

JUBILEE YEAR OF THE APPARITION

Monthly Recollection for Seminarians of La Salette Matha Province

May 2021

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1. Opening Song: Holy Spirit Song

2. Opening Prayer: PRAYER FOR THE MARIAN YEAR

(See the Prayer Card)

3. Scripture Passage

Isaiah 35: 1-10

4. Theme of Meditation:

“La Salette, a message of hope and a road to Resurrection”

5. Reflection

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

May, the month in which the earth springs into bloom in the Northern Hemisphere is also the Month of Mary. This Christian custom of dedicating the month of May to the Blessed Virgin arose at the end of the 13th century. In this way, the Church was able to Christianize the secular feasts, which were accustomed to take place at that time.

5.1 Roses and La Salette Apparition

Flowers have always been associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary. There is even an early tradition that states when the apostles went to open Mary’s tomb, they found it filled with the most fragrant flowers, confirming that Jesus took her up to heaven after she died. *Flowers are often used in art to symbolize different spiritual truths about Our Lady.* The rose is sometimes used to represent heavenly joy when worn as a crown by saints, while its thorns often point to Original Sin. The Blessed Virgin Mary is called the “rose without thorns.” One of Our Lady’s choicest titles recited in the Litany of Loretto is the invocation “Mystical Rose”. Everyone knows that the Rosary, the universal prayer to Mary, derives from the popular symbol of a wreath of roses. There is a striking association of the rose with Our Lady’s apparition at la Salette. On the Holy Mountain of La Salette, she wore wreaths of roses around her feet, a garland of roses on her breast and a crown of roses upon her head. In this Apparition, roses bespeak a deep mystical lesson and the triple wreaths of roses from Heaven are an unmistakable symbol of the Mysteries of the Most



Holy Rosary. Let us reflect in this month of May the meaning of roses in her apparition at La Salette.

5.2 Meaning of La Salette's Special Roses

The children knew nothing in nature that might give us an adequate idea of the roses worn by the Beautiful Lady. More enlightening is the lesson we may draw from them. No one can fail to interpret the fair garlands of roses as representing the three phases of Mary's life, which we contemplate in the recitation of the Rosary. The roses at her feet mark the Joyful Mysteries; those on her breast stress the Sorrowful Mysteries and those that made up her crown evoke the Glorious Mysteries.



This is the way traditionally reflected before Pope John Paul II added luminous mysteries

It did not escape the children's observation that when the Blessed Virgin directed her steps up the slope of the ravine in which she appeared, the roses at her feet suffered no pressure, since her feet barely touched the tips of mountain grass or the rough pebbles in her path. She seemed to glide gracefully without crushing in the least her delicate footgear of roses.

Well may we apply to her the words of Scripture: "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger of peace." Hers indeed was a mission of peace for humankind and her rose-bedecked feet recall to mind the great visitations of grace with which she gladdened our earth.

5.3 The Roses at Her Feet Mark the Joyful Mysteries

The Joyful Mystery is the sublime inaugural of Her Role as Mediatrix between God and man. The rose-wreaths around the blessed feet of Our Lady may be said to signify the glad progress of the Queen on her mission of mercy.

5.4 Roses on Her Breast Stress the Sorrowful Mysteries

When first seen by the children, Our Lady was seated on a stone in the dry brook of the Sezia, her head buried in her hands in an attitude of overwhelming sorrow. On her shoulders lay the wreath of roses which seemed to weigh down on her heart.

It is significant that within the garland of roses on Her kerchief and extending alongside, there also lay what the children described as a chain-work of golden links. This heavy chain may well represent the yoke of submission and the bond of obedience. It also gives a special meaning to the twined roses of suffering laid so gently over Her sword pierced heart, whereon rested the golden crucifix with hammer and tongs.

In her ascent up the rugged mountainside, Our Lady of La Salette retraced in miniature a replica of the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem, as pilgrims to the Holy Land have observed. Thus she epitomized in a dramatic way the tragic scenes of Our Lord's Passion. Weeping alone in her agony of grief, she recalls the Vigil of Gethsemane; then the Scourging, the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion and Death – all of which she shared through her compassion as Co-Redemptrix of the human race.

5.5 The Crown of Roses on Her Brow is Clearly Associated with the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary – not only the Resurrection and the Ascension of Our Lord, which were a token of her own glory, but in a particular way, the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon her and the Apostles, her glorious Assumption, which previous to her disappearance she re-enacted before the children's eyes, and lastly her Coronation in heaven where, as Queen of the Angels and of all people, she watches with solicitude over her erring subjects on earth.

Her very attitude and every movement at La Salette, the garments which she wears and the tear-filled words which drop from her lips are at once a bold challenge and a tender appeal. Who can resist the charm of her rose-wreaths with which she would captivate our hearts?



Like the boy Maximin who tried to snatch with his hands the last fading rose at her feet, let us reach after these garlands of fragrant beauty by translating the Mysteries of the Rosary into our lives and garnering the fruits of virtue attached to each one.

Dear brothers in these trying times, when the full import of Our Lady's Message at La Salette is being brought home to people with such stark vividness, through corona Pandemic, war and fear and turmoil, we need but fix our bewildered yet prayerful gaze upon the healing vision of her rose-garlands; and in our troubled skies, her white roses of innocence and joy, her blood-drenched roses of suffering and her gorgeous many-tinted roses of heavenly merit will blend into a triple-arched rainbow declaring God's Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation.

(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:

- How do I experience the wonders of nature? Am I aware about the greatest truths revealed to us through the works of creation?
- Do I reflect with devotion the mysteries of salvation proclaimed by Mary at La Salette?

8. Group Sharing Based on the Questions Above

9. Spontaneous Prayers

10. Concluding Prayer

Prayer to Mary at the Foot of the Cross

Loving Father,

you sent us Mary, the Beautiful Lady at La Salette,

the Mother of your Son.

Her warm welcome to those two unsuspecting children
and her message of great news touched our hearts.
Her words were direct, yet filled with hope;
challenging but always expressed
from a heart of boundless love
for her wayward children.

As she stood at the foot of the Cross
on that fateful but glorious day,
her heart was broken seeing the suffering of her only Son.
He gave Mary to her new family, the Church,
as First Disciple and guide on our way back to you, Father.
As your Son gave up his spirit, all for love of us,
we, in turn, place our lives in your hands this day.

As we draw closer to you,
may Mary assist us through her intercession
that our lives may be wonderful reflections of your Son,
who lives with you, Father, and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

11. Concluding Song: La Salette Song

