

Dear Friends of Christ, many of you have probably heard (if not seen) the 2004 movie, “The Passion of the Christ” directed by Mel Gibson, which starred Jim Caviezel as Jesus Christ. The movie essentially focused on the final twelve hours of Jesus’ life – from His Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane to His Crucifixion on Mount Calvary. Although the movie was an international success (with worldwide receipts totalling \$612 million), many critics and filmgoers however lamented on the excessive violence depicted in the movie; this is rather surprising given the amount of violence that is often found in many other movies in various genres. Nevertheless, I believe that Mel did a credible job of depicting what Jesus would have suffered throughout His Passion – sufferings that have been described by notable historians of that era. Jesus really did suffer during His last few hours on earth and Christians readily accept this fact. Yet, how many Christians reflect on a more sombre reality; that is, on the suffering Jesus continues to suffer today and throughout the ages on account of what He experiences in the Blessed Sacrament?

St. Peter Julian Eymard, also known as “The Eucharistic Saint” (because of his profound love and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament) succinctly sums up this painful fact with the following words: “Jesus is condemned by His own people, by the very ones He showered with His favors. He is condemned as a fomenter of rebellion, He Who is goodness itself; as a blasphemer, He Who is holiness itself; as one seeking power, He Who made Himself the least of all. He is condemned to die on the Cross like the lowest of slaves. Jesus lovingly accepts this sentence of death: He came down to this earth in order to suffer and die and to teach us to do the same. In the Holy Eucharist Jesus is again condemned to death: primarily in His graces, which are rejected; in His love, which is slighted; in His sacramental state, by the unbeliever who denies Him, by horrible sacrilege...Jesus is more cruelly treated by bad Christians than by the Jews. In Jerusalem He was condemned only once, but in the Blessed Sacrament, He is condemned every day and in thousands of places, and by an appalling number of unjust judges. And yet Jesus allows Himself to be insulted, despised, and condemned. He still continues His sacramental life in order to show us that His love for us is without condition or reserve, that it is greater than our ingratitude. O Jesus, forgive, I beseech Thee, all sacrileges! Should I ever have committed any, I want to pass my life making reparation for them and loving and honoring Thee for them that despise Thee. Grant me the grace to die with Thee!” I invite you to please consider visiting Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and spending some time with Him in prayer and adoration. Our Church is opened every Monday-Saturday from 7am until the end of evening/afternoon Mass (the side doors always remain open throughout the day). Won’t you come and be with Him; come and console Him, He who continues to humble Himself in a tiny piece of consecrated bread for the love of you and me?

Pax Christi, Fr. Thomas