

THE SEVENTH DOLOUR:
THE BURIAL OF JESUS

I pity thee, my afflicted mother, for the seventh sword which pierced thee when thou didst embrace thy dead Son, no longer beauteous and delightful, as thou didst receive Him in the stable of Bethlehem, but covered with blood, livid and all lacerated with wounds, so that even His bones were exposed. Thou didst then say, "My Son, my Son, to what has love reduced Thee?". And when He was borne to the sepulchre, thou wouldst thyself accompany Him, and place Him with thine own hands in the tomb; and bidding Him thy last farewell, thou didst leave thy loving heart buried with thy Son. By this martyrdom of thy beautiful soul, do thou obtain for me, O mother of fair love, the forgiveness of the offences which I have committed against my beloved God, and which I repent with my whole heart. Do thou defend me in temptations; do thou assist me at the moment of my death that, saving my soul through the merits of Jesus and by thine own merits, I may one day, after this miserable exile, rise to Paradise to sing praises for evermore to Jesus and to thee. Amen.

Pater. Seven Aves. Strophe.

On the three pendant beads, say three Aves in remembrance of the tears our Lady shed in sympathy for the sufferings of Jesus, her beloved Son, and to obtain true sorrow for our sins.

On the pendant crucifix (or medal), say the following versicle and response and the final prayer:

℣. Pray for us, O most sorrowful virgin.

℞. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

O God, at Whose Passion, according to the prophecy of Simeon, a sword of sorrow didst pierce through the most sweet soul of the glorious Virgin Mother Mary, grant that we who commemorate and reverence her dolours may attain grace and salvation through the fruit of Thy blessed martyrdom and death, Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

Now move back onto the three pendant beads from the pendant crucifix or medal, making a petition on each as follows:

Virgin most Sorrowful, pray for us.

Virgin most Sorrowful, pray for us.

Virgin most Sorrowful, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

Now say the Salve Regina on the centrepiece and then the Memorare on the pendant medal. Close with the Signum Crucis.

The Little Rosary of the Seven Dolours
according to St. Alphonsus de Liguori
(from "The Glories of Mary")

THE FIRST DOLOUR:

THE PROPHECY OF SIMEON

I pity thee, O afflicted mother, on account of the first sword of sorrow which pierced thee when, in the Temple, all the outrages which men would inflict on thy beloved Jesus were revealed to thee by Saint Simeon, and which thou didst already know by the Sacred Scriptures—outrages which were to cause Him to die before thine eyes on an infamous gibbet, exhausted of His blood, abandoned by all, and thyself unable to defend or help Him. By that bitter knowledge then, which, for so many years, afflicted thy heart, I beseech thee, my Queen, to obtain for me the grace that, during my life and at death, I may ever keep the Passion of Jesus and thy sorrows impressed upon my heart.

One Pater Noster.

Seven Ave Marias (one on each bead).

Strophe: My mother share thy grief with me; and let me bear thee company, to mourn thy Jesus' death with thee.

THE SECOND DOLOUR:

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

I pity thee, my afflicted mother, for the second sword which pierced thee when, soon after His birth, thou didst behold thine innocent Son threatened with death by those very men whom He had come into the world to save. I pity thee because, on this account, in the darkness of night, thou wast obliged to fly secretly with Him into Egypt. By the many hardships then, which thou, a vulnerable young woman, in company with thine exiled Child, didst endure in so long and exhausting a journey through rough and desert countries—and during thy residence in Egypt where, being unknown and a stranger, thou didst live for so many years in poverty and contempt—I beseech thee, my beloved lady, to obtain for me until death the grace to suffer with patience in thy company the trials of this miserable life, that I may thus, in the next, escape the eternal punishments of Hell which I have deserved.

Pater. Seven Aves. Strophe.

THE THIRD DOLOUR:

THE LOSS OF JESUS AT THE TEMPLE

I pity thee, my sorrowful mother, on account of the third sword which pierced thee upon the loss of thy dear Son Jesus, Who remained absent from thee in Jerusalem for three days. No longer seeing thy divine Son by thy side and not knowing the cause of His absence, I can well conceive, my loving Queen, that, during those nights, thou didst not repose and didst only sigh for Him, Who was all thy treasure. By the sighs, then, of those three days—for thee, too long and bitter!—I beseech thee to obtain for me the grace never to lose my God so that, always clinging to Him, He might lead me at death into the realm of eternal bliss.

Pater. Seven Aves. Strophe.

THE FOURTH DOLOUR:

CARRYING THE CROSS

I pity thee, my sorrowful mother, for the fourth sword, which pierced thee in seeing thy Son condemned to death, bound with cords and chains, covered with blood and wounds, crowned with a wreath of thorns, falling under the heavy weight of the Cross, which He carried on His bruised shoulders: going as an innocent lamb to die for love of us. Thine eyes met His, and His met thine; and your glances were as so many cruel arrows which wounded your loving hearts. By this great sorrow, then, I beseech thee to obtain for me the grace to live in all things resigned to the will of my God and to carry my cross cheerfully in company with Jesus, until my last breath.

Pater. Seven Aves. Strophe.

THE FIFTH DOLOUR:

THE DEATH OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

I pity thee, my afflicted mother, for the fifth sword which pierced thee when, on Mount Calvary, thou didst behold thy beloved Son Jesus slowly dying on the hard bed of the Cross before thy very eyes amid so many torments and insults, where thou couldst not minister to Him even the least of those comforts which are granted to the greatest criminals at the hour of death. By the agony which thou, my most loving mother, didst endure, together with thy dying Son; and by the sadness which thou didst feel when, for the last time, He spoke to thee from the Cross and bade thee farewell and left all of us to thee as thy children in the person of Saint John; and by that constancy with which thou didst then see Him bow down His head and expire: I beseech thee to obtain for me from thy crucified love the grace to live and die crucified to all earthly things, and that I may spend my life for God alone and thus one day enter Paradise to laud Him face to face.

Pater. Seven Aves. Strophe.

THE SIXTH DOLOUR:

THE PIETA

I pity thee, my afflicted mother, for the sixth sword which transfixed thee when thou didst see the sweet Heart of thy Son pierced through and through. He was already dead and had died for those ungrateful creatures who, even after His death, were not satisfied by the torments they had inflicted upon Him. By this cruel sorrow then, which was all thine, I beseech thee to obtain for me the grace to dwell in the Heart of Jesus, wounded and opened for me. Through thine intercession, may I live only in that Heart, which is the beautiful abode of love, in which all souls that love God repose, and abiding there, I may never think of anything or love anyone but God. Most sacred virgin, thou canst obtain this for me: from thee do I hope for it.

Pater. Seven Aves. Strophe.