



The Holy See

WAY OF THE CROSS AT THE COLOSSEUM

REFLECTION OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Good Friday, 6 April 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

By following Jesus on the way of his Passion we not only see the Passion of Jesus, but we also see all the suffering in the world, and this is the profound intention of the prayer of the Way of the Cross: to open our hearts and to help us to see with our heart.

The Fathers of the Church considered insensitivity and hardness of heart the greatest sin of the pagan world and were fond of the Prophet Ezekiel's prophecy: "I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (cf. *Ez 36: 26*).

Being converted to Christ, becoming Christian, meant receiving a heart of flesh, a heart sensitive to the passion and suffering of others.

Our God is not a remote God, intangible in his blessedness. Our God has a heart.

Indeed, he has a heart of flesh; he was made flesh precisely to be able to suffer with us and to be with us in our suffering.

He was made man to give us a heart of flesh and to reawaken within us love for the suffering, for the destitute.

Let us pray to the Lord at this time for all the suffering people of the world.

Let us pray to the Lord that he will truly give us a heart of flesh, that he will make us messengers

of his love not only with words, but with our entire life. Amen.

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