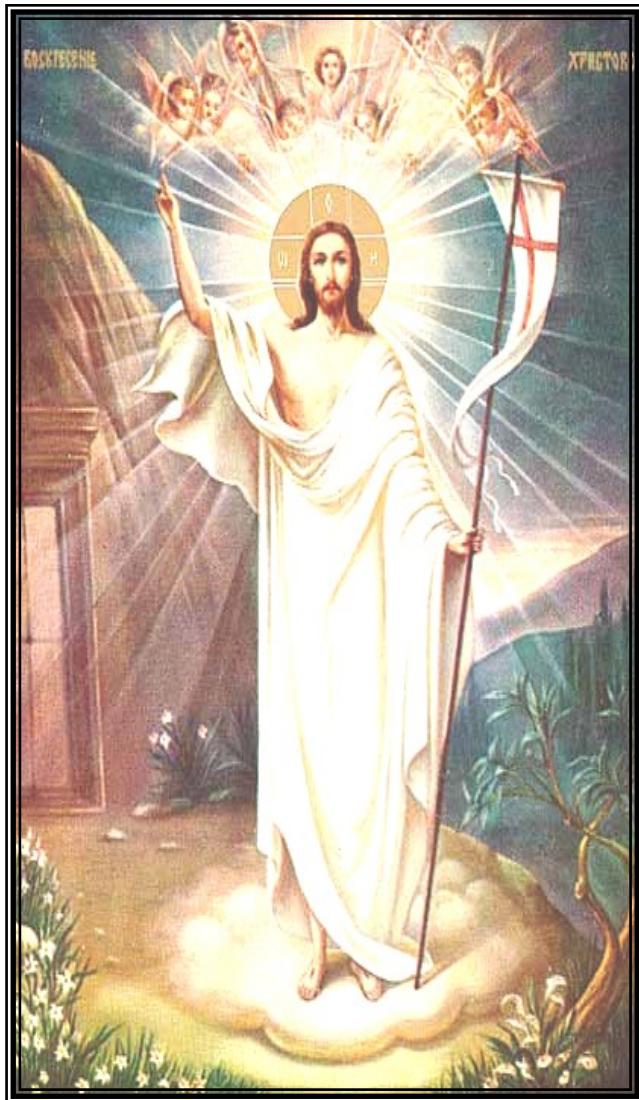


# THE SERAPH

April 2020

Vol. XL No. 8



*The Resurrection of Our Lord by Carol Jackson*

# The Seraph

Vol. XL No. 8  
APRIL 2020

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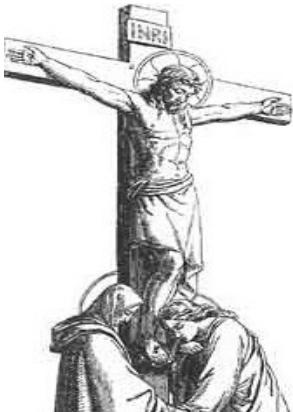
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In ómnibus - Cáritas.*



# TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

*Bishop Giles, OFM DD*

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We are invited, encouraged, and even commanded to follow Jesus in this world if we wish to have eternal life. “*If you will be My disciple, deny yourself, take up your cross daily and come follow Me.*” (Matt. 16:24) In following Jesus, the most important part is found on Mount Calvary. If we follow Him there, we will most likely follow Him into Heaven.

Since we cannot physically follow Jesus in this life, we must spiritually follow Him. The practice of making the Stations of the Cross is a wonderful place to begin. It is said that Mary and many of the early Catholics often retraced Jesus’ journey to Calvary. They recalled the various events in great sorrow, but also with great love. “*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten*

*Son.*” (John 3:16) Jesus loved us so as to die for us.

In the Fifth Station, we see Simon helping Jesus to carry His cross. Simon was at first an unwilling aid to Jesus but then was transformed by the very act. He was very happy to have been chosen to help Our Lord. In our own lives, we are often faced with disagreeable tasks that we are inclined to reject or refuse, and in this, we deny ourselves the opportunity to gain great graces or merit. When we are compelled by some necessity to perform some disagreeable task, we should think of Simon of Cyrene. There is certainly something good in store for us if we will embrace this cross for the love of Jesus.

In meditating upon the mysteries of the Way of the Cross, we cannot help but recall that it is our own

personal sins that inflicted all the pains and suffering upon Jesus. We can each recall how our disobedience, lying, cheating, etc. was essentially spitting upon Jesus, mocking Him, scourging Him, and driving nails in His hands and feet. We recall these things when we make the Stations, not to repeat these wounds in Our Lord, but to increase our sorrow for having done them. When we spiritually see the sufferings our sins have caused, we can more earnestly repent of them and do penance for them.

This is our chance to tell Jesus how sorry we are for having done this to Him. This is also an occasion for us to take the hand of Mary, the Blessed Virgin Mother of Jesus. What our sins have done to her Son has also inflicted great pain and sorrow in the heart of Mary. To her, we also owe a sincere and humble apology. As we confess our sins and recall the evil we have committed against the Son of God, she will eagerly take us by the hand and lead us along the Way of the Cross. She will reveal to us in ever greater detail what we have done to Jesus and show us likewise the wounds in her own heart and soul.

If we take her hand and follow Jesus, she will instruct us all along the Way. She will have us shedding tears of contrition as she shows us how we have hurt Jesus and indirectly her. What pains we have caused her, but yet, like Jesus, she is eager to forgive us and help us to repair the evils that we have done. In our shame, we often fear to face Jesus, but she will hold our hand and accompany us with all motherly tenderness and love. She is His mother, but she desires to be ours as well.

If we cannot make the Stations of the Cross every day, we can, at least, take Mary's hand when we pray the Rosary. She will happily take us through the Mysteries from the Incarnation to the Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of her Son, and then to her own glory in Heaven. In this way, we are daily prepared to follow Jesus in all that we must do.

In rising from our sleep, we can recall that Jesus rose from each fall, and bravely went forward to embrace all the sufferings that lay ahead. This should help us overcome so many temptations of despair or loathing of the difficulties that await us this day. In dressing, we can recall how

our sins stripped Jesus of His garments. How our vanity exposed Him to humiliation. Thus, we should dress and adorn ourselves in humble moderation (modesty). In eating, we can recall how through our sins of appetite we offered Jesus vinegar as He hung upon the Cross. Then, let us eat moderately, so as to maintain our health and strength to be able to follow Him even more closely. In our work, let us do it for the love of God, and all that is hard or bitter will be made easy and sweet. Every difficulty in our day can be taken up and embraced in imitation of Jesus and even spiritually with Jesus. In the times of our breaks or recreation, we can with St. Veronica offer to refresh Our Lord by wiping His Face. In this way, we also moderate our recreation and can avoid overindulgence, or we can avoid office gossip, slander, and rumor-mongering. As we lie down to take our rest, we can once again think of Jesus as He was laid in the tomb. We should pray and prepare our soul to be judged, and even look forward to eternity. We should have sorrow for the sins we have committed, as well as regret for the many opportunities of grace that we have lost

throughout our day. We should also give thanks for the many graces we did receive and cooperate with. At least, we should be grateful for the loving mercy of God – we are not in Hell at this very moment, because this is truly what we deserve.

If we will spiritually take Mary's hand as we make the Stations of the Cross, or pray Her Rosary, we will find an increased motive for repentance, penance, and amendment. She will obtain many graces for us so that we can do all these things. Where we are too ashamed to face Jesus or to follow Him intimately, Mary will encouragingly take our hand and lead us onward. She will show us the enormity of our sins, but also the love and mercy of God. With tears in her eyes, she will soon bring forth tears in our own eyes. Once we have our heads hanging in shame and sorrow with tears in our eyes, she will lift our chin so that we may look into her eyes and she will smile upon us. With the pain of sorrow, she brings the joy of mercy and love.

We will surely find that following Jesus is very satisfying and rewarding when we take Mary for our guide,

letting her show us the way. Our sorrow will be truly profound but will not crush us in despair. Our penances will be ever more intense, yet, will be filled with hope and joy. Our amendment will be even more secure as she leads us forward holding our hand and

not allowing us to return to the evils of our past life. Most importantly, she will teach us to love as we have never loved before. We follow Jesus best when we approach Him through Mary. Let us take her hand and hold on tight until the very end.



*“Mary having co-operated in our redemption with so much glory to God and so much love for us, Our Lord ordained that no one shall obtain salvation except through her intercession.”*

*St. Alphonsus Liguori*

*“Let us then cast ourselves at the feet of this good Mother, and embracing them let us not depart until she blesses us, and accepts us for her children.”*

*St. Bernard of Clairvaux*



*“Let us run to Mary, and, as her little children, cast ourselves into her arms with a perfect confidence.”*

*St. Francis de Sales*

# THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

*Bishop Giles, OFM DD*

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The nuclear family is often presented as the ideal. It is the very reflection of the Divine Trinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is reflected in the father, mother, and child.

In the beginning, God created Adam. It was not good for him to be alone, so from his side, God created a helpmate – Eve. From their union of love came forth children to fill the earth. In Holy Scripture, we read that a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one.

Our world seems to glorify and hold up the independence of this nuclear family, but seldom is a nucleus free from others. It seems that we should be looking beyond husband, wife, and child. In our world, it is virtually impossible for new parents to be self-sufficient and independent of others. We hear of couples waiting until they are “financially secure” before marrying or starting a family. It is also common to hear that if we wait until everything is perfect, it will be too late.

Was there ever a time when a young family did not need the help of others? Grandparents,

aunts, and uncles, cousins, neighbors, and friends all appear to be an essential element in the success of a family. Those with greater financial security may be able to walk away from extended family, but they end up buying one. In an extended family, there are built-in babysitters. If a nuclear family has money, they can hire babysitters. In an extended family, there are role models, teachers, playmates, coaches, shoulders to cry on, etc. A wealthy nuclear family may be able to purchase these services as well – and they often do. They can hire teachers, tutors, coaches, playmates, psychological therapy, etc.

A child principally needs parents, but he also needs so much more. The extended family fills in much more than we recognize. As we observed, the affluent can purchase these things, but this purchase of family and friends is usually a very poor substitute for the real thing. The poor that are deprived of this extended family will create one in other ways. Neighbors can often fill this need for them. Many can

confess that they were raised by their neighbor more so than by their own parents. The gangs, criminal or otherwise, are essentially another substitute extended family. The various mobs established their own “family” crime syndicates.

While it is wrong to put the entire burden of raising children upon grandparents, we must also understand that loving grandparents are often able to provide something that parents cannot. To balance out the lives of our children, we should provide them with an extended family environment. It is not necessary that everyone lives under the same roof, but the connections need to be there, and they need to be strong. A struggling child is often unable to speak to parents but will readily and easily open up to a grandparent, aunt or uncle. If these are not available, they will bottle it up inside or they will find advice on the street or on the internet and this advice is often not the best and sometimes is the worst possible.

It is not the right or privilege of grandparents or the “nice” aunt or uncle to spoil a child. To spoil means to corrupt or break down. No one has a right to do this. Everyone should be working together for

the good of the child, and most importantly, for the good of the child’s soul.

Sometimes it becomes necessary to cut off ties to various people. This should never be done lightly and without serious considerations. Many times, our greatest spiritual danger is in our own homes. These dangers should not be played with but should be eliminated quickly and decisively. Those who would lead our children into Hell should never have access to our children. At the same time, we should realize that no one is perfect. Only God is good. We are all sinners. Our children need to learn early to recognize sin then to reject and avoid it. We can teach our children to be kind and compassionate towards those who make mistakes or fall into sin, and yet hate and detest the sin or the crime.

It is not uncommon in our days to have an aunt, uncle, cousin, or someone in our lives that has become a slave to substance abuse of one kind or another. It is easy to teach our children to detest and even hate them because of what they have become, but this does not appear to be the Christ-like thing to do. Our children will be exposed to this sooner or later. They are

looking and learning from parents and other adults in their lives, how to act or react to this situation. We must show love and compassion but must not aid and abet in the evil. Our children need to see us open up our hearts with loving concern, helping with food or shelter, but not in the continuance of the evil. We should help with the cure and salvation of their body and soul not in the destruction of their physical and spiritual life. Seeing the evil and recognizing the cause and effect relationship is a vital learning experience for children. More importantly, however, the children need to see the practical implementation of true love and concern.

When a child sees that his father is always patient and ready to help his erring relative in positive ways, the child will be more likely to come to his father for help if he is ever in a similar situation. If a child sees that his father is harsh and cruel to his sinful or erring relatives, he will most likely never turn to his father for help in any crises of his life. The goal is to establish in the minds and hearts of our children such love, trust, and confidence in us that they will turn to us

whenever they are truly in need. Having made one mistake, they should not be forced into continuing or making more out of fear of their parents.

We should allow our children to see some of our faults, only so that they may also see us filled with shame for them and humbly confessing them and doing penance for them. Let our sons and daughters see that a real man (their father) is strong enough to humbly confess his mistakes, repent of them and do all that he can to correct them.

We cannot do this alone, so God, in His Wisdom, has given us extended families. Let us not despise or cut them off under some excuse of false piety or social standard. Their imperfections are learning opportunities for our children. Their annoyance is an opportunity for us to practice patience and love. When our children see the way we act and behave in the face of problems, we are teaching them how they should act.

Extended family can be and often is a serious cross for us, but in embracing our cross we will find the greatest reward. We must not forget to look for the good in everything. God can and does draw good from

everything – even evil and sin. Relationships in our extended family teach our children how to establish and maintain relationships with others in the world around them. If we fail to provide them these positive relationships, they will seek them out in less than optimal places. The substitutes will never measure up the real thing. Even if we are affluent enough to hire “professionals” to fill these positions in our children’s lives, these “professionals” are never as good as the family God has given us. The hireling is only interested in his wage, not the souls entrusted to him. He will run and hide at the first threat of real danger. The criminal “family” gangs will only teach our children evil. They are wolves dressed in sheep’s clothing.

Let us, not be afraid to re-examine our extended families. What has God given us? How can this extended family help us to save our souls? There is surely enough opportunity for us, in our extended family, to give the example of true Catholic life. We can show our children how to love and be kind and merciful, while still hating and detesting sin; how to be patient in carrying our crosses and putting up with others. We can allow our children to see that everyone makes mistakes, but true Catholics are humble, confess, and repent of their sins, and don’t stay down. We must get up every day and carry our crosses and truly follow Jesus.



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# CATHOLIC INTENTION VS MASONIC INTENTION

*Bishop Giles, OFM DD*

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## LEFEBVRE AND LIENART

It is related that Lefebvre twice publicly stated that he was ordained a priest and consecrated a bishop by Lienart a high ranking Freemason. (May 11, 1976 in Minneapolis, Minnesota and again in Montreal on May 27, 1976) Lefebvre even claims to have seen Lienart in his Masonic regalia.

We present the following select quotes from Humanum Genus and from a seminary text book on the Principles of Sacramental Theology for our dear reader's consideration. We believe that with humility, truth, and reason our reader will be able to see why the orders stemming from this line are doubtful, regardless of the attempts of many to minimize the necessity of sacramental intention. Humanum Genus is presented so that we may understand that in Freemasonry we are not facing simple heresy, schism, or even apostasy, but rather a diabolical attack upon the Church with the intention to completely destroy Her. We believe that it is relatively safe to assume that a person intends to do what he is doing. A Catholic Bishop is to be

presumed to intend what the Church intends. Is it not fair to also relatively safely assume that a Freemason intends to do what Freemasonry does? The question then is, was Lienart acting as a Catholic or as a Freemason at the time of the ordination and consecration of Lefebvre? Was his intention as a Catholic to do what the Church does, or was his intention as a Freemason to undermine and destroy the Church?

### SELECT QUOTES FROM:

#### *HUMANUM GENUS*

#### *ENCYCLICAL OF POPE LEO XIII ON FREEMASONRY*

*APRIL 20, 1884*

2. ...At this period, however, the partisans of evil seems to be combining together, and to be struggling with united vehemence, led on or assisted by that strongly organized and widespread association called the Freemasons. No longer making any secret of their purposes, they are now boldly rising up against God Himself. They are planning the destruction of holy Church publicly and openly, and this with the set purpose of utterly despoiling the nations of

*Christendom, if it were possible, of the blessings obtained for us through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

*10. ... For, from what We have above most clearly shown, that which is their ultimate purpose forces itself into view - namely, the utter overthrow of that whole religious and political order of the world which the Christian teaching has produced, and the substitution of a new state of things in accordance with their ideas, of which the foundations and laws shall be drawn from mere naturalism.*

*14. Nor do they think it enough to disregard the Church - the best of guides - unless they also injure it by their hostility. Indeed, with them it is lawful to attack with impunity the very foundations of the Catholic religion, in speech, in writing, and in teaching; and even the rights of the Church are not spared, and the offices with which it is divinely invested are not safe.*

*15. But against the Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff the contention of these enemies has been for a long time directed. The Pontiff was first, for specious reasons, thrust out from the bulwark of his liberty and of his right, the civil principedom; soon, he was unjustly driven into a con-*

*dition which was unbearable because of the difficulties raised on all sides; and now the time has come when the partisans of the sects openly declare, what in secret among themselves they have for a long time plotted, that the sacred power of the Pontiffs must be abolished, and that the papacy itself, founded by divine right, must be utterly destroyed. If other proofs were wanting, this fact would be sufficiently disclosed by the testimony of men well informed, of whom some at other times, and others again recently, have declared it to be true of the Freemasons that they especially desire to assail the Church with irreconcilable hostility, and that they will never rest until they have destroyed whatever the Supreme Pontiffs have established for the sake of religion.*

#### **SELECT QUOTES FROM:**

#### **PRINCIPLES OF SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY BY BERNARD LEEMING, S.J. PROFESSOR OF DOGOMATIC THEOLOGY AT HEVTHROP COLLEGE 1956**

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## PRINCIPLE XV

**THE MINISTER OF A SACRAMENT IS PRESUMED TO INTEND WHAT THE RITE MEANS: NEVERTHELESS, IF IN FACT HE RESOLVES NOT TO DO WHAT THE CHURCH DOES, HE HAS NOT SUFFICIENT INTENTION AND THE SACRAMENT IS INVALID.**

*This principle is affirmed as certain theological doctrine, taught by the Church, to deny which would be at least theologically rash.*

552. *The second part of the principle: if in fact the minister resolves not to do what the Church does, he has not sufficient intention and the sacrament is invalid: this was categorically affirmed about Baptism by Alexander VIII in 1690, cf. n. 537. About Orders, it was affirmed by the Congregation of the Council, in the cases of bishops not intending to ordain a particular class of candidates, cf. n. 541 (b); and about Marriage, It is exactly stated in Canon 1086, 2, CF. N. 549*

*Thus, the mind of the Church is clear that it is possible for a minister to have the intention of not doing what the Church does, and that if such is the*

*case, the sacrament is invalid. This teaching is universally accepted by modern theologians, who agree that a sacrament is invalidated even by a secret intention of the minister contrary to the substantial nature of the sacrament. Exactly what constitutes an intention contrary to the substantial nature of each sacrament must be left to consideration about particular cases.*

555. ... *but the mind of the Church about the nature of the sacred ministry is that at least an interior will is required not contrary to her mind. This is supremely reasonable, since the Eucharist is an act of adoration offered to God in the name of the whole Church, and the Church manifests her judgement that a minister who willed not to offer her adoration would not be fulfilling the commission which she gives him. The same argument would apply to Extreme Unction.*

*In general, the Christian mind has recoiled from the concept that its priests and bishops are mere functionaries, commissioned only to repeat parrot-wise certain formulas; and has felt that they are entrusted by Christ with his flock, and in no wise fulfil that trust if there is a will positively to exclude what the*

*Church of Christ does for the flock.*

556. ... Now there is always a presumption that a man intends to do what he actually does; nevertheless, a presumption is always liable to be overthrown by clear evidence. It is possible to speak certain words and yet have no real mind in accord with the words. It is clearly contrary to

common sense to say that the spoken word inevitably reflects the inward mind; for lies and deceit are, unhappily, not unknown. A man who tells a lie most certainly wills to say the words, but wills to say words which are contrary to his real mind. A false promise involves a will to speak words affirming an intention contrary to the sincere intention....



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# OUR LORD'S SUFFERINGS

*Father Joseph Noonan, OFM*



It has been noted by many Catholic writers and verified by Our Lord Himself that most of His suffering was due to the sins of men. When one considers his own sins over a lifetime, there is an embarrassing number of sins committed by each of us. For those who love Our Lord, it breaks the heart to consider that their sins caused Our Lord to suffer so much. The reality is that each time one sins, it causes His pain and suffering to increase.

Christ's Passion began in real terms in the Garden of Gethsemane. He understood that the time had come for Him to suffer and die. In His humanity He was afraid. This has been made known to us through the Scriptures where He said, " *Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me ...*"

His Divinity was able to see all that He would suffer in His Humanity in the next twenty-four hours. It is understandable

that He was afraid. The different sufferings He endured would have killed most men before they reached Calvary.

The suffering was indeed real and intense to the point that Our Lord sweat His Blood. One understands the shedding of blood, but to sweat blood requires a heightened level of fear. Yes, it is possible to sweat blood. By the fact that one rarely hears of anyone sweating blood is a clear indication of the intense suffering of Our Lord. He truly was in an agony that was unique to Him and His suffering.

It should be noted here that it is not my intent to describe all of Our Lord's sufferings but to comment on a few of them to illustrate the terrible suffering He endured for men.

Our Lord's Kingship was directly mocked when the soldiers made a crown of thorns and proceeded to place it on His Sacred Head. One must understand that the

soldiers did not lightly place this crown on His Head but pressed the thorns through the skin and skull. One can at least in some small manner understand the pain from these thorns. Anyone who has frequent headaches, especially severe sinus or migraine headaches, has, in some small way an understanding of His physical suffering.

The principle reason why He was crowned cannot be overlooked. Once Our Lord rightly proclaimed that He is a King, the soldiers took advantage and mocked Him, not realizing the grave sins of which they were guilty. The sins of disrespect, mockery, and blasphemy stand out as perhaps the worst sins. Evil men have worked to overthrow Christ's Kingship for two-thousand years. The raw ugliness of these attempts was displayed during His Passion. It must be said, though, did these men really understand the magnitude of their actions?

Of the different ways in which Our Lord was tortured during His Passion, the scourging clearly displays an open brutality of inhumanity which can be compared perhaps only with the Crucifixion itself. It would take a person who truly hates Our Lord or enjoys the perverted idea of torturing others not to have pity

on Our Lord as He endured extraordinary suffering from these metal-tipped whips.

It is difficult to picture Our Lord realistically after having been whipped in such a barbaric manner by crude and godless men. It is sufficient to say that most of His Body was an open wound after these men completed their horrendous acts. Most men would not have survived the scourging, especially when one considers that the law concerning how many times a person may be struck with these whips was totally ignored.

Catholic spiritual writers explain this part of Our Lord's sufferings in this way. The suffering was indescribable because it is to be compared with the numberless and terrible sins of impurity committed by men. It was necessary for Jesus to suffer in the flesh and shed His Precious Blood to make up for all the sins of the flesh of which men have so often been guilty.

Holy Mother Church has understood the connection between the sin and the means to counteract these transgressions. This would explain the need to do corporal fasting to tame the flesh and its tendencies to pamper the flesh.

Crucifixion is considered by many to be the most barbaric means by which men put other men to death. The Roman Empire used crucifixion as its means of carrying out the death penalty. There have been other nations to use this method, also.

Most Catholics are familiar with the struggle of Our Lord to walk to Calvary. He was nearly beaten to death when He was scourged and had lost a great quantity of blood. He was then required to carry the cross on which He would be crucified. He simply willed Himself to reach Calvary because it was His Father's Will that He die on the cross on Calvary. This would be the method through which Man would be redeemed.

Once having arrived on Calvary, He was stripped of His garments. This is too often overlooked because He was nailed to the cross within a few minutes. The rough removal of His garments caused Our Lord great pain because it again opened the wounds from the scourging. Although He was not whipped again, the suffering from the scourging did indeed return.

He was then nailed to the Cross. It seems inconceivable that men would nail another man to a cross. These men,

though, were rough, crude men; men who carried out the death penalty regularly. Perhaps they had become numb to this act of barbarism, perhaps they did not care.

The thought of anyone being nailed to a cross is repulsive on the most basic natural level. When one considers that Our Lord was treated like a common criminal and violently thrown upon the cross and nailed to it, one is left speechless and in tears. It is a clear indication of how hatred and envy will drive a person to do unspeakable things to others.

Everyone experiences physical pain in their life. This is a part of what has been inherited from Man's Fall. The pain of a small cut in one's hand and the pain of having one's hand nailed to a cross are quite different. Who can bear the thought of Our Lord's veins, muscles, and ligaments being torn apart?

He is then lifted from the earth, where "*He will bring all things to Himself.*" The death of Our Lord is at the same time, the most terrible act carried out by men, and the greatest deed accomplished by the God-Man. It is the single most important act in history because it redeemed Man and

made salvation possible. Yet, one will not find it in secular history books. Such is the control of evil men.

Our Lord was obedient to His Heavenly Father to the end of His life. His example of obedience is as relevant today as it was two-thousand years ago. His willingness to die for men is a testament of His love for us. Fallen Man is undeserving of His love, but He willingly gave His life, nonetheless.

The need for the God-Man to die for us tells the rational man, who is concerned with his eternal salvation, of the

seriousness of sin. This is, indeed, a problem today. Too few people are concerned with sin and its consequences. These people will not reap the benefits of Man's Redemption.

Make time in Lent and especially in Holy Week to meditate upon Our Lord as He hangs upon the Cross. Realize the love He has for you. As sinful as you are, His love remains. Resolve to return this love to Our Lord. Allow the merits of His Death to work within your soul and seek salvation by taking up your cross each day.



*"If God gives you an abundant harvest of trials, it is a sign of great holiness which He desires you to attain. Do you want to become a great saint? Ask God to send you many sufferings. The flame of Divine Love never rises higher than when fed with the wood of the Cross, which the infinite charity of the Savior used to finish His sacrifice. All the pleasures of the world are nothing compared with the sweetness found in the gall and vinegar offered to Jesus Christ. That is, hard and painful things endured for Jesus Christ and with Jesus Christ."*

*St. Ignatius of Loyola*

*Sister Agnes' Favorites*

**M**ay Christ  
Give us all the courage  
That we need to go the way  
He shepherds us.

**I**f He bids us to come to Him  
Across the waters,  
May we go unfrightened.  
And if He bids us climb the hill,  
May we not notice it is a hill-  
Mindful only of the happiness  
Of His Company.

**H**e made us for Himself,  
That we should travel with Him  
And see Him at last  
In His unveiled beauty  
In the abiding city,

**W**here He is light and happiness and endless home.

Author: Bede Jarrett, OP

# THE LITURGICAL YEAR WITH ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

*Father Anthony Lentz, OFM*

## **Holy Week**

*"In Holy Week, when the most bitter sufferings of Jesus Christ are put before us by the Liturgy, the Church invites us to come to Calvary and follow in the blood-stained footsteps of the Divine Redeemer, to carry the cross willingly with Him, to reproduce in our own hearts His spirit of expiation and atonement, and to die together with Him." – the Encyclical Letter Mediator Dei by His Holiness Pope Pius XII*

Here Pope Pius XII encourages all of us to make the extra effort during Holy Week to develop and nurture our devotion for the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ. We should view this week as a sort of spiritual retreat. So, in as far as possible, we should avoid all worldly distractions, cares, and concerns. The duties that our station in life demand should be the only exceptions. When experiencing Holy Week we should come to understand what Our Lord meant when He told us to take up our cross and follow Him. We have denied ourselves, at least a little, this season with the Lenten fast, but now we must re-enforce this by

devout meditation upon the Passion.

St. Francis of Assisi made the Passion a subject of daily meditation. In fact, he was so touched with this reality that even simply gazing upon a crucifix would make him cry-out with heartfelt sorrow and compassion for Our Crucified Lord. We may say that the Passion of Christ is the cornerstone of Franciscan spirituality and, if truly meditated upon, it will pierce into our hearts with the tip of the Blessed Virgin's "Sword of Sorrow."

In this issue of *The Seraph*, we have reprinted twenty-four short meditations called *The Hours of the Passion*. They recall several of the events that took place during this dolorous time and may prove helpful to stir up devotion.

I was permitted to write the introduction for these meditations, as a means to help outline exactly what our disposition should be and general considerations about the Passion. I have included the introduction here:

***"God so loved the world that He gave up His only begotten Son.' (St. John 3:16) The***

*Passion and Death of Christ is the greatest and most beneficial topic of meditation for the Christian soul. There is really nothing else that inspires contrition and appreciation than the Passion. His entire life on this earth, 33 years, was a life of suffering – from the wood of the manger to the wood of the Cross. We learn from the Revelations of St. Margaret of Cortona that while Christmas Day was a day of great joy for mankind, it was for Our Lord a day of great dread. I am sure we have all experienced, at one time or another, the dread of anticipating having to do something which we do not really want to do. Yes! It was the Will of His Father that Our Lord should die on the Cross and so redeem fallen man, but imagine the fear that gripped the human soul of Our Lord. He did not have a mere faint idea of what was going to take place, He knew and saw exactly what He was going to suffer. He knew exactly how those coarse ropes which He was to be bound with at the Garden of Gethsemane would feel like. He knew exactly how much pain the scourging would cause Him. He knew exactly which parts of His Sacred Head would be punctured with thorns. He knew exactly the weight of the Cross; the pain of the nails; and torment of those*

*three treacherous hours slowly suffocating, slowly dying on the Cross.*

*He knew!*

*As you go through the Hours of the Passion put yourself at the side of Jesus. Experience the events of His suffering not as a mere fact of history, but as if you were truly present. Many spiritual writers have said that if Christ had his own sins to make-up for then His suffering would not have been so great! He suffered for you! Yes, you do not have to consider anyone else's sins, just consider your own. As you watch Christ suffer remind yourself that it was your sins that brought all of this about. It was because of your sins that He was blasphemed. It was because of your sins that He was scourged. It was because of your sins that He was crowned with thorns. It was your sins that put Him upon that Cross.*

*Why? Why did this happen? Christ could have redeemed the world in any other way, a small drop of blood, a word, a thought! Christ gave Himself completely to the Will of His Father, and on account of His love of us, He was willing to be that unstoppable force that would break the bonds of sin. His complete act of love redeemed us and continues to be the example of how we should live and die for God.*

***'God so loved the world that He gave up His only begotten Son.'***

With frequent considerations upon these sacred mysteries, a soul will be elevated above the worldly concerns and attachments. Priorities will change, the soul will want only what God wants! This is what the spiritual writers call uniformity with the Divine Will. This was the state which St. Francis was elevated to when he received the Sacred Stigmata.

The events explaining how St. Francis became the living crucifix are related by many authors. I have chosen the one by Father Hiliaron Felder, O.F.M. cap. in his book *The Ideals of St. Francis of Assisi*:

*"Early one morning – it was the feast of the Holy Cross, 1224 – Francis again struggled with his crucified Love, 'Oh my Lord Jesus Christ,' thus he prayed, 'I pray Thee grant me two graces before I die; the first, that in my lifetime I may feel in my soul and in my body, so far as is possible, all the pain and grief which Thou, O sweet Lord, did feel in Thy most bitter passion; the second that I may feel in my heart, as far as possible, that excessive love by which Thou, the Son of God, were impelled willingly to sustain so great sufferings for sinners."*

*The longer Francis prayed for this twofold grace, and the longer he contemplated the passion of Christ and His infinite love, the stronger waxed the flame of love and compassion within him, until he was wholly changed into Jesus.*

*Suddenly, he beheld the Crucified Savior descend toward him in the figure of a Seraph. The wonderous apparition shone with a blazing light of glory and with the searing flame of suffering. Blood-red were the marks of the nails in the hands and feet, and the gaping wound in the side. And the Vision looked upon Francis with such unspeakable tender and loving eyes that he fain would have died for love and compassion. At the same time, he felt himself smitten with a fivefold agonizing pain. His hands and feet were pierced as if with fiery nails his right side opened as if with a lance. The Stigmata of the Savior glowed and burned his flesh." (pages 35-36)*

Learn and be inspired! Strive by the grace of God to make this Holy Week spiritually beneficial. We all may not be called to bear the wounds of Christ on our bodies, as St. Francis did, but we all must bear them within our souls.

*Special Feature from the Cherub!*

# THE HOURS OF THE PASSION

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*The Hours of the Passion shows the timeline of the last hours of the life of Christ. In order to appreciate His Love for us, we need to know what He suffered. We encourage you all to review this timeline at least once a week during Lent, especially during Holy Week.*

## Thursday

6:00 PM	Jesus takes leave of His Mother and goes with His disciples to the Cenacle for the Last Supper.
7:00 PM	Jesus partakes of this Last Supper and washes the feet of His disciples.
8:00 PM	Jesus institutes the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacred Priesthood.
9:00 PM	Jesus gives His Last Discourse on the way to the Mount of Olives.
10:00 PM	Jesus suffers the Agony in the Garden and sweats His Blood.
11:00 PM	Jesus is comforted by an angel.

## Friday

12:00 AM	Jesus is betrayed by the kiss of Judas Iscariot
1:00 AM	Jesus is bound and taken before Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the High Priest.
2:00 AM	Jesus is denied by Peter three times.
3:00 AM	Jesus is mocked, blindfolded and beaten by the men of the Temple.
4:00 AM	Jesus is falsely convicted by the High Priest and the Sanhedrin.
5:00 AM	Jesus is dragged before the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate.

6:00AM	Jesus is sent before King Herod Antipas, where He is treated as a fool.
7:00 AM	Jesus is nearly released by Pilate, but the crowd cries for Barabbas.
8:00 AM	Jesus is scourged in order to pacify the mob.
9:00 AM	Jesus is ridiculed by the Roman soldiers and crowned with thorns.
10:00 AM	Jesus is condemned by Pilate and released to the cruel barbarity of the mob.
11:00 AM	Jesus is made to carry His cross to the summit of Mount Calvary.
12:00 PM	Jesus is nailed to the cross and placed between two thieves.
1:00 PM	Jesus forgives His Enemies and pardons Dismas.
2:00 PM	Jesus entrusts His Mother to John, and entrusts John, and us, to His Mother.
3:00 PM	Jesus cries out, “It is finished,” and gives up His Spirit.
4:00 PM	Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for the Body of Jesus.
5:00 PM	Joseph and Nicodemus place the Body of Jesus in the sepulcher.



# ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

## *An Autobiography*

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### CHAPTER THREE

#### PAULINE ENTERS CARMEL

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Keeping to the pavement, we had nothing to fear from the passing vehicles and for a brief space all went well. But presently we fell over and upset some boxes that stood at a shop door. Out rushed the angry shopkeeper to pick up his goods, while the would-be hermits, scrambling to their feet, made off at full speed. Their eyes were now wide open, and their ears could not shut themselves to the reproaches of Jeanne, the maid, who seemed quite as much vexed as the shopman.

I have not yet told you of my altered relationship with Celine, and how at Lisieux the positions had been reversed. She was now the little romp, full of mischief, while I had become quite a quiet child, and much too inclined to tears. I stood in need of a champion, an office which dear Celine was ever ready to discharge with the utmost intrepidity. At that early age our hearts were simple and unspoiled. They unfolded like spring flowers swayed by the same soft breezes and gladly welcoming the morning dew. It

was our delight to make one another little presents; in fact, all our joys were shared in common, as I felt vividly on the happy day of Celine's First Communion.

I was then only seven and had not as yet begun school at the Abbey. During her last weeks of preparation, you talked with her every evening of the great step she was about to take. In my own eagerness to prepare, I listened to all you said, and my heart was very sore when I was told to go away because I was still too young. Four years, I thought, was not too long a time to spend in making ready to receive Our Lord. One evening I heard someone say to my happy little sister that from the time of her First Communion she ought to begin an entirely new life. I determined to begin with her, without waiting for my First Communion.

During the preliminary retreat she remained as a boarder at the Abbey. The time seemed to me very long, but at last the great day dawned. What an

impression it has left! It was like a foretaste of Our Lord's first entry into my own heart. Many were the graces I received, and I look on it as one of the most beautiful days of my life.

I have gone back a little in order to recall those tender memories, but now I must tell you of the parting that almost broke my heart when Our Lord took you, my little Mother whom I so dearly loved. I told you once I should like to go away with you to a far-off desert, and you replied that you wished it too, and would wait till I should be old enough to set out. I took this impossible promise in earnest, and great was my grief when I overheard you speaking to Marie about your approaching entrance into Carmel. I did not know what this meant, but I quite understood you were leaving us to enter a convent, and that you would not wait for Therese.

How can I describe the anguish my heart endured! In a flash I beheld life as it really is, full of suffering and constant partings, and I shed most bitter tears. At that time the joy of sacrifice was still unknown to me. I was so weak, that I look back on it as an immense grace not to have died under a trial which to all appearance was far in excess of my strength.

I shall never forget how tenderly you tried to console me, my little Mother. You explained to your child the nature of the religious life, and one evening, while pondering all alone on the picture you had drawn for me, I felt that Carmel was the desert where God wished me also to hide. I felt it so strongly that there was no room for doubt. It was not the dream of an impressionable child, but the certainty of a divine call, and this sensation, which I am unable to describe, brought with it a wonderful peace. Next day I confided my desires to you, and, seeing in them the working of God's Will, you promised to take me soon to interview the Mother Prioress that I might tell her my secret.

*To Be Continued.....*

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# THE GIFT OF ONESELF

*From the French of*  
**THE REVEREND JOSEPH**  
**SCHRYVERS, C.S.S.R.**  
*Translated by a Religious of Carmel,*  
*Bettendorf, Iowa*

## PART TWO *The Practice of Abandonment* CHAPTER THREE *The Practice of Self-Abandonment in Crisis*



### ARTICLE I

#### THE GIFT OF ONESELF, IN INTERIOR TRIALS

Jesus is a good Gardener. He watches over the fruit-trees that His Father has planted; He prunes them at the proper time. The soul knows that she is the object of His Divine solicitude. She is satisfied to grow, to be covered with leaves and flowers and fruits. She does not seek to know when the Master will begin to cut and to take away the dead branches. She waits patiently, knowing that Jesus is watching and that at the proper moment He will send her His dear cross. She arranges nothing; she does not specify the kind of suffering she wishes her Lord to send her. That would be rashness, indiscretion. She leaves the matter to Him. What He does is well done.

Many and varied are the crosses which Jesus sends in order to make souls perfect. The soul does not know which one is destined for her. She accepts them all in advance. Then when Jesus comes to her laden with the cross, she hastens to help Him carry it.

How might we mention in detail the trials with which Jesus favors souls? They are infinitely varied, adapted to the needs of each one, chosen in accordance with the particular kind of beauty which is to adorn each.

Especially is Jesus pleased to diversify interior suffering. In the depth of the soul, His action is less observed, less restrained, and meets with less opposition. There, He may use His pruning-knife in the heart's quick, detaching all impure roots, extracting all alien sap.

Often Jesus makes use of anxieties of conscience, of doubts as to the sincerity of one's intentions or the quality of good works. The soul is deeply distressed; she is continually protesting her love and her fidelity to God.

Trial reaches its acute extremity when the soul is persuaded that she is an enemy of God, that she has committed treason and abandoned Him. It seems to her that God, in turn, has forsaken her, that He turns away His Face and gives her to her enemies.

Then the soul imagines that she is an object of horror in God's Eyes, that He disdains her and crushes her beneath the weight of His wrath.

Sometimes she fancies that she is damned. Blasphemies are crowding to her lips; hate is gathering in her heart; finally, despair assails her and holds her fast.

But how may we describe all this? God reserves this domain for Himself. He wishes to be free and to act alone in the center of the soul. With this object, He binds the faculties, blinds the reason, causes the will to be, as it were, numbed, and the senses to seem foolish. No master can enlighten a soul that God wishes to keep in darkness; no one can explain what God envelops in mystery; no one can console when God wishes to take away all consolation.

At these painful times, it is the duty of the surrendered soul to renew the act of self-oblation. God always leaves to the soul this supreme power of abandoning herself to Him by an act of the will. It is true that He takes away the consolation of her act and hides its goodness from her; but He always assists her to make it; for this is the essence of the spiritual life.

The act having been made, the soul has nothing to do except to suffer, to wait, to be patient. All her perfection, for the present, is attained. God works in her. He is purifying her. He casts her into the crucible; He makes use of iron and of fire. It is true that sparks are flashing under the redoubled blows of the divine hammer; but the iron is taking shape. Yet a little patience, and God will have finished a new masterpiece. Then, suddenly, the trial will cease; for, after having plunged the soul into a refreshing bath, He will set her powers at liberty and will tear away the veil that has covered her eyes.

O Jesus, admirably dost Thou crucify! Would that, in these sad moments, I could understand that I ought to allow Thee to do Thy work in me without complaint or murmur, and that to each new pain, each more dolorous crisis, I should reply by a more loving "Fiat"!



# FRANCISCAN SAINTS

APRIL 26TH

The Servant of God Anna of

the Holy Cross

*Widow, Second Order*

Anna, the eldest daughter of the duke of Arcos, was born on May 3, 1527, in Andalusia, one of the most prosperous provinces of Spain. The world offered her every comfort that a worldling could wish for. What heaven offered her, her birthday was to indicate; it was the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross. From her earliest years, Anna learnt to prefer the gifts of heaven, even when they were crosses, to the allurements of the world. The renowned master of the spiritual life, John of Avila, was her spiritual guide during her youth, and the director of her conscience through life.

She was scarcely sixteen years of age, when, in compliance with the wish of her relatives, she married the noble and pious count of Feria, Peter, marquis of Priego. The married state did not interfere with her former practices of piety, the less so because during the first three years her husband was absent on a campaign with the Emperor Charles V. Upon his return, they supported each other in the true service of God and in the practice

of virtue, as truly Christian spouses should do.

Anna had an extraordinary love for the poor. With her own hands she made shirts for the sick and the poor. Often, she gave up the jewels from her person for their support.

When a son was born to her and she enclosed him in her arms after Holy Baptism, God Almighty revealed to her that He would soon take the child to Himself again. Although she was shocked at this, the young mother at once submitted her heart to the will of God. After a few days, the child died. But this was to be only the beginning of her way of the cross.

A few years later her husband became ill. Anna was constantly with him for his comfort and benefit, scarcely ever leaving his bedside. In the three years during which his sufferings lasted, she did not remove her clothing, in order to be constantly at his service.

The Venerable Louis of Granada assisted the duke at his death. When he breathed forth his soul

with the kiss he impressed upon the crucifix, and his confessor then passed the crucifix to the duchess, she also kissed it fervently and said: "From now on, He shall be my only spouse."

The twenty-four-year-old widow thought only of consecrating her life to God. She would gladly have entered the convent of the Poor Clares, but her delicate health did not warrant it. So, she remained with her mother-in-law. In order to mortify her own will, she wished to make a vow of obedience to her Father Confessor; but Master Avila did not consider it prudent that a woman should vow obedience to her confessor, and therefore he advised her to vow obedience to her mother-in-law. Anna did that, and ever after she sought her mother-in-law's permission for even the most trifling matters.

After a period of years, during which her desire for conventional life increased, her health also appeared to be wonderfully improved, so that the director of her soul and, finally, also her mother-in-law consented to her entrance into the convent of the Poor Clares at Montilla. Anna was overjoyed.

In the convent, she deprecated every distinction and every exception. Just as if she were the

servant of the other sisters, she performed the lowliest tasks. She observed poverty so strictly that she did not wish to accept even the smallest gift from her wealthy relatives.

Her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was animated by the liveliest faith and the most ardent love. Many continuous hours she spent before It in the sweetest exchange of sentiments, for which reason she was called "the bride of the Blessed Sacrament."

But the cross was also to test her in the convent. Her health again declined, and for thirty years of almost continuous illness, she practiced perfect resignation to the will of God. To this were added vexations from people who were indebted to her, but she never complained. Her brother, the new duke of Arcos, whom she dearly loved, died. Upon receiving the news of his death, she took the crucifix and said: "Lord, as Thou wilt; he belonged more to Thee than to me."

Her prayers effected many wonderful results in ailments, but she never cared to pray for relief in her own sufferings. Finally, the patient sufferer went to her eternal repose on April 26, 1601. She was honored like a saint.

#### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*Grant, O Lord, that we may have a perpetual fear and love of Thy Holy Name, for Thou never ceasest to direct and govern by Thy grace those whom Thou instructest in the solidity of Thy love. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

# THE GREATEST TREASURE

*Reverend L. Chiavarino*



CHAPTER XV

## **WE ARE OBLIGED TO HEAR MASS ON SUNDAYS AND HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION**

You already know, dear reader, that it is one of our chief duties to hear Mass on Sundays and on holydays of obligation, and that he who fails to observe this law without a real excuse commits a serious sin. How shameful is the behavior of those Christians who care little about the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and absent themselves from it so easily! Their Sundays are spent in carrying on business, in idle conversation, in excursions, in games, and their interest in these things causes them to disregard their obligation to hear Mass. Let us not be numbered among these foolish souls. When, on Sunday, we know that the

hour of Mass will soon be striking, let us think of it as the voice of God calling us to His house. Let us not say: "No" to Jesus. Let us not turn a deaf ear to Him. We ought to remember that the early Christians went to Mass even though it involved risking their lives.

The virgin St. Anisia was stopped by a Roman soldier while she was on her way to Mass. It was in the midst of the terrible persecution which the Emperor Diocletian was waging against the Christians. The soldier, suspecting Anisia to be one of the followers of Christ, said: "Stop, where are you going?"

"I am a Christian," the young Anisia replied courageously, "and I am going to the meeting of the faithful."

"Ah, you are a Christian!" exclaimed the soldier. "Well, I will see that you do not go to worship your God. I shall sacrifice you to the gods of Rome."

He clutched her arm and strove to drag her with him. Anisia resisted as well as she was able and called upon Jesus to help her. The sound of the sacred Name infuriated the inhuman soldier, and he drew his sword from its scabbard and thrust it into the maiden's body. So Anisia fell, a martyr to her determination to hear Sunday Mass.

Wonderful tales are told by missionaries about the devotion of the poor savages in the jungles who have been Christianized. Often, they will walk for days through thickets and forests in order to assist at Mass. A Marist Father, who had labored in the Missions of Oceania, recalled that on one occasion while he was preparing to say Mass in the open fields, he saw something strange appear on the surface of the ocean. It seemed to advance toward the shore, but he was puzzled as to what it might be. It was an entire tribe of natives. They had traveled

over six leagues by swimming through dangerous waters, and this, that they might assist at the Holy Sacrifice which they had learned would be celebrated by the missionary.

Father Bresciani, in describing the state of Catholic missionary work in Siberia, relates that many of the inhabitants of that cold country, wrapped in the furs of bear and linx, would walk through forests and over snow and ice for the space of an entire night in order to hear Mass. Oftimes, said he, the cold was so intense that the wine would freeze in the chalice. Nevertheless, those who could not find place within the church would remain outside, devoutly kneeling even during a snowfall. It was not unusual for a child to faint because of the intensity of the cold. In such a case, the mother of the little one would take it into her arms, and breathing into its mouth, would endeavor to restore it to consciousness.

On the occasion of the birth of one of the sons of a prince of the German Imperial House, the late Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was invited to act as sponsor for the infant at his baptism. The Archduke left Vienna on Saturday night and was due to arrive at Berlin on the morning

of Sunday at about eleven o'clock. The Archduke telegraphed the Emperor William asking that no official reception be held at the station inasmuch as the last Mass scheduled to be held at the church of Saint Hedwig was for eleven-thirty, and if he were to be delayed, he would not be able to hear Mass. The reception was, therefore, deferred, and the Emperor went to the station accompanied only by the Crown Prince and his staff in order to welcome the Austrian guest. Then the latter went directly to the church of St. Hedwig. Such a story as this ought to bring a blush to the faces of those who

lose the opportunity of hearing Mass in order to attend moving picture shows.

It is to be hoped that these examples of heroism will spur us on to fulfill our duty to hear Mass on Sundays and holy-days. Even if we should be obliged to work on holy-days, or if the church should be at a great distance, or the weather bad, let us be willing to make some sacrifice in order to go to Mass. There are many men and women who although obliged to work on Sundays, yet never fail to assist at an early Mass and to receive Holy Communion. God will certainly bless them and their families.



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