



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

The Stations of the Cross explained — by Rev. Larry Power

All of us are familiar with signs and trademarks; every oil company has its own sign e.g. Shell or BP. Our supermarkets have their own emblems, which distinguish them from all others. This can be seen in the particular uniforms of its employees; such things set them apart from other companies. Signs are carried through into the religious sphere also. Roman Catholicism is a religion of signs and ceremonies peculiar to itself. One such ceremony is the Stations of the Cross. It, along with others i.e. lighting of candles, holy water, ashes on the forehead, and the blessing of images is deemed to bring a spiritual dimension to everyday life.

As a young boy I followed the Stations of the Cross. The ceremony consisted of a sequence of pictures beginning at the Lord's betrayal and arrest, leading to His trial, crucifixion and resurrection. The priest led prayers and a response was given by the laity. This ceremony was accompanied with lighted candles. We bowed before each scene as we went through the sequence of pictures. This ceremony takes place at Easter.

This is an empty ritual aided by images. The New Testament church knew of no such practice, but obeyed the second commandment: "Thou shalt not make unto thee, any graven image or any likeness of any thing that is in the heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth, thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them. . ." Exodus 20:4-5. If it is new it is not true. The adoration of the cross, images and relics was endorsed about 786 AD. The apostles and evangelists of the New Testament knew nothing of this practice.

The sad fact is that ecumenical Protestantism is all too willing to get involved and indeed must get involved if it is to attain its goal of unity with the Church of Rome. Its involvement in such processions is not to be wondered at. They have already taken up many of the trademarks of Romanism e.g. praying for the dead. This goes unnoticed by the vast majority of Protestants. These men of the ecumenical stamp may not have yet fully shown their hand as to who they really are but their words and practice betray them. They're Romanists at heart and their policy is that of the Jesuit, working quietly and yet achieving their aim most successfully. There is of course a proper meditation on these great fundamentals of the faith as they are set forth in the Word of God, not to be limited to a particular time of year and in no way connected with images or processions. The faith that saves the soul has, for its main element, trust which is absolute rest of the whole soul on the Lord Jesus Christ to save.

My faith has found a resting place, Not in device or creed, I trust the Ever-living One His wounds for me shall plead.

I need no other argument, I need no other plea; It is enough that Jesus died, And that he died for me.