

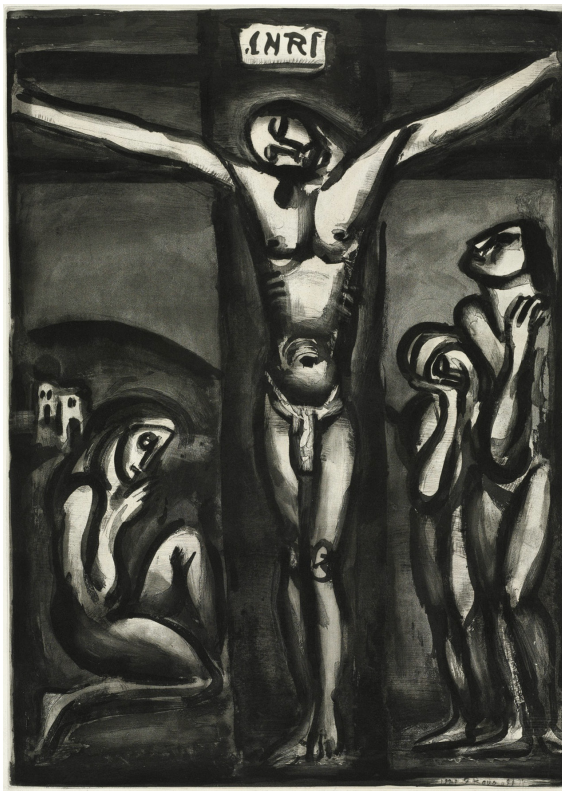
The Cross

Alexander Garklavs

*Ah, my dear Father, ease my smart!
These contrarities crush me: these cross actions
Do wind a rope about, and cut my heart:
And yet since these thy contradictions
Are properly a cross felt by thy Son,
With but four words, my words, "Thy will be done."
—George Herbert, "The Cross"*

You cannot think about the Cross on Good Friday,
The sadness is too great, why ponder
Spring, it fails its wonders,
Moments, lacking meaning, become motionless, intransigent,
Sun's light, heavily unsettled, surrenders to darkness, barren branches murmur,
"You're Undone!" A tomb is all, for men and man, and promises made
At the comforting table, to access hope at home, are severed;
Here the Cross accentuates the loss of youth and time, and comforts
With pure sorrow the hearts of seekers who discover the pain of truth.

Think rather of a cloudless day, perhaps in March, July, or May,
Of children playing, people laughing, old and young embracing,
Of schools and factories producing satisfactioned ease,
Where government is honored, and people nobly led,
No fears of wars or conflicts, no dreadful complications
Of progress gone berserk in frenzies of ambition,
Planetary spheres align, logic's perfect emblems,
The earth itself is crowned with angelic splendor,
This possible impossible; the Cross is there!



Georges Rouault,
*That Ye Love One An-
other* from *Miserere*,
1923, published 1948.

Or think of suns and moons colliding, and stars as poisoned drops
That leak the bile of demons unto people gone amuck,
Prayers are unanswered for fools who try to pray,
Some even go to extra length seven times a day,
Nights are here the standard, the time of rot's increase,
Where children with computers connect but have no peace,
But neither anxious planning or memories cause dismay,
For mankind found it can survive by simply saying, "I'm OK!"
Impossible? It's possible; the Cross is there!

So think of the Cross on a day in September,
Walking down an American street,
Think of everything that you can remember,
Of the people you've known and those you'll still meet,
Think of how you loved them, even if sometimes you needed to pretend,
The Cross is there, for you from God, and good news too, beginning without end. ✱



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