

NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE
APRIL 2021



175th Anniversary of the Apparition

The Order of Novena

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Prayer for the Marian year

Priest: 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.

Prayers of the Proper Day: (See each Day)

Memorare to Our Lady of La Salette

Priest: Remember, Our Lady of La Salette, (*all*) true mother of sorrows, the tears you shed for me on Calvary. Remember also the care you have taken to keep me faithful to Christ, your Son. After having done so much for me, you will not now abandon me. Inspired by this consoling thought, I come to cast myself at your feet, in spite of my infidelities and ingratitude. Do not reject my prayers, oh Merciful Mother, but intercede for me, obtain for me the grace to love Jesus above all things and console you by a holy life that one day I may see You in heaven. Amen.

Priest/ Our Lady of La Salette Reconciler of Sinners.

A/ Pray without ceasing for us who have recourse to you.

Final Blessing

Priest/ The Lord be with you.

R/ And also with you.

Priest/ May Almighty God bless you all, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

R/ Amen.

First Day
A People, Children of God

La Salette

“Come closer, my children; don’t be afraid. I am here to tell you great news.”

Scripture

“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord” (Luke 4\ 18-19).

Reflection

“Come nearer, my children, don’t be afraid.” ‘Don’t be afraid, open the door to Christ!’ At La Salette and for today’s world, Mary is the Messenger of Christ. She appeals to all of us, the people of God, to open our hearts with complete trust in the Lord. Confidence in God is indispensable if the heart and spirit are to be open to the announcement of the Good News. The Good News is that everyone, without exception, can be saved. In the synagogue, at Nazareth, on the mountain of La Salette, Christ the Saviour and Mary in tears proclaim that salvation comes from God for whole world.

- 1- As Christ and Mary glance at us, their eyes reveal the confidence, the respect, the love and the dignity that they have for us. How do we respond to this ‘glance’ from God?
- 2- The grace of La Salette reiterates the ‘Good News’ of the Gospel. Does this ‘News’ continue to animate and attract us as Christians and, above all, as religious of Mary, Reconciler?

Second Day
A People Calling for Freedom.

La Salette

"If my people refuse to submit, I will be forced to let go the arm of my Son.

Scripture

"Seek out Yahweh while He is still to be found, call to Him while He is still near.

Let the wicked abandon his way and the evil one his thoughts.

Let him turn back to Yahweh who will take pity on him, to our God, for He is rich in forgiveness" (Isaiah 55\ 6-7).

Reflection

"My people, what have I done?" We hear an echo of the Prophet Isaiah in the sadness of the words spoken by the Virgin Mother. It is always difficult for men and women to abandon themselves completely and always to the will of God.

God has created us 'to live life fully' Everything we do or chose in life, if it harmonises with that which ennobles us, is obedience to the 'Creative Dynamism' who gives us our existence. God has put everything into our hands. The Virgin reminds us of the power that we have to either create or destroy, depending on whether we allow ourselves to be or not to be touched by God.

- 1- From the very beginning, the Lord desired an alliance between Himself and 'His People.' The Lord is patient even to the point of respecting the choices that we sometimes 'impose' on our Creator. Does God really love us to that extreme?
- 2- Humanity has to experience freedom before being able to submit to God. Do we truly accept our reality ... do we recognise what the Lord has done for us? In our day to day living, do we place our trust in the God who created us and who loves us?

Third Day
A People with a Mother.

La Salette

"If I want my Son not to abandon you, I am obliged to plead with Him constantly. As for you, you pay no heed!"

Scripture

"Listen to my voice, then I will be your God and you shall be my people. In everything, follow the way that I mark out for you, and you shall prosper.

But they did not listen, they did not pay attention; they followed their own devices, their own stubborn and wicked inclinations, and got worse rather than better.' (Jeremiah 7\ 23-24)

Reflection

Vatican II: "The Virgin Mary ... is acknowledged and honoured as being truly the Mother of God and of the Redeemer ... But, being of the race of Adam, she is at the same time also united to all those who are to be saved; indeed, 'she is clearly the Mother of the members of Christ' ... she is the truly Mother of the Body of Christ, since she has by her charity joined in bringing about the birth of believers in the Church, who are members of its Head." (Lumen Gentium 53).

"This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly ... until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect ... This is why the blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, Mediatrix, ... The Church does not hesitate to profess this subordinate role of Mary; which it constantly experiences and recommends to the heartfelt attention of the faithful, so that encouraged by this maternal help they may the more closely adhere to the Mediator and Redeemer." (Lumen Gentium 62).

- 1- Do I recognise the marvellous glory of Mary, Mother of God and of humanity? Do I honour her in my life as I imitate her virtues?
- 2- Mary was compassionate, interceding for those in need, a reconciliator during her life on earth and at La Salette? Do I approach her with childlike confidence?

Fourth day
A People of Hope

La Salette

"However much you pray, however much you do, you will never be able to recompense the pains I have taken for you."

Scripture

"So it is proof of God's own Love for us, that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. How much more can we be sure, therefore, that, now we have been justified by his death, we shall be saved through him from the retribution of God. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more we can be sure that, being now reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5\ 8-10).

We read in the first Eucharistic Prayer: "Do not consider what we truly deserve, but grant us your forgiveness.' Do we perform good works to merit the forgiveness of God? Moralism perhaps remains a temptation for the soul of the Christian. If I pray more, if I do more, then I will be able to say that I did something and so believe the Lord really resurrected for me! I attempt to give life to the resurrection of Christ while the reality is that Christ resurrected for my justification. Since the Lord has resurrected and Mary wept for me at La Salette, I am able to entrust myself into their hands with total confidence.

- 1- The trust that the Lord and the Virgin ask of me involves a real forgetting of myself ... and not the question we ask ourselves so often: 'now, what else must *I* do?' or 'what else can *I* do to console the Virgin who is weeping?'
- 2- If the Christ who shines brightly on the bosom of the Virgin is the fundamental Rule of my Life, then the 'means' are no longer problems. What is most important in my life is to discover the 'Treasure': *if Christ is with me, then everything else is secondary.*

Fifth Day An Escatological People

La Salette

"I gave you six days to work; I keep the seventh for myself, and no one will give it to me."

Scripture

"If you refrain from breaking the Sabbath, from taking your own pleasure on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath 'Delightful', and the day sacred to Yahweh 'Honourable' if you honour it by abstaining from travel from seeking your own pleasure and from too much talk, then you will find true happiness in Yahweh, and I shall lead you in triumph over the heights of the land. I shall feed you on the heritage of your father Jacob, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken." (Isaiah 58/ 13-14)

At the end of the first week of creation, after six days of work, God rested and saw that it was "very good". God admired the work of His hands: a man made from the earth, animated with a free and happy spirit, the master work of His creation. Israel will remember and devote the seventh day in thanksgiving for the wonders of God.

On the first day of the 'new' week, Jesus introduced a new creation in which Christians, children of light, will have the responsibility to believe, to celebrate and to live the seventh day in the spirit of the Resurrection.

- 1- On the first day of the week, the Lord God resurrected His Son, Light of Light, the Sun that illuminates our darkness. Is Sunday still a day in which we find God?
- 2- The Day of the Lord is the day 'par excellence' when "the Lord is with us". It is the day in which the Lord renews the covenant with His people. The Virgin, with maternal concern, begs her people to abandon themselves to the forgiveness of God and to the abundant graces of this day.

Sixth Day
A People on the Path to Conversion.

La Salette

"If they are converted, rocks and stones will turn into heaps of wheat, and potatoes will be self-sown in the fields."

Scripture

"The Lord is not being slow in carrying out His promises, as some people think He is; rather is He being patient with you, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to repentance." (2 Peter 3\ 9)

In her apparition, Mary quickly invites us to conversion. She urges us to move from the path we are following and walk in the way of the commandments of God, especially the first three commandments. "Repent and believe the Good News" (Mark 1\ 15).

To convert is to pass from the state of sin to an entirely new way of life. For St. Paul, conversion is: 'to be in Christ, to die and resurrect with him, to be a new creature, to put on the new man'

St. John speaks of a 'new birth' a *passing* from darkness to light, from death to life, from hatred to love, from disbelief to belief.

To convert is to enter into the Love of the Trinity; to participate in the paschal mystery of Christ; to respond to the call of Christ, to accept redeeming grace.

Christian life is an on-going conversion, a step by step journey on an ever ascending path.

All promises of God are subject to the sincerity of conversion.

- 1- Am I convinced that my life must be a continued conversion ... an uninterrupted journey on the path of holiness? It is Christ Himself who said: "Be holy as your heavenly Father is holy ..."
- 2- What does personal conversion mean to me? ... to the brethren I meet?

**Seventh Day
A Praying People**

La Salette

*"Do you say your prayers well, my children?
Ah, my children, you should say them well, at night and in the morning..."*

Scripture

"These remained faithful, to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers." (Acts 2\ 42)

At La Salette, the Virgin wanted to restore God as being foremost in our lives, she wanted us to place God in the center of our lives. In her message, she speaks of the mortal dangers that surround those who deny God or who distance themselves from Him. Hence the urgency for Christians to rediscover the 'necessity' of prayer. Prayer is a gift and a grace but is, also, a need.

Seek to pray with faith and in faith, because God always answers a prayer made in faith. To someone facing struggles in life, Christ speaks of the necessity of prayer. The problems that we face in life are burdensome and difficult; to those who are tired, He gently says ... 'pray'

- 1- Is my prayer something indispensable or is it simply an obligation?
- 2- Is prayer a loving dialogue with God, a breathing of the soul, a silent listening to God who speaks in so many ways?

Eighth Day A Sharing People

La Salette

"Here my child, eat some bread while we still have it this year, because I don't know who will eat any next year, if the wheat keeps up like that."

Scripture

"But the angel of Yahweh came back a second time and touched him and said,

'Get up and eat, or the journey will be too long for you.

So he got up and ate and drank, and strengthened by that food he walked for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, God's mountain" (I Kings 19\ 7-8).

In our world, with its advanced technology and so preoccupied by the quality of life, comes a cry from the poor and the emaciated against the selfish rich!

God, who is both father and mother, reveals in the words of the Virgin, His preoccupation and longing to share the sufferings of all the poor in the world. The goodness of God is constant, as is His suffering when He sees His children suffer from a lack of daily bread.

- 1- The Rule of Life of our Congregation invites us to live a modest and simple life, the Gospel-life. Have we been seduced, all too often, by excessive comfort in our everyday life?
- 2- Solidarity and the sharing of goods are serious demands of the Gospel. We must also remember that entire peoples and vast segments of our society hunger and thirst for God and His Word.

Ninth Day
A Missionary People

La Salette

"Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people."

Scripture

"How beautiful on the mountains, are the feet of the messenger announcing peace, of the messenger of good news, who proclaims salvation, and says to Zion, 'your King is God!...' (Isaiah 52\7)

Before leaving the ones He loved, Jesus said to them: "Go, therefore, make disciples ..." (Matthew 28\ 19). In like manner the Virgin, before leaving the two shepherds, said to them: "Well, make this known to all my people!"

This mission, confided in the beginning to Maximin and Melanie, became the mission of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette.

It was an evangelising mission, because the Virgin reminded us of the universal call of the Gospel. She reminded us in an explicit way of the observance of the first three commandments. She calls us to conversion, to penance, to prayer and to complete trust in an ever-present Father. The distinctive cross that our weeping Mother carried on her bosom reminds us of the mystery of Redemption; Christ died, was buried and resurrected for our salvation. "The Redeemer of mankind, Jesus Christ, is the center of the cosmos and history.' (Redemptor Hominis 1).

- 1- "The entire Church is missionary.' (Vatican II).
Do I try to be a missionary in my everyday living ... not only in word, but by the witness of my life?
- 2- Do I refer to the message of the Virgin in my ministry as a Missionary of La Salette? Do I experience this message as scriptural and evangelical? ... as being important for our world of today?