

HOMILIES FROM THE HERMITAGE

(and other things)

On view of the current isolation and detachment from normal ministry, it seemed good to provide some other ways in which to keep in contact. There will be some ‘thoughts’ (not each day), some shared ideas and maybe some pleasantries.

CORONA 9

THE PRICE OF LOVE: A MOTHER’S ODYSSEY

In old tradition the Fifth Friday on Lent was the day when we remembered ‘Mary of Sorrows’ but our Community keep it together with and on the day after Holy Cross Day in September. Mary at the foot of the Cross is a iconic picture and there she remains silent, grieving and loving. It is easy to paint pictures of ‘what Mary must have said’ but in fact her grief is impressive by its silence. Mary had many sorrows in life and the Scriptures reveals them to us in the life and work of her Son.

The Annunciation gave joy and obedience: but she was at risk as being considered as an unmarried mother with a threat of death. Joseph saves her and marries her.

The demand for the census at Bethlehem, although it gets her away from wagging tongues in Nazareth, caused a difficulty and dangerous journey when nearly at birth.

At Bethlehem she had the refusal of refuge by the innkeeper: she had to bear Jesus in a stable-house amid comings and goings. Even the Wise Men brought the gift of myrrh for the death of her Son. Then even worse the flight to Egypt with her infant child.

Somehow in events came the Presentation in the Temple, where her Son was praised by Simeon but Mary was told that ‘a sword will pierce your heart’.

The Finding in the Temple. Mary had the worry of the loss of her Son and the hassle of the journey to find Him.

Then He went to Nazareth and was obedient. There was the marvellous family, Mary, Joseph and Jesus. But then he left home, probably for education and prayer and then for His mission. That would have been a wrench for Mary: many mothers grieve greatly when their children (especially only children) leave home—to marry, to travel and even if the child wishes to be a priest, religious or missionary. The worst sorrow is for a mother to have to bury her child.

Mary however was not far behind as we find at Jesus’ first miracle at Cana in Galilee. She appears at other points and most poignantly at the foot of the Cross. There in silence she remains faithful until Jesus has died and unto her arms He was laid.

On this account we can see that Mary had many points of sorrow in her life—like most of us. When we consider Mary’s sorrows we need to see them throughout her life—a life of love, obedience and faith. In this we can echoes of our lives, sorrows and all. For if we love we shall suffer. This is the price of love, as any mother would tell us vibrantly. But without that we shall not have real life nor shall we be truly human. Not only on our cross but also with the pinpricks of life can we achieve the trueness of love: and that life is supreme in the Cross, when Jesus paid the price of love in order for us all to live.

