

You Wonder at the Sword in My Heart

The soul of Jesus passed into the earth at the foot of the Cross, and descended to the limbus of the fathers. Mary was still at the foot of the Cross. She comprehended in its completeness the vast mystery of the separation of that Body and Soul, the death of the Son of God. The Soul has left her, but she has the Body still. ...The two thieves are still in their agony close to the dead Body of Jesus. To one of them it is like the soothing presence of the Blessed Sacrament, ...To the other there is no consolation now. ... he has made his choice, and keeps to it. The life that remains in him is every moment desecrating Calvary. ...What must have been the unspeakable love of Mary for the body of her Son,--her Son, who was God as well! She spoke not. Her voice broke not the silence, mingled not with the moans of the dying thieves; but the silence of her prayer was loud in heaven.

... one of the soldiers drew near, and drove his spear into our Lord's right side, across His body, and through his Sacred Heart, and immediately there issued forth from the sacrilegious wound both Blood and Water, some of which, it is said, sprang upon the limbs of the penitent thief as if it were an outward baptism or a visible absolution where inward grace had already accomplished its heavenly work. ...The piercing of our Lord with the spear was to our Blessed Lady by far the most awful sacrilege which it was then in man's power to perpetrate upon the earth. ...It is in vain that we try to lift ourselves to a true appreciation of this sorrow in Mary's heart.An angel told St. Bridget that so tremendous was the shock to her, that she would have died instantly, but for a miracle. A sword in her own heart would have been a thousand times less dreadful.

(Rev. Frederick William Faber, D.D., THE FOOT OF THE CROSS, Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, IL, Pgs. 288-297.)

Tradition tells us the soldier's name was Longinus and that he suffered from a disease of the eyes, which may explain why he was uncertain if Jesus was really dead and why he went beyond the scope of his commission on that hill. The action was cruel, and more cruel for being done in the presence of Jesus' grief stricken Mother. It is said some drops of that Precious Blood fell upon Longinus' face and instantly cured him and restored his sight, but a greater miracle gave sight to his soul; he immediately fell on his knees and confessed the Divinity of Him whose Body he had dared to desecrate. **“Truly this was the Son of God!”** Then Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus arrived to remove the Body from its bloody altar of sacrifice and lay it tenderly in Mary's lap. So gently she smoothed Jesus' hair and traced His Passion in every mark upon His Sacred Flesh like one might trace a road map, but she did not wash the Blood off His Body. He would want every drop, even those on the executioners' shoes and on the pavement of Jerusalem and on the olive roots of Gethsemane. She closed each wound with myrrh and aloes Nicodemus had provided with a quietness and concentration that sent her deeper and deeper into the sufferings Jesus had borne and the agony they had caused him. Her grief was beyond relief. (Faber, Pgs. 297-300.)

The dead Body seemed as obedient to her as ever the Babe had been in Bethlehem, obedient in all things but one. She told St. Bridget that the extended arms could not be closed, and laid by His side, or crossed upon His breast. We ought rather to say they *would* not, than they *could* not, be closed. He will not relinquish those outstretched arms, which seem to invite the whole world into the utmost width of their embrace. (Faber, Pg. 301.)

It is no surprise that Our Lady would reference the sword in her heart when speaking to Sister Mildred Neuzil of suffering as the means to purge the soul and mold it into the image of her Son, the New Passover Lamb slain on the altar of Calvary.

“My child ...You see the sword in the Heart of your Mother. Suffering completed the work of divine grace in my soul. He who refuses to suffer will never abide in the Spirit of Christ, will never be formed into His image.

...You wonder at the sword and the deep wound it has made in my Heart. It is the sword of grief plunged therein by my children who refuse to let me teach them the true way. There is only one true way to the Father, my child, only one way to eternal union. It is the way of the divine humanity. It is through my Son, the Only-begotten of the Father, that souls attain perfect union with the Divinity, as perfect as human nature is capable of, aided by divine grace.

See, I weep but my children show me no compassion. They behold the sword in my heart but will make no move to withdraw it. I give them love; they give me only ingratitude. Weep, then dear child, weep with your Mother over the sins of men.”

(Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA©, Fostoria, OH, Pgs. 23, 34.)

In her March 3, 1957 letter Sister Mildred recounts words of Jesus similar to those of Mary regarding the ingratitude of those for whom He died. How He longs for our love in return. Is there anything more painful than an unrequited love?

“I Who bore the cross for love of men, how many of them bear it for love of Me? Oh, my little white dove, bride of My Heart, I crave for love. I Who died that men might live am refused even a small corner in men’s hearts. What have I done to deserve such ingratitude? Will men never understand the longing of My Heart for their love! Oh my little one, simple and most lovely in My sight because of the lowliness of your heart, help Me to gain for Myself the love of those for whom I suffered and died. Let My love, surrounding you and filling you, draw souls to Me in great multitudes. Such is My will oh My beloved one. Open then your heart that I may pour into it without ceasing the sweet waters of My undying and saving Charity. For it is from this Fountain of Life, which springs forth from My Divine Heart that men will receive Eternal Life. It was to obtain this for them that I lived, suffered and died. ...I have shown him [man] the way. He has but in love to take up his cross as I have done and follow Me. The way is sure.

Already in 1954 Jesus had spoken to Sister Mildred of the great lack of FAITH in the world and how so many profess to believe in Him but do not live this belief; their

hearts are cold, for without faith there can be no love. He expressed grief over those who are being drawn farther and farther away from Him and will not even listen to His Mother because they have never been taught to listen. He called Himself a Beggar for our love but said so few seek to satisfy His divine hunger. (Diary, Pgs. 5-6.)

On March 6, 1957 Our Lady again spoke to Sister:

“At the foot of the cross, my sweet child, through the greatest pain and suffering, I obtained for you and all mankind, in union with my dying Son, all the graces necessary for your salvation and sanctification. Think of this, my little one, and do not forget the sorrows of your Mother.”

[In an April letter Our Lady said:] “I am indeed the Mother of Sorrows and it is my children who pierce my heart. Their lives are filled with vanity and selfishness. They love my Son with their lips but not in their hearts. They refuse to follow me and my Son along the way of the Cross, because they have no love. Love gives, love does not count the cost. But for most souls, love asks too much. They are willing to receive in abundance, but they will not give. A full heart cannot receive love. It must first be emptied. It must give all, then it will receive all. Oh my children, give me your hearts emptied of all self-seeking and fill it with Divine Love. I will give you Jesus to hold in your hearts.”

Since the 1940's Our Lady has been asking for our love and for a reform of life, interior holiness through union with the Divine Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity and through imitation of the simple virtues modeled for us in the Holy Family. She has entrusted us with her message that we must make known in America and around the world. She has given us a mission from heaven to lead the world in bringing peace and spiritual renewal to our world in such urgent need of it. Will we do as she asks at last? In 1981 she said: **“Tell my faithful ones who are working so diligently for my cause that I am grateful but urge them to do all in their power to continue even in the midst of sacrifice and suffering....Get this message to them quickly as the time is shorter than ever.”** Will you help us spread Our Lady's message? Help us take the sword from her sorrowful heart? We invite you to make a sacrifice and use the money saved to purchase Diaries to give to people who do not know of Our Lady of America and her message and our mission. Ask them to pay it forward and do the same for others who do not know. **Diaries are \$5 each and can be obtained by mailing a check for the number desired to: Our Lady of America Devotion, P.O. Box 264, Lodi, OH 44254.** Kindly add extra to help cover the postage. Thank you, and may Our Lady hide you in the refuge of her Son's Most Sacred Heart, pierced and laid open so we might enter in.

Oh, my children, give me your hearts and I will give you Jesus!

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