NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (https://www.ncronline.org)

A Holy Week prayer for our suffering world

Tony Magliano | Apr. 14, 2014 Making a Difference

By prayerfully meditating before a crucifix, one can see and begin to understand the ultimate result of sin.

The Romans' sins, the Jews' sins, our sins nailed our Lord Jesus to the cross. The cost of sin is death. Our sins killed the Son of God. Our sins crucified our loving Lord. And our sins continue his suffering passion.

God is not the grand watchmaker who created the world and now sits back and watches from afar as humanity suffers. No; by his incarnation, life, passion and death, he has proven that he is with us, especially in our suffering.

It is said that in a deeply loving marriage, when the wife cries, the husband tastes the salt. So it is with humanity and God. As the father of all, God continues to suffer when his children hurt themselves and each other.

A prayerful meditation before the crucifix should inspire us to be more firmly committed to living out the Ash Wednesday instruction: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel."

Let's turn to God in prayer and ask for divine humility and strength to turn away from our personal sins that not only hurt God and us, but also lead to what Blessed Pope John Paul II called the "structure of sin" in the world.

Let us pray.

From the personal sins of pride, arrogance, selfishness, greed, indifference, envy, lust, anger, unkindness and violence, save us, O Lord. Make us instead men and women whose lives reflect your humility, compassion, selflessness, generosity, justice, kindness, purity, gentleness and nonviolence.

From our indifference to the structures of sin so evident in our society and world, save us, O Lord.

From an abortion industry that profits from the brutal dismembering and murder of unborn babies, save us, O Lord.

From an insufficient government response to the suffering of our poor and hungry brothers and sisters in this country and throughout the world, save us, O Lord.

From the many corporations that reap huge profits from the use of sweatshop labor, that refuse to pay a living wage, that produce unsafe products, that pollute and dangerously warm our Earth, save us, O Lord.

From the military industrial complex that produces the guns used in many murders committed on our city streets, that manufactures the light arms, tanks, helicopters, fighter jets, war ships and drones that fuel the world's wars and kill far more innocent civilians than combatants, save us, O Lord.

From the research facilities and factories that produce nuclear weapons of mass destruction, save us, O Lord.

From a government that is far more committed to astronomical military budgets and tax cuts for the wealthy than it is to funding programs for the poor and the middle class, to fixing the nation's infrastructure, to helping family farmers, to trading fairly with poor nations, to legalizing our hard-working undocumented population, and to committing adequate funding for clean, renewable energy sources, save us, O Lord.

Let us remember also that the crucifixion was not only the ultimate sign of the evil of sin but was also the ultimate sign of the love God has for us.

And that death -- even the most loving death of Jesus -- does not have the final word. Christ's resurrection does!

So let's live as brothers and sisters of the resurrected Lord Jesus, fully committed to building a just and peaceful world.

[Tony Magliano is an internationally syndicated social justice and peace columnist. He is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings about Catholic social teaching. His keynote address, "Advancing the Kingdom of God in the 21st Century," has been well received by diocesan gatherings from Salt Lake City to Baltimore. Tony can be reached at tmag@zoominternet.net [1].]

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