

When I am lifted up, I will draw everything to myself. JN12:33

Good Friday darkness must come before Easter brightness.

"unless the seed falls into the ground and dies...."

Creation Spirituality reveals that it is intrinsic to creativity, that it begins in the dark!

...we spend 9 months in the dark womb.

...clouds gather and darken before life giving rains.

...creativity broods in the darkness of our dreams.

...the seed must be covered over with dark soil before it sprouts.

So today Jesus prepares us for the darkness of Good Friday.

In the second reading Paul assures us that Jesus *"learned obedience from what he suffered."*

This is a hard saying.

Obedience to what? Perhaps to the human condition rather than to a sadistic Father?

There is suffering all around us in every age. Viktor Frankl who survived Hitler's concentration camp wrote that for his endurance, he had to seek meaning in the suffering, and so he observed courage, fortitude, patience, endurance, the best of human traits shining in the darkness of Nazi hate.

It takes a keen observer to glimpse such a scene and come up with "meaning."

The other option is meaningless and despair.

So today Jesus gives us an image of hope, something rising up out of the darkness:

☐ "Unless I am lifted up, I will draw everyone to myself."

Does the "lifting up refer to the cross?

Or does the "lifting up refer to the Resurrection?

For us, it must mean both.

Out of darkness into the light.

This is our Paschal Mystery, and it is to be the pattern of the Christian life.

In today's First Reading, Jeremiah urges the Hebrew people "to write the law upon their hearts."

We might ask "Where is Jeremiah today in Israel?

The newly re-elected premiar has announced there will be NO two state solution for the Palestinians.

This is a momentous decision. It undermines all the years of peacemaking efforts in that troubled land.

And darkness descends again.

And we must wait even longer before the bright sun of peace can shine upon the Holy City of Jerusalem!

And so we pray:

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,

you have not heard the voices of the prophets,

nor have we!

Your leader spurns the "Arabs." in his midst.

Our leaders spurn the undocumented Hispanics in ours!

And Hitler spurned the Jews in his.

Turn us, turn us around.

Let us look up and see Jesus raised up above the darkness of human spurning.

Turn us around Jesus!

Turn us around!

Amen.