

Holy Saturday

Reading Matthew 27:57-66

Meditation

The Gospels don't tell us much about what happened in the time between Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Matthew does tell us that Joseph of Arimathea, who was a follower of Jesus and a wealthy man, received permission from Pontius Pilate to take Jesus' body. Joseph wrapped the body in a linen shroud and placed it in his own tomb with a large stone at the entrance. Matthew also tells us that Pilate, at the request of the chief priests, ordered guards at the tomb and had the stone sealed.

Foolish men! Didn't they know that the power of God was stronger than a group of guards and a sealed stone, even if the stone did weigh several tons? Didn't they realize that God created that stone and the men who guarded it? Not a thousand stones and not a battalion of guards would have made any difference. The power of God is stronger than we can ever imagine.

Except for one tiny stone. That is the stone that some of us have at the entrance of our souls and hearts, sealing us from the message of God. Although God is omnipotent, he does give us a choice; he does not force himself upon us. We need to open up ourselves, our souls and our hearts to God. We need to remove the stone which we may carry within ourselves and allow our innermost being to be filled with God. When the stone closes the entrance to our souls, we

are in darkness. We become confused and frightened, just as the disciples did at Jesus' arrest and crucifixion. When we remove the stone and open up our hearts and souls to God, we are filled with his light and his love. We understand his plan for us, and we feel the security and happiness of life with God.

Prayer

*Jesus, the tomb that they laid you in was so cold and dark
and sealed with a stone.
It was meant for eternity,
But the feeble plans of people would be swept aside
by the power and plan of God.
Help us, Lord, to move the stones in our own hearts,
To bring our souls from darkness and cold
To the light and warmth of God's love.*

For reflection

What obstacles keep me from experiencing God's love?

What is God's plan for me?

Did you know ...

The feast of Christ's resurrection begins with the Jarakaloytz or candle-lighting service of Easter Eve and extends all the way to Pentecost—a period of 50 days. During the 40 days to Ascension, there are no fast days, since the world is in joyous celebration of Christ's victory on the cross.