

Our Lady and the Com-Passion

REMEMBER that in the redemptive act itself, there were two elements, the human nature *in which* the act was done, and the divine Person by *whom* the act was done. Because it was an act in human nature, it could rightly be offered for the sin of the human race. Because it was the act of the Divine Person, it had an infinite value which no merely human act could have had. That being so, we considered the question why some lesser act in the human nature could not have sufficed and we saw how it accorded with the demand of all that is best in man that, in expiating the sin of man, human nature should give of its very uttermost, and in the human nature of Christ, it did.

In the human nature of Christ it did: but if only there, then human nature has not given of its uttermost, for in the event, the rest of men would be merely spectators, the human nature that is in them contributing nothing. The infinite Person of Christ did not need so total a giving in His human nature, yet it was fitting that He should redeem us by that total giving. Similarly our redemption thus effected did not require that humanity as a whole should give what it has to give. But it was in the glorious design of God that human love should not be denied all place in the expiation of human sin, and men be condemned to be no more than spectators of their own redemption. Redeemed humanity should suffer in union with Christ, and in union with Christ these sufferings should be co-redemptive. When St. Paul says that in a body the head cannot say to the foot, "I have no need of you", he may be speaking in all strictness of the *Body* and the *Head*.

There is, then, a co-redemptive action of Christ; and in this co-redemptive activity every member of

the Mystical Body plays some part insofar as he unites his sufferings with Christ's: human nature is privileged to repeat in the persons of men what it has completed in the person of Christ. But what all of us may do according to our imperfection, Our Lady did perfectly. Even St. Paul could not make all his sufferings available for the Church, since some at least must be set against his own sins. Our Lady had no sins, and whatever she suffered could be wholly for the sins of mankind. But how could she suffer? She could suffer like any other mother to see her child suffer, and more than any other mother because she was better than any other and had a Child more worthy of love. But for the completion of suffering, she must have sufferings of her own, and at their highest these must be in the soul. Her son chose for her and she chose for herself the suffering that would lead to the uttermost increase of her sanctification, and give her the most to contribute to the spiritual needs of all of us. Her Son loved her supernaturally, as God loves all who have His sanctifying grace in their souls, and more than all others because no spirit of man or angel has ever received and responded to so vast a measure of His grace. Her Son loved her naturally, as a human son loves a human mother, and again more than any other because of His perfection and hers. It was a wonderful thing for her, this second sort of love, but it was still second. So vast a thing is supernatural relationship, that every one of us in the state of grace is more closely related to her Son supernaturally than she merely by her natural relationship as His mother. And if our relation by grace is closer than hers by nature, how immeasurably closer still was *her* relation by grace.



Commentary from Theology and Sanity by Frank J. Sheed (1897-1981).

Proper Prayers of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form

ADDENDUM:

THE SEVEN SORROWS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



SECOND COLLECT

DEUS, in cuius Passiōne secundum Simeōnis prophetiā, dulcissimam animam gloriōsae Virginis et Matris Mariāe dolōris: gladius pertransiuit: concede propitius; ut, qui dolōres ejus venerādo recōlimus, passiōnis tuae effectum felicem consequāmur: Qui vivis et regnas ...

O GOD, at whose Passion, according to the prophecy of Simeon, a sword of sorrow pierced the most sweet soul of the glorious Virgin and Mother Mary: mercifully grant, that we who with devotion honor her Sorrows, may obtain the happy fruit of Thy Passion: Who livest and reignest ...

SECOND SECRET

OFFÉRIMUS tibi preces et hōstias, Dōmine Jesu Christe, humiliter supplicātes: ut, qui Transfixiōnem dulcissimi spīritus beatae Mariāe Matris suae precibus recensēmus; suo suorūmque sub cruce Sanctōrum, consortium multiplicāto piissimo intervēntu, mēritis mortis tuae, mēritum cum beātis habeāmus: Qui vivis et regnas cum Deo Patre in unitate Spīritus Sancti Deus: per ōmnia saecula saeculōrum.

WE OFFER unto Thee our prayers and oblations, O Lord Jesus Christ, and humbly beseech Thee that, even as in our prayers we recall the piercing of the most sweet soul of Thy blessed Mother Mary, so through the merits of Thy death, and the repeated loving intercession of Thy Mother and her holy companions at the foot of the cross, we may share in the reward of the blessed: Who livest and reignest ...

SECOND POSTCOMMUNION

SACRIFĪCIA, quae sumpsimus Dōmine Jesu Christe, Transfixiōnem Matris tuae et Virginis devōte celebrāntes: nobis impetrent apud clemēntiam tuam omnis boni salutāris effectum: Qui vivis et regnas ...

O LORD Jesus Christ, may the sacrifice of which we partook while devoutly recalling the anguish of thy Virgin Mother, win for us from Thy mercy all good and healthful fruit: Who livest and reignest ...

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