**With Incredible Love!**

I want all of us to totally clear our minds of the things we know about the Paschal Mystery of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Don’t think about anything but what we are experiencing today. Let’s put ourselves into the Passion personally. What role are you playing? Are you Jesus? Are you Judas? Are you Mary? Are you Simon Peter? One of the other apostles? Are you Pilate? Are you the centurion nailing the hands and feet of Jesus to the cross? Are you Joseph of Arimathea? Or are you simply in the crowd yelling, “Crucify Him”.

We all know that the cross is the symbol of our eternal salvation. I want to talk a little today about the difference in true repentance. All we really need to do is to look at the difference between the responses of Judas and Peter.

* Judas has no difficulty initially turning Jesus over for monetary gain.
* After he turns Jesus over to the Romans, he comes to realize his transgression.
* What does he do? He returns the money and tells the chief priests, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”
* Judas then goes and hangs himself.
* Then let’s look at Peter.
* Peter is consistently telling Jesus he will always be there for him.
* At the last supper he tries to find out Jesus’ betrayer.
* He goes to the garden and cannot stay awake and is chastised by Jesus.
* Peter pulls out his sword and cuts off the ear of Malchus, the slave. Again, trying to protect Jesus.
* Peter then follows Jesus as He is led away by the soldiers. He follows at a distance to not be discovered. Imagine how Peter was feeling. The strong protector now afraid.
* He gets through the gate and tries to be invisible but is recognized.
* After three times denying Jesus, the cock crows.
* Peter realizes what he has done and begins to sob.
* Jesus catches Peter’s eye and with a simple glance, Peter knows he is still loved and forgiven by Jesus.
* We do not really know what Peter did during the rest of the events of Jesus’ Passion.
* Research shows though that he was probably not at the crucifixion.

What’s the difference between Judas and Peter? The difference was that Peter understood that the love of Jesus was unconditional and he was forgiven even after denying Him three times. Judas on the other hand, although he realized what he had done and he repents by returning the silver coins. He never understood the love and forgiveness of the Jesus.

How does that impact us today? Jesus died on the cross for all of our sins. All we need to do is come to Him at the foot of the cross and ask Him for His forgiveness.

We are often lost, confused, without purpose or meaning in life, without assurance of a future life. But from the cross Jesus reached out by His death and rescued us.

The forgiveness and the mercy of God are so far beyond our comprehension that we can hardly even talk about them.

Sometimes the things that make us the strongest come from our failures. We can leave all of our failures at the cross. Shortly we will have the chance to venerate the cross, take this opportunity to allow Jesus to take your cares and troubles away at the foot of the cross.

I leave you with these questions.

* **Do you know Jesus?**
* **Do you know the forgiveness of the cross and the power of Jesus’s love?**