

Prayers in Honor of the Seven Sundays of St. Joseph

Fourth Sunday

The Sorrow of the Prophecy of Simeon and the Joy of Hearing the Salvation of the World through the Sufferings of Jesus



Reading

Lk 2: 22-35

And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord" and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the Temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took the Child in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now let Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for my eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou has prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Thy people Israel." And His father and His Mother marveled at what was said about Him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, His Mother, "Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against, and a sword will pierce your own soul also, that the thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed."

Meditation

This rite to which Luke refers, includes the ransom of the firstborn and sheds light on the subsequent stay of Jesus in the Temple at the age of twelve.

"The ransoming of the firstborn is another obligation of the father, and it is fulfilled by Joseph. Represented in the firstborn is the people of the covenant, ransomed from slavery in order to belong to God. Here, too, Jesus – who is the true ‘price’ of ransom – not only ‘fulfills’ the Old Testament rite, but at the same time transcends it, since He is not a subject to be redeemed, but the very author of redemption.

"The Gospel writer notes that ‘his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him’, in particular at what Simeon said in his canticle to God, when he referred to Jesus as the ‘salvation which

you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel' and as a 'sign that is spoken against'."

Simeon tells Joseph and Mary that Jesus will be a sign of contradiction, a standard which people will either follow or oppose. And he adds that the Son's sufferings will be intimately connected with His Mother's sorrows. The sorrows of Jesus and Mary are made known. This revelation enables Joseph to glimpse more clearly the mystery of the Son's cross. "It pleased God, in His goodness and wisdom, to reveal Himself and to make known the mystery of His Will. His Will was that men should have access to the Father, through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit, and become sharers in the divine nature.' *"Together with Mary, Joseph is the first guardian of this divine mystery."*

"It is impossible to guess the depth of Joseph's suffering. He always wanted to protect the child whom he loved with the greatest of fatherly love, for, as St. Pius X says, he is "the virgin father of Jesus." Now he understands with new insight all the Old Testament prophecies related to Christ's passion. Joseph's mind and heart have been marked by the cross. As Mary offered her Son on the cross, so did Joseph. This offering constitutes the holy patriarch's greatest act of generosity. "It took all the generosity of his love to offer Jesus and Mary to God. It was his supreme sacrifice since he loved them immeasurably more than his own life."

Litany of St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
God the Holy Spirit,
Holy Trinity, One God,

Holy Mary,
Saint Joseph,
Illustrious son of David,
Light of the patriarchs,
Spouse of the Mother of God,
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,
Foster-father of the Son of God,
Watchful defender of Christ,
Head of the Holy Family,

Joseph most just,
Joseph most chaste,

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Christ, graciously hear us.

have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.

pray for us.
pray for us.
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pray for us.
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Joseph most prudent,
Joseph most valiant,
Joseph most obedient,
Joseph most faithful,

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Mirror of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of workers,
Glory of domestic life,
Guardian of virgins,
Pillar of families,
Solace of the afflicted,
Hope of the sick,
Patron of the dying,
Terror of demons,
Protector of Holy Church,

pray for us.

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Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,

spare us, O Lord.

graciously hear us, O Lord.

have mercy on us.

V. He made him the lord of His household,
R. And prince over all His possessions.

Let us pray:

O glorious St. Joseph, model of faithful fulfillment of God's plans, the prophecy of Simeon about the future sufferings of Jesus and Mary brought mortal fear to you, but at the same time, filled you with blessed joy for the salvation and glorious resurrection which he prophesied would follow for numberless souls. By this sorrow and this joy, obtain for us that we may be among those who, through the merits of Jesus and the intercession of the Virgin Mother, are to rise in glory. Amen.