

SOME THOUGHTS FOR HOLY WEEK

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Some thoughts for Holy week by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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FOR HOLY WEEK**

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PREFACE.

THE planning of this little work has been the subject of much earnest thought. Commentators differ as to the sequence of events commemorated in Holy Week; and, after all, exactitude in such a matter is not essential. It has seemed well, therefore, to take one received method without hesitancy, and to gather from it such practical reflections as shall deepen our sense of sin, and heighten our appreciation of the Saviour's love.

It is supposed that all who take up such a book as this, are not mere nominal Christians, but rather true-hearted disciples of the Cross; who, conscious, perhaps, of many defects, of coldness or lukewarmness, of a tendency to worldliness or self-seeking, have yet a real desire for better things.

It may be that the little volume will fall into the hands of some, whose lot is cast among the ungodly, and who are struggling hard to live for God and Heaven, while tasting but sparingly "of the waters of comfort." Or, it may be read by others who, dwelling amid pleasant surroundings, are unaware of their own shortcomings, and unknowing that the Life of the Spirit has had, as yet, but little growth in their heart.

It is the author's fervent prayer that for all of these various classes of readers this little manual "may be good to the use of edifying," that it may assist each individual soul, whether by the ministry of warning or of counsel, of encouragement or of consolation, to rise to a higher life.

It is suggested that each meditation be entered upon with prayer for the Holy Spirit's guidance. It may be one of the many fervent aspirations from the Psalms, such as Ps. xix. 14, 15, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be always acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord: my strength, and my Redeemer." Or, the Invocation of the Holy Trinity may be used, as though to call down the aid of each Divine Person for a profitable meditation upon the Inspired Word.

Two meditations are given for each day, either of which can be selected, as all are entirely independent of one another. Or, better still, the reader, having sufficient time at his disposal, may use both of the daily meditations, so that the opening and closing thoughts of every day may be consecrated to Him Who gave Himself at this season without reserve for us.

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Preliminary Meditation.

TO BE USED ON THE EVENING BEFORE
PALM SUNDAY.

WE have come to the verge of Holy Week, the Great Week, as the early Christians also termed it. It is the season in which we commemorate the last cruel sufferings of our Redeemer, borne ungrudgingly for love of us. What shall hinder me from spending it with Him? Shall love of the world, with its various attractions? or fear of the world and its ridicule? No; for it was to deliver me from the snares of the world that my Saviour braved scorn and infamy without a murmur.

Shall my own cold heart hinder me? with its slothfulness and love of ease, its proneness to shrink from self-denial? No; for it was to save me from the corruption of my own heart that Christ my God became "a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Shall the devil hinder me? with his insidious temptations, his plausible excuses? Oh! surely not; for it was to deliver me from the tyranny of Satan that Jesus died; to save me from drifting away into a life of carelessness and sin.

There can be no question with whom it is most fitting that I should spend this Holy Week. I will give it up as far as I am able to my Lord, deeming it a high honour to be allowed to follow Him closely, and to have a share in the bearing of His cross. I will endeavour so to solemnize my thoughts this night, that I may enter upon the Great Week with my mind intently fixed upon Him, and fully resolved to draw nearer and nearer to Him as the sacred days run on.

So will the love of Christ penetrate my heart, and I shall become more closely united to Him, and shall be more worthy, through this union, of the reward which He has in store for His faithful followers.

Oh! may I learn through these seven awful days to value the sacrifice of Calvary, that it may not be found in the Great Day of account to have been made in vain for me! Oh! may

this Silent Week¹ be to me the means, under God, of purifying and elevating my soul,—that, when we are called upon to keep the Feast of Easter, I may indeed have learned to lead the Risen Life, the Life which can triumph over sin and self through the power of the Crucified!

¹ It is called in Germany "Die stille Woche."

Palm Sunday.

1. CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

A WINDING, rocky road leads from the village of Bethany to the metropolitan city—Jerusalem¹. Here a procession is slowly making its way round the slopes of Olivet. The central figure is a Man riding on an ass, this being the animal mostly used in the East by kings and judges in time of peace.

This Man, meek and lowly in His aspect and bearing, has yet attracted a multitude of followers². Some came with Him from Bethany, and some went out from the city to meet Him. Eager to do Him honour, they cast down their garments before Him, and strew palm branches along His path, crying Hosanna; Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

And who is this Man, so gentle, yet so ma-

¹ St. Luke xix. 35-37.

² St. Matt. xxi. 8, 9.