

## 6<sup>th</sup> SCRIPTURAL STATION - THE SCOURGING AND CROWNING OF JESUS

by Fr Robbie Low

(Mt 27 v 26-31. Mk. 15 v 15-20. Lk. 23 v16. Jn.19 v 1-3)

A soldier's view:

You can stand on the Pavement, The Gabbatha, the place where Pilate judged.

Just along the street, under the Convent of the Sisters of Zion. It's still there.

The Judgement is passed and the grisly procedure can begin.

We are in the Fortress Antonia. It's named by Herod the Great after his patron,

Marc Antony. Unlike Herod to back a losing horse. The Antonia guards the

Temple. The Priests even keep their vestments there. The Governor has his

quarters and the barracks adjoin. The punishment block is in the Praetorium.

In the bowels of the building the Christ is tied to a pillar and flogged. The

flogging is not with ordinary whips. The Romans are masters of cruelty. They

know how to make it hurt. The long thongs of the leather whips are studded

with lead. Each lash will not just raise wheels but bite into the flesh. Each blow

draws blood. Each swing of the muscular soldier's arms bores deep into the

taut skin and stretched muscle of the back. The aim is pain. The aim is

weakening. The aim is blood loss. The aim is humiliation and dizziness and

degradation. You cross the authority? This is the price. See what your

followers and fanatics think of your once glorious demeanour as we drag your

shattered shell to the gallows.

The Governor's instructions were clear. Lay it on with a trowel. We want it

over by sundown. Curtain down on this affair by dusk. There's enough to

manage in this bursting, pilgrim jammed city without night watches on the

scaffolds.

‘But, hey lads, word has it that this guy is not only a prophet but a king. What can we do to make this special. Peel what’s left of Him off the pillar and blindfold Him. My turn.....Hey Jesus, Jesus the prophet. Tell us who hit you? Hit Him a bit harder, I don’t think He heard the question. We don’t do dumb insolence here, your majesty. Ooh, even I felt that one. Next.

You’re not much of a prophet, buddy.

Get him up off the floor. Everybody gets a turn.’

‘We’ve got to get your majesty ready for the grand entrance. We’re a bit short of crowns down here and not too many of us are good at flower arranging.

Marcus, plait this. The last candidate wore it under his loincloth.

Uncomfortable or what? Now grab that old bit of purple curtain we put over the bloke who gave up during our previous bout of back tickling.

Your majesty.....I crown you King of Calvary.

Just press it down a bit firmer. That’s better.

We don’t want it slipping off in the Royal Parade do we?

There we are.

All together now lads, show a bit of respect.

Hail King Jesus ! And again, this time with feeling !

It is Jesus isn’t it? Somebody told me it means ‘God Saves’.

He’d better hurry up.

I don’t think this is your lucky day.

Not long to wait now your Royal Highness.

Ok lads, get this sorry son of a bitch upright and let’s get this show on the road.

That would be you, your Mickey Mouse Majesty.

You wait til you see your kingdom. It’s to die for.’