

## JUBILEE YEAR OF THE APPARITION

### Monthly Recollection for Seminarians of La Salette Matha Province

July 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

Luke 1:46-56

#### 4. Theme of Meditation:

“Mary at La Salette speaks of the Name of the Lord”

#### 5. Reflection

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

In our world today, we create a God who will tolerate all our evil deeds and never punish the sinners. We want a God who do not care our misdeeds and blesses us unconditionally. Do we find this sort of image of God in the Bible?

One of the difficulty of several pilgrims in the message of Our Lady is her statement about her Son's arm, which she can no longer withhold. One must first note that Mary's message does not speak of punishment even once. At La Salette we are not dealing with that inexorable Christ which one can contemplate in the Sistine chapel, a Christ whose wrath the Virgin was charged with appeasing. Such a Christ is not the Christ of the New Testament, the Risen one now seated at the right hand of the Father, concerning whom the



Letter to the Hebrews declares that he is definitively our intercessor with the Father. (Heb 9:24)

On the other hand, as Mary does at La Salette, the Bible often speaks to us of the arm of God, but it is always a saving arm. God saves his people “with mighty hand and outstretched arm” (Psalm 136:12a). At the threshold of the New Testament, Mary, in her *Magnificat*, sums up the entire Old Testament by speaking to us of a God who “...has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.” (Lk 1:51)

The image of the arm of God is an unmistakable image of biblical Revelation. Mary recalls us to it, and warns us that the arm of her Son weighs heavily on the proud who refuse to submit. This arm speaks to us of the passionate and jealous love of God for all his people. God cannot resign himself to seeing his children suffer from what will weigh on them because of their refusal; namely, the spoilt wheat, the famine and the death of little children.

When Mary evokes her Son's abandonment of her people, it is because her people have abandoned her Son. She speaks of a God who can tolerate neither the one nor the other. This image of her Son's arm reveals to us the tragic mystery of humanity's refusal of the Savior's love.

Certain texts of the New Testament speak of it likewise: “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed... For I was hungry and you gave me no food... what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ (Matthew 25:41a, 42a, 45b).

And the letter to the Romans Paul speaks to us of the “wrath of God (which) is indeed being revealed from heaven against every impiety and wickedness of those who suppress the truth by their wickedness” (Rm 1:18-32)



“Then (the king) will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed... For I was hungry and you gave me no food... what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ (Matthew 25:41a, 42a, 45b).

### **MARY HOLDS BACK WHAT WE TRULY DESERVE**

If ever the human heart could learn the terrible effects of sin, it will understand it now at the feet of the Virgin of La Salette, contemplating that tragic scene she so vividly describes. “If my people will not submit, I shall be forced to let go the arm of my Son. It is so strong, so heavy that I can no longer withhold it.”

Yes, the arm of her Son is strong. It was always strong to help and to save; to carry home to the fold the lost sheep; to bring back from the grave the child of the widowed mother. Strong it was to carry the cross and so open once more the Gates of Paradise to us human beings. But now that strong arm of love and mercy has become strong with the judgment of Divine Justice – so long delayed and withheld. With tears flowing down her face, Mary says: “It is so heavy...” Yes, for his arm is weighted down with the sins of her ungrateful and selfish people.

It is only the whispered pleading of a mother's love – and of such a mother as was Mary – that averts that terrible – yet so justly merited – chastisement. Will humanity continue on, having abused the mercy and goodness of the Son, with the supreme folly of also dismissing the powerful witness of his Mother's love?

Mary reminds us of the secret, the sure way to escape the just punishments of God. We must return to God in faith and obedience, and be reconciled. Then his arm, so strong, so heavy, will be changed into an instrument of blessing and of mercy. It will remain over us, but now only to shelter and enfold us, only to protect and comfort us.

*(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:

“*If you obey* the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I am giving you today, loving the Lord, your God, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and ordinances, you will live and grow numerous, and the Lord, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

“*If, however,* your heart turns away and you do not obey, but are led astray and bow down to other gods and serve them, I tell you today that you will certainly perish; you will not have a long life on the land which you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: *I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life,* then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, obeying his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land which the Lord swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give to them” (Deuteronomy 30:15-20, emphasis added).

## 8. Group Sharing Based on the Questions Above

## 9. Spontaneous Prayers

## 10. Concluding Prayer

**Let us Pray:**

God our Father you sent Mary to remind us the secret of conversion, a way to escape the just punishment of yourself. She exhorted us to return to God in faith and obedience and to be reconciled. Then your arm of your Son, Jesus which is so strong and so heavy will be changed into an instrument of blessing and of mercy. May it remain over us to shelter and enfold us and to protect and comfort us. This we ask through Christ our Lord.....Amen

## 11. Concluding Song: La Salette Song

