

The Passion of Jesus As Lived by a Kid Named Faustino

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Dear Friends:

I was asked to prepare an article describing the manner in which **Faustino Pérez-Manglano** took part in the observance of Holy Week to serve as an inspiration for young people. It occurred to me that this could be a valuable lesson for everybody. I hope you experienced a fruitful celebration of Holy Week strongly united in the company of Jesus on Calvary.

With all my best wishes,

Jose Maria Salaverri, S.M.

"Today is Good Friday ... Today Jesus died on the cross for my sins. All for me. Always ungrateful I fall repeatedly. Pardon me, Jesus, Pardon me. Pardon me for the umpteenth time."

That was what was written on April 20, 1962, by a kid who was 15 years old. No, no he was not a flagrant sinner. On the contrary, he wished to be an intimate friend of Jesus. His name is **Faustino Pérez-Manglano** (1946-1963). He was ill, but he was fighting against the illness and simultaneously offering his suffering to Jesus in empathy with His Passion on the cross.

In his earliest childhood he was gifted with a resonance with Jesus in His Passion. He liked to contemplate the suffering of Jesus and express his gratitude to Jesus in the company of the Virgin Mary, His mother.

At times in his diary there are thoughts that are expressed in union with the Virgin Mary in a deeply emotional register that takes the form of prayers. He evokes a dialogue with the Virgin Mary that focuses on Jesus on Good Friday:

“What are you thinking, Virgin Most Holy, as you look upon that kiss of Judas? Oh what suffering the Virgin experiences as she moves among the crowd; as she looks upon so many people who once benefitted from the favors of Jesus who are now screaming that Jesus should be crucified. And the poor most Holy Virgin who has to look upon her son at the side of Pilate whipped, torn apart and spit upon ...” (20-1-1963)

“Lord, make me see that sin serves for nothing. My sin is a cry that screams out that they should crucify Jesus; that I prefer Barabbas. There is still time to turn to Christ. We can do penance and repent truly. Let us beg Mary our Mother: ‘Pray for us sinners.’”

The moment that is most moving is recounted by Saint John in his gospel:

"When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son!' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home." (John 19: 25-27)

And Faustino dwells on the moment when the Virgin receives the dead Jesus into her arms.

"Mary, after having seen the crucifixion was willing to accept all those men as her sons, despite that they had murdered her son. At the end she received Jesus in her arms just as she had when he was small. She must have thought to herself 'My other sons have done this.'"

Faustino was not content with words and nice sentiments. And he wonders: *"What will we give to Jesus who gives us everything, including even His mother?"* And he adds: *"You say 'I thirst.' You have thirst for the souls of all those men. Lord, let me participate in your thirst."* For this reason he wanted to do something for Jesus who is suffering.

He was convinced that *"our sufferings, united with those of Jesus, help to save the world."* That cross of Christ called to mind so many people who suffer: *"The cross of Christ! All those who suffer are the living crosses of Christ."* And he decided to become a Marianist religious and a missionary to help Jesus and the Virgin. That could not happen, The Lord and the Virgin called him to heaven. But from there he is a missionary. Pope Benedict XVI declared him "venerable." This means that he had practiced the Christian virtues in an outstanding manner.

**Marianist Martyrs:
Witness, Conviction and Stability**

Below is a link to a moving video produced on Blessed Jakob Gapp and our Spanish martyrs. It was produced by Bro. Brandon Paluch, S.M, and directed by David Brun.

<https://youtu.be/twitncNeSXo>