

Reflection Tuesday Week 24 – Our Lady of Sorrows 2020

The devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows flourished in the Middle Ages, and the hymn *Stabat Mater*, which is often sung between the different Stations of the Cross, was composed for it. Although it is officially celebrated today, the day after the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, popular devotion in many parts of the Mediterranean celebrates it with processions on the Friday before Holy Week.

Although some suffering leads eventually to death, in many more cases suffering is the prelude or preamble to healing. It is unfortunate that we are only given the numbers of those who have died from Covid 19 but we are not told of the great numbers who have recovered even if some of them still suffer from after effects. One of the key examples of the positive fruits is found in the pain of childbirth suffered by women. That pain goes to strengthen the bond of love between the mother and her child in a profound and deep-rooted way. How much more, then, do the sorrows of Mary unite her to us with such great love; we who are her children. Isn't this why we sing:

O you Mother, fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
make my heart with yours accord:
make me feel as you have felt;
make my soul to glow and melt
with the love of Christ our Lord. . .

From the moment of his conception through his birth, childhood and adult life, Mary was close to Jesus, nurturing, guiding, inspiring and supporting him throughout his life; sharing in both his joys and laughter as well as his sufferings and pain. She was there at his death and helped lay him in the tomb. She was there to greet him when he rose again. What Mary did for her son, Jesus, she does for us. She is always there, always watching over us, sharing in our joys and sorrows, greeting us at our birth, there at our death and ready to welcome us into heaven. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate us from her love. *Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death, AMEN.*

Annoyed, a teacher asks a student, "Are you ignorant or just apathetic?"

The student answers, "I don't know and I don't care."