

**THE THREE HOURS'
AGONY OF OUR
LORD JESUS CHRIST**

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The three hours' agony of Our Lord Jesus Christ by Peter Guilday

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PETER GUILDAY

**THE THREE HOURS'
AGONY OF OUR
LORD JESUS CHRIST**

THE
THREE HOURS' AGONY
OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

GIVEN AT THE CHURCH OF
OUR LADY OF LOURDES, NEW YORK
GOOD FRIDAY, 1916

BY THE REV.
PETER GUILDAY
OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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TO
Charles Philip Henry

PREFACE

VERY few words are needed to preface the publication of these sermons. Persuaded by friends that they would be welcome not only to those who heard them at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, New York City, on Good Friday, 1916, but also to that larger audience of devout souls who gather year by year around the Cross on that sorrowful day, the author now prints them in the hope that they will be of benefit to all who read them.

The Good Friday Devotion, popularly known as the Three Hours' Agony, is becoming one of the most eagerly attended services of Holy Week. It consists of parts of the Psalms, hymns, and prayers, with nine discourses—an introductory sermon, seven sermons on the Seven Last Words, and a concluding sermon. The usual method followed in this country is that contained in the booklet: "Good Friday: The Three Hours' Agony," published by the Cathedral Library Association, of New York. Those who wish to learn the history of the origin and development of this popular method of recalling the Crucifixion

and Death of Our Blessed Lord will find an excellent introduction to the subject, together with a list of books on the same, in the English edition of Father Messia's work, recently issued by the eminent historian, Father Herbert Thurston, S.J.

No other series of sermons could be of a more intimate and personal character than those given during this impressive service of the Three Hours' Agony. *Cor ad cor loquitur*, and the century-long traditions of the occasion itself open the heart wider than ever before. At no other moment does the sense of sin seem so intense, the fear of it so tangible; and the personal realization of the meaning of Calvary's tragedy reaches a depth seldom touched before or after Good Friday itself. This fact alone would seem to preclude any publicity to the words spoken at the very height of such emotion; but in spite of this hesitation, the sermons are now published, as they were given, as an humble act of devotion to the Crucified Master.

I thank my very dear friend, the Rev. Edward A. Pace, D.D., for many helpful suggestions and for correcting the proofs of these sermons.

PETER GUILDAY.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA,

WASHINGTON, D. C.,

January 6, 1917

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