

# JUBILEE YEAR OF THE LA SALETTE APPARITION

## Monthly Recollection for Seminarians of

### La Salette Matha Province- October 2020

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#### 1. Opening Song: Holy Spirit Song

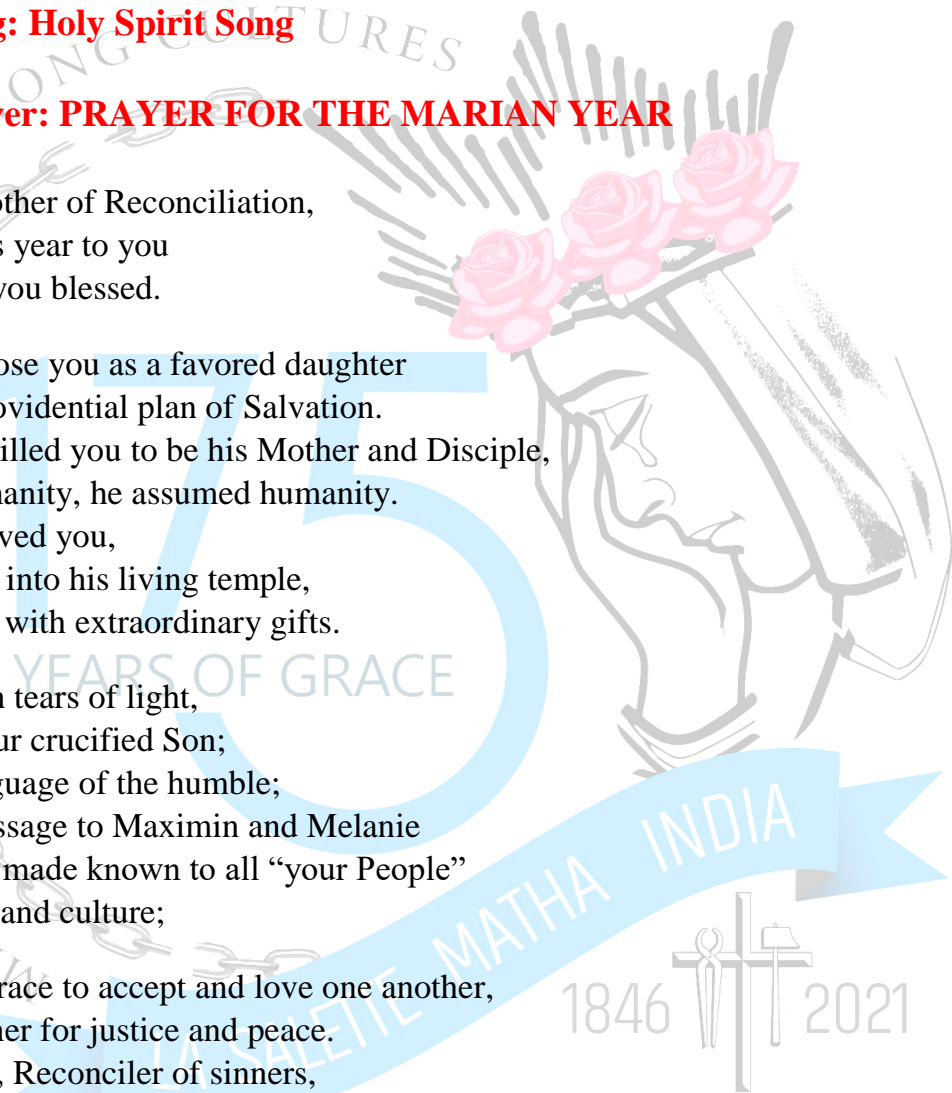
#### 2. Opening Prayer: PRAYER FOR THE MARIAN YEAR

**O Mary, (All)** Mother of Reconciliation,  
as we dedicate this year to you  
we rejoice to call you blessed.

God the Father chose you as a favored daughter  
to carry out his providential plan of Salvation.  
The Son of God willed you to be his Mother and Disciple,  
when, to save humanity, he assumed humanity.  
The Holy Spirit loved you,  
and fashioned you into his living temple,  
and showered you with extraordinary gifts.

At La Salette, with tears of light,  
you showed us your crucified Son;  
you spoke the language of the humble;  
you gave your message to Maximin and Melanie  
so that it might be made known to all “your People”  
of every language and culture;

obtain for us the grace to accept and love one another,  
and to work together for justice and peace.  
To you, O Mother, Reconciler of sinners,  
Pathway of hope and peace among peoples and cultures,  
we confidently entrust all humanity and our “common home,”  
and the fears and hopes that inhabit them.  
Speak once more to Jesus, your Son, that, like you,  
we too may do whatever he tells us.  
Amen.



### 3. Scripture Passage

Mathew 8: 23-27

### 4. Theme of Meditation:

**“Do Not be Afraid...”**

### 5. Reflection

*(This reflection could be either read out or explained as talk without losing the important thoughts of the reflection)*

In this month of October let us take the second word of Blessed Mother at La Salette for our monthly recollection.

At La Salette, Mary said: **"Do not be afraid."**

When the two shepherd children of La Salette, Maximin and Melanie, first saw "the Beautiful Lady" of the Apparition a great fear came upon them. Melanie dropped her pastoral staff in sudden awe and wonderment, and Maximin spoke encouragement to her. It was only when Our Blessed Mother arose and spoke those comforting words, "Come near, my children, be not afraid!", it was only then that their courage came, warming back to their hearts, and they had strength to draw close to her – so close they tell us afterwards, that a third person could not have passed between them and Our Lady.

They felt a great peace in their hearts, a strange and wondrous happiness that held them blissfully unconscious of the passing of time, as they stood there eating the words of Our Lady. Fear melted from their hearts and a great calm and peace flooded their souls.

### **The Dark Shadow of Fear in the seminaries**

How often is not this experience of the children at La Salette repeated in the life of every seminarian! So many times our heart is chilled, with cold fear of impending evil. The shadow of a future cross casts its gloom across our pathway and darkens prematurely the happiness of our soul. I can recall some of the common fears I had as a seminarian in the early stage. What will happen to me if I fail in the exams? Will I be send home etc.

Fear has so blighting an effect. It dampens our fondest hopes; weakens our finest determination, and makes the joys of the present hour seem so empty and unsatisfactory. If we would only pause then and analyze our evil forebodings, how often we would discover of what unsubstantial stuff our fears are made. Perhaps, too, we would hear in the depths of our conscience the low yet clear voice of encouragement saying to us: "Be not afraid!"

When the Apostles worried because the skies were darkened and their sailboat was tossing fitfully on the angry waves; when fear gripped their hearts; there came the gentle voice of the Master sounding above the roar of the elements: “Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?” Then he got up, rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was great calm” (Matthew 8:26).

I had also the fear of my future as a seminarian. Will I be happy in my life as a religious priest? But the words of many spiritual directors, retreat masters, priests and friends gave me courage to continue. They assured me that, it has been and will always be for those who sail through the storms of this world with the Master at the prow; and even though at times he seems to be asleep in the shrouds, we must not, succumb to the panic of fear that will stamp us at once as people "of little faith." We must . . . keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

### **We ask “Why?” but we live in hope**

God called us for special service and planted the seed of a religious vocation in our heart. Perhaps we are even today charting our future course, and we are inclined to follow the crowd, to choose the easiest way, the line of least resistance.

"Do not be afraid!" How much good is left undone in our lives each waking hour because we are morally afraid! How often our souls are stained with sin because our courage failed us! We heard perhaps the inner prompting of grace, the voice of conscience urging us to a better life. But then came the cowardly fear of what others would think or say if we changed our ways and sought to walk more perfectly in the Master's footsteps. Our better self urged us perhaps to avoid such an occasion of sin, a bad companion, dangerous reading; but the nightfall found us treading the same old way because we were too fearful to make the effort; we were only a craven at heart. We may never know why the winds of trial and tribulation must beat so strongly against us, and the waves of temptation all but submerge our souls in profoundest darkness; but we will have peace and fortitude and hope through it all, if we learn to fear not, but only trust blindly in the wisdom of him who “. . . has done all things well (Mark 7:37).

### **Mary can help calm our fears**

To each of us La Salette seminarians Our Lady whispers; "Do not be afraid!" Take courage and strive resolutely, putting aside all fear of future and possible trials and difficulties. Draw close to the Mother of God as did the children at La Salette, and there at her feet all danger and trouble will melt away. "Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid" (John 14:27b). Do not be afraid to be illumined, directed, confronted and even corrected by the truth of Christ manifested to us in Sacred Scriptures, Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church. Do not be afraid to open your hearts and minds to the Truth, for it shall make you free and lead you to an abundant life.

The words of the Psalmist sum it all up in one brief verse: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).

Finally, remember that Love conquers fear! "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear," says St. John in his First Letter (4:18). Let the love of Christ conquer any fear in your heart. In fearful situations, choose the most loving thing to do. Conquering fear is the first and indispensable step in your lives if you are to open wide the doors to Christ – first, the doors of your own hearts, then of the hearts of the people you will serve.

*(The Sessions breaks for half an hour. After the break the group gathers again in a prayerful atmosphere either in the Chapel or a hall. The Blessed Sacrament exposed, or a room is prepared for group sharing)*

## **6. Meditative Music**

## **7. Questions for Personal Reflection and Discussion:**

- a. What is my fear at this stage of Life?
- b. Do I feel strengthened by meditating the words of Our Lady?

## **8. Group Sharing based on the Questions above**

## **9. Spontaneous Prayers**

## **10. Concluding Prayer**

Lord you sent your son Jesus to cast away fears and anxieties from the life of humanity. He himself strengthened his disciples when they were met with storms in the sea. Blessed Mother strengthen the shepherd children with her words, "do not be afraid". Grant, we pray, that setting aside the fears in our life, in our vocation, with confidence we may respond to your call. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

## **11. Concluding Song: La Salette Song**