

CONSIDERATIONS
AND
DEVOUT MEDITATIONS

FOR EVERY DAY DURING THE
HOLY SEASON OF LENT.

WITH GOSPELS FOR THE SUNDAYS, &C.

BY A MEMBER OF THE
SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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DEVOUT MEDITATIONS

FOR LENT.



MEDITATION FOR ASH-WEDNESDAY.

ON EXTERIOR PENANCE AND MORTIFICATION.

1ST POINT. There is nothing more united and less united than the soul and body. When one advances, the other recoils ; when one rises, the other descends ; when one is in health, the other is sick ; when one is strong, the other is weak. It is necessary, then, in order to strengthen and give health to the soul, to bring the body under subjection, and weaken its evil propensities by penance and mortification.

I am not a man if I obey my passions ; I am not a Christian if I do not combat with and overcome my passions ; I am not a true penitent if I do not mortify my passions. Since my body is polluted by sin, it ought to be purified by

pain ; and since it has part in the pleasures of the soul, it ought to glory in sharing its sorrows.

2ND POINT. How do I know that my sins are forgiven ? How do I know that the pain which my offences merit is remitted ? How do I know that God will not punish me in my body ? How do I know that he will not chastise me in my soul ? How do I know that he will not regard me with coldness, and permit me to fall into some grievous sin ? How do I know that I shall be able to rise after falling therein ?

3RD POINT. If I spare myself, God will not spare me ; if I love myself, God will not love me ; if I hate myself, God will not hate me ; if I punish myself, God will not punish me ; if I excuse nothing in myself, God will pardon all ; if I excuse all things in myself, God will pardon nothing ; if I am indulgent to myself, God will be severe ; if I am austere and harsh with myself, God will be merciful.

Oh, Christian soul ! make your body a living and dying victim ; mortify your passions, your senses, and your desires ; mortify yourself at all times, and in all places ; mortify yourself with zeal, mortify yourself with discretion.

MEDITATION FOR THURSDAY AFTER
ASH-WEDNESDAY.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

1ST POINT. Make a free offering of your body to God, and he will impart to you his Spirit. Be watchful and careful in the discipline of your exterior, and he will guard and provide for the interior. Do all that you can, and that which you cannot accomplish he will do for you. Walk while you can, and when your strength fails you he will bear you in his arms. Fast with Jesus, that you may eat the Pasch with him.^a

2ND POINT. Fasting is salutary for both soul and body; it is an efficacious remedy for their diseases. Nothing is impossible to him who has faith; nothing is difficult to him who loves; all is possible to him who reposes his trust in God. Fast if you can, and persuade yourself that you can do more than you imagine yourself capable of. Fasting is blessed by God, consecrated by his Son, and observed by all the faithful. God imparts strength to those who fast, and deprives of strength those who do not. Good cheer and luxurious ease are destructive

to the health and life of all men ; fasting and abstinence are safe remedies which restore the health and prolong the lives of all who practise them. He who shall have lost his health and strength for Jesus Christ, shall recover all that he thinks he has lost. He who desires to preserve his body and health, to the prejudice of the interests of Jesus Christ, shall lose all that he hopes to gain.

3RD POINT. I will therefore chastise my body as the Apostles did, for fear of being found among the reprobates. I desire, with all my heart, to follow the example and imitate the life of Jesus Christ, that I may be of the number of the predestined. I will mortify my body, in order to remedy the maladies of my soul ; I will deprive it of the power of revolting, by fasting, which will impair its strength. I will mortify my senses, that I may live a spiritual life. I wish to die with Jesus, that I may rise with Jesus. I wish for stripes and wounds, that I may become a true member of his thorn-crowned head ; and if I have not courage to inflict them on myself, I will at least suffer with thankfulness whatever afflictions God may see fit, in his divine providence, to send me.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; for these are contrary one to another.”—*Galatians*, v.

“And they that are Christ’s have crucified their flesh, with its vices and concupiscences.”—*Ibid.*

“If you live according to the flesh, you shall die.”—*Romans*, viii.

“For the wisdom of the flesh is death ; but the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace.”—*Ibid.*

“Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.”—*Jeremias*, xvii.

MEDITATION FOR FRIDAY AFTER
ASH-WEDNESDAY.

ON THE EXCELLENCE OF MORTIFICATION.

1ST POINT. What is mortification ? It is a death of love which destroys the criminal life, detaches the mind from the senses, separates the soul from the body, and makes it live in the spirit.

It is a sacrifice of love, in which the Holy

Ghost is the priest, the body is the victim, the heart is the altar, pain the knife, love the fire, glory the fruit.

2ND POINT. What is mortification? It is a martyrdom of love, less bloody than a martyrdom of faith, but longer and more wearisome, more free, and (in one sense) more voluntary.

What is mortification? It is a continuation of the sacrifice of the passion of Jesus, which supplies all that is wanting in his sufferings; which transforms our bodies into members of his, and animates them with his divine spirit; which makes us participate in his sorrows, merit his graces, and finally exalts us to the throne of his glory.

3RD POINT. Why is it that I mortify myself so little? Alas! it is because I do not love Jesus Christ, and am not one of his members animated by his spirit; it is because I lead a sensual and carnal life, and despise and shrink from his sufferings; it is that I am the slave of my body, and seek only the pleasures of the flesh, and relish not those of the spirit, being worldly, sensual, voluptuous, and the enemy of God. Oh! in order that I may die the death of the just, I will henceforth live the life of the just; I will, from this moment, become a

victim of love, that I may die in the arms of divine love.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing unto God.”—*Romans*, xii.

“I die daily.”—1 *Corinthians*, xv.

“With Christ I am nailed to the cross.”—*Galatians*, ii.

“Who now rejoice in my sufferings, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh for his body, which is the Church.”—*Colossians*, i.

“Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, by Jesus Christ our Lord.”—*Romans*, vii.

MEDITATION FOR SATURDAY AFTER
ASH-WEDNESDAY.

ON THE OBLIGATIONS WE ARE UNDER TO MEDITATE ON THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

1ST POINT. The Son of God is well pleased when we reflect on the sorrows of his bitter

passion ; and we owe him this consolation, since it was for us that he suffered and yielded himself a willing victim to the justice of God, bearing in himself the punishment due for our sins. It was for this that he descended from the throne of his splendour at the right hand of the Father, and passed his life on earth in poverty, humiliation, and misery, "*Blotting out,*" says St. Paul, "*the handwriting of the decree that was against us, fastening it to his cross.*" We should, then, suffer with patience and joy, for the love of him, all pain, all distress, all injuries, which may overtake us. But he only asks us to come hither, and, at the foot of the cross, think of the love we owe him, and the excessive griefs he has suffered for our salvation. Is there anything more just ? Notwithstanding which, we occupy ourselves but little with such reflections. When they are presented to our minds, do we not think of them with lightness and frivolity, and without interest, attention, or grief ? The grandeurs, the vanities, and pleasures of the world, engross our thoughts, while the sorrows and pangs of Jesus are forgotten ! Can anything be more unjust ?

2ND POINT. There is nothing sweeter or more consoling, than to meditate on the passion of

Jesus, because it reveals to us the excess of his tender and compassionate love, and inspires us with a lively and strong hope, that God will pardon our sins, and be merciful to our infirmities. For the Son of God has satisfied the justice of God the Father ; he has transferred to us the treasures of his merits ; and we should glory more in the price he has given for us, than in all the blessings, graces, and joys, which we hope to obtain from his infinite goodness.

These are sweet reflections, and ought to fill our souls with consolation. What joy and pleasure ought we not to derive from the fountain of all grace, which is ever open and free for the refreshment of souls !

I have committed many and grievous sins ; my conscience is terrified ; but why should I be cast down or troubled, when I remember the wounds of my Saviour, and that it was for my sins that he received them ? “There are no wounds, however mortal,” says St. Bernard, “which may not be healed by the death of Jesus.”

3RD POINT. The remembrance of the passion of our Lord, is very useful to us in our spiritual warfare ; for it renders us victorious over our enemies, who are the world, the flesh, and the devil. The devil tempts us by despair or pre-

sumption : despair arises from ignorance of the mercy of God, who delivered his only Son to death for the salvation of sinners, and accepted his sufferings in payment of their debt. He revealed his justice in the rigorous treatment which he inflicted on his only, his most holy and innocent Son, who, wearing only the likeness of a sinner, and being clothed in the shadow of our transgressions, was obliged to submit to the weight of his anger, and suffer the penalty of our guilt.

The passion of Jesus enables us to obtain the victory over the world, which tempts us only by love and pleasure, fear and grief ; for who is there that can love pleasure, when they behold the Saviour of the world consumed by suffering ? Who can fear grief and pain, when they reflect that Jesus preferred them to all the splendour and felicity of paradise ?

The flesh is our most dangerous enemy ; it is that which tempts us both by love and fear ; but the passion of Jesus inspires us with horror for all that it loves, and with love for all that it hates and fears. When I see the body of my Saviour covered with wounds, I am constrained to cry out, with one of the saints, in accents of tender compunction, *Behold mine, without wounds !*

Oh, Saviour of my soul! is it surprising that I, who meditate so seldom on thy sacred passion, who shrink with horror from the contemplation of thy wondrous sufferings, who turn my eyes away from thy wounds, should yield to temptations when they assail me? But, from henceforth, I will establish my habitation on Calvary. There do I wish to live—there do I wish to die. Not on Thabor will I begin my Lent, but on this hill of grief. Here I will say, “It is good, O Lord, for me to be in this place.” Oh, spectacle full of profit and consolation, to behold a God expiring on a cross for the love of sinners!

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Think diligently upon him that endureth such opposition from sinners against himself, that you be not wearied, fainting in your minds.”—*Hebrews*, xii.

“O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.”—*Lamentations*, i.

“For I judged not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.”—*1 Corinthians*, ii.

“Forget not the kindness of thy surety, for he hath given his life for thee.”—*Eccles.* xxix.

“Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought.”
—1 *Peter*, iv.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE GOSPEL. *Matt.* iv. 1-11.

“At that time, Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards hungry. And the tempter coming, said to him : If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Who answered and said : It is written : Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil took him into the holy city, and set him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and said to him : If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down ; for it is written : He hath given his angels charge over thee ; and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said to him : It is written again : Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again the devil took him up into a very high mountain, and showed him all

the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and said to him : All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and adore me. Then Jesus said to him : Begone, Satan ; for it is written : The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil left him ; and, behold, angels came and ministered to him."

MEDITATION.

ON THE CAUSES OF TEMPTATION.

1ST POINT. Why did our Lord suffer himself to be tempted ? It was in order to vanquish our enemy, to teach us how to combat, to inspire us with courage, to animate us by his example, to humiliate the devil, who triumphed over Adam, to repair the sin of our first parents, and to raise them from their fallen condition, by giving their children power to triumph over the devil.

2ND POINT. Why am I tempted ? It is because you are proud, because you do not guard your senses, especially your eyes and ears, because you are under the dominion of bad habits, which hold correspondence with the devil ; it is, perhaps, because you are not in the

order, or state, in which God desires you to be, and have not followed your vocation ; it is that your heart is attached to creatures, or that you are not sufficiently occupied ; it is that you are a man, a sinful man and a Christian, and that you desire only happiness and consolation. For a man, being free, is not always determined to do good ; but the sinner, being a slave, is under the dominion of him who has conquered. The Christian, being a soldier, should never relax his warfare, or slumber at his post. If the righteous wish to be crowned, they must first be proved by temptation.

3RD POINT. Why has the devil tempted me ? Because he hates the image of God, which you bear in you ; because he is envious of man, and wishes him to be in his own place ; because he seeks to make you his slave and the companion of his pains. It is for this end that he desires to enter into your heart, which is the throne of God, to be adored therein ; strives to profane his temple and sanctuary ; wishes to drive Jesus Christ from his kingdom, which is in you ; wishes to crucify him anew, in your soul, and renew the ignominies of his passion. Do you not assist him in his malicious designs ? Do you not satisfy his

ambitious schemes? You do this as often as you yield assent to his temptations.

4TH POINT. Why does God suffer me to be tempted? For his glory and your good. He wishes to know if you truly love him; he wishes you to know yourself, and to make you sensible of your infirmities, and constrain you to have recourse to him; he wishes to prove your virtue, to hold you in dependence on him, to prepare you for combat, detach you from creatures, and render you worthy of eternal life.

Oh, Jesus, Saviour of my soul! since thou hast been tempted, I am no longer astonished that I also suffer temptations. It is good for me to know thee and know myself. Temptation is necessary and salutary for me, because it renders me humble, and prevents me from being presumptuous. Let me be tempted, then, my God, and prove me to see if there is any iniquity in me. Oh, no, my God, do not tempt me; I know my miseries too well! Deliver me speedily from temptation, at least strengthen me against its assaults, and give me courage to vanquish it. Satan aims at thee as well as at thy servant. Defend thyself and thy interests, therefore, in me, against thy enemy and mine.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“God tempted Abraham.”—*Genesis*, xxii.

“Fear not; for God is come to prove you.”
—*Exodus*, xx.

“Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart?”—*Acts*, v.

“God hath tried them, and found them worthy of himself.”—*Wisdom*, iii.

“As gold in the furnace he hath proved them.”—*Ibid.*

MEDITATION FOR FIRST MONDAY IN LENT.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD IN GENERAL.

1ST POINT. Jesus is the true Son of God. He is the holiest of men, the greatest of kings, the faithfulest of friends. He never injures any, but does good to all. And all the world have conspired against him, all the world have persecuted him. As he suffered *for* all men, so all men have made him suffer. Men and women of all ranks have contributed to his passion. Jews, Gentiles, priests, kings, soldiers, and people, men and women, and his own disciples even, have all put a hand to his cross, and added

to his miseries. Are you not of the number ? are you not the most cruel of his persecutors ?

2ND POINT. Jesus suffered every description of evil in his soul and body, mind and heart, memory and imagination, his honour and goods, his parents and friends ; in his senses and in all his limbs ! He was a *man of sorrows*, and I wish to be devoted to sensual pleasures ! He suffered from all the world, and I wish to suffer from none ! He suffered all imaginable evils, and I wish to suffer none ! He suffered the worst of evils, and I wish for those only which are light ! He suffered voluntarily, I suffer only what I cannot avoid !

3RD POINT. Oh, my sweet Jesus ! thy holy passion fills me with grief and confusion. It is a great source of grief to me to behold thee suffering for me ! It is a source of great confusion to me not to be able to suffer for thee ! Give me grace, at least, to suffer ordinary evils with patience, and, by thy divine aid, render me capable of supporting, from day to day, those more weighty and grievous afflictions which may visit me, and through which, as a fiery ordeal, I must pass.

MEDITATION FOR FIRST TUESDAY IN
LENT.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

1ST POINT. Jesus is the victim of all time and of all men ; the victim of sinners and of the just. As he has loaded himself with all our crimes, he has crowned himself with all our sufferings ! As there are none of his creatures whom he has not loved, there are none for whom he has not suffered. But he suffered principally for myself, as he bestows more graces on me than on others, which are the fruits of his sufferings. He has ever held me in remembrance, and I never think of him ! I do not love him, or desire to suffer for his sake.

2ND POINT. Why did Jesus die ? Why did he desire the unspeakable anguish and misery that he endured ? Alas ! he died to return to me the life which I lost through sin ; he rendered himself miserable to secure for me an eternal felicity ; he delivered himself to the power of his enemies to deliver me from mine ! He did not question the judgment of Pilate, he did not work miracles as he might have done, to deliver himself from their hands. He was crucified

throughout his life. His heart was transfixed to the cross with his body. The greatest of all his sufferings was in not suffering ; it was his chief desire to be baptized in his own blood, to drain the chalice of his passion, and die.

Oh, sweetest Jesus ! thou wert not displeased with thy enemies for doing that which thou didst so much desire, and which enabled thee to suffer without measure. It was only their sins and malice which diminished thy satisfaction, and added to thy griefs. The torments which they inflicted on thee cannot be surpassed in cruelty, nor could they make thee suffer more. They loaded thee with opprobriums and ignominy, and treated thee as the most miserable of all slaves, and the most abandoned of all men. Couldst thou have suffered more than thou didst suffer, or die in more cruel agonies than thou didst ?

3RD POINT. And I avoid all suffering and mortification, and would even escape death. I wish to live surrounded by delights and enjoyments, when, if justice were awarded me, I should at this moment be suffering all the pains of hell. Where is it that I do not find examples of thy goodness and tender mercy ? Where is it that I do not discover my own malice and

presumption? Where is it that my ingratitude is not apparent?

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporally.”—*Colossians*, ii.

“And Christ died for all.”—*2 Corinthians*, v.

“Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us.”—*Galatians*, i.

“And I have a baptism, wherewith I am to be baptized: and how I am straitened until it is accomplished?”—*St. Luke*, xii.

“From the sole of his foot to the top of his head, there is no soundness therein: wounds and bruises and swelling sores: they are not bound up, nor dressed, nor fomented with oil.”—*Isaias*, i.

MEDITATION FOR FIRST WEDNESDAY
IN LENT.

JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES.

1ST POINT. *Jesus is sorrowful even unto death.*
What is the cause of his sadness? Is it the foreknowledge of all that he is to suffer? Alas, no! it is the sight of my sins, my ingratitude, my misery! I laugh at those things which

should cause me to weep! I take pleasure in that which ought to render me miserable! He has compassion on me, and I have none on him.

2ND POINT. He is seized with fear to prove that he is man, that he is human and infirm like myself. He has divested himself of his strength, and clothed himself with my weakness; he has given me his courage, and taken my timidity; he trembles to assure me, fears to encourage me, falls to raise me! Oh, what goodness! what charity! Where can we find a physician who is willing to give his health and strength to his patients in exchange for their maladies and feebleness? Oh! *surely, he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows.*

3RD POINT. Pleasure and grief constitute the causes of the sins of men; desire and fear their passions. Jesus has vanquished these two enemies, and imparted to us his strength, that we also may vanquish them. He has abstained from all pleasure, suffered all griefs, renounced all the desires of nature, triumphed over all fears; sweat blood and water from all his veins, and contended even unto death.

MEDITATION FOR FIRST THURSDAY
IN LENT.

ON THE BLOODY SWEAT.

1ST POINT. Consider, my soul, how rude was this first shock of his sacred passion to our divine Saviour! Behold him kneeling, bathed in his own blood, which oozes from every pore. It is the fear of his approaching torments; it is the horror inspired by your crimes, and the desire for your salvation, which excites this intolerable combat in his sacred heart. He has concentrated in himself all the iniquities of the human race, and conceived for them so great a sorrow, that he must have expired had not his life been preserved by a miracle. He wrought miracles that he might suffer, but none to exempt himself from suffering. And I am impatient, because God does not constantly interpose miracles to exempt me from suffering and dying.

2ND POINT. Oh, Saviour of my soul! this first combat of thine has been a bloody and fearful one! What pains it cost thee to dissipate, by the violence of thy sorrow, the multitude of our crimes, which thou hadst before

thine eyes ! I was with Judas in the Garden of Gethsemani to seize thee ! I was in thy sacred heart to afflict thee ! My sins were in the world before my birth ; they strengthened the arms of the Jews to strike and buffet thee ; and delivered thee to thy enemies, who tormented thee with malicious ingenuity, and afterwards crucified thee !

3RD POINT. Oh, divine Master ! thou hast given to the world most noble and beautiful examples, but no one desires to imitate them ; thou hast taught us the most perfect lessons, but no one desires to learn them ; thou goest first to the conflict, but none follow thee. Thy disciples have basely abandoned thee ; they sleep while thou dost watch ; they enjoy repose while thou art engaged in a bitter warfare ; they afflict instead of consoling thee ; they betray instead of delivering thee !

Oh, what confusion overwhelms me ! Jesus overcomes all the alarms and infirmities of nature, clothed as he was with the weakness of man, and I yield to them, although I am sustained by the strength of God ; he goes generously to the conflict with my timidity, and I, who am endowed with his courage, fly !

Oh, precious blood, which watered and bathed

this ungrateful earth, warm my cold heart, water my arid soul, strengthen my spirit, and raise up my fallen courage ! I wish to enter the combat with a firm resolution to overcome and resist the rebellious movements of nature, even unto the shedding of blood. I will, by the grace and in the strength of God, triumph over my flesh, and subject my spirit to divine charity. I will maintain the warfare, until, like thee, I sweat blood and water. Like thee will I suffer, and drink the chalice of thy bitterness unto death.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“The chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?”—*St. John*, xviii.

“He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad. Then he saith to them : My soul is sorrowful even unto death : stay you here, and watch with me.”—*St. Matt.* xxvi.

“And his sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground.”—*St. Luke*, xxi.

“Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows.”—*Isaias*, liii.

**MEDITATION FOR FIRST FRIDAY IN
LENT.****THE PRAYER OF JESUS IN THE GARDEN.**

1ST POINT. Jesus, in his sadness, withdraws himself from his disciples, for the purpose of praying to God his Father to remove from his lips the bitter cup of his passion. He prays with reverence, prostrating himself before him. He prays with perseverance for several hours. He prays with resignation to the divine will of God his Father. He prays, and is not favourably heard, that we may learn to pray and be resigned.

2ND POINT. Oh, sweet and tender Jesus! thou didst not desire to receive a consoling answer to thy prayers, that we might prevail in ours. Thou didst not obtain favour for thyself, but secured it for me. I am heard favourably when I pray, but he was not. He could have commanded legions of angels to come to his assistance, but he did not invoke their presence, because he wished to die and shed his blood for our salvation. What charity! what compassion! what mercy!

3RD POINT. Pray in your afflictions. Pray

that God may remove them from you ; pray with humility ; pray with constancy and perseverance ; pray with resignation ; pray with conformity to the will of God. Weary not in prayer, and murmur not if you are not heard.

Propose to yourself all those subjects of fear and sadness which distress you, and present them to Jesus, saying : My Lord and my Saviour, behold this chalice of confusion which thou hast presented to me to drink ; remove it far from my lips, for it is extremely bitter ; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done. Father of mercies ! behold a chalice of grief prepared for me ! Father of the poor ! behold a chalice of poverty, presented to me by thy divine providence ! Must I drain it ? Wilt thou not in pity remove it ? I pray thee, O my God, to dispense me from this bitter draught ; yet not my will but thine be done.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ And going a little further, he fell on his face, praying, and saying : My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou *wilt*.”—*St. Matt. xxvi.*

“ My Father, if this chalice may not pass

away, but I must drink it, thy will be done."
—*Ibid.*

"Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee : take away this chalice from me : but not what I will, but what thou wilt."—*St. Mark*, xiv.

"O my God, I shall cry by day, and thou wilt not hear ; and by night, and it shall not be reputed as folly in me."—*Psalm* xxi.

MEDITATION FOR FIRST SATURDAY IN LENT.

THE DOLOURS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

1ST POINT. *O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow.* Mary's sorrows are measured by her love. Those who love much, suffer in proportion to their love. They who have but little love, know but little suffering. The holy Virgin loved her divine Son with a tender affection, which surpassed that of all other mothers for theirs, because he was the most amiable of the children of men ; and she loved him by nature, knowledge, and grace.

He was her only Son, whom she shared with no father. She had conceived him by the operation of the Holy Ghost, who is the spirit of divine

love, and who united them together by an indissoluble chain of love and sympathy. This Son resembled her in holiness, purity, and perfection. She had received infinite graces from him, and thus with her natural love was united a love of gratitude, a love of sympathy, and a love of charity. She loved him as God and as man ; as her Father and her Son ; as her Creator and Redeemer. There never existed any creature so amiable as Jesus ; there never has been known love comparable to Mary's, which was better, more tender and perfect, than the love of all mothers who have ever lived.

2ND POINT. Her grief was measured and augmented by the prophetic knowledge she had of all that he was to suffer. Not only had the Prophets foretold his passion and death, but he, also, had discoursed with her, and instructed her concerning them. It was all—the ignominy, the buffeting, the scourging, the bloody sweat, the spitting, the cross, the spear—apparent to her from the hour of his birth. She meditated on the griefs which awaited her divine Son, and examined in her thoughts all the circumstances attendant thereon. Consider the anguish of this most afflicted and tender mother, when her Son separated himself from her, and bade her a

last adieu ! As the Son and the mother had but one and the same heart, she felt all that he endured. The wounds which were inflicted on his body, were imprinted on her sacred heart. What a spectacle ! A Son expiring on a cross, and a mother standing by, the mute and agonized witness of his sufferings ! *O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow.*

3RD POINT. Admire the virtues of the most holy Virgin. What resignation to the will of God does she not exhibit amidst so many afflictions and sorrows ! What humility, to follow her Son to the place of suffering and ignominy, and wish to be recognized by all the world as his mother ! What courage, to behold him expiring, without evincing the least sign of impatience, without allowing herself to be bowed down by her grief, but to remain standing by his cross ! What charity, to consent to the death of a Child so dear to her soul, to satisfy his will and desire ! What love for men, to immolate her Son on this bloody altar, for their salvation !

Oh, Mother of grace and mercy ! since thou hast loved me so much as to deliver thy only Son to the painful and ignominious death of the

cross, I will love and serve thee all the days of my life ; I will offer thee only praise and benedictions all my life ; I will, by thy most holy example, make a continual sacrifice to God of all that I hold most dear to me ; I will endeavour to imitate thy virtues, of which I will make a chaplet, to crown my heart continually with, in thy honour.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his Mother.”—*St. John*, xix.

“ And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed.”—*St. Luke*, ii.

“ For my sighs are many, and my heart is sorrowful.—*Lamentations*, ii. Thau.

“ Woman, behold thy Son. After that he saith to the disciple : Behold thy Mother.”—*St. John*, xix.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE GOSPEL. *St. Matt.* xvii. 1-9.

“ At that time, Jesus taketh unto him Peter and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart. And he

was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as snow. And, behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then Peter, answering, said to Jesus: Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us here make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias. And as he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And, lo! a voice out of the cloud saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And the disciples, hearing, fell upon their face, and were very much afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said to them: Arise, and be not afraid. And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one, but only Jesus. And as they came down from the mountain Jesus charged them, saying: Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of Man be risen from the dead."

MEDITATION.

ON THE TRANSFIGURATION.

1ST POINT. Jesus is transfigured on Thabor, on Calvary, and on our altars. The first is a transfiguration of glory; the second of ignominy;

the third of love. To be transfigured with Jesus on Thabor, we must be transfigured with him on Calvary. If you suffer with him, you shall reign with him ; if you take part in his ignominies, you shall also have part in his glory.

2ND POINT. The third transfiguration is that of the body of Jesus on our altars. His vestments there are as white as snow, and his face a thousand times brighter than the sun ; but it is covered with a cloud or veil, for what human eye could support the ineffable splendour of his countenance ? It is here that Moses and Elias, that is, the will and understanding, converse together with him of all the extremes of love and grief that he suffered for us in Jerusalem, since this divine mystery represents the sacrifice of his bitter passion and death, and was instituted by him as a commemoration thereof.

3RD POINT. The fourth transfiguration is that which takes place in holy communion ; wherein a man is transformed into Jesus Christ. He is no longer a man, but a God ; no longer a sinner, but a child of God. The eternal Father regards him with complacency, and salutes him, as he did his divine Son on Thabor : “ *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” He who was before a sinner, being clothed in the real

presence of the body and divinity of Jesus, is thereby rendered holy and just ! They are one body, and one spirit ; they are two united in one flesh. Let your lives, then, correspond with the great privilege you enjoy, of being transformed into Jesus. Let your thoughts be the thoughts of Jesus, your words be the words of Jesus ; that God the Father, beholding you, may say : *“ This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

4TH POINT. The fifth transfiguration is that of a soul in prayer. His heart burns with a celestial flame. Moses and Elias, the law and the prophets, converse with him of the passion of Jesus. The powers of his soul, filled with the sweet rest of contemplation, cry out with ecstasy : It is good, O Lord, for us to be here ; here let us remain always. I have had great difficulty in ascending the height, I have not spared myself in the exercise of mortification ; and I have, through many toils, prepared my spirit by meditation ; but the labour, the sweat, and the pains are forgotten in my present happiness, and in the extreme repose that I enjoy.

5TH POINT. The last transfiguration is that of happy souls in heaven. *“ When we behold God,”* says St. John, *“ we shall be like him.”* When,

after the sufferings of this life, we shall have been received into the glorious company of those who reign on this beautiful Thabor, our eternal and joyful song shall be : “ *Oh, it is good for us to be here !*” There is nothing left me to wish for. I have found an everlasting rest. I have received a glorious recompense for my poor labours. But, Christian soul, while you are waiting to sing this beautiful canticle in heaven, be contented, wherever God may place you on earth. In whatever state you may be, *it is good for you to be therein*, since God has placed you there ; whether it be in poverty, sickness, humiliations, or confusion, Jesus is with you, and will remain with you, if you do his holy will.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ But we all, beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.”—*2 Corinthians*, iii.

“ We are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also : heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs with CHRIST : yet so if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him.”—*Romans*, viii.

“ If so be you have tasted that the Lord is sweet.”—*1 Peter*, ii.

“Thou art beautiful, O my love, sweet and comely as Jerusalem.”—*Canticles*, vi.

“But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.”—1 *Corinthians*, vi.

“How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord.”—*Psalms* lxxxiii.

MEDITATION FOR SECOND MONDAY IN LENT.

ON THE TREASON OF JUDAS.

1ST POINT. Judas was an avaricious, ungrateful, deceitful, and impious man. He was instigated by avarice to sell his divine Master. An avaricious man is ready to sell his soul and his God for silver. What ingratitude, to betray and deliver to his enemies, him from whom he had received so many blessings! What treachery, to betray him with a kiss! What impiety and sacrilege, to sell, for vile and filthy lucre, the most holy and sacred being on earth!

2ND POINT. An inordinate love of money caused Judas the eternal loss of his soul. This passion stifled his faith, hope, and charity. It

obscured his spirit and debauched his heart. It destroyed all those sentiments of piety which had been imparted to him by the presence of Jesus, by his conversation, examples, miracles, and graces. Who will not tremble, when they remember that an Apostle became an apostate? Who will not fear, when they behold a pillar of the Church overthrown and dashed to pieces? Who will dare assure themselves of salvation, when they reflect that a man chosen by God himself was transformed into a demon, and precipitated into hell?

Presume not on your graces; Judas had received more than you have. Presume not on your inspirations; Judas was more enlightened than you. Presume not on your miracles; Judas wrought more than you have done. Presume not on your strength; Judas possessed a greater and more sensible protection than you do. Presume not on your election; Judas was chosen by God himself. Presume not on the signs of your predestination; those of Judas were more apparent than yours.

3RD POINT. Judas was damned. Why? Because he allowed himself to be possessed of an infernal passion; because he did not destroy it in its birth; because he did not generously

resist its first assaults ; because in the beginning he was guilty of little frauds and light infidelities, which became great because he was envious of the spiritual blessings of his fellow-creatures ; because he concealed his avarice with a veil of pretended charity ; because he did not conceive a true repentance for his sins, but abandoned himself to despair.

Oh, it is a dangerous thing to abandon one's self to an evil passion ! Oh, how *little sins* should make us tremble ! Oh, these light infidelities are formidable enemies, and throw us into great disorder ! Oh, there are many Judases in the world, who every day betray Jesus with a kiss, which they give him at the holy table ! How often have you betrayed him ? How many times have you not sold him to the devil for a little pleasure, a vile interest, an imaginary glory ? Do not despair as he did, but reject the offered price ; return to his sweet society, and attach yourself more strongly to your divine Master, who would, in his tender compassion, even have given his grace to Judas, if he had acknowledged his sin and implored his forgiveness.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Friend, whereto art thou come?”—*St. Matt. xxvi.*

“Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?”—*St. Luke, xxii.*

“He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.”—*St. Matt. xxvi.*

“There is not a more wicked thing than to love money: for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale.”—*Eccles. x.*

“The eye of the covetous man is insatiable in his portion of iniquity: he will not be satisfied till he consume his own soul.”—*Ecclesiasticus, xiv.*

“For they that will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snares of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition.”—*1 Timothy, vi.*

MEDITATION FOR SECOND TUESDAY
IN LENT.

ON THE COURAGE OF JESUS AFTER HIS PRAYER
IN THE GARDEN.

1ST POINT. Jesus, desolate and full of extreme anguish, arose from prayer to seek some kind friend who would sympathize in his sor-

rows, and administer consolation to his afflicted spirit, but there was none to whom he could address himself. He approached his disciples, but they were sleeping : he then returned, and again had recourse to prayer, but received no response from his eternal Father. Restless in his agony, he came once more to his disciples and said : "*What ! could ye not watch one hour with me ? Watch ye and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*" Is it not to you, Christian soul, that these complaints and reproaches are addressed ? Do you not sleep when you should watch and pray ? Are you not afraid that you will fall into temptation ?

2ND POINT. Jesus prays the third time, and is not heard. Then, falling into extreme agony, God his Father sent an angel to strengthen and console him. Learn from this to despise the consolations of men, and have recourse to God in all your afflictions ; to pray to him in fears and doubts, and implore his succour and protection in dangers. Prayer is the best remedy for a soul that is sick, a sweet consolation for the afflicted, strength for the weak, courage for the timid, light for the blind, refuge for sinners, the buckler of faith, the life, nourishment, treasure,

and salvation of all Christians. Why is it, then, that you pray so little? why is it that you abandon prayer, and pray with so little fervour and so many distractions?

3RD POINT. Jesus, strengthened by prayer, came to his disciples, and said to them: "*Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go: behold, he is at hand that will betray me.*" Whence obtained he this courage? Through prayer. Imitate your Master; accompany your King; follow your Captain. When it is necessary to resist a temptation, or vanquish a repugnance of nature, say to your base and sleepy heart: Rise, and let us go to death or to prison, go to be reconciled with those whom we have offended, and assure those who have injured us of forgiveness; rise, ye who sleep, and Jesus Christ will enlighten you, strengthen you, defend you, render you victorious over your enemies, and crown you with glory after death.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

"In the day of my trouble I sought God, with my hands lifted up to him in the night: and I was not deceived."—*Psalm lxxxvi.*

“Behold, there is no help for me in myself, and my familiar friends also are departed from me.”—*Job*, vi.

“Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch one hour.”—*Mark*, xiv.

“Behold, he is at hand that will betray me.”—*Matt.* xxvi.

MEDITATION FOR SECOND WEDNESDAY IN LENT.

JESUS IS TAKEN BY HIS ENEMIES.

1ST POINT. Jesus, addressing the soldiers, said: *Whom seek ye?* They replied, *Jesus of Nazareth!* There are some who, like the Jews, only seek Jesus to take him, outrage, and crucify him. There are others who seek him only to love and serve him, but the number is small. Whom do you seek in your designs, your devotions, and prayers? Is it Jesus or yourself? Is it his honour and glory, or your own? Oh, if you seek God with a pure heart, your happiness and contentment will abound until the measure of your joy is filled to overflowing! All of your troubles, anxieties, and doubts arise from your seeking *yourself* instead of the will and glory of your heavenly Father.

I have sought him, but I have not found him. Why is this? It is because you do not seek him at the proper time or place. You seek him in the garden of delights, and he is only to be found in the field of conflicts and sorrows, where he sweats great drops of blood and water. You seek him in palaces, and he is only to be found in a stable, in the temple, or on the cross. You seek him after he has stood knocking for a long time at the door of your heart, but it is too late; he grew weary of waiting; his locks were heavy with the dews of night, and he has gone away. You seek him coldly and with indifference. He is strong and swift as a giant: it is necessary to run that you may overtake him.

2ND POINT. Jesus said to the soldiers, *I am he*, and *they went backwards and fell to the ground*. What a Captain! who maketh his enemies fall to the earth by a single word! What will be his power when he comes to judge them, if he is so powerful when they come to judge him? Oh, how terrible it will be to the wicked at the hour of death, to hear him say *I am he* whom you have betrayed, outraged, and crucified! But how full of sweetness and consolation he will be to the just, who, having lived piously, are received by him after death with these welcome

words : Fear not, *I am he* who redeemed you; *I am he* whom you have served, honoured, and obeyed!

Fear not, he will say to you in your temptations, *I am he* who has proved you, visited you, and sent this or that affliction to try you, and I will deliver you.

3RD POINT. The just fall as well as the wicked, but in a different manner. The just fall into venial sins, the wicked into mortal sins. The just fall through surprise and frailty, and the wicked through premeditation and malice. The just fall forward on their faces as the Apostles did on Mount Thabor, the wicked fall backwards like the Jews in Gethsemani. The just know wherein they fall, and quickly raise themselves; but the wicked know not when they fall, and fear to rise, or think it too difficult and troublesome a task to do so.

Oh, my soul, what do you seek? Is it Jesus of Nazareth? Behold your divine Master in the hands of the soldiers, who bind him with thongs, buffet him, and treat him with violence! Do not abandon him in his desolation as the other disciples did, but remain with him even unto the end. They said, at the Last Supper, that they would never abandon him, but go with him to

prison and to death; notwithstanding which, they basely forsook him when he was seized by his enemies. Do you not often act thus? What pious and tender protestations have you not made to him in holy communion, and yet how frequently have you not betrayed and abandoned him in the hour of temptation!

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Whom seek ye?”—*St. John*, xviii.

“You shall seek me, and you shall die in your sins.”—*St. John*, viii.

“I sought him, and found him not.”—*Canticles*, iii.

“As soon, therefore, as he said: *I am he*: they went backward, and fell to the ground.”—*St. John*, xviii.

MEDITATION FOR SECOND THURSDAY IN LENT.

ON THE BLOW THAT JESUS RECEIVED IN THE
PRESENCE OF THE HIGH PRIEST.

1ST POINT. What greater insult can be offered to a noble or royal personage, than to strike them? Jesus is a person of infinite dignity,

and he received a blow from the hand of a poor insolent slave, who had come with the Jews into the garden of Olives, and, being wounded by one of the disciples, was cured by his divine power. He received it in a great assemblage, composed of the priests and princes of the people. He received it in the manner of a correction, as if he had committed some grievous fault, and been wanting in proper respect to the high priest. He received it with extreme patience. He asked why he was struck, lest by his silence he should give them cause to believe that he consented to their accusations, and acknowledged himself guilty.

2ND POINT. Jesus desired to be struck : 1st. To repair the insult offered to God by the first man who disobeyed his word, and in a manner contradicted him. 2nd. To repair, by his ignominies, the shame and confusion of our nature, which was transformed by the sin of Adam into a degraded and sensual one, as he repaired our infirmities by his weakness, and delivered us from the sting of death by dying. 3rd. To afford us an admirable example of sweetness and patience, by suffering so great an outrage without uttering a threat against his enemies, or drawing vengeance on them as he could have done.

3RD POINT. You have enemies. What injury have they done you? Is it comparable to that which was inflicted on the Son of God? Are you of more account, more innocent and holy, than he is? How many sins have you committed? As often as you have sinned, so often have you struck Jesus. And do you presume, after this, to complain of the ill-treatment you received from men who are your equals and superiors? Do you desire to be revenged on your enemies? to return evil for evil? Do you dare to murmur against the providence of God, who has given you a blow on the cheek by the hand of the wicked, in punishment for the outrages you have offered him?

O Lord, I will say nothing, but keep silence, believing that it is thou who hast struck me by the hands of my enemies. Thou dost neither desire their sin, nor co-operate therein; but it is thy will that I should suffer the pain that I have merited by mine. It is not Satan who has caused me to suffer this loss; it is not men who have outraged me; it is the hand of God that has chastised me. Oh! I will submissively bear the weight of his anger, because my offences deserve it. I will be silent, and not complain, because thou, O Lord, hast afflicted and humi-

liated me.' I turn to thee my other cheek, and beseech thee to spare me not in this life, that I may receive pardon in the life to come.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

"I was dumb, and was humbled, and kept silence from good things: and my sorrow was renewed."—*Psalm xxxviii.*

"I was dumb, and I opened not my mouth, because thou hast done it."—*Ibid.*

"The hand of the Lord hath touched me."—*Job, xix.*

"He shall give his cheek to him that striketh him: he shall be filled with reproaches."—*Lamentations, iii.*

"My enemies have chased me, and caught me like a bird, without cause."—*Ibid.*



MEDITATION FOR SECOND FRIDAY IN LENT.

ON THE OUTRAGES THAT OUR LORD RECEIVED IN THE HOUSE OF CAIPHAS.

1ST POINT. Consider the outrages and insults our Lord submitted to from his enemies, in the house of Caiphas. He was spit upon; he was

blindfolded ; he was treated as a false prophet ; he was declared a blasphemer, and judged worthy of death.

You do the same whenever you offend God. You repeat these outrages whenever you offend or scandalize your neighbour. Jesus Christ declares that he suffers whatever evil is done to the least of his disciples, as the head feels whatever injury is inflicted on the smallest member of the body. It is, then, striking Jesus Christ to strike your neighbour ; it is hating Jesus Christ to hate your neighbour ; it is scoffing at Jesus Christ to scoff at your neighbour.

2ND POINT. Suffer, like Jesus, the most injurious words that may be said to you. Suffer, with Jesus, all outrages that are offered to you. Are you greater than he is ? Are you more holy and innocent than he is ? Jesus suffered, and you would escape suffering ! Jesus did not take revenge on his enemies, and you seek revenge on yours !

3RD POINT. Oh, Jesus my Saviour ! do I not deserve to be despised and maltreated by creatures, since I have had the insolence to despise and maltreat thee ? I deservedly merit their blows, since I have so often raised my hand against thee ! I hear thee declared guilty, and I

wish to be thought innocent ! I behold thee unjustly condemned to death, and I shrink, with pain, from the thought of dying ! Oh, my sweet Saviour, I wish to die for thee, since thou hast given thy life for me ! I will bear with patience the injurious words and actions of those who hate me, since thou hast suffered the most base and malicious treatment for me.

Oh, dear Jesus ! silence me when I complain of the malice of those who desire to harm me ; restrain me when angry impulses urge me to speak. When I have offended or injured my neighbour, say to me : Why do you strike me ? Why do you dishonour me ? I hold as done to myself, that which is done to the least of my members.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ One of the servants standing by gave Jesus a blow.”—*St. John*, xviii.

“ Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him ; and others struck his face with the palms of their hands.”—*St. Matt.* xxvi.

“ Why strikest thou me ? ”—*St. John*, xviii.

“ He shall sit solitary, and hold his peace ; because he hath taken it up upon himself.”—*Lamentations*, iii.

MEDITATION FOR SECOND SATURDAY
IN LENT.

ON THE SEVEN STATIONS OF OUR LORD'S
PASSION.

FIRST STATION.

Oh, Jesus my Saviour! thou didst sweat blood and water in the garden of Olives, at the sight of my sins and thy approaching torments, and strip thyself of thy strength to assume our infirmities! I adore thee, all bathed as thou art in thy sacred blood. I thank thy most tender and sacred heart, for being thus afflicted for me; I detest all sins that have caused thee so much sadness and bitter anguish; and I am resolved rather to die than offend thee again. Give me grace to conceive, like thee, so poignant a sorrow for my sins, that I may resist, even unto death, the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and that, in all things, I may conform to the will of thy Father, howsoever my nature may be opposed to it.

SECOND STATION.

Oh, Jesus my Lord! thou hast been struck and maltreated in the house of Caiphas. I

Thank and adore thee for having suffered these injuries, and this confusion for me. Alas! how often have I not struck and outraged thee in the person of my neighbour! I most humbly beseech thy pardon, and am resolved, from henceforth, to bear all injuries with patience, and offend thee no more in this way, by thought, judgment, word, will, or action.

THIRD STATION.

Oh, Jesus my King! Herod and the Jews despised thee, when they preferred a thief, a seditious man, and a murderer, to thee. Vouchsafe to grant me thy forgiveness, for having so often preferred the suggestions of the devil, and the love of miserable creatures, to thyself. Thou shalt ever reign the sovereign of my heart, and I am resolved to lose my life, my possessions and reputation, rather than offend or dishonour thee. Forbid, dear Lord, that I should ever again prefer the enemy of souls to thee; and grant me grace to fly from every occasion of sin that would cause me to treat thee with contempt, and trample under foot the fruits of thy sacred passion.

FOURTH STATION.

Oh, Jesus, the most chaste and pure of all men! whose innocent flesh was torn with scourges in the house of Pilate, in order to expiate the criminal pleasures we take in ours; I know it is for me thou hast suffered these cruel torments. I am filled with sorrow when I behold those wounds, which have been inflicted on thee by the indulgence of my sensuality. I implore thee, by the pangs of thy bitter passion, to sanctify me, both soul and body; wash and cleanse me of every impurity in thy precious blood, and never permit me again to be soiled by sin, or renew thy ignominies by my guilt.

FIFTH STATION.

Oh, Jesus, the greatest of kings! thou hast been crowned with thorns, and borne on thy shoulders the royal marks of thy principality, and I acknowledge and adore thee as my Lord and Sovereign. And since there is no part of thy body that is not covered with wounds, I desire to take no pleasure in mine, but to live always in a state of mortification and grief, in order to be a living member and true subject of thine.

SIXTH STATION.

Oh, Jesus my Saviour! for me thou wast fastened to the cross, whereon thou didst shed every drop of thy precious blood, to deliver me from the power of the devil, whose slave I was. I thank thee for the incomparable love thou hast borne me, and for the innumerable sufferings thou hast endured. With tender awe I salute thy wounded hands and feet. I adore thy sacred heart, which was opened for the love of me, and I am resolved sooner to die than to crucify thee again by mortal sin.

SEVENTH STATION.

Oh, Jesus, my life and my hope! who didst die for me, and was abandoned in thy last hour, that I may not be abandoned in mine! Oh, Lamb without blemish, who wast immolated for the salvation of men! Oh, Victim of love, who wast consumed in a funereal pile of grief! Oh, Holy of holies! Oh, King of kings! What can I do to express my gratitude for such infinite goodness? I can only die for him who died for me.

I believe that thou art indeed my Saviour: I should despair, if I were to doubt it for a

moment. As thou hast given thy life for me, I will humbly hope thou wilt forgive all my sins, and admit me after death into thy glorious presence. I detest my crimes, the cause of thy passion and death. I will, from this moment, suffer all things with patience, that thou mayst never die in my heart, since such a death would be more sensibly felt by thee, and be more ignominious than that of the cross. I beseech thee to pardon all who have offended me. I offer myself to thy holy Mother as her child, and desire, with all my heart, to imitate her virtues, and die in her arms. Into thy hands I commend my spirit, and beseech thee, by the bitter abandonment thou didst suffer on the cross, to assist me at the hour of my death, and receive my soul in peace, that I may behold thee, praise and bless thee, through all eternity. Amen.*

* This devotion can be recited every Friday during the year, and every day during the holy sacrifice of Mass; also, before confession and communion, but above all, in sickness. Pause after each station, and make with all the heart the acts just read.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE GOSPEL. *St. Luke, xi. 14-28.*

“ At that time, Jesus was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb. And when he had cast out the devil, the dumb spoke, and the multitude were in admiration at it. But some of them said : He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. And others, tempting, asked of him a sign of heaven. But he, seeing their thoughts, said to them : Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall. And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand ? because you say that, through Beelzebub, I cast out devils. Now, if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out ? Therefore, they shall be your judges. But if I, by the finger of God, cast out devils ; doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in peace which he possesseth. But if a stronger than he come upon him, and overcome him, he will take away all his armour wherein he trusted, and will distribute his spoils. He that is not with me is

against me ; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest ; and not finding, he said : I will return into my house, whence I came out. And when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and, entering in, they dwell there. And the last state of that man becometh worse than the first. And it came to pass, as he spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice, said to him : Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts that gave thee suck. But he said : Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it.'

MEDITATION.

ON RELAPSES INTO SIN.

1ST POINT. The oftener a sin is pardoned, the less excusable it becomes. As sins increase in number, so do they increase in malice. The second fall is dangerous : old wounds are incurable. Sins pass into habit, and from being habitual become necessary, after which they

grow more frequent and heinous; then habit becomes stronger; grace more feeble; co-operation more difficult; the spirit more incapable of seeing; the will more infirm; the passions more rebellious; devils more powerful, and their power more tyrannical.

What ingratitude, to offend God after having received so many blessings! What contempt, to abandon him after he has so often pardoned and received us! What treachery, to betray him after having made so many promises! What malice, to outrage and crucify him in your heart, after he has bestowed so many graces on you!

2ND POINT. Is it thus that you mock God? Is it thus that you despise his love, laugh at his patience, and abuse his goodness, presume on his mercy, make war with his sweetness, and waste his graces? Is it thus that you trample under foot the blood of Jesus Christ, and render his passion fruitless, stifle his Spirit, drive him from your heart, and prefer the service of the devil to his?

After abundance comes poverty; after rain, dry weather; after the heat of summer, the ice of winter; after day, night; after consolation, affliction; after grace, chastisement; after love,

contempt ; after patience, anger ; after insults and injuries, vengeance !

3RD POINT. Oh my God, my Father, and my King ! how can I presume to appear before thee after so many treasons and infidelities, after so much contempt and ingratitude ? My sins have, in a manner, changed my nature. Those which, formerly, were my weaknesses, are now a species of contempt, ingratitude, and malice. Those that were formerly but the involuntary result of my evil passions, are now impenitence and hardness of heart. Those that were pardonable faults, are now crimes without excuse, and second falls without remedy.

The number of my sins is infinite ; the weight of them insupportable, and their malice without excuse. Oh my God, I am resolved to forsake my evil habits, and the proximate occasions of sin ; I will frequent the sacraments, and spend the rest of my life in penance ! Oh my God, deprive me of life if I do not desire to be converted ! Take me from the world, if I wish not to break the ties that bind me to it. Bestow no more graces on me, if I am so miserable as to abuse them. I ask only grace to weep for my sins, and do penance for them as long as I live.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“It is impossible* for those, who were once enlightened, have tasted also the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have moreover tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and are fallen away ; to be renewed again by penance.”
—*Hebrews*, vi.

“For if I build up again the things which I have destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.”
—*Galatians*, ii.

“Behold, thou art made whole : sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee.”—*St. John*, v.

“And the last state of that man becometh worse than the first.”—*St. Luke*, xi.

MEDITATION FOR THIRD MONDAY IN
LENT.

ON THE FALL OF ST. PETER.

1ST POINT. St. Peter denied his divine Master, who had preferred him to the other Apostles, and appointed him chief bishop of his Church. He denied him, after having made the most solemn protestations of love and fide-

* That is to say, *difficult*.

lity. He denied him, as his God and Master, in these words : "*I know not the man.*" He denied him thrice. He denied him with curses and imprecations. Behold the progress of evil ! Behold how from slight faults one may fall into great and dreadful sins ! Be compassionate towards this Apostle, while you are astonished at his fall, and seek the causes thereof.

2ND POINT. St. Peter fell because the love that he bore our Lord was lukewarm, and he followed him afar off. A soul that is lukewarm does not take long to fall into great sins, for lukewarmness is a mixture of charity and concupiscence, grace and nature, devotion and coldness, which, like tepid water, partly cold and partly warm, cannot remain together without one or the other of its contrary qualities being destroyed. Concupiscence, in a measure, increases, and charity diminishes. That which does not advance goes backwards. Besides which, the soul must have consolation, and cannot live without it ; and that which is lukewarm, not being of heaven, it is compelled to seek it on earth, and of earthly things, and having no fervour, its venial sins lead quickly to those that are mortal. Added to this, these infidelities cause God to withdraw many of his

graces, and the devil overcomes, with ease, an opponent so feeble and languishing. Is not this your state? Is this not the origin of your fall?

3RD POINT. St. Peter fell because he depended too much on his own strength. He did not know how necessary was the assistance of divine grace to him; he did not understand his own weakness; he was filled with pride and presumption; he said, in his fervour, that nothing could move him, and even seemed to exalt himself over the other Apostles, when he declared, that if all of them should abandon Jesus, yet he would never be wanting in fidelity to him. He was so possessed with a good opinion of himself, that, when his divine Master told him that he would deny him thrice, he did not believe him; he declared that he would not, as if the Son of God could deceive himself. Oh! it is truly a dangerous thing to presume on our own strength, and trust only to our good resolutions. Is not this the cause of your fall? Do you not trust too much your heart and mind, your passions and weaknesses? Do you have frequent recourse to God? Do you pray to him continually to guide and defend you?

4TH POINT. St. Peter fell because he threw himself rashly into the occasions of sin. He

went into the house of Caiphas, not to defend his Master, but to see all that should happen, and hear all that was said. He fought among the soldiers, and was arrayed against them. He was, apparently, intrepid, until the voice of a servant frightened him ; that of another made him tremble ; that of a soldier overthrew him, and made him deny his Master, with curses and imprecations.

Fly from the companionship of the wicked, unless you desire to become like them. What safeguard have you to preserve your chastity among the lewd and immodest ? How can you remain sober in the society of drunkards, or humble with those who are haughty ? You must surely resemble those with whom you associate ; if not, you will soon become like them. You have grace to withdraw from them, but no promise of its continuing with you if you remain with companions who are evil.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ Be mindful, therefore, from whence thou art fallen : and do penance, and do the first works. Or else I come to thee, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou do penance.”—*Apocalypse*, ii.

“Therefore, let him that thinketh himself to stand, take heed lest he fall.”—1 *Corinthians*, x.

“Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the chair of pestilence.”—*Psalm* i.

MEDITATION FOR THIRD TUESDAY IN LENT.

ON THE REPENTANCE OF ST. PETER, AND THE DESPAIR OF JUDAS ISCARIOT.

1ST POINT. Judas betrayed his divine Master, and Peter denied him. Judas, in despair, destroyed his own life ; and Peter was converted. From whence comes this difference? Is it because Jesus looked at Peter? But he *spoke* to Judas : he warned him of his crime ; he threatened him with terrible chastisements ; he treated him as a friend, and assailed his heart with all the inspirations and charms of divine love. Notwithstanding these facts, St. Peter was converted, and Judas despaired. Oh, judgments of God ! terrible is the effect of your visitation on men ! Oh, malice of the human heart ! Oh, admirable results of the mercy and justice of God !

2ND POINT. Judas was lost because he did not desire to be saved. He had powerful graces before he sinned ; he had the grace of repentance after he had sinned ; but these graces were of no avail, because he abused them, resisted them, and was hardened in evil ; because he had communicated unworthily, and was too much attached to the things of the world ; because he sinned through malice, knowing the sanctity of him whom he betrayed ; and through ingratitude, delivering up to death him from whom he had received so many graces. Oh, it is a perilous thing to abandon one's self to evil passions, to resist the grace of God, and sin with knowledge !

3RD POINT. St. Peter was raised, because he fell through fear and weakness. He did not renounce his Master in his heart, although he denied him with his lips. His apostasy was criminal, but excusable, as it was caused by terror, surprise, and unexpected events. He always loved his divine Master, but fear triumphed over love. It was his first fault. The dangers which threatened him, of being seized and delivered into the hands of the infuriated Jews, prevented his reflecting on his crime, hearing the cock that crowed, or

remembering the prediction of Jesus Christ. As soon as he was conscious of his fault he did penance, and did not, like Judas, despair.

MEDITATION FOR THIRD WEDNESDAY IN LENT.

ON THE CAUSE OF THE CONVERSION OF ST.
PETER.

1ST POINT. St. Peter was restored to grace, because our dear Jesus turned his divine countenance towards him, and looked him in the face ; called to his recollection the prediction he had uttered ; opened his eyes to discern his fault, and touched his heart to weep and do penance. The look that Jesus cast on him was an arrow of divine love, which pierced his soul, and drew from his eyes fountains of tears. It was a ray of light and grace, which showed to him the love, tenderness, and preference, that his Lord had borne for him ; the charitable counsel he had given him ; the blessings he had received from him, and the solemn protestations he had made of never abandoning him ; then a full sense of his ingratitude, his infidelity

treachery, and perfidy, broke up the depths of his repentant heart, and he wept bitterly.

2ND POINT. Alas ! St. Peter denied his Lord and Master on only one occasion, and never ceased weeping for his offence during his life. How often have you not betrayed him ? How often have you not renounced him through fear, human respect, passion, malice, and coldness, knowing all the time what you were doing ? How often has he not spoken to you through his priests, and revealed to you the enormity of your guilt ? And, notwithstanding all, you neither weep nor do penance ! He casts a look of tender compassion on you, but instead of weeping bitterly for your sins, you return to his enemies, where you deny him, strike, outrage, and spit upon him more cruelly than the Jews !

3RD POINT. Oh, ye heavens ! be astonished at this ingratitude and perfidy ! Oh, who will give to my eyes fountains of tears, to weep day and night for my sins and unfaithfulness ? Oh, sweet Jesus ! cast on me a single look of thy mercy ; it is all that I need to convert me. I desire to do penance all the rest of my life. It is the effect of thy grace. Ah ! do not permit me to abuse it as I have hitherto done.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“And the maid, therefore, that was portress, saith to Peter : Art thou not also one of this man’s disciples ? He saith : I am not.”—*St. John*, xviii.

“Whom when a certain servant maid had seen sitting at the light, and had earnestly looked upon him, she said : This man was also with him. But he denied him, saying : Woman, I know him not. And after a little while, another seeing him, said : Thou art also one of them. But Peter said : O man, I am not. And about the space of one hour after, another man affirmed, saying : Of a truth, this man also was with him : for he also is a Galilean. And Peter said : Man, I know not what thou sayest.”
St. Luke, xxii.

“I say to thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest me.”—*Ibid.*

“And the Lord, turning, looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said : Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. . And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.”—*Ibid.*

“My eyes have sent forth springs of water : because they have not kept thy law.”—*Psalms* cxviii.

**MEDITATION FOR THIRD THURSDAY
IN LENT.****JESUS IS ACCUSED BEFORE PILATE.**

1ST POINT. Of what do you complain? You are innocent, and have been calumniated. Was not the Son of God calumniated? He was accused of being a seditious man, who had only preached doctrines of peace and love to his enemies! He was accused of inciting the people to resist paying tribute, who had paid it to Pilate and Cæsar, and who had taught obedience to the laws in all his counsels! He was accused of assuming the qualities of a king, who had fled from the people when they wished to crown him! Pilate declared him innocent! Why, then, was he crucified? Because he was Jesus! because he was the Saviour of his people, and had assumed the burden and penalty of our guilt! In this behold the cause of his death.

Jesus is innocent, and appeared guilty; I am guilty, and wish to appear innocent! Jesus never sinned, and bore the pain of our sins; but I, who am a sinner, wish to avoid bearing the pain of mine! I am ashamed to appear criminal before men, but fear not to appear so before

God. I do much that is worthy of condemnation, yet cannot endure the slightest blame. What injustice and arrogance to be wicked, and aspire to those honours which are only due to virtue! If you are guilty, why do you complain? If you are innocent, why do you grieve? Do you not consider it a great honour to be treated as the Son of God was?

2ND POINT. If you are a good man, you *cannot* avoid the condemnation of the world. They will present you bound, as they did Jesus, before the tribunal of their injustice. They will institute proceedings against you, and declare that you are unworthy to live among honest men. What will you do? Compare the judgments of men with those of Christ; the tribunal of Pilate with that of Jesus. He is the truth, whom this wicked ruler and judge did not wish to know. If the truth deliver you, you shall be free indeed. Be satisfied with the testimony of your own conscience with God. It is better to be betrayed by the wicked, than loved by them; to be despised by the world, than honoured by it. Do you desire to please those who are displeasing to God?

3RD POINT. My soul, draw near to this tribunal of iniquity. Behold a God judged by a man!

A God standing before a man who remains seated! A God, who is judge of the living and the dead, examined and condemned by the most wicked of his creatures! What hast thou done, O innocent Lamb, that thou art bound, and dragged through the city? Permit me, sweet Lord, to answer for thee. Thou hast created the heavens and the earth; thou hast made the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the dead to live, and hast gone about doing good to all men; delivering those who were possessed of devils, and making heaven the reward of the good, and hell the punishment of the wicked. Oh Jesus, what hast thou done to be so maltreated by men? What hast thou done to me that I should dare offend and insult thee?

Oh my people! what have I done to displease you? What have I not done to gain your hearts, and give you eternal joys? What ought you not to do for me? What have you not done against me?

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?”—*Romans*, xiv.

“But with me it is a very small thing to be

judged by you, or by human judgment: but neither do I judge my own self."—1 *Cor.* iv.

"For I am not conscious to myself of any thing: yet I am not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord."—*Ibid.*

"O God, be not thou silent in my praise: for the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful man is opened against me. They have spoken against me with deceitful tongues; and they have compassed me about with words of hatred; and have fought against me without cause."—*Psalms* cviii.

"Instead of making me a return of love, they detracted me: but I gave myself to prayer. And they repaid me evil for good, and hatred for my love."—*Ibid.*

MEDITATION FOR THIRD FRIDAY IN LENT.

ON THE CONTEMPT OF HEROD FOR JESUS, AND THE SILENCE OF JESUS BEFORE HEROD.

1ST POINT. Herod desired to see Jesus, and Jesus would not look at him; Herod questioned Jesus, and Jesus would not answer him; Herod demanded miracles of Jesus, and Jesus would not perform them; Herod despised Jesus, and

Jesus cared not for his hatred. It is thus that the wisdom of God passes for folly in the eyes of the world, and the so-called wisdom of the world is but foolishness in the eyes of God.

2ND POINT. Jesus does not speak to the proud; he does not manifest himself to the haughty; he replies not to the adulterer; he bestows not his grace on the ungrateful. He, at last, despises those who despise him. After having often spoken, he is silent. Being often driven away, he goes and returns no more. He conceals himself after having sought in vain.

3RD POINT. Oh Lord, my God! thy silence is a terrible thing! It is dangerous to resist thy inspirations and despise thy word. Wilt thou be pleased to speak often to me? How frequently have I not heard thy voice, and left undone what thou hast commanded! How often have I not, like Herod, caused the death of thy precursor, and slaughtered thy harbingers in my heart; stifled thy inspirations, rejected and despised thy graces! I hear thy word, and obey it not; I read pious and holy lessons, and do not profit by them. Alas! I have reason to fear that thou wilt withdraw thy graces from me, and speak to me no more.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“And Herod, seeing Jesus, was very glad; for he was desirous of a long time to see him, because he had heard many things of him: and he hoped to see some miracle wrought by him. And he questioned him with many words. But he answered him nothing.”—*St. Luke, xxiii.*

“For the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God stronger than men.”—*1 Corinthians, i.*

“There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.”—*Ecclesiastes, iii.*

MEDITATION FOR THIRD SATURDAY
IN LENT.

JESUS CONFESSES THAT HE IS A KING.

1ST POINT. *Art thou a king?* asked Pilate. Jesus answered: *Thou sayest that I am a king. For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth.* But he adds: *My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from hence.* Jesus is the King of the universe, but he came

not into the world to exercise the functions of an earthly monarch. He came to serve, obey, live in misery, and die in shame. My soul, is your King within? Is this his kingdom? Do you wish to take part in his sufferings and ignominies?

2ND POINT. The kingdom of God is not of this proud, ambitious, rich, and sensual world. His kingdom is within us; he reigns over us through the obedience that we show his commandments; he reigns through peace in our hearts, and by the submission we render to his divine providence; he reigns over our spirits by faith, our hearts by charity, our will by hope, our passions by mortification, and our bodies by the cross; he reigns in this life by grace, in the other by glory. Of which kingdom are you—that of Herod, or that of Jesus?

3RD POINT. The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world; for his kingdom is the truth, and that of the world is vanity. If the kingdom of Jesus is not of this world, it follows that his disciples are not of it. You are not a disciple of Jesus if you are possessed with the spirit of the world, if you love its grandeur, if you seek its perishable treasures and its fleeting enjoyments; if you live as worldlings live, and follow the

wicked maxims and customs thereof. Happy is he who can say with truth, *my kingdom is not of this world!* I am in the world, but not of it, neither do I wish for an abiding-place in it. Happy is he who, at the hour of his death, can say with Jesus, *I am going to my Father!*

I came into the world to love and serve God, work for his honour and glory, and keep his commandments. My mission is ended. I have accomplished the work he has given me to do. I leave with joy a miserable world, where I have known only suffering, to return to my Father, who will give me a recompense for my labours in the eternal enjoyment of his presence.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord, and against his Christ.”—*Psalms* ii.

“For I am appointed king by him over Sion his holy mountain, preaching his commandment.”—*Ibid.*

“My kingdom is not of this world.”—*St. John*, xviii.

“You are of this world: I am not of this world.”—*St. John*, viii.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE GOSPEL. *St. John*, vi. 1-15.

“At that time, Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias; and a great multitude followed him; because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased. Jesus, therefore, went up into a mountain; and there he sat with his disciples. Now the pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand. When Jesus, therefore, had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh to him, he said to Philip: Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to try him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him: Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to him: There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are these among so many? Then Jesus said: Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. The men, therefore, sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves: and

when he had given thanks, he distributed to them that were sat down ; in like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would. And when they were filled, he said to his disciples : Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost. They gathered up, therefore, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten. Now these men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said : This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world. Jesus, therefore, when he knew that they would come and take him by force, and make him a king, fled again into the mountain himself alone."

MEDITATION.

ON ALMSGIVING.

1ST POINT. Jesus teaches us, by his example, to nourish the poor, and attend to their necessities ; from which we may draw the following considerations :

The rich depend on the poor, and the poor on the rich ; the rich take care of the poor, and the poor of the rich ; the rich give corporal nourishment to the poor, and the poor give

them spiritual. The poor depend on the rich in time, and the rich on the poor in eternity. Without the assistance of the rich, the poor would die corporally ; without the prayers and blessings of the poor, the rich would die spiritually. The rich are the judges of the poor on earth ; the poor shall be their judges in heaven. Why, then, do you despise the poor ? Why treat them with harshness ? Why do you not endeavour to deserve their blessings ? Why do you not assist them ?

2ND POINT. Graces and chastisements are in the hands of the poor. When they demand mercy for him who aids them, God grants their prayers ; when they demand justice against those who send them empty away, God also grants it. A rich man is in danger of losing his soul, when he has not the prayers and benedictions of the poor. Those who have not the poor for their advocate, shall not find grace with their Judge. He who has the poor to plead for him, need not fear, but rejoice.

3RD POINT. Be merciful, then, to the poor, since they are human and miserable like yourself. Their misery is only corporal, yours is spiritual. Who do you think it is that asks alms of you ? It is Jesus, your King, your God, your Father ;

it is he who, under the guise of poverty, implores your assistance. Oh! happy and honoured are the rich, who give alms to Jesus Christ. Accursed those who refuse him alms.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor.”—*Daniel*, iv.

“If one of thy brethren that dwelleth within the gates of thy city in the land which the Lord thy God will give thee, come to poverty; thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor close thy hand, but shalt open it to the poor man.”—*Deut.* xv.

“Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the evil day.”—*Psalms* xl.

“Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you clothed me; sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me.”—*St. Matt.* xxv.

**MEDITATION FOR FOURTH MONDAY
IN LENT.****THE JEWS PREFER BARABBAS TO JESUS.**

1ST POINT. The innocent is compared to a criminal, the just to a thief, the king to his slave, the God of sanctity to a sinner. This outrage was less painful to his sacred heart than that which you inflict on him when you compare him to a creature, and prefer his enemy, the devil, to himself. You are guilty of this as often as you sin. Which do you prefer of the two, Jesus or Satan? The creature or the creator? Heaven or hell?

2ND POINT. Oh Jesus, the greatest and most humble of men! Oh, first and last! When I see thee at the feet of Judas, I know not where to place myself. But when I behold thee put lower than Barabbas, I see no place but hell wherein to hide my confusion. Is it just that I should exalt myself above thee? Oh! if I prefer myself to the least of thy disciples, I prefer myself to thee, since, at this stage of thy sacred passion, thou art made the least of all.

3RD POINT. Oh my soul, how often have you not thus thrown contempt and insult on Jesus!

How often preferred some vile interest, or brutal pleasure, to his service ! Have you not many times cried out with the Jewish rabble : We wish not Jesus, give us Barabbas ? Oh, ye heavens, be astonished, my people have committed two crimes : they have left me, the source of living waters, and gone to drink from a broken and corrupted cistern, which cannot quench their thirst.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“I have brought up children, and exalted them : but they have despised me.”—*Isaias*, i.

“To whom have you likened me, and made me equal ; and compared me, and made me like.”—*Isaias*, xlvi.

“But you denied the Holy and the Just One, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. But the author of life you killed.”—*Acts*, iii.

MEDITATION FOR FOURTH TUESDAY
IN LENT.

ON THE SCOURGES OF OUR LORD.

1ST POINT. Jesus is beaten like a slave ; he is bathed in his blood ; his body is disfigured by

frightful wounds. There is no part of his flesh that is not bruised and torn. Behold the Lamb of God scourged by slaves! Almost immolated, there is nothing left but to fasten him to the cross! Consider, and see if there is grief like his.

2ND POINT. Why does he submit to a chastisement so cruel and shameful? It is to show the extent of his love for you; it is to make you understand the enormity of the guilt of sin; it is to expiate, by his sufferings and blood, the infamous pleasures of your flesh; it is to make satisfaction to God his Father for your impurities; it is to show how necessary it is to mortify your body if you wish to become one of his members, and the impossibility of being saved without sufferings.

3RD POINT. Oh, Christian soul! take the scourge into your own hand, and inflict justice on yourself. Say: It is I who have sinned, it is I who deserve chastisement. Is it just that I should be without wounds, seeing my King covered with them? How can my body enter heaven, unless it is at first purified by sufferings? He who will not be chastised with men, must be punished with devils.

Oh, most holy Lamb, what crime has drawn

on thee such pain, and led thee to submit to ignominies so great? Oh, virginal and sacred flesh! to what a miserable state the impurities of men have reduced thee! Alas! thou dost expiate in thy body the criminal pleasures of ours; it is to make satisfaction for the sins of our flesh, that thine is torn and covered with ghastly wounds. Let my body, then, be chastised, since it is that which has caused the evil. I desire to cut off all sinful pleasures, since they have caused thee so much grief. I wish to suffer stripes and wounds, in order to be like thee.

Miserable wretch that I am! I sin, and do no penance; I am guilty, and practise no mortification! Oh, my God, I confess my baseness, I have not courage to chastise myself. Take, then, the scourge in thy hand, and spare not thy chastisements. I am prepared to suffer all thou mayest be pleased to inflict on me. Chastise me, if thou judgest it necessary, but let it be through love, and not in anger. Chastise me in time, but not in eternity.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Then, therefore, Pilate took Jesus, and scourged him.”—*St. John, xix.*

“So Pilate delivered up Jesus, when he had scourged him.”—*St. Mark*, xv.

“For I am ready for scourges: and my sorrow is continually before me.”—*Psalms* xxxvii.

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”—*Hebrews*, xii.

MEDITATION FOR FOURTH WEDNESDAY IN LENT.

JESUS IS CROWNED WITH THORNS.

1ST POINT. Jesus came into the world to expiate our offences, and bear the pain thereof. Man's head is the source of all sin. It is here that he conceives thoughts of ambition, impurity, injustice, and revenge. It was to make satisfaction for these sins that Jesus desired to be crowned with thorns, that is to say, with ignominies and sufferings.

2ND POINT. Jesus is a victim who desires to offer himself a holocaust to the Father, and be consumed in the fire of sufferings. His body is covered with wounds; from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, there is not a sound place in him. He was crowned with thorns,

that there might remain no part of his body that was not penetrated by severe sufferings, and to verify what he had said : That his kingdom was not of this world.

Christian, behold your King ! Do you recognize this crown, this sceptre, and this purple robe ? The Jews renounced him ; do you, also, renounce him ? If you are a child of God, you must be mocked, torn, and crucified with his divine Son. It is necessary to wear two crowns, one of gold, the other of thorns. If you wear the crown of gold in this life, in the life to come you will be crowned with thorns. If your crown is of thorns in this world, you will be crowned with glory in the world to come.

3RD POINT. The crowns of the world produce thorns ; the thorns of Jesus produce the flowers of unfading and eternal joys. Who would wish to be crowned with glory and pleasures, seeing their King crowned with sorrows and ignominies ? How can a member of a thorn-crowned head be exempt from suffering ?

There are three sorts of thorns on earth, which grieve and afflict souls—thorns of sin, thorns of temptation, and thorns of penance. Sin is a thorn that pierces and kills the soul ; temptation is a thorn that troubles and tor-

ments the spirit ; penance is a thorn that afflicts the body. The thorn of sin is cruel, bloody, and mortal ; the thorn of temptation is dangerous ; the thorn of penance is salutary, and produces the flowers of peace and joy at all seasons.

MEDITATION FOR FOURTH THURSDAY IN LENT.

SENTIMENTS OF GRIEF AND COMPASSION FOR
THE SUFFERINGS OF JESUS.

1ST POINT. Daughters of Jerusalem, come forth and see King Solomon with the diadem with which his mother, the Synagogue, has crowned him. Alas ! it is not a mother, but a cruel and inhuman tyrant, who crowns himself with roses, and his God with thorns. Daughters of Jerusalem, Christian souls, observe this MAN OF SORROWS ! Behold the MAN who has saved you, the MAN whom you have crucified ! behold the MAN who loves you infinitely, the MAN whom you cease not to persecute !

2ND POINT. Oh, most holy God ! thou hast sought a MAN to appease thy anger, and one who would

submit himself to thy vengeance ; behold him whom we present to thee ! Look on the face of thy Christ, the sight of whose sorrows will subdue the hearts of sinners, and whose intercession will render thee favourable to their prayers. Behold the Man for whom thou hast created all men, and through whom thou lovest all men. Behold the robe of thy Son Joseph, torn and bloody ; dost thou not recognize it ? Behold the King of martyrs, crowned with grief and ignominy ! Behold the High Priest of the New Law, who offers thee his blood for the salvation of men ! Will not this blood efface thy anger ? Is not this blood sufficient to cancel all our debts ?

3RD POINT. Daughter of Zion, holy and sorrowful Virgin Mother, come and see the diadem that has been placed upon the head of thy divine Son. Behold the Son whom thou didst conceive by the Holy Ghost, and bring forth without pain or sorrow, whom thou didst watch over with so much anxiety, and sacrifice with so much love ! Behold this glorious and magnificent King, who ought to sit on the throne of David, and reign over all the earth ! Behold this High Priest, whose office it is to appease the anger of God ! What a Priest ! what a King ! what a Child ! what a MAN ! What a spectacle

of grief for thee, oh most afflicted Mother ! How is it that thou didst survive so sorrowful a sight ? Ah ! it is because it is necessary for thee to accompany him to Calvary, and behold him die between two thieves !

Oh, holiest of men, greatest of kings, Christians renounce thee as well as the Jews, and desire no other king than Cæsar, that is to say, the world. The avaricious desire a rich king, the sensual a voluptuous king, and the ambitious a king who is glorious on earth ; but, as for me, I choose for my king this MAN OF SORROWS, who is poor and despised ; I desire no other king than Jesus, and no other crown than that of Jesus.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ And the soldiers, plating a crown of thorns, put it upon his head : and they put on him a purple garment.”—*St. John*, xix.

“ Behold your King ! Behold the Man !”
—*St. John*, xix.

“ We have no king but Cæsar.”—*Ibid.*

“ O my King and my God !”—*Psalm* v.

“ He will crown thee with a crown of tribulation.”—*Isaias*, xxii.

**MEDITATION FOR FOURTH FRIDAY IN
LENT.****ON THE SENTENCE OF DEATH PRONOUNCED
AGAINST JESUS.**

1ST POINT. The Jews clamoured for the death of Jesus. Pilate, who was convinced of his innocence, wished to evade the demand. The Jews declared : "*We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.*" "*Take him you,*" saith Pilate, "*and crucify him, for I find no cause in him.*" The law of the world condemns the Son of God to death ! All worldlings cry, through the mouth of the Jews, Crucify him ! crucify him ! If you are a slave to the maxims of the world, you conspire, with the Jews, against Jesus. Christians have also a law which condemns to death a sensual and voluptuous life.

2ND POINT. Pilate questioned Jesus, and Jesus replied not to him, because he had been guilty of an act of great injustice, and inflicted cruel injuries on him, even while he believed him to be innocent ; because he did not profit by what Jesus had already said to him, or desire

to learn the truth ; because he had spoken with an air of authority, and was proud and unjust in saying to him, that he *could deliver or condemn him* ; for if he could have delivered the innocent, he should have done it, since he was invested with power only that he might acquit himself of his duty. Behold how dangerous it is not to profit by the Word of God ! He keeps silence, and speaks no more.

You complain that God no longer responds to you in prayer, and ask the cause of his silence. Perhaps you have offended him, and excited his anger by mortal sin, or that your continual and dissipated intercourse with the world is displeasing to him, or that your heart is too much set on some earthly object, all of which render the soul deaf to his voice. It may be that you are too curious in spiritual things, or desire to learn without toil, or think, in your presumption, that he may unite himself to your soul without the intervention of the senses, either corporal or spiritual. If thus tempted, it is necessary to humiliate, but not trouble yourself.

3RD POINT. Pilate is afraid to condemn Jesus Christ, not only because he is convinced of his innocence, but that he has also discovered

a power of divinity in him, which terrifies and makes him tremble; notwithstanding which, when he heard the people threatening him with the anger of Cæsar, he betrayed his conscience, and delivered him to his enemies, that they might satisfy their fury, by putting him to death. Oh, human respect! Oh, miserable fear of the world! It is this that has condemned and put to death the Son of God! It is this which causes him to die every day in the hearts of men! They are afraid of giving offence to Cæsar. Judges condemn the innocent to gratify the vengeance of the great. Christians commit acts of injustice to please their friends. Mercenary souls betray their conscience, and condemn Jesus to death, to preserve their goods, their fortune, and their employment.

Oh, sweet Jesus, condemned to an ignominious death! All the world cry out, Crucify him! crucify him! and no voice is heard in his defence, to deliver or give him life. Thou didst submit to all this through obedience to thy Father in heaven, whose will it was for thee to die, but who desired not the sin of this wicked judge. Thou dost submit to deliver us from eternal death, the sentence of which was issued against all the children of Adam, to show the love thou

hast for us, and thy desire to suffer for us. Thou dost submit, in order that we may be submissive to the chastisements of God, and that we may not be troubled as to whether the person who afflicts and injures us is good or wicked, or whether they are guided by reason or passion.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“When Pilate, therefore, had heard this saying, he feared the more. And he entered into the hall again; and he said to Jesus: Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.”—*St. John*, xix.

“If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar’s friend.”—*Ibid.*

“Then, therefore, he delivered him to them to be crucified.”—*Ibid.*

“And having scourged JESUS, delivered him to them to be crucified.”—*St. Matt.* xxvii.

“Let us condemn him to a most shameful death.”—*Wisdom*, ii.

“He was offered, because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth: he shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be as a lamb before the shearer, and he shall not open his mouth.”—*Isaias*, liii.

**MEDITATION FOR FOURTH SATURDAY
IN LENT.****JESUS IS ABANDONED TO THE POWER OF
HIS ENEMIES.**

1ST POINT. He was abandoned by Pilate, who should have defended his innocence, and who ought to have died rather than commit so great an act of injustice. He was abandoned by his disciples, who had declared they would go with him even unto death. He was abandoned by God his Father, who could have delivered him from the power of his enemies, but who permitted them to exercise over him all the cruelties and ignominies that their wicked malice could devise. Oh, how often have you not abandoned him, base Christian, when you beheld him condemned and outraged by the impious !

2ND POINT. God the Father abandoned his divine Son to the power of his enemies ; and do you learn from this to abandon yourself to the will of God, who is the best of all fathers. Why should you mistrust him ? Do you doubt his power or his love ? What can you refuse him who has given his only Son, and delivered him

up to death for your salvation? Can your honour, goods, health, life, soul, and salvation be in better keeping than his? Why do you not abandon yourself entirely to him? Why so many cares, so much trouble and inquietude, when there is so good a Father who careth for you?

3RD POINT. Jesus is abandoned by his Father, but not by our Blessed Lady, who had followed him thus far, step by step, through the bitter way of his passion, and was present at his condemnation. Who can conceive her grief, when she beheld his sacred flesh so frightfully torn, that his bones were exposed to sight! when she saw him bathed in his blood, wearing on his shoulders a purple rag, holding in his hand the reed, which his enemies had placed there in derision, and crowned with thorns! Oh, who can comprehend her affliction, when she heard the Jews crying out with tumultuous fury: *Away with him! away with him! Crucify him! crucify him! His blood be upon us and upon our children!* Consider the grief and agony that pierced her soul, when she saw Pilate wash his hands, and heard him pronounce sentence of death against her divine Son, and then abandon him to his enemies, who, with renewed

imprecations and insults, seize him, and prepare to nail him to the cross!

Oh, most afflicted Mother! God has also abandoned thee, and thou feelest in thy sacred heart all that thy dear Son does in his body. Oh, who is there so insensible as not to be touched with tender compassion at thy wondrous grief! Since God has abandoned Jesus and Mary, the two persons most dear to him in heaven or earth, have I, a sinner, not reason to fear that he will abandon me to the power of the devil, to be tempted, tormented, and afflicted in my body and soul, and in all that belongs to me? Oh, my God, my Father! I abandon myself to thee; but do not thou, I beseech thee, abandon me to the power of my enemies.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“And he released unto them him who, for murder and sedition, had been cast into prison, whom they had desired: but JESUS he delivered up to their will.”—*St. Luke, xxiii.*

“To thee is the poor man left: thou wilt be a helper to the orphan.”—*Psalms ix.*

“Oh God, my God, look upon me: Why hast thou forsaken me?”—*Psalms xxi.*

“To what shall I compare thee, or to what shall I liken thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? To what shall I equal thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Sion? for great as the sea is thy destruction: who shall heal thee?”
—*Lamentations*, ii.

PASSION SUNDAY.

THE GOSPEL. *St. John*, viii. 46–59.

“At that time, Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: Which of you shall convince me of sin? If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe me? He that is of God, heareth the words of God. Therefore, you hear them not, because you are not of God. The Jews, therefore, answered and said to him: Do we not say well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered: I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and you have dishonoured me. But I seek not my own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Amen, amen, I say to you, if any man keep my word he shall not see death for ever. The Jews, therefore, said: Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets:

and thou sayest : If any man keep my word, he shall not taste death for ever. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead ? and the prophets are dead. Whom dost thou make thyself ? Jesus answered : If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing : it is my Father that glorifieth me, of whom you say that he is your God. And you have not known him ; but I know him ; and if I should say that I know him not, I should be like you, a liar. But I do know him, and do keep his word. Abraham, your father, rejoiced that he might see my day : he saw it, and was glad. The Jews then said to him : Thou art not yet fifty years old ; and hast thou seen Abraham ? Jesus said to them : Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am. They took up stones, therefore, to cast at him ; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple."

MEDITATION.

ON THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY.

1ST POINT. A Christian's whole life should be a season of abstinence and trial ; abstinence by separating himself from all worldly pleasures, and trial by humble resignation to suffering and

grief. After death, if such has been our life, we will celebrate a perpetual Easter in heaven, and know a day of consolation and rejoicing without end. Oh ! you will then be satisfied with having fasted in Lent and mortified your passions ; with having borne your cross with patience, and suffered many griefs for the love of Jesus.

2ND POINT. Why did not the Jews believe the words of Jesus, for a master is worthy of belief, whose doctrines are pure and whose life is irreproachable ? The doctrine of the Son of God was holy ; he preached the truth to them, and confirmed it by wonderful miracles, and nothing could be found more holy than his life. Why, then, did they disbelieve his word and reject his doctrines ? Because they were haughty, and desired not to learn anything from a man whom they looked on as an inferior ; they hated him, because he reprov'd their vices and chided their hypocrisy, and were filled with envy on seeing the people listen with attention to his discourses, and applaud his miracles. Behold the causes of their incredulity ! We do not desire to submit our spirits to the mysteries of truth, and our judgment to the direction of God, because one is incomprehensible to human

reason, and the other displeasing to nature. We have wicked hearts, which corrupt the understanding, and turn us away from the contemplation of eternal truths ; we have passions, which render the spirit blind, and delude our minds. Behold the causes which prevent our believing the Word of God, and being converted to him !

3RD POINT. "*He that is of God heareth the words of God.*" Who are you ? whence came you ? whither are you going ? what will become of you ? Are you one of the predestined, or are you a reprobate ? Judge yourself by the sentiments with which you receive the Word of God, by the pleasure you take in hearing it, by the care you take to preserve it, by the obedience you show it, by your fidelity in putting it into practice. You are not of God if you take no pleasure in hearing his Word.

4TH POINT. "*I honour my Father, and you have dishonoured me,*" said our Lord to the Jews. Do you not also deserve this reproach ? Do you not dishonour Jesus and betray his interests ? Might he not address himself to you in the words of the Prophet : "*I have brought up children and exalted them, and they have despised me*" ? You dishonour God by your wicked life and actions, your scandalous words, and your unfaith-

fulness to a profession or vocation which should make your life more regular and holy. Why, oh Christian soul, will you dishonour so good a Master? When will you begin to honour him?

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“If I have spoken evil give testimony of the evil: but if well, why strikest thou me?”—*St. John*, xviii.

“He that heareth you, heareth me; he that despiseth you, despiseth me.”—*St. Luke*, x.

“They are of the world: therefore of the world they speak, and the world heareth them.”—*1 John*, iv.

“We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us: he that is not of God, heareth us not. And every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God.”—*Ibid.*

MEDITATION FOR MONDAY IN
PASSION WEEK.

JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS.

1ST POINT. The enemies of Jesus, having placed the cross on his wounded and bleeding shoulders, he went with it towards Golgotha, but, overcome by the heavy burden, he fell fainting

beneath it. They inflicted heavy blows on him with their hands ; they struck him with a knotted stick, and kicked him with violence to make him rise ; but his strength was gone, and he could no longer obey them. They then laid hands on a stranger from the country, one Simon, lifted the cross to his shoulders, and compelled him to follow Jesus with it.

Why did he permit them to relieve him, by taking from him the cross he loved so much ? Could he not have repaired his strength by a miracle, and continued to carry it ? It was done to teach us that we deserve the cross ; that he bore it through love of us ; that we aid him in carrying the cross when we bear ours with patience ; that to be his disciple it is necessary for us to carry the cross, and follow him whither he goeth ; that he assists us in carrying our cross, and we ought to rejoice when we have an opportunity to carry his.

2ND POINT. Happy Simon (happy through obedience), who had the honour to bear the cross of Jesus ! Christian, the same privilege is yours ; all your crosses are fragments of his ; they have either touched his soul or body. He drank of our chalice, and, draining it of all its bitterness, left us the sweetness thereof. He

suffered all that we suffer, and felt all that we do. He espoused our griefs; there is not one that has not pierced and afflicted his sacred heart.

3RD POINT. Oh, Jesus my Lord! I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest, and, as thou hast carried thy cross, I will take up mine and follow thy steps even unto death. It is the trophy of my salvation, the standard of my faith, and the seal of my predestination. Oh, how miserable are those who trample it under foot, betray or abandon it! Save me from this, dear Jesus, and give me grace to carry it even to Calvary. Oh holy cross, consecrated by the blood of Jesus! Receive me in thy arms, and let me repose on thy bosom; give thyself all to me, and I will abandon myself entirely to thee! I espoused thee in baptism; the vow is made, the union is indissoluble, and death alone can separate us.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“And, bearing his own cross, he went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew Golgotha.”—*St. John, xix.*

“Come, follow me.”—*St. Mark, x.*

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”—*St. Matt. xvi.*

“ I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.”
—*St. Luke*, ix.

“ He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins : the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed.”—*Isaias*, liii.

MEDITATION FOR TUESDAY IN PASSION WEEK.

JESUS ON THE CROSS.

1ST POINT. The inhuman persecutors of Jesus renewed his sufferings, by stripping him roughly of his garments, which adhered to his sacred wounds ; after which they laid him on the cross. They handled him with taunts and jeers, extended his limbs with cruel violence, and nailed his hands and feet to the wood ; then, raising him on high, he was exposed to view, a spectacle for angels and men. He rested only on his wounds, from which issued forth those precious streams which enrich the Church that he came to establish, and efface the sins of mankind.

He desired the cruel and ignominious death of the cross, to encourage you, by his example,

to die for him ; to repair the sin of the first man, who ate the fruit of the forbidden tree ; to raise our hearts to heaven, according to what he had foretold, that he would draw all hearts to him, when he should be lifted up from the earth ; to signify, by the four extremities of the cross, the four quarters of the world whose inhabitants he came to save ; to show his goodness and mercy, by extending his arms to receive all sinners, and make known to us the height and depth, the length and breadth, of divine charity. Finally, he died on it to accomplish the design which he had prefigured, when he said that the world should be saved by the wood of the cross, as it had been before saved by the ark of Noe and the rod of Moses. Oh, how shall those who have a horror of the cross, and evade it whenever they can, be saved !

2ND POINT. They gave him vinegar, mixed with gall, to drink, and he accepted the bitter draught, that nothing might be wanting that could augment his grief, or lend weight to his sufferings. His enemies insulted his miseries, railed at him, assailed him with curses and blasphemies, and, in derision, invited him to come down from the cross ! Oh, it is a difficult and painful thing for one who is innocent to remain

silent and patient under injury, when it is in his power to be revenged on the enemies who triumph over his misfortune, and take advantage of his weakness. But we must imitate Jesus in the ignominies he suffered, if we desire to be partakers of his glory in the world to come. Alas ! how is it that we can seek only sweetness and consolation, when Jesus has drained the chalice of bitterness and grief !

3RD POINT. Oh, Saviour of the world ! I adore thee on this thy throne of sorrow and ignominy ; I cast myself into thy arms, which thou hast opened to receive me ; I throw myself at thy feet, that I may be washed in the saving fountain that flows from them ! Oh sacred Victim, consumed by suffering ! Oh High Priest of the New Law ! Why dost thou remain on this altar ? Why dost thou not descend from the cross ? If thou wouldst descend, all men, seeing thy power, would believe in thee.

Do not descend, oh divine Wisdom, from the cross. If thou art the Son of God, thou wilt die thereon ! If thou shouldst come down and save thyself, they will not follow thee, they will also fly the cross ; they will refuse to carry it, or die on it.

My soul, regard your SAVIOUR on the cross.

Your sins have nailed him there! He was crucified once on Calvary; but how often have you not crucified him in your heart! As often as you have sinned mortally, so often have you crucified Jesus! You must crucify him or your passions.

Oh, sweet Jesus! destroy my life, for fear I may be so miserable as to destroy thine in my soul by mortal sin. Crucify my body, for fear I may crucify thy spirit. Fasten me to thy cross with the nails of fear, hope, and love, that I may never again be separated from thee.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“They crucified him, and with him two others, one on each side, and Jesus in the midst.”—*St. John, xix.*

“And they gave him wine to drink, mingled with gall.”—*St. Matthew, xxvii.*

“With Christ I am nailed to the cross.”—*Galatians, ii.*

“And they that are Christ’s have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences.”—*Galatians, v.*

“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.”—*Galatians, vi.*

MEDITATION FOR WEDNESDAY IN
PASSION WEEK.

JESUS PRAYS FOR HIS ENEMIES.

1ST POINT. Exalted on the cross, Jesus Christ was exposed to the profane gaze of a blasphemous multitude. No complaint escaped his lips. He uttered not a word, until, moved with tender compassion for his enemies, he cried out, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" The blood of Abel demanded vengeance, the blood of Jesus pleads only for mercy and grace for those who shed it; and when they insulted his mercy, he excused their sin, diminished their malice, and assumed the office of advocate for them, notwithstanding that they had accused him falsely, judged him through passion, condemned him through malice, and crucified him between two thieves, as the greatest indignity they could offer him. He forgot his own bitter anguish, to think of those who persecuted him unto death. Their guilt afflicted him more than all the torments he endured.

2ND POINT. Keep silence, Christian soul, when on the cross of suffering. Complain not of your misfortunes, lose not the fruit of your trials, pray for your enemies, forget the injuries

they have inflicted on you, excuse their intention, if you cannot excuse their acts. If you refuse them a grace which they do not merit, how can you expect to obtain grace from God ?

3RD POINT. Oh, most amiable and compassionate Lord ! when will I begin to imitate thy mercy and sweetness ? Thy precepts command me, thy love urges me, thy example engages me by a sweet and irresistible power. I pardon all who have offended me. I forgive all who have outraged, persecuted, and crucified me.

Alas ! they know not what they do. They believe that they do me much evil, when, in fact, they procure me much good. When they think they do me good, they bring evil on me. By their injuries, they provide me with more occasions of merit than I can procure for myself. By their worldly counsels and dangerous flatteries, they do me more evil than I would do them, or desire for them. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. I sin through malice ; they through ignorance. They believe they have good reason to treat me as they do ; and I entertain too great a desire to be revenged on them. If they had received the numerous graces of which I have been the recipient, they would be more faithful

servants of God than I am. If I had been tempted as they have, I should, perhaps, have lost the grace of God, and become more wicked than they.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ My Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”—*St. Luke*, xxiii.

“ But I say unto you : Love your enemies : do good to them that hate you : and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.”—*St. Matt.* v.

“ Forgive thy neighbour if he hath hurt thee, and then thy sins shall be forgiven thee when thou prayest.”—*Ecclesiasticus*, xxviii.

“ Revenge not yourself, dearly beloved, but give place to wrath ; for vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord.”—*Romans*, xii.

MEDITATION FOR THURSDAY IN
PASSION WEEK.

ON THE PENITENCE OF THE GOOD THIEF AND
THE IMPENITENCE OF THE BAD.

1ST POINT. One of the thieves who were crucified with Jesus confessed him, the other renounced him ; one adored him, the other blasphemed him ; one ascended to heaven from

his cross, the other descended into hell from his ; one was saved at the side of Jesus, the other was damned at the side of Jesus. He was the Redeemer of both, but only one profited by the salvation prepared for them. He offered his life for both, and one died in his impenitence and obstinacy.

Oh, judgments of God, how profound ! Oh, goodness of God, how infinite and sweet ! Oh, justice of God, how terrible ! Oh, ways of God, how admirable ! Who will not fear eternal loss ? Who may not hope for eternal life ? One can be lost anywhere, since a criminal damned himself at the side of Jesus, who was shedding his blood and dying for him. One may hope at all times, since a malefactor saved himself at the last hour of a wicked and criminal life.

2ND POINT. Admire the faith of the good thief, who believed in and confessed Jesus when he was naked on the cross, borne down with a load of suffering, mocked and blasphemed by the doctors and priests of the law, and in a state so little in conformity with the dignity of his divine nature. Admire his hope, which inspired him to ask Jesus to remember him when he entered into his kingdom. Consider his charity

towards God, in defending the innocence of Jesus Christ against those who assailed it; towards his neighbour, by correcting the error of his guilty companion, and endeavouring to inspire him with sentiments of faith, humility, and piety. In fine, admire his patience, humility, and penitence, and endeavour to imitate the virtues which rendered his contrition so perfect.

3RD POINT. Jesus forgot his own cruel sufferings to attend to the prayer of a malefactor. He forgave him all his sins, and with an oath, promised him Paradise. Oh, incomparable Prince! who was not jealous of his crown, but willing to divide his empire with a thief. Oh, liberal Master! who gives his servants so liberal a recompense.

Oh, precious and consoling words to the sick and weary soul: This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise! Oh Lord, I say to thee, with this great penitent: "*Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!*" We truly deserve the cross, but as for thee, what hast thou done to deserve so cruel a death? Let me also be crucified with thee, that I may hear thee say at the moment when my soul is on the eve of departing from my body: "*This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*"

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ And one of the robbers who were crucified with him, blasphemed, saying : If thou art Christ, save thyself and us.”—*St. Luke, xxiii.*

“ But the other answering, rebuked him, saying : Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation.”—*Ibid.*

“ And we indeed suffer justly ; for we receive the due reward of our sins : but this man hath done no evil.”—*Ibid.*

“ And he said to Jesus : Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him : Amen, I say to thee, this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.”—*Ibid.*

“ And I say to you : In that night there shall be two men in one bed : the one shall be taken and the other left.”—*St. Luke, xvii.*

MEDITATION FOR FRIDAY IN PASSION
WEEK.

ON THE PASSION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

“ *Woman, behold thy son. Son, behold thy mother.*”

1ST POINT. Oh sweet and merciful Jesus, couldst thou not have spared thy tender and sorrowful Mother the pain of seeing thee suffer

and die? What had she done that she must take part in thy sacrifice, and witness the agony that she could neither relieve nor soothe? What greater pain could have been inflicted on her, than to be obliged to stand by and behold her only Son expiring in such cruel torments? What greater grief for thee than to die in the presence of thy desolate and afflicted Mother? What mother is comparable to MARY? What son comparable to Jesus? What tortures comparable to those of the cross?

2ND POINT. God desired that the holy Virgin should be at the foot of the cross, and, by the sacrifice of her only Son, co-operate in our redemption, by offering to the Almighty Father that which was most precious and dear to her, to repair thereby the fault of Eve, who caused our loss; to increase the grief of her Son, by her presence; to bear part in his sorrows; to drink of his chalice; to become the Queen of martyrs, of whom her Son was the King; to be as he was, crowned with opprobriums and ignominies; to receive all the predestined who were given to her in the person of the beloved disciple, and to be declared their mother by these words: "*Woman, behold thy son. Son, behold thy mother.*"

3RD POINT. Mary endured all that Jesus

suffered. The sword that entered his sacred side pierced her afflicted soul. The wounds that disfigured his flesh filled hers with suffering inconceivable. The stripes that had lacerated him were imprinted in her heart.

The martyrs suffered in their bodies, Mary suffered in her soul; the martyrs suffered in their criminal flesh, Mary suffered in the innocent flesh of her Son. The hearts of the martyrs were filled with joy, and the heart of Mary with desolation. Love diminished the pangs of the martyrs; love increased the pangs of Mary. Can she not truly say: There is no grief comparable to mine?

MEDITATION FOR SATURDAY IN PASSION WEEK.

THE PASSION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, CON- TINUED.

1ST POINT. Jesus was crucified in his body and soul; in his body on the cross, and in his soul in the heart of his holy Mother. Mary was crucified spiritually and corporally; spiritually in her soul, corporally in the flesh of her divine

Son. Love imprinted on her heart all the wounds that the scourge had inflicted on his body. Those that were not mortal to the Son were so to the Mother. The lance that opened the side of Jesus after he was dead, pierced the living heart of Mary. Never has a mother loved or suffered as the Mother of Jesus did.

Oh, daughter of Zion, to whom shall I compare thee? Thy grief is without example: only the sorrows of thy divine Son are comparable to thine; only his surpass thine. He is the King of martyrs, thou art the Queen! He is the MAN OF SORROWS, and thou art the Mother of sorrows!

2ND POINT. Christian soul, go with MARY to Calvary, take part in her affliction, mingle your tears with hers, and consider the excess of her grief. She stood by the cross of Jesus. What strength! what virtue! what constancy! While there, pray to be received among the number of her children. Imitate her patience, to render yourself worthy of such a mother. To receive this honour, you must, like her, stand by the cross, kneel at the foot of the cross, and there wait daily. It is only here that she receives those who are presented to her, by her divine Son, as the children of her adoption.

Renew not her dolours; do not augment her afflictions. When you sin mortally, you crucify her Son anew in your heart; you deprive him of a life more dear to him than the one he lost on the cross. Oh! this death is most painful and bitter to him, and afflicts the heart of his holy Mother, who cannot bear to see the fruits of all he suffered made useless by the guilt of those for whom he suffered. She consented to the corporal death of her Son, but not to his spiritual death in the souls of men. The first gave them life, the second gives them death. She did not complain of the Jews, although they were wicked and criminal, but she has reason to complain of Christians, who are faithless to Jesus who redeemed them, and to her who suffered with him for their salvation.

3RD POINT. Suffer, then, with patience and submission like hers, all that may afflict your body or soul; be constant in tribulation. Continue beside the cross in your desolation. Do not murmur against the order of God's providence, however severe it may appear to you, but draw near to Jesus crucified, and hear him say from his throne of suffering, "*Son, behold thy mother. Mother, behold thy son.*" Do you not desire to belong to the family of Jesus Christ?

Become, then, a child of Mary, and you will be a member thereof.

Oh, most holy and afflicted Virgin! oh, Queen of martyrs! oh, Mother of sorrows! impress on my heart the wounds of thy Son! Obtain for me grace to love his cross, and courage to take part in his sufferings. Pierce my heart with the sword of grief that pierced thy own. Let me drink of the same bitter chalice that thou didst; and, above all, I conjure thee to assist at the hour of my death, as thou didst at that of thy divine Son, receive my soul into thy hands, and return it to him who gave it.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Who shall find a valiant woman? far, and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her.”—*Prov. xxxi.*

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his Mother.”—*St. John, xix.*

“Jesus said to his Mother: Woman, behold thy son.”—*Ibid.*

“And he said to his disciple: Behold thy mother.”—*Ibid.*

“And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed.”—*St. Luke, ii.*

PALM SUNDAY.

THE GOSPEL. *St. Matt. xxi. 1-9.*

“At that time, when Jesus drew nigh to Jerusalem, and was come to Bethphage, unto Mount Olivet, then he sent two disciples, saying to them : Go ye into the village, that is over against you : and immediately ye will find an ass tied, and a colt with her ; loose them and bring them to me. And if any man shall say anything to you, say ye, that the Lord hath need of them : and forthwith he will let them go. Now all this was done that the word might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying : Tell ye the daughter of Sion : Behold, thy king cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of her that is used to the yoke. And the disciples going, did as Jesus commanded them. And they brought the ass and the colt, and laid their garments upon them, and made him sit thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way, and others cut down boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the way : and the multitude that went before and that followed, cried, saying : Hosanna to the Son of David :

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

MEDITATION.

ON THE ENTRANCE OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM.

1ST POINT. Jesus went triumphing to death. He knew all that awaited him at Jerusalem, and had foretold to his disciples how he was to be betrayed to the *chief priests and scribes, who would condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked, scourged, and crucified.* But notwithstanding all, he went thither promptly and joyfully. Whence arose this eagerness and joy? It was because he desired infinitely to suffer and die for our salvation, to show thereby his great love for us; to honour his heavenly Father, and accomplish his will. It was to crown his ignominy and humiliations with glory and triumph; it was to eat the pasch and institute the sacrament of his body and blood, that he might perpetuate on our altars the sacrifice he offered on Calvary.

Christian soul, do you imitate the example of your divine Lord? do you suffer, with Jesus, resignedly and joyfully? do you go triumphantly

to death ? do you allow yourself to be led thither as a victim to the sacrifice ? Is there anything more noble than to die for God ; anything more just than to give your life to him who gave his for you ; anything sweeter or more consolatory than to offer him proofs of your love ; anything of greater merit in his eyes than to sacrifice those things which, of all the world, we love best, for the sake of Jesus ? On the contrary, is there anything more cowardly, unjust, and deplorable, than to shrink away at the approach of death ? to allow despair to enter the soul, or feel unwilling to pay so lawful a debt, or pay it with such regret as to lose the merit of the greatest and most important act of our lives ?

2ND POINT. Jesus enters your heart in triumph whenever you communicate worthily at the divine banquet of the altar. His triumph here is infinitely sweet and glorious to [him, because the heart into which he enters is a kingdom, the conquest of which cost him his life ! Daughters of Sion, rejoice ; behold your King, who approaches, full of sweetness and love. It is your king, and not a tyrant ; he is not a severe judge, but a prince full of peace and compassion ; he comes not to destroy you, or to punish your treasons and rebellions, but to save

you, to sanctify you, to pardon your sins, to communicate to you the merits of his passion, to animate you by his spirit, pour out his graces on you, and give you part with him in the abundance of the glory and felicity of his heavenly kingdom.

3RD POINT. What preparations will you make, daughters of Sion, to receive your King? You must go before him, bearing a palm, to signify the victory you have gained over the world, the devil, and your own evil passions. It is necessary to divest yourself of the wicked habits with which your soul is clothed, and place them under the feet of Jesus Christ; you must break off branches, that is to say, cut off all that is superfluous in yourself, whether it be in words, habits, nourishment, or amusements, by continual mortifications; you must give alms to the poor, and make them your care and treasure. If any one question or praise your works, say: *The Lord hath need of them*: it is in his name, and for him, that I labour.

Sing, then, with the multitude, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Receive him with joy; receive him in your inmost soul; take care that you do not betray him, outrage and crucify him, as the Jews did

three days after they had received him. Oh, inconstancy of man! oh, vanity of life! oh, perfidy of the human heart! how often have ye not crucified him, after having welcomed and received him in triumph! Humiliate yourself, and ask forgiveness of your offended Lord, for having so betrayed his interests, and resolve to be more faithful to him in future.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“Then Thomas said to his fellow-disciples: Let us also go, that we may die with him.”—*St. John, xi.*

“With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer.”—*St. Luke, xxii.*

“I have a baptism, wherewith I am to be baptized: and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?”—*St. Luke, xii.*

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”—*St. John, i.*

“And they indeed went from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus.”—*Acts, v.*

MEDITATION FOR MONDAY IN HOLY
WEEK.ON THE ABANDONMENT OF OUR SAVIOUR ON
THE CROSS.

1ST POINT. “*My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?*” Oh, how terrible must have been that abandonment, which forced tears and sighs from a God, and made him complain before his enemies, who triumphed; before many who believed no longer that he was the Son of God, but a wicked man, since he was thus abandoned by his Father!

2ND POINT. Jesus was never separated from either grace or glory; his divinity was never separated from his humanity. He was always holy, always happy, always God. This terrible abandonment was only a suspension of the succours and sensible consolations that his divinity imparted to his humanity; it was a shadow and figure of the pain a sinner feels in hell when he is abandoned by God.

3RD POINT. Oh my God, the agony that thy divine Son suffered on the cross, gives me an idea of what the damned endure. Thy temporary abandonment of the just, affords me

some conception of the horrors of thy eternal abandonment of the wicked. If the loss of thy presence was so bitterly and sensibly felt by thy Son, who can bear for ever the weight of thy infinite anger? who can suffer, in hell, an eternal separation from thee, an eternal privation of thy grace, thy love, thy presence, thy consolations, thy succour, thy providence, thy felicity, and of all that the immortal soul values, desires, and loves? who could, added to this, suffer an everlasting deluge of evil in the actual presence of all that the soul most fears and is most afflicted by?

Oh my God, do not abandon me, although I deserve it, having so often abandoned thee. Deprive me, if such be thy will, of all consolation, but not of thy grace; abandon me, if necessary, in life, but not at the hour of my death. If thou shouldst abandon me in time, oh! abandon me not in eternity.

Oh Jesus, my Saviour, why art thou abandoned by thy Father? What hast thou done? It is I who deserve to be abandoned; it is I who am guilty, and have sinned. Oh! thy abandonment terrifies and consoles me at the same time: it fills me with terror to see what I merit; it fills me with consolation to see what

I ought to hope for; for if thou wast abandoned at thy death, it was that I may not be at mine. Oh Lord, be thou with me, and succour me, when all the world shall have forsaken me.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?”—*St. Matt. xxvii.*

“Forsake me not, O Lord my God: do not thou depart from me.”—*Psalm xxxvii.*

“Cast me not off in the time of old age: when my strength shall fail me, do not thou forsake me.”—*Psalm lxx.*

“I will not leave thee, neither will I forsake thee.”—*Heb. xiii.*

MEDITATION FOR TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

ON THE THIRST OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

1ST POINT. Jesus said, *I thirst*; and they offered him only vinegar and gall to drink! He desired this torment to make satisfaction for our gluttony, and bear the penalty of the sins we commit by excess, or too great a fondness

for delicate and expensive food. He was abandoned in his soul and body. In his soul, by a suspension of all sensible consolation ; in his body, by the suffering of all imaginable evils.

All his senses, corporal and spiritual, were crucified on Calvary. His eyes, by the sight of his enemies ; his ears, by their blasphemies ; his smell, by the infectious odours of the place ; his touch, by the wounds that covered his body ; his taste, by the vinegar and gall ; his memory, by the recollection of our crimes ; his spirit, by the darkness which seemed to conceal from him the will of his Father, and which wrung from him that bitter cry : *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* his will, by fear and dejection ; his appetite, by disgust, sadness, and grief. There was no part of his body that was not pierced with wounds ; no power of his soul but what was plunged in unspeakable grief. He suffered as if he had been a mere man, without drawing any other succour from his divinity than a strength to suffer without dying. God wrought a miracle, not to relieve his Son from suffering, but to prevent his dying under those sufferings ; and you desire him to work a miracle to preserve you from suffering and death.

2ND POINT. The divine Victim was torn by

whips without, but within he was yet sound. For this reason he made the bitterness of his chalice descend into his body, by enduring the most cruel thirst that was ever suffered, and drinking the vinegar and gall which they offered him. It was then that the book of the Lamb was written within and without. Within, by the justice of his Father ; without, by the cruelty of men. Within, by interior pains ; without, by exterior sufferings.

3RD POINT. Jesus complained of being thirsty, knowing well that they would give him vinegar and gall to drink ; he complained of his sufferings only that he might suffer more ; he made known to us his grief that we might know his love ; he thirsted for our salvation ; he was consumed with the desire of bringing sinners to repentance, of freeing the captive, and making the miserable rejoice. It was love that made him complain, love that made him suffer, love that made him die.

Oh Jesus, my Lord and my merciful Redeemer ! how can I relieve or quench the thirst that consumes thee ? "Hear me," says Jesus from the cross : "Leave the sins that so often wound me ; forsake thy evil companions, who may cause the loss of thy soul, and who daily

offend and displease me ; approach my cross by continual meditations on my sufferings ; be frequent in prayer ; receive me often in holy Communion ; abstain from raileries and slander ; pardon the injustice and injuries inflicted on thee, and keep silence when angry. Behold whereby thou mayest quench my thirst and alleviate my sufferings ; behold how thou mayest refresh me ; behold wherein thou mayest console me."

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

"Afterwards Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said : I thirst."—*St. John*, xix.

"O that some man would give me water of the cistern of Bethlehem, which is in the gate."—*2 Kings*, xxiii.

"And they gave me gall for my food : and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."—*Psalm* lxviii.

"As the hart panteth after the fountains of waters ; so my soul panteth after thee, O God. My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God ; when shall I come, and appear before the face of God ?"—*Psalm* xli.

MEDITATION FOR WEDNESDAY IN
HOLY WEEK.

“ *It is consummated.* ”

1ST POINT. When Jesus had taken the vinegar, he said : *It is consummated.* The holocaust is consumed in the fire of my love and sufferings ; the will of my Father is accomplished ; the Gospel is announced ; the prophecies are fulfilled ; the ransom of mankind is paid ; their sins are forgiven ; the captives are delivered ; paradise is opened ; the sacraments are instituted ; fountains of grace flow forth to the uttermost ends of the earth ; the devil is vanquished ; the sins of the world are atoned for ! I have nothing more to say, to do, or to suffer.

2ND POINT. Oh, what consummation more full of joy and peace, than that of the faithful servants of God ! Oh, what consummation more replete with misery and anguish, than that of sinners !

It is consummated ! the dying sinner exclaims. My pleasures are vanished, my amusements are over, my beautiful and joyous days are eclipsed, my hopes are for ever gone, my time is irrevocably lost, my life is near its close, my malice is

consummated and at an end ! In a little while, I will enter into a life of suffering that will never end, and know a misery that will be eternal !

3RD POINT. *It is consummated !* says the dying Christian. My evil days are over, my sufferings are ended, my combats finished, my troubles are calmed and dispersed, my griefs are soothed, my infirmities healed, my tears all wiped away, and my miseries for ever ended. *It is consummated !* There is nothing more for me to do. The cross is laid down at the portals of death ; there are no more evils for me to fear or endure ; no sins to avoid ; no more penance to perform. I shall soon enter into a life of peace and rest, where my joy will be full and eternal.

4TH POINT. Christian soul, you must choose one or the other of these two consummations. An hour rapidly approaches, when you will be obliged to say, "*It is consummated.*" Will you say it with Lazarus, or will you say it with Dives ? Will you say it with Jesus, or will you say it with Pilate ? In that hour you will discover that all you have loved in the world, and all that it has promised, is only deceit and vanity.

Oh Jesus, author and finisher of our salvation ! I offer thee my life, and the consummation thereof, as thou hast given thine for me ! Give

me grace to do thy will, to sacrifice myself to thy glory, to be consumed with divine love, to make my body a victim of suffering, to fulfil all thy designs, and acquit myself of all my duties, that I may say with my failing breath : It is done : all is accomplished : *It is consummated !*

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“It is consummated.”—*St. John, xix.*

“For by one oblation he hath perfected, for ever, them that are sanctified.”—*Hebrews, viii.*

“Looking on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith.”—*Hebrews, xii.*

“He learned obedience by the things which he suffered : And being consummated, he became the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey him.”—*Hebrews, v.*

“If a man live many years, and have rejoiced in them all, he must remember the darksome time, and the many days : which, when they shall come, the things passed shall be accused of vanity.”—*Ecclesiastes, xi.*

MEDITATION FOR HOLY THURSDAY.

ON THE LAST WORDS OF OUR LORD ON
THE CROSS.

“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”

1ST POINT. Jesus abandoned himself to his Father, after having been abandoned by him. After showing us how to live, he taught us how to die. He afforded us in this life divine lessons of patience, and has given us in his death an admirable and holy example of abandonment to the will, and confidence in the mercy, of God. Imitate Jesus, living and dying. Rest in his arms. Commend your spirit into his hands. He is our Father : can he abandon us ? He is our Saviour : will he condemn us ?

2ND POINT. To die well it is necessary to live well. Say often to Jesus Christ what you would say if you were dying : *“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”* Thou art its first cause ; let it return to thee as to its last end. It is the breath of thy mouth, the product of thy spirit, the price of thy blood, and the sanctuary of thy graces. Into thy hands, which were pierced for me, I commend it ; and to thy

sacred heart, which is ever open to receive sinners, I recommend it. Oh sweet Jesus, take care of it, and abandon it not? Alas! if unsupported by thy hands, it will fall into the power of thy adversary, the devil. Oh, suffer not a soul that has cost thee such an infinite price, to be lost!

3RD POINT. Go forth, my soul, from this body which has been your prison. Why should you fear to die? In dying for you, Jesus has taken away the sting and bitterness of death. He recommended your spirit to his Almighty Father, when he recommended his own. Depart, then, Christian soul, in the name of the Father who created you, of the Son who redeemed you, of the Holy Ghost who sanctified you. Jesus invites you to the eternal rest of heaven.

Bow your head in obedience, and fear not; your soul is safe in the hands of Jesus.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“And bowing his head, he gave up the ghost.”
—*St. John, xix.*

“And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”—
St. Luke, xxiii.

“ But God is our King before ages : he hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.”—*Psalm lxxiii.*

“ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.”—*1 Cor. vi.*

MEDITATION FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

ON THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST.

1ST POINT. Jesus died : who will fear death? Having died for us, who will refuse to die for him? In his death he was consumed with grief : who will desire to die without suffering? By his death he redeemed us : who will serve any other master? He died for our sins : who will not endeavour to destroy and overcome sin?

Oh Good Shepherd! thou hast given thy life for thy sheep. Oh High Priest of the New Law! truly hast thou immolated thyself for the salvation of thy people. Oh divine Lord! thou hast, indeed, taught us from the cross how great an evil sin is, since it caused thee to die; and how infinite a good is that heaven, which cost the life of the Son of God.

2ND POINT. Children of men, will you be always ungrateful, always blind? Do you know the price that was paid for you? Do you know

what you owe? You owe your life to the Son of God, who has given his for you. What injustice, then, to give it to the world, the flesh, and the devil, which are your most deadly enemies. Did the enemy of souls die for you? Did the prince of this world and concupiscence shed their blood for you? Have they ever done you good? Can they ever do you good? Can they love you? Have they a heaven to offer you? My brethren, you belong, not to yourselves, but to him who, in dying for you, paid an infinite price for your salvation.

3RD POINT. Oh, Jesus my Saviour, let me die with thee, for thee, and like thee. I forgive all my enemies, and hope humbly thou wilt be favourable to me; accept my desires, and graciously give me admittance into Paradise, as thou didst the penitent thief. I declare myself a child and servant of thy holy Mother. Recommend me to her as thou didst thy beloved disciple, and desire her to take care of me at the hour of my death. And I implore thee, oh blessed Jesus, by thy abandonment on the cross, do not leave me when all the world abandons me. Sustain my spirit by thy grace, when the strength of my body fails. Give me a great thirst and desire for Paradise. Cast

thy eyes on the poor victim, who is consumed with grief and suffering.

Oh my Father, I abandon my spirit to thee ; I unite my last hour to that of thy divine Son. I wish to honour thee by the sacrifice of my life. I accept death, in acknowledgment of all the blessings I have received from thee ; I accept it to satisfy thy justice, which I have so often irritated ; I accept it willingly, as an expression of my love and obedience ; I accept it that I may enjoy the bliss of possessing and beholding thee ; I accept it, finally, to honour thy Son and his most holy Mother, and to drink the same chalice which they have drained.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ And bowing his head, he gave up the ghost.”—*St. John*, xix.

“ The just perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart.”—*Isaias*, lvii.

“ For why did Christ die for the ungodly?”—*Romans*, v.

“ Christ died for us.”—*Ibid.*

“ For to this end Christ died and rose again, that he might be Lord both of the living and the dead.”—*Romans*, xiv.

“ For you are dead ; and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”—*Colossians*, iii.

MEDITATION FOR HOLY SATURDAY.

ON THE BURIAL OF OUR LORD.

1ST POINT. They took Jesus from the cross. He descended from it only after his death, and through the obedience which he rendered to God his Father, and to those who detached him from it. It was necessary for him to remain there while he lived, to die there, and be taken down only after death. Should you not detach yourself from worldly things, and be all to God? Ought you not to become like a dead body, that remains where it is placed, and never complains of what is done to it?

2ND POINT. Jesus was taken from the cross to the tomb. Behold the end of his works! Behold the place of his repose! Behold the termination of his laborious travels! It was for this that he came into the world. After many sufferings, you will also come hither, and find rest in the grave, if you have not enjoyed it in your life, and have died on the cross. The disciples almost lost hope; their charity was weak, if not quite dead; they were sad and downcast, because they were deprived of

the sensible presence of their divine Master, and could neither see nor hear him. Oh, how often this happens !

3RD POINT. When Jesus was taken down from the cross, how eagerly his holy Mother received him in her arms. But unutterable grief was blended with her consolation, when she beheld him covered with blood and wounds from his head to his feet ! His sacred body was washed with her tears ; his wounded hands, feet, and side were kissed with tenderness, awe, and anguish. His agonies were over, but the dolours of Mary continued. Her heart was wrung with new pangs when they took him away to entomb him. Her afflictions were increased by this separation. What did she say ? What were her thoughts while gazing on this sad spectacle ? She did not abandon herself to grief, or fall into impatience, but was resigned to the separation from that which was most dear to her, because it was the will of God. Imitate her example, suffer the loss of all that you most prize and love, and sacrifice everything to the will of God, who orders all things for your good.

Happy is he who receives Jesus when he descends from the cross ! The grain of mustard must die, and be buried in the earth, ere it can

bring forth fruit. Jesus is on the altar as truly as he was on the cross : the altar is Calvary, your heart the sepulchre where he desires to rest after the great sacrifice of his love. It is the place he has chosen for his burial, and where he ought to be kept by a constant renewal of grace and penance. Joseph of Arimathea gave our Lord his sepulchre : will you refuse him yours ? Nicodemus brought sweet spices and new linen for his burial : oh, it will be rendered precious and glorious for him if you prepare the sepulchre with the rich perfume of humility and devotion ! Oh Christian soul, make ready for the burial of Jesus in your heart !

4TH POINT. Happy is he who is crucified and buried with Jesus, who is hidden on earth from the eyes of men, who is unknown, numbered as it were with the dead, and remembered no more ; he will soon rise, with Jesus, immortal and impassible, like him. Happy is he who preserves his faith in the obscurity of the senses, who loses not his hope because all sensible support is withdrawn, and who does not cease to love when deprived of all consolation !

Oh Jesus my Saviour ! thou didst truly become a hidden God, being wrapped in linen, buried in a sepulchre, and numbered with the

dead ; hide me in thy bosom, let me be buried with thee, let me no longer be esteemed or known among men, let me die to all my senses, and be separated from all my desires. I am ready to follow thee withersoever thou goest ; in company with thee I have nothing to fear.

Hell, with thee, would be heaven ; without thee, heaven would be hell.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“ And Joseph, taking the body, wrapped it up in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new monument, which he had hewn out of a rock.”—*St. Matt.* xxvii.

“ Woman, why weepest thou ? Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.”—*St. John*, xx.

“ And Nicodemus also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes. They took, therefore, the body of JESUS, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices.”—*St. John*, xix.

“ My soul is filled with evils ; and my life hath drawn nigh to hell.”—*Psalms* lxxxvii.

“ I am counted with them that go down to the pit ; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead.”—*Ibid.*

“ They have laid me in the lower pit ; in the dark places, and in the shadow of death.”—*Ibid.*

EASTER SUNDAY.

THE GOSPEL. *St. Mark, xvi. 1-7.*

“ At that time Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, bought sweet spices, that coming they might anoint Jesus. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen. And they said one to the other : Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre ? And looking, they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe : and they were astonished. Who saith to them : Be not affrighted : you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen ; he is not here ; behold the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee : there you shall see him, as he told you.”

MEDITATION.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD.

1ST POINT. Jesus has risen. He has come glorious and impassible from the tomb, he is

victorious over death, he has broken the gates of hell, triumphed over Satan, and stripped him of his spoils ; terrified the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre, confounded the Jews, triumphed over his enemies, and enjoys, at the present moment, a life of infinite glory. My soul, weep no more ; Jesus will die no more in his body ; take care that you do not make him die in your heart.

2ND POINT. Jesus has risen in our souls, entered into the kingdom of our hearts and spirits, driven the devil therefrom, triumphed over our sins, which held us slaves, remained in us by his grace, lived by his spirit, reigned by his love, and rested in peace. My soul, weep no more ; Jesus has risen to a better life ; he will die no more in his body ; but be watchful lest you make him die in your heart.

3RD POINT. All the Church has risen with Jesus ; all its body has come from his sepulchre ; all its members are re-animated by the spirit of penance ; all who were spiritually dead have risen with him ; he has now only to give them the Paschal Lamb to eat. Woman, why weepest thou ? Jesus is no longer dead in the sepulchre ; he has risen to a new life ; he will die no more in his body ; but take care that your sins do not make him die in your heart.

Oh Jesus, divine Master ! ascend not so soon into heaven ; remain with us to strengthen our faith, hope, and charity ; behold this holy Easter Sunday is nearly over, night approaches, the spirits of evil assemble and conspire against us, the lion cometh forth seeking my soul to devour it, my passions begin to revolt, my old habits revive, the world takes arms against me, and my flesh torments me with divers temptations. Oh Jesus, thy life, within me is not in safety ; they conspire thy death, and seek to renew thy sufferings. All the wicked and impenitent clamour together to drive thee from the world, scourge and crucify thee again. Defend thyself, oh my Saviour, and do not permit me to destroy thy life in my heart.

Oh, senseless Galatians ! ungrateful Christians ! know ye not that Jesus was crucified for you ? You wept at the cross and at his burial, and now that he has risen, you only think how you may renew his passion, and deprive him of life ! You prepare the whips to scourge him, thorns to crown him, and a cross whereon to crucify him ! What has he done to merit such treatment ? Is he criminal because he has loved you infinitely ? Does he deserve death for having saved you from death eternal ? My soul,

weep no more, Jesus is risen ; he will die no more in your heart, if sin does not crucify him therein.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

“The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.”—*St. Luke*, xxiv.

“Knowing that Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more, death shall no more have dominion over him.”—*Romans*, vi.

“If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above ; where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.”—*Colossians*, iii.

“Mind the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For you are dead : and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”—*Ibid.*

“Crucifying to themselves the Son of God, and making a mockery of him.”—*Hebrews*, vi.

THE END.