

# A Coffee with Alessio



AMDG

## The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross (Part 2)

**Spoiler alert:** In this week's column, I am talking about the film *Penguin Bloom* which was released recently. If you haven't seen it and would like to, you might view it before reading this week's column.

In last week's column I focused on what Christ said in the Twelfth Station. I am continuing on from where I left off last week. Today, I am focusing on what the people's response is.

The people reply:

My Jesus,  
I offer you my death  
with all its pains,  
accepting now  
the time and kind of death in store for me.

None of us know when or how we will die. It is a reality that we find very confronting. Every time we are at someone's funeral, that is a reminder to us that one day we will be the one who is laid to rest. Whilst our response here (in this Station) is about our bodily death, I would like to suggest that we also include in it our daily dying to self. All those acts of kindness or what I like to call pastoral care, that take the focus off ourselves and put it on someone else are good works we can offer up to Jesus on the Cross. Pastoral care should really be a fulltime ministry! Sometimes we do those kind deeds willingly, other times we don't. Sometimes we do them quietly behind the scenes and other times we don't. In any case, let us continue our works of prayer, fasting and almsgiving during Lent, so as to become better followers of Christ, better people and living witnesses to the Gospel in our families, to our friends, in our workplaces and the wider community.

So each day when we rise and give thanks to God for the gift of another day, let us pray for the courage and strength to follow willingly and sincerely what the Lord is calling us to do that day.

Recently, I went to see the film *Penguin Bloom* – a good Australian film. In the film everything starts off normally, and the son (Noah), who narrates the story, tells us that his parents decided to go to Thailand for their annual holiday. Whilst on holiday, the mother Sam Bloom (played by Naomi Watts) has an accident which leaves her paralysed. The movie continues by exploring how Sam Bloom and her family deal with her accident and her subsequent depression. Her husband and her children did not give up on her as they dealt with the aftermath of the accident, even though sometimes it would have been easier to do so.

My Jesus, I offer you my dying to self, with all its pains,  
accepting now,  
the ways you call me each day to die myself.

Yes, Sam Bloom had to die to herself, because she had to live in a way that took a long time to adjust to. Her husband, children and extended family and friends had to die to themselves, because they knew that Sam was a very different person. They could have completely cut ties with her instead of dealing with her depression and other ailments. They didn't though.

The saving grace for Sam Bloom is that she takes up kayaking with an instructor who believes in her. The family bring home an injured bird, a welcome distraction for the Bloom family, eventually making a profound difference on Sam's life, teaching her how to live again. (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6317656/>)

Yes in our dying to self we become a welcome distraction for others. We lighten their load and as I've said before, there is no better cure than to share a laugh and make someone smile.

Let each day of our life be a positive example to others that we really believe that Jesus is our Saviour and that as He died for us, and that we too are willing to "die" for Him and our neighbour. In this way, just as we heard in last week's column that the Cross is Jesus' pulpit, our lives of Christian witness are our pulpit also.

The verse of the hymn from "At the Cross" that follows this Station is as follows:

"Let me mingle tears with thee,  
mourning him who mourned for me,  
all the days that I may live".

I have made reference to the "Death in Paradise" series in my columns this Lent, drawing a parallel between that series and this series on the Stations of the Cross. I have held off going into detail so as not to spoil the plotline for people who may not have yet seen it. Jesus didn't die a paradisiacal death, but He promised paradise to the good thief and He promises that to us also. The series "Death in Paradise" is now airing on the ABC on Saturday nights. A new Detective Inspector arrived – Neville Parker played by Ralf Little. He replaced Ardal O'Hanlon, who played DI Jack Mooney. The new detective seems to have a problem with the living conditions on the Island of Saint-Marie. They are driving him up the wall. He is taking his time to adjust to the new conditions. So it is with us. We have no idea when we wake up each morning what is in store for us, nor where the Lord may ask us to go. But just like DI Neville Parker and those before Him who had to adjust to the conditions and requirements of their job, so too each day we must say:

"Lord, by my baptism you have called me as son or daughter of yours.  
Help me to be a worthy disciple today in my home, workplace and in the community,  
so that your Cross may triumph in the world."

Two other comments before I conclude this week's column. Firstly, this Sunday is Laetare Sunday, the rejoicing Sunday which marks the half-way point of Lent. We can lessen our penance this Sunday. This Sunday the priest wears rose vestments – a sign of rejoicing. If you have an item of clothing that is rose coloured I encourage you to wear it to Mass. I am looking forward to some cake this Sunday – just something simple, though, like a piece of apple pie. Speaking of apple pie, next week we celebrate two solemnities – that of Saint Patrick (Wednesday 17 March) and that of Saint Joseph (Friday 19 March). Again, on these solemnities we can lessen our penances. A piece of apple pie is a simple dessert and has something 'green' in it to help us celebrate Saint Patrick's Day.

Next week's column will focus on Saint Joseph. The series on the Stations of the Cross will resume in two weeks' time on Friday 26 March.

Till next week – enjoy your coffee and cake!

Alessio Loiacono  
Music Field Officer

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