

A GRACE-FILLED EASTER SEASON!



Ernest Gordon was a British Army officer captured at sea by the Japanese at the age of twenty-four. Gordon was sent to work on the Burma-Siam railway line that the Japanese were constructing through the dense Thai jungle in preparation for invading India. Ernest recalls this true story from a prison camp:

One day when the shovels were counted after work, the guard on duty went berserk. He said one shovel was missing. He said one shovel was missing. Screaming in broken English, he ordered the thief to step up. When no one did, he got his rifle and threatened to fire on the crowd.

At this point, an Australian came forward. He stood silently as the guard beat him. Finally, the guard struck him a thunderous blow with his rifle on the head. The Australian dropped – clearly dead, but the guard kept beating him savagely. Then the work crew carried the shovels and the dead Australian to the guard house. There the shovels were counted again. No shovel was missing after all.

What are my thoughts as I imagine myself to be the Australian, before stepping forward?

“The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them.” (John 15:13)
St. Paul reminds and assures us that *“Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:39)*

On Good Friday, from the cross, Jesus preaches his greatest sermon of all: love to the end, the one sermon that transformed humanity.

The night of Easter our Lord reveals *“the beauty”* of God’s Love, who, passing through the sacrifice of the cross and death, is transfigured in the Risen Jesus, ever living and ever present in and among those who put his Word into practice, ready to put on His apron... ready to love and serve others just as He did, not only on Holy Thursday.

Throughout the pandemic, as we have become aware, we need more and more of that oil called ‘patience, understanding, thinking of others, and compassion,’ especially with those we rub elbows with, that is, we spend more time with than before.



Saint Guido Maria Conforti

In each present moment we are invited to renew our “Yes,” individually and together, to the One who called us to follow in his footsteps and to carry on his mission today: reaching out to the ends of the earth so **“to make of humanity one family.”** And by doing so He’ll be risen, present, and alive anew in each of us and in our midst. That is resurrection and new life!

A Happy and grace-filled Easter to you all!

*With deep gratitude,
Fr. Mark and the Xaverian Missionaries*

God's blessings and peace at Easter and always!