

The Easter Octave - Saturday

Morning Prayers

Evening Prayers

Annunciation Novena

Saturday in Easter Week: His Apparition to the Holy Women and to the Apostles

And on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene cometh early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre; and she saw the stone taken away from the sepulchre. She ran, therefore, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith to them: They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him. And they both ran together, and that other disciple did out run Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And when he stooped down he saw the linen cloths lying: but yet he went not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin that had been about His head not lying with the linen cloths, but apart, wrapt up into one place. Then that other disciple also went in who came first to the sepulchre: and he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

The Gospel according to St John, xx:1-9.

Summary of the Morrow's Meditation

We will meditate tomorrow upon two visits to the tomb of Our Lord, as recounted in the gospel of the day, and made, the one by the holy women, the other by St Peter and St John. We will then make the resolution: first, to bring to the service of God the same fervour as the holy women did when they were seeking the risen Jesus; second, to animate ourselves to the practice of virtue by means of the good example set us by our neighbour. Our spiritual nosegay shall be the words of St Augustine: "*What such and such persons have done, why should I not do?*"

Meditation for the Morning

Let us adore Jesus, who has risen gloriously from His tomb, allowing Himself to be sought for by the holy women and by the apostles St Peter and St John. He acts from love. He hides Himself from the soul in order that it may seek Him; that, in seeking Him, it may desire Him more and more, and that, in desiring Him more and more, it may increase in love and in merits. Oh, how good and amiable is Jesus in all His ways! Let us render Him our homage of adoration, praise, and love!

Visit of the holy women to the sepulchre

Early in the morning (John xx:1) of the Sabbath, before day had dawned, the holy women came to the sepulchre of the Saviour, and, finding the stone, which had closed the entrance to it, removed; they ran, filled with grief, to tell the apostles that the body had been taken away. The apostles took these accounts to be only dreams, and would believe nothing. It was an incredulity which entered marvellously into the designs of God; for it was thereby proved that the witnesses and the preachers of the resurrection did not belong to the number of those credulous minds who believe, without any proof, all that is said to them. They were not only seriously-minded men, who do not believe excepting after strict examination and upon good evidence, but they were also cautious men, who were disposed not to believe mere indifferent proofs, and to yield to nothing except on evidence that was perfectly clear. Now, this was precisely what was necessary, as much to decide the adherence of the whole universe to the great fact of the resurrection, the basis of the whole of our belief, as to teach us to be neither too credulous nor too incredulous. To believe lightly, and without discernment, is to be imprudent and to be wanting in good sense; not to believe, because we are determined not to do so, without even being willing to examine whether solid reasons for believing exist, is an infidelity. Wisdom consists in keeping ourselves between the two extremes: to believe nothing lightly, that we may not be deceived; to lend ourselves willingly to the examination of reasons, with a disposition to believe whatever may be proved. Is this our manner of proceeding? Do we not turn sometimes into ridicule, before having made any examination, the simplicity of those who believe in certain extraordinary facts? Are we ourselves as reserved in our criticisms as we are in our praises? When we study a fact which seems to us strange, do we not do it with prejudice and a desire to find that it is false? Do we bring to this study candour and the love of truth?

The visit of St Peter and St John to the sepulchre

Less prompt than the other apostles to condemn the holy women, St Peter and St John set out for the sepulchre (John xx:3). They go there joyfully, because they see, in the absence of the body, the proof that He has risen, according as He had predicted. Faith and love seem to give them wings, and they run with great haste to the sepulchre. Marvellous effect of faith and love! He who believes and loves does everything joyfully; he runs, he flies; nothing stops him; he does not feel the difficulty; he knows nothing of the impossible. With his gaze fixed upon heaven, and with love in his heart, his courage knows no limit. Not only do St Peter and St John set out joyfully, but there is between them a holy emulation, which teaches us to rival one another as to who shall be the most fervent, the most humble, the most charitable. St John arrives the first, doubtless because he was younger, but he does not enter; he remains outside at the door, mortifying in this way his curiosity and, at the same time, yielding to St Peter the honour of being the first to enter, in order to honour in him the head of the apostolate, the doctor of the faith in whose footsteps all the flock must follow. Peter arrives, sees the linen cloths, with the shroud folded up in a place apart. John comes next; he sees like Peter, and both of them believe without hesitation, not like Mary Magdalene, that their Master had been taken away, but that Jesus had really risen, and therefore was truly God. What a beautiful lesson of mortification, humility, and faith in these holy apostles!

Resolutions and spiritual nosegay as above.

Feedback/Typos/Suggestions