

The Easter Octave - Thursday

Morning Prayers

Evening Prayers

Annunciation Novena

Thursday in Easter Week: His Apparition to Mary Magdalene

Mary stood at the sepulchre without, weeping. Now as she was weeping, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and she saw two angels in white, sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid. They say to her: Woman, why weepest thou? She saith to them: Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. When she had thus said she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing; and she knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith to her: Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, thinking that it was the gardener, saith to him: Sir, if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus saith to her: Mary. She, turning, saith to Him: Rabboni (which is to say, Master). Jesus saith to her: Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren and say to them that I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and your God.

The Gospel according to St John, xx:11–17.

Summary of the Morrow's Meditation

We will meditate tomorrow upon the apparition of the risen Christ to Mary Magdalene, as it is recounted in the gospel of the day, and we shall see, first, the ardent love of this holy soul in seeking the Saviour; second, the manner in which Jesus responds to her love. We will then make the resolution: first, often to make, during the day, acts of love towards Our Lord; second, every time the clock strikes to animate ourselves to live better, and better to perform the present action. Our spiritual nosegay shall be the words of Wisdom: "*Wisdom is found by them that seek her*" (Wis. vi:13).

Meditation for the Morning

Let us adore Jesus Christ granting to St Mary Magdalene the favour of being the first, after the Blessed Virgin, to whom He appeared, after issuing from the tomb. Let us congratulate this illustrious lover of Our Lord and like her thank Jesus Christ by saying, Good Master. Oh, how good He is, and how He does indeed merit our whole heart's love.

The ardent love shown by Mary Magdalene in seeking the saviour

After the death of Jesus, Mary Magdalene seemed not to be able to separate herself from Him to whom she had given all her love; she runs to the tomb, and, finding that the sacred body is no longer there, she imagines that it has been taken away. Where has it been put? She is determined to discover it, no matter at what price; and instead of going away, as the disciples and the other women had done, she remains there, retained by love, in order to seek Him whom she has lost; kept there by grief, to weep over Him whom she cannot find. She remains on the spot, without fearing anything, for, after having lost Jesus, there is no longer anything for her to lose. Jesus was the life of her soul, and having lost Him, it was more desirable in her estimation to die than to live, for she hoped that she should find, in dying, Him whom she could not find whilst living.

She remains there, and looks into the sepulchre several times to see if Jesus is not in it. Wherefore do you weep? said the angel who was seated there. "*They have taken away my Lord*" she replies, "*and I know not where they have laid Him*" (John xx:13). She turns her head and perceives a man; it is Jesus, who presents Himself to her without making Himself known. "*Sir*" she exclaims, "*if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away*" (John xx:15). An ardent desire will not admit that anything is impossible, and renders a person capable of everything. How admirable is the love of Mary Magdalene! and how ardent it is! How intrepid is the desire which consumes her to find Jesus! Happy the soul who loves Jesus to the extent of thus desiring Him! God makes our desires the measure of His benefits; and often, with Him, the greatest blessings cost nothing more than a desire. If He sometimes defers granting our petitions at the very moment we offer them, it is only to make us the more earnestly desire His graces, and to make us appreciate them better when He does give them to us. Oh, if we did but desire to possess Jesus within us by recollection and love I do not say as Mary Magdalene desired Him, but only as much as the worldly man desires wealth and honours how quickly should we become saints! Our great misfortune is not to love, and, consequently, not to desire ardently our perfection. We lose a trifle, and grieve over it; we lose Jesus in losing recollection, humility, patience, mortification, charity, and it does not in the least distress us, and we do not say with Mary Magdalene: Tell me where He is; I am ready to do all and everything to recover Him. Let us beg of Our Saviour to infuse into our hearts the ardent desires which would make us saints.

How Jesus responded to the love of Mary Magdalene

St Mary Magdalene, at the beginning, had only a very imperfect faith, because, not having found Jesus Christ, she supposed that He had been taken away, and not that He had risen. Jesus, however, being touched by her love, sends to her, first, two angels clothed in white, whom she sees seated in the very place where His body had been! the one at the head, the other at the feet; then He presents Himself to her in person, beneath the humble form of a gardener. She does not recognise Him, but He makes Himself known to her by one single word: *Mary!* He says to her. Then Mary Magdalene cannot contain herself any longer. Intoxicated with joy and with love, she falls at the feet of Jesus, exclaiming: *Rabboni! good Master!* She would love to remain there forever, kissing His sacred feet, pressing them to her lips and her heart. No, said Jesus, you must do something more than delight in My presence; you must go quickly and find My brethren, and tell them that I am risen, and that soon they will see Me ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God. Happy Mary Magdalene! she is the first, after Mary, to whom Jesus has shown Himself; she is the elect of the Saviour, that she maybe the apostle of the apostles themselves, and go to announce to them that Jesus is risen. She promptly obeys the command, and

teaches us by her example that we must know how to leave Christ, that we may console and help our neighbour; that it is better to be obedient and humble than to enjoy divine consolations; that it is not enough to love that we must make God, whom we love, to be also loved by others; lastly, that we must know how to moderate our joy, however holy and spiritual it may be, and never abandon ourselves wholly to it, lest we should be tempted to commit some want of respect, which would make us forget the reverential fear which is due to God and the prudent apprehension of losing the graces we have received. What precious lessons are conveyed to us in this behaviour of Mary Magdalene!

Resolutions and spiritual nosegay as above.

Feedback/Typos/Suggestions