

INSTITUTE OF THE BETHLEMITE SISTERS

DAUGHTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Holy Brother Pedro De San José Betancur Province – India



“If my death on the cross does not convince you of my love,  
What will convince you?” -St. Faustina

Gospel of John 18: 19- 24

### The High Priest Questions Jesus

Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. “I have spoken openly to the world,” Jesus replied. “I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said.” When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby slapped him in the face. “Is this the way you answer the high priest?” he demanded. “If I said something wrong,” Jesus replied, “testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?” Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

### Reflection:

Jesus was accused and being kept in front of higher authorities. The high officials hardly find faults to punish Jesus. In all His life, He has done good to the people and there was nothing to accuse Him. For that reason only Jesus said to the high priest that He has done everything in public and nothing was done in secret.

The sole reason for the Ministry of Jesus was to spread the good news and to lead the humankind to the love of God. In the moment of suffering no one came in front to rescue Jesus. They knew well about the person of Jesus, but they said nothing concerning the miracles of Jesus, by which he had done so much good, and which proved his doctrine. Thus the enemies of Christ, while they quarrel with his truth, wilfully shut their eyes against it. He appeals to those who heard him. The doctrine of Christ may safely appeal to all who know it, and those who judge in truth bear witness to it. Our resentment of injuries must never be passionate

One of the officials - One of the inferior officers, or those who attended on the court. "Gave him a blow either with the open hand or with a rod" In whatever way it was done, it was a violation of all



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law and justice. Jesus had showed no disrespect for the office of the high priest, and if he had, this was not the proper way to punish it.

What in decent attitude of Jewish, that an inferior officer dared to strike a supposed criminal, standing before the judgment seat. But Jesus asked boldly the reason for the slap. **Jesus . . . knew all things that should come--**Despite of all, He was humble enough to accept the will of God and gave himself to rescue all the sinners.( to rescue you & me).Because He loves God and loves all human beings. He is the wonderful saviour that we all need of Him. Let us put our trust in Him and learn from Him to do what God is expecting from us.

The higher officer didn't know it at the time, but he was not only slapping a greater High Priest in the face than the one he was protecting, he was also slapping God in the face. Jesus suffered many indignities in his trial and crucifixion. However, the greater tragedy is that those who inflicted these horrible cruelties never had any idea that they were abusing the Son of God, the Messiah that God had sent to redeem them. Yet Jesus suffered these indignities so that we could know that he loves us and will help us in our times of rejection and need!

Many a time we too turn our face to Him, we give Him slaps telling Him 'what you are saying is wrong'. So, let us ask Jesus to have mercy on us.

Let us reflect the invitation of Jesus the words of Jesus who says that He has done everything in open. We need to explain the way we have lived. We have a great high priest (Jesus) who has gone to live with God in heaven. He is the Son of God. So let us continue strongly in the faith we have. Jesus, the high priest that we have, is able to understand our weaknesses. When Jesus lived on earth, he was tempted in every way. He was tempted in the same ways that we are tempted, but he never sinned. With Jesus as our high priest we can feel free to come before God's throne where there is grace (forgiveness). There we receive mercy and kindness to help us when we need it.

- Which are the situations you have spoken the truth like Jesus?
- Do the people recognize your mission as a witness to Jesus?
- What are the moments you have slapped Jesus like that higher officer?

**Prayer:**

Father, thank you for your forgiveness. Thank you for your patience. Thank you for long suffering kindness. Thank you for your overwhelming grace. I see these demonstrated in Jesus' willingness to submit to humiliation, abuse, and torture so that the very ones who hurt him could come to know you as their Father and find your saving grace. I know that same grace is given to me. I praise you and thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

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### THE SLAP THAT JESUS RECEIVED IN THE HOUSE OF ANNA



*“When a soul belongs totally to Divine love, it is called to do everything that God asks of it”*



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*Second Prayer*

The source of the passion of Christ was his intense love for mankind. The great love of Jesus resulted in his extreme commitment to walk a very precise and narrow path to redeem mankind. For the sake of restoring humans to fellowship with God, he made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant by being made in human likeness with this concept, He humbled himself even to receive the slap, spat and strike. His passionate love caused him to leave the glory of heaven to take human form and live an obedient life of self-sacrifice required by the holiness of God. Only such a selfless life could produce the pure and innocent blood sacrifice required to cover the sins of those who put their faith in him.

The life of our Mother Encarnacion was a clear testimony of her unbreakable faith and love of Christ and his providence. Once she got the mystical experience, which was fixed in her mind and she kept pondering over the inner voice that was vibrating in her, “No one celebrates the sorrows of my heart” with great fear, she convinced to promote the inner sorrows of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As consequence of this “Mystical Experience” three things seem to be clear in the account of Mother Encarnacion Rosal:

*\* Jesus’ insistence in his demand and the pressure with which he urges Mother.*

*\* Mother’s heroic offering. “I offered myself to the Lord, promising him that I would bear all the shame and troubles to promote this devotion”*

*\* Certain resistance of Mother to believe she was God’s chosen one, “May be those were ideas of mine”*

By baptism we too are chosen by God. God’s love demands us to please God and do good to our brethren. Jesus underwent terrible passion, received slaps, and finally he died on the Cross.

Our Mother Encarnacion Rosal also endured to receive words of slaps, struggles shame and troubles to promote the devotion to the Sacred heart of Jesus. When a soul belongs totally to Divine Love, it is called to do everything that God asks of it, by knowing and recognizing its incapacity. The perception of one’s own unworthiness astonishes the soul, but it does not overthrow it, it puts it in truth, purifies it by giving it a condition of peace and affability.

Our Mother is very grateful to God our Father and remembers each and every blessing and benefits whatever she received from him. All her phrases and her affection seem sparks coming from a forge in activity.

To honour the inner Sorrows of the Sacred Heart of Jesus she herself writes,

- The Novena.
- The pious exercise which is called the exercise of the lamps.
- Triduum to the Heart of Jesus, in which his love, justice and mercy are honored
- Exercise for relieving the Sorrows of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Today Our Mother Encarnacion Rosal is inviting us to reflect over the fourth lamp.

- From the book of Encarnacion Rosal A Life, a commitment page no: 141
- Constitution Article no: 3 & 6

- In which area of my Consecrated life do I need to change and How to celebrate the inner sorrows of sacred heart of Jesus?
- Do I remember the moments that I forget the blessings and benefits of God?
- How many times I slapped Jesus by my words and deeds and what are the remedies?
- When I am in agony did I accept it as the will of God to sink in the ocean of God's love or murmuring the dark experience?

**Prayer:**

Dear loving Sacred heart of Jesus you have suffered in bitter passion *for me*. The Agony in the Garden, the scourging at the pillar, crowning with thorns with the insults, spitting, buffeting, punching and pounding, the carrying of the cross, the brutal crucifixion,— all these sufferings and many more, you have under gone, just for the love that you have towards us. Help me to be a worthy daughter to be aware of my failures and commit no more sin. Amen.