

Spiritual Bouquet: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Rom. 12:21

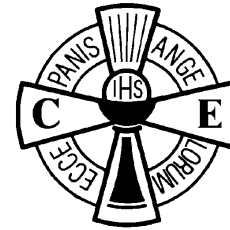
The SEVEN SORROWS of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



The Church twice commemorates the sorrows of its heavenly Mother. The Friday of Passion week, since the 15th century, has also been dedicated by the universal Church to Her *Compassion*. Why is this so? To understand this double liturgy, we must know that Mary is also the Mother of the Mystical Body. The present feast was instituted by Pius VII after his return from his captivity and exile, which lasted from 1809 to 1814. Christ no longer suffers, and for Our Lady also, all suffering as we understand it has ceased. Nonetheless, the prophet Jeremias in his Lamentations, asks: "To whom shall You be compared, O Virgin? Your affliction is like the ocean." A mother who is happy in her home weeps just the same over the sorrows of her children. The statues and pictures of Mary all over Europe wept before the Revolution in France, and Her statues weep again today, in many places. The Passion of Christ continues in His elect, in particular in His Vicar on earth, from whom He does not separate Himself, and against whom the force of hell is deployed unceasingly. The mysterious *compassion* of the Mother is forever acquired for the Mystical Body of Her Son, which must reproduce the divine death in its human nature, elevated above its natural condition by the superhuman power of grace.

Mary's great sorrows began at the prediction of Simeon that a sword would transpierce Her heart. Soon afterwards, She was obliged to flee with the newborn Infant, already object of a fatal search. She lost Him in the temple for three inexpressibly painful days; She met Him on the road to Calvary, and the sight indeed pierced Her heart. She saw Him die, heard His final cry, and witnessed the opening of His side with the effusion of His last drops of blood, mingled with water; She received in Her arms the inert body of the most beautiful of the sons of men. Finally, She was obliged to depose Him in a tomb, leave Him there and return with Her adopted son, John, to a decidual Jerusalem.

The Queen of Martyrs has never ceased to encourage Her children on earth to bear their own crosses, which complement the Passion of Christ. He suffered first the ordinary contradictions of life; for three years He was taunted and regarded as a menace by those who should have recognized Him and His mission. He knew hunger, cold and fatigue; He slept so heavily in a boat amid a tempest, that we can only suppose He was exhausted. He knew what it was to be abandoned in need and to lose, to the empire of various passions, followers He had called His. Christ is our forerunner in all human sorrows and difficulties. Mary, as His Mother, offered to God with Him all the afflictions of His earthly life, and She continues to offer those of the Church, for its sanctification, for the souls in Purgatory and the salvation of souls.



Handmaids of Christ and Children of Mary

Supplement to the Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade in Ireland

September 2008

Month of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady

This leaflet is intended for high-school girls. Being part of the Eucharistic Crusade, you receive the bulletin of the Crusade and pray for the intentions of the Crusade. As girls, Our Lady is your special model. Therefore as well as being Crusaders and Handmaids of Christ, you are also Children of Mary. The purpose of these few pages is to help you in your spiritual life.

AN EASY WAY TO BECOME A SAINT By Fr Paul O'Sullivan, OP

Chapter 5 - THE PASSION (2)

WHAT MUST WE DO?

Clearly, we must love and honor the Passion. The following are very easy ways of doing so. We honour the Passion:

1. By making the Sign of the Cross. We make the Sign of the Cross very often; let us make it slowly and reverently. Made reverently, it gives great honor to God. Made hastily, it insults God and is a kind of parody of the Passion. Let us remember that each time we make the Sign of the Cross, a) We offer the Passion and death of Jesus Christ to the Eternal Father, b) We thank Our Lord for dying for us on the Cross, c) We offer the infinite merits of the Passion for our own souls and for the salvation of the world. Each time we make the Sign of the Cross this way, we console the Heart of Jesus; we obtain pardon for our sins; we help to save the world from great evils.

2. By repeating often the Holy Name of Jesus. Because St. Paul tells us that Jesus merited His Name by His Passion and death. Therefore, when we say Jesus, we should have the intention of offering the Passion and death of Jesus Christ to the Eternal Father in union with all the Masses being said all over the world.

3. By kissing our crucifix, especially after our morning and evening prayers, and before and after saying the Rosary.

Publisher: Fr. Paul Biérier

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4. **By saying the Five Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary**, asking Our Lady to give us a great love for the Passion. We thus honor the Passion of Our Lord and the Dolors of Our Lady.

5. **By making the Way of the Cross**. The 14 Stations bring vividly before our minds the sufferings of our Saviour.

6. **An excellent and most meritorious way** of honoring the Passion is by offering all our sufferings, pains and troubles in union with the sufferings of Our Lord. This gives our sufferings an indescribable value and obtains for us strength and patience to bear them patiently. It is so easy to say: "All for Thee, Dear Jesus, Who hast suffered so much for me."

7. **By studying the Passion**, that is, by reading some books on the Passion.

8. **Hearing and offering Mass** is the best of all means of honoring the Passion because the Mass is the Passion. It has the same value and brings us the same graces as the Sacrifice of Calvary did. It is lamentable to see how few Catholics hear Mass with this intention. During Mass many do not even think of the Passion. The Mass is not an imitation of Calvary; it is the same Sacrifice as Calvary, though in an unbloody manner.

These are all very easy ways of honoring the Passion.

Instruction upon meditation

Meditation, or mental prayer, is a devout and fruitful consideration of Divine things, and of all that is conducive to the acquirement of virtue and of eternal salvation.

It is not a difficult exercise; it requires attention and reflection, a desire to know God better in order to love Him more. It should be done in the company of Our Lady, the saints and our guardian Angel.

Refer to the previous issues of this bulletin to learn how to make meditation properly. Remember that as Handmaid, you promised to meditate 15 minutes every day. St Teresa of Avila says that he who spends 15mn a day in mental prayer cannot be lost.

He who learns to live the interior life and to take little account of outward things, does not seek special places or times to perform devout exercises.

Imitation of Christ, Book 2, Chapter 1 "On Meditation"

Meditation – On Purgatory - 1

We are taught by faith, that nothing defiled can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; and therefore, those who depart this life defiled with the stain of venial sin, or owing some satisfaction for mortal sin which has been remitted by penance, cannot enjoy the presence of God until « the last farthing » be paid to divine justice. When the soul appears before Jesus Christ to be judged, she then clearly understands the horror and deformity of sin, the least degree of which she sees to be more dreadful than every calamity that we can imagine : at the same time she comprehends the infinite perfection of Almighty God, in whose presence the slightest shadow of sin cannot exist; and if she is defiled with any imperfection, she instantly flies from His presence, and rushes willingly and with gratitude into a place of expiation, by means of which she may be fitted to see God : and were there no such means for effacing the rest of sin, she would suffer far more grievous torments from the grief she would feel at the impossibility of removing this obstacle to the enjoyment of God.

SAINT CYPRIAN and SAINT JUSTINA

Martyrs
(314)



The detestable superstitions of Saint Cyprian's idolatrous parents delivered him, from his infancy, to the devil, and he was brought up in all the impious mysteries of idolatry, astrology, and black magic. Cyprian, having learned all the extravagances of these schools of error and delusion, hesitated at no crime, blasphemed Christ and committed secret murders.

In the time of the emperor Diocletian, there lived at Antioch a young Christian called Justina, of high birth and great beauty. A pagan nobleman fell in love with her, and finding her modesty inaccessible and her resolution to evade him invincible, he applied to Cyprian for assistance. Cyprian tried every secret with which he was acquainted to overcome her resolution. Justina, perceiving herself vigorously attacked, armed herself by prayer, watchfulness, and mortification against all his demonic artifices and the power of his spells. Cyprian, realizing he was being bested by a superior power, began to recognize the weakness of the infernal spirits, and resolved to quit their service and become a Christian himself. Agladius, the suitor of the holy virgin, was likewise converted and baptized.

When the persecution of Diocletian broke out, Cyprian and Justina were seized and presented to the same judge. She was inhumanly scourged, and Cyprian was torn with iron hooks. After this they were sent in chains to Diocletian, who commanded their heads to be struck off. This sentence was executed at Nicomedia, in the year 304.

Reflection: If the errors and disorders of Saint Cyprian show the degeneracy of human nature corrupted by sin and enslaved to vice, his conversion displays the power of grace and virtue to repair it. Let us beg of God to send grace to those who are still slaves of error today, and be confident that He will not be deaf to our charitable prayer.