

Good Friday: Love and Conversion

Summary of the Morrow's Meditation

We will consecrate our meditation of tomorrow to the consideration of Good Friday: first, as a day of love; second, as a day of conversion. We will then make the resolution: first, to spend this holy day in recollection and in frequent aspirations of love towards Jesus crucified; second, to practise, in honour of the cross, some little mortifications, adding to them the sacrifice which costs us most. Our spiritual nosegay shall be the words of the Apostle: "*The charity of Christ presseth us; judging this, that if one died for all then all were dead. And Christ died for all, that they also who live may not now live to themselves, but unto Him who died for them and arose again*" (II Cor. v:14-15).

Meditation for the Morning

Let us transport ourselves in spirit to Calvary; let us there adore Jesus lifted up on the cross for our salvation; and at the sight of His body, which is but as one great wound, let our hearts overflow with compassion, gratitude, contrition, praise, and love.

GOOD FRIDAY A DAY OF LOVE

Let us with loving eyes gaze at the divine crucified Saviour; everything from the sole of His feet up to the crown of His head, from the least movement of His heart up to His deepest emotion; everything constrains us to love Him; everything cries out to us: "*My Son, give me Thy heart*" (Prov. xxiii:26). His outstretched arms tell us that He embraces us all in His love; His head, which could not repose on aught save the thorns with which it is crowned, inclines towards us to give us the kiss of peace and of reconciliation; His breast, wounded with blows, rises with the beatings of His heart, which is moved with love towards us; His hands, violently torn by the weight of the body; His feet, the wound in which is enlarged by the weight they have to bear; His bruised face; His veins exhausted of their blood; His mouth parched with thirst; lastly, all the wounds with which His body is covered form as it were a concert of voices which cry out to us: "See how I have loved you." And if we could but penetrate into His heart, we should see it wholly occupied with each one of us, as though He had only each one of us to love, begging mercy for our ingratitude, our lukewarmness, and our sins; soliciting for us the help of all the grace which we have received, and which we shall receive; offering His blood for us to His Father, together with His life, all His interior and exterior sufferings; lastly, consuming Himself in the indescribable ardours of love, without anything being able to turn away His thoughts from it. O love, would it be too much to die of love for so much love! O good Jesus, I will say to you with St Bernard: "Nothing touches me, nothing moves me, nothing constrains me to love Thee so much as does Thy holy Passion. It is there I gain the most from Thee, it is that which unites me the most closely to Thee, and which attaches me to Thee the most strongly." Oh, what good reason had St Francis de Sales to say that the Mount of Calvary is the mountain of love; it is there that in the wounds of the Lion of the tribe of Judah faithful souls find the honey of love, and that even in heaven, next to divine goodness, Thy Passion

is the most powerful of motives, the sweetest, the most violent, to ravish all the blessed with happiness! And I, after that, O crucified Jesus! could I live any other life than one of love for Thee?

GOOD FRIDAY A DAY OF CONVERSION

In order to prove to Jesus that I really love Him, I must be converted, that is to say, I must die at the foot of the cross to all which belongs to the old man in me; to all my negligences and all my lukewarmness; all my self-love and my pride, all the effeminacy which is so eager in seeking after comfort and enjoyment, so inimical to everything that annoys or displeases; the susceptibility which is hurt by everything; the spirit of backbiting and calumny which finds continually some thing to speak against; the frivolity and dissipation and want of application which will not permit the soul to give itself up to recollection; the licence of the tongue which pours forth all that is in the mind; lastly, all that is incompatible with the love which Jesus crucified asks of His disciples. We must substitute for these evil inclinations the solid virtues taught by the cross; humility, meekness, charity, patience, abnegation. Jesus asks it of us by all His wounds, as though they were so many tongues. Can I refuse Him? Can I still adhere to my attachments when I see Him naked on the cross, and not make my garment of His nakedness, my livery of His opprobriums, my riches of His poverty, my glory of His confusion, my enjoyments of His sufferings?

Resolutions and spiritual nosegay as above.