

Jesus was victorious: Love and forgiveness win

written by Bishop Anthony B. Taylor |

Bishop Anthony B. Taylor delivered this homily on Good Friday March 25.

What was so good about Good Friday? It was an evil day when an innocent man was killed by the state.

Betrayed and abandoned by his friends, railroaded by the leaders of his own people, tortured by sadistic soldiers, a gross miscarriage of justice, evil on top of evil.

Jesus rose victorious from this very tomb on Easter Sunday, but that was not the day the battle was won, it's just the day we found out.

How could anyone possibly characterize the Friday on which this occurred as good? Sweating blood in agony, his whipped back nothing more than ribbons of shredded flesh, thorns crushed into his bleeding head, knees bleeding from three falls along a stumbling path carrying the instrument of his own execution, to Calvary where so much blood had already been spilled before.

Humiliated and mocked, completely naked to increase the shame, nailed to increase the pain, lifted high to increase the horror, dehumanized in order to discredit him and undo everything he had set out to accomplish, eliminating not only him but also everything for which he lived and died.

But in this they failed. They could kill him, but they could not eliminate him.

Jesus rose victorious from this very tomb on Easter Sunday, but that was not the day the battle was won, it's just the day we found out. The day Jesus won the battle was Friday, which is why we call that Friday good.

The Romans broke his body but not his will. They stole his life but not his soul. They insulted but he returned no insult. They hated but he continued to love. They mocked but he forgave. They cursed but he prayed. They betrayed and abandoned but he remained faithful.

Evil did its very worst but he did his very best and his goodness prevailed, turning the worst Friday ever into the best Friday ever. The day the battle was won. The day the power of sin and death was broken.

The day that the redemption announced by Isaiah was fulfilled by Jesus, God's suffering servant, upon whom was laid the chastisement that makes us whole.