

Reflection Thursday Week 24 Our Lady of Sorrows 2022

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

It is only fitting that in celebrating the exaltation of the Cross, we remind ourselves of the suffering Mary must have experienced in the last moments of Jesus' life. Mary works hard, like her Son, to bring us all back to Jesus when we stray or just simply become lost, or feel forgotten. She has appeared many times in different parts of the world. The relic of St Bernadette coming to Stevenage soon brings to the fore Lourdes where Mary called on us, as she so often does, to pray for sinners as we in the hail Mary.

Queen Elizabeth also had her periods of suffering in her efforts to serve the nation and the commonwealth. She suffered tragedies in her own family especially the loss of her husband. She suffered from the mistakes she made whenever they mitigated against her love for the people she served.

"Grief is the price we pay for love."

"In remembering the appalling suffering of war on both sides, we recognize how precious is the peace we have built in Europe since 1945."

"To all those who have suffered as a consequence of our troubled past I extend my sincere thoughts and deep sympathy. With the benefit of historical hindsight, we can all see things which we would wish had been done differently or not at all."

"When life seems hard, the courageous do not lie down and accept defeat; instead, they are all the more determined to struggle for a better future"