



OUR LADY OF SORROWS

Standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple there whom He loved, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your Son." Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.
John 19:25-27

PRESENCE of GOD

Let us pause and remember that Jesus Who is the Son of Mary came into this world to be our Way, our Truth and our Life. He along with the Father and the Holy Spirit dwell with us and call us to accept our humanity as we model His divinity through our daily joys and sorrows. Amen.

LUKE 2:21-39

When eight days were completed for His circumcision, He was named Jesus, the name given Him by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. When the days were completed for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they took Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord," and to offer the sacrifice of "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to Him, he took Him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

"Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace,
according to Your word,
for my eyes have seen Your salvation,
which You prepared in sight of all the peoples,
a Light for Revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for Your people Israel."

The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about Him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother,
"Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel,
and to be a sign that will be contradicted
and you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

The Gospel of the Lord!

As Mary stood at the foot of the Cross on which Jesus hung,
the sword of sorrow Simeon had foretold pierced her soul.

Below are the seven sorrows of Mary:

1. The prophecy of Simeon (Luke 2:25-35)
2. The flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15)
3. Loss of the Child Jesus for three days (Luke 2:41-50)
4. Mary meets Jesus on his way to Calvary (Luke 23:27-31; John 19:17)
5. Crucifixion and Death of Jesus (John 19:25-30)
6. The body of Jesus being taken from the Cross (Psalm 130; Luke 23:50-54; John 19:31-37)
7. The burial of Jesus (Isaiah 53:8; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42; Mark 15:40-47)

HYMN: STABAT MATER

At the cross her station keeping,
Mary stood in sorrow weeping
When her Son was crucified.

While she waited in her anguish,
Seeing Christ in torment languish,
Bitter sorrow pierced her heart.

With what pain and desolation,
With what noble resignation,
Mary watched her dying Son.

Ever-patient in her yearning
Though her tear-filled eyes were burning,
Mary gazed upon her Son.

Who, that sorrow contemplating,
On that passion meditating,
Would not share the Virgin's grief?

Christ she saw, for our salvation,
Scourged with cruel acclamation,
Bruised and beaten by the rod.

Christ she saw with life-blood failing,
All her anguish unavailing,
Saw him breathe his very last.

Mary, fount of love's devotion,
Let me share with true emotion
All the sorrow you endured.

Virgin, ever interceding,
Hear me in my fervent pleading:
Fire me with your love of Christ.

Mother, may this prayer be granted:
That Christ's love may be implanted.
In the depths of my poor soul.



REFLECTION

As we commemorate the feast of our Lady of Sorrows we recall Mary bravely standing at the foot of the cross where Jesus hanged dying, our Blessed Mother must have recalled the words of old Simeon in the temple: "...and you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."(Luke 2:35) She had kept these things in her heart, and now she recognized their fulfillment.

Whenever we undergo our own doses of daily suffering, it somehow becomes a little more bearable when we recall that the Mother of God herself wasn't spared of life's miseries. She had to endure first a farcical trial of her Son, and then His tragic execution by crucifixion. Her heart must have really been pierced with a sword when His Body was taken down from the Cross and placed in her arms. But only for a brief moment, because He would be laid in the tomb, and her grief would be complete.

Many swords still continue to pierce the heart of our Blessed Mother today. The continuing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that have killed thousands; the oppression of her children in Islamic countries; the violence and degradation caused by crimes, especially human trafficking and narcotics; corruption in high places; and even our own apathy or indifference to the poverty around us—all the sins happening daily against love, justice and peace.

PRAYERS of INTERCESSION

Response:

**MARY, MOTHER OF HOPE AND CONSOLATION,
PRESENT OUR NEEDS TO YOUR SON.**

We recall what is going on in many countries that are torn by civil war. How many families are living in refugee camps or had to immigrate to foreign countries to escape those who are kidnapping and murdering the fathers, the mothers and even the children? How many families had to escape from their homeland to protect their daughters from being raped by mercenaries and soldiers who have no morals whatsoever? These families can associate with the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For them we pray:

Many parents can associate with the frightening experience of a missing child. How many parents have lost their child in a supermarket, at a campground or even experienced an incident where their child wandered away from the back yard and could not be found for a few hours? How many parents have experienced the loss of a child due to a messy separation and custody battle? How many parents have permanently lost their child, not knowing his or her whereabouts? Such traumatic events truly pieces the soul of the person involved. This is something that many cannot perceive unless they personally experience it. For all who experience the loss of a child in some manner, we pray:

The events Mary endured in those last hours of Jesus' agony remind many parents of their personal family experiences. Some parents have seen their son or daughter beaten so badly that his or her face could no longer be recognized.

Some had to identify the body of their child who was murdered in a random shooting. Many parents in war-ridden countries had to care for their sons after they had been kidnapped, beaten and even mutilated. How great is the suffering of these parents. How much greater was the suffering of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For she who enjoyed the fullness of her immaculate state could never conceive doing such deplorable crimes. For innocent victims of heinous crimes, for the victims of crime we pray:

As we reflect upon the sufferings of the Mother of God we think of those who continue to endure similar sufferings, let us pray that they may receive from God the strength that they desperately need to continue to carry their spiritual crosses. For them we pray:

PRAYER

Father,
as Your Son was raised on the cross,
His mother Mary stood by Him, sharing His sufferings.
May Your Church be united with Christ
in His suffering and death
and so come to share in His rising to new life,
where He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
One God, for ever and ever. Amen.



Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
help us to imitate Mary in our times of suffering.

Live Jesus in our hearts.
Forever!



Mary most sorrowful, Mother of Christians, pray for us.