

## Monday in Passion Week: How we ought to Love Jesus Crucified

### *Summary of the Morrow's Meditation*

After having meditated how greatly the crucified Jesus has loved us, we will now meditate upon how we ought to love Him ourselves, and we shall see that we ought to love Him, first, with a penitent love in memory of the past; second, with a generous and fervent love for the present and the future. We will then make the resolution: first, to address frequently, during the day, loving aspirations of love to Jesus suffering and dying for us; second, to perform all our actions from a motive of love for Him, and to give, with this object in view, all the perfection of which we are capable to these actions. Our spiritual nosegay shall be the words of St Paul: "*Christ died for all, that they who live may not now live to themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again*" (II Cor. v:15).

### *Meditation for the Morning*

Let us prostrate ourselves in spirit at the feet of Jesus Christ suffering and dying for us, and let us offer Him our most fervent homage of adoration, of gratitude, and of love.

#### WE OUGHT TO LOVE JESUS CRUCIFIED WITH A PENITENT LOVE IN MEMORY OF THE PAST

How full of shame for us, what a subject for regret and repentance, is our whole past, studied at the foot of the cross! Alas! is it not true that the cross of the Saviour has most often found in us nothing but lukewarmness and insensibility, perhaps even coldness and baseness? Is it not true that the cross is like a great book, in which our sins are written in characters of blood? The flesh of the divine Saviour, which is torn to pieces, and His blood, which flows under the lashes of the scourges, are an accusation against the unruly love we have for our body. His head, crowned with thorns, reproaches the pride of our minds and the vanity of our thoughts. The gall and vinegar which He is given to drink protest against the effeminacy and sensuality of our tastes. His face, wounded with blows and covered with spittle, condemns our desire to make a parade and attract notice, our horror of humiliation and contempt. The nails which fasten Him to the cross ought to make us blush for our love of liberty and of our inborn independence. Lastly, His death speaks to us of the enormity of our sins, which are the cause of it. O Jesus, whom I ought so much to love, how I regret to have so greatly offended Thee! Penitence ought to be my portion forever; and, instructed by the voice which issues from all Thy wounds, I will begin a new life.

#### WE OUGHT TO LOVE JESUS CRUCIFIED WITH A GENEROUS AND FERVENT LOVE

If a man were to show us kindness, we should not be insensible to it. If he were to sacrifice for us his fortune, we should think that we could never thank and love him sufficiently. What would it be, then, if to the sacrifice of his fortune he were to sacrifice his honour and sacrifice his liberty to the extent of allowing himself to be bound and scourged like a slave? What would it be, above all, if he were to sacrifice his life in order to save

ours? Can we conceive a heart sufficiently bad to offend such a benefactor, or to refuse him a sacrifice, no matter what it might be? O crucified Jesus, who hast done all this and infinitely more still—who hast heaped ineffable benefits upon us, which were the cause of Thy holy death, how then can we have the heart to offend Thee? to refuse Thee aught, when Thou givest all, when Thou givest Thy own self without reserve? How can we be attached to earthly possessions when Thou art all naked upon the cross? How can we indulge in self-love and vanity when Thou art covered with confusion? How can we give way to self-will when Thou dost obey even unto death? to pleasure and enjoyment, when for us Thou didst taste suffering? No, my God, it is not possible. To Thee is due a generous love which spares nothing, which sacrifices everything without reserve. But even that is not enough. To this generous love ought to be united fervour; that is to say, that noble and delicate sentiment, which, after having given all, humbly confesses that it is a million times too little; that it is nothing in comparison with what Thou dost deserve, O crucified Jesus! Such was the love of the saints, They always aspired to love more and more, and, whatever they did, to do a thousand times more, and a thousand times more still. They consumed themselves with holy desires to love always more. They would have desired to love infinitely if they had been able, because they comprehended that our great God is millions of times worthy of an infinite love. Hence it was that on one side they never relaxed their efforts, and always made progress; and on the other were always very humble, ashamed and confused not to love more. Oh, who will give us this fervent love which burns ceaselessly like a living flame and is fed in consuming itself? O love, come to me, consume me; may I no longer live except by love, and may I die of love! O crucified Jesus, give me, like St Paul, a heart able to say: The love of Jesus Christ constrains my heart, and nothing can stay its holy ardour (II Cor. v:14; Rom. VIII:37)

*Resolutions and spiritual nosegay as above.*