

JERUSALEM RETREAT

FEBRUARY 10 TO FEBRUARY 18

BY FR. JOSEPHJUDE GANNON



MY SECOND DAY IN JERUSALEM

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2019

This morning I went in haste to the temple. I walked through the Damascus Gate and walked to the Temple Mount. Thankfully it's early and it's not crowded. I prayed at the wall for unity, for everyone who asked me to pray, for the NYPD Detective who was killed last night and his family.

Then, I walked down the road to the museum, which is the stairs of the temple built by Salomon. Prophets proclaimed on these very stairs; they were witness to the presentation of Mary as a child, they were witness to the angel talking the Jesus uncle Zachariah, they were witness to the presentation of Jesus with Mary, Joseph, Simeon and Anna, they were witness to Jesus cleansing the temple area, they were witness of his preaching, they were witness of the Apostle's prayer and teaching after the coming of the Holy Spirit, they were witness of the presence of God, and they talk to the soul of every Catholic Christian and Jewish.

I prayed at the steps for about an hour and a half by just praising God and praying:

*"Lord Jesus you entered here enter my soul anew
Lord Jesus you cast out those who made this place into
a marketplace from a place of prayer conversion and
joy. Cast out sin and vice and the evil one from my
heart."*

In the distance this morning, as I sit on these steps I hear roosters crowing as the day starts, and they keep doing it louder and louder ... *"Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times."*

You can hear them all over the countryside of the temple steps. About a mile from the High Priest rich

house on the countryside overlooking the Mount of Olives. It is said that after that day Peter never again slept late. He would hear the rooster in the morning, wake up and cry. Then, he would pray and know the Lord forgave him and loved him. Then, he would start his day with passion, and love, and truth, and zeal to proclaim the good news that Jesus is the crucified resurrected and glorified Messiah and son of God.

So peaceful.... I could stay there all Day.

Next, I went to say mass at the First Station of the Cross.

Ecce homo convent

That was a beautiful and quiet experience. It's next door to the First Station and was originally part of the same complex, Pontius Pilate house.

It is part of the complex, the part that would held Jesus prisoner along with Barabbas and the two thieves. Like St. Peter it's a basement cistern. That must have been a place to throw people in to them. Like Joseph in Genesis whose brothers did the same thing?

The nuns let me have the whole Basilica to myself. I said the mass of the crowning of thorns and did a tour. There are a museum and guest house, where you can

see the whole city from their roof. It was powerful and beautiful.

From there I went to St. Anna's Church.

While there at St. Anna's church, the place of Mary's birth and next to the pool of Bethesda, I prayed the rosary. Then, I realized it is Wednesday and I also did the novena to St. Gerard as we do at my parish every Wednesday.

I prayed for the conversion of Governor Cuomo and to abortion and the change of that horrible new law and for victims of it. I start praying for that young lady who was killed and her unborn baby - the baby will never see justice that's to the murder and that is a dumb law. I prayed for moms, dads and babies. I prayed for all St. Gerard Majella babies, for all the babies I baptized and for all those who are in need.

When they were locking up the church, I found a spot outside there to have a quiet picnic lunch. However, before lunch I stopped by that pool. Jesus helped healing the man who was ill for more than 20 on the Sabbath day.

That story also connects to the prophet Ezekiel who followed those waters in his vision of a new built temple and its tradition that the reason that water over

flows and bubbles up was because that it's water that flowed from Eden in the beginning before God parted the land and sea. This is its healing property. But, then Jesus is the word so he does not need anything but his word to heal.

After lunch, I did my own private stations of the cross ending at the Holy Sepulchre; it was packed. The line to Calvary and the empty tomb were out of the door. Beautiful, but it also reminded me of a catholic Disney World lines. 😊

I did get a chance to see the Eastern brothers come from the tomb and incense the stone and the cross etc. It was powerful.

A guy dressed like Jesus who at first glance looked ... um like one of the crazies from home...came over and followed the priests who anointed with oil and this Jesus guy touched his robe to each site, following the priest around, who saw him but paid him no mind, not a laugh, or anger, or a bow, or a get out of here crazy guy thing. The priest just did his thing and the Jesus guy did his.

I need to investigate that Jesus guy more - just seems um not part of a rite. Maybe he is Jerusalem version of local harmless crazy guy. Or just a strange part of the Orthodox rite. 😊

It was a longer walk as I got turned around a little to the temple security and back to the roads. But I got at St. Peter in Gallicantu, the High Priest House.

I always find this place powerful upon me. Jesus, totally alone, walked those steps- which are now in Rome. He got denied by his best friend, He was thrown into the cistern-dungeon while above, they plotted against Him. They woke up a few members of the Sanhedrin to make it look right. But was like 3 in the morning and Jesus was alone, wounded, hurt and scared.

But, then I also thought no one, except the disciples slept at all that night. They slept not only because of their weakness but also they were given that grace to sleep by Jesus as he must have seen that cohort of men with torches walking from this house to the mount of olives.

One can see it clearly from this house. He saw them coming, how could he miss one hundred guys with torches and yelling walking about two miles to him, getting closer every step. Jesus could have run but he chose in mercy, truth and love to stay. Bethany was just a mile up the road, he could have gotten away that night. He got away other days when the crowd turned ugly, but not that night; because in His love and

truth He knew this had to be this way. Now, I'm here in that church, in the cistern and I am hurt with him and I pray for that type of love for my people, his people. I pray for that type of courage and trust and mercy.

*No one slept that night,
Not Jesus ... they would not let him in that dungeon
...Not Mary
...Not John
...Not Peter
...Not the others
... Not even Pilates nor his wife, she had bad dreams
about Jesus and what would happen...
...Not the high priest or his father in law the- other-
high priests
... No one slept that night - except the apostles, for
that one brief hour of mercy.*



I did the walk a lot. I waked from St. Peter in Gallicantu to the church of the Agony. I used main roads and it was just me. It took me about 30 minutes. The roads are better now and I'm not a mob, as moving a group is hard at night when they are all angry would take about an hour I'm guessing.

And I prayed at the rock of Agony by the high altar. Groups kept coming in and out. They would come in, reverence the rock, and who wept at it and what it witnessed and some say the Our Father, others the Hail Mary, some sang in their languages.

It was a powerful witness of the power of devotion and prayer to move hearts and minds. I know, it moved mine...



