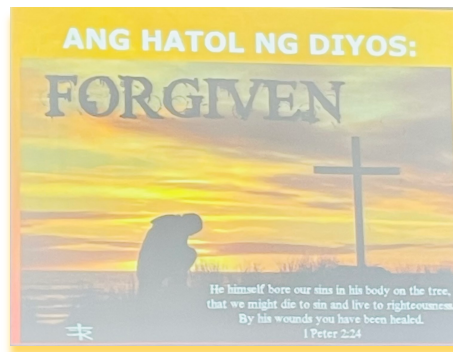


GOD'S VERDICT: FORGIVEN

Lenten Recollection: The Final Hours of the Lord

Fr. Bong Guerrero

April 7, 2023



Fr. Bong Guerrero delivered an inspiring and incisive message on April 5 (Holy Wednesday) at the TLF Heritage about God's Verdict: Forgiveness, amidst an intent audience willing to listen to God's word. He reminded us that man is inherently good; death is certain, and faithfulness needs to be nourished. He showcased the significance of forgiveness intertwined with man's goodness, death and faithfulness.

Man is inherently good but wrong decisions caused him to sin and be deprived of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). When Jesus was nailed on the cross, he asked the Father to forgive them (Lk. 23: 34). Forgiveness may be tough because it is giving up one's right and the power to punish. Hence, only God (Jesus) can ask God (the Father) to forgive us.

Moreover, relative to forgiveness is faithfulness which is not a sprint race but a marathon. It is a lifetime trip that demands patience, perseverance, constancy and consistency. Stumbling is allowed, but getting up is required. Run, walk and crawl, BUT DO NOT QUIT! Faithfulness is not about perfection. It is about constancy in trying. Genuine holiness is to bear and forgive our imperfections patiently. Faithfulness is not about falling down. It is about getting up and finishing the race. If we don't give up, we cannot fail. We should never give up on ourselves, because God will never give up on us.

In addition, death is inevitable; however, it is not the end but the beginning of life. It is "going back home." Death is the door to eternal life. Therefore, we need to prepare for something we cannot avoid. We will give an account of how we have lived by forgiving those who hurt us and also forgive ourselves in the process.

Finally, as Catholics we believe in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). Jesus said to His disciples, "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (Jn. 20:23). The early church also practiced confession which has always been a place of victory. This is where Jesus always gets to win.

We have already been forgiven. ALL WE NEED TO DO IS ASK!

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