

Our Lady of Sorrows. 9/15/2021

We hear in the reading of St Luke's Gospel the presentation of Jesus in the temple, to fulfill the precepts of the Law for him and for Mary. His parents bring the child to the temple, and they find Simeon, an old man who is moved by the Holy Spirit. Mary receives from Simeon a blessing and a prophecy. This is like a "second annunciation" for her, lifting somewhat the veil of the future life and mission of this child, and of herself.

Simeon rejoices and praises God in seeing this child, the awaited salvation, a light for revelation of the Gentiles, the glory of the people of Israel.

Then he turns to Mary to explain that for this mission to be accomplished, Jesus will go through suffering. And so will

she. There will be struggle. The holiness and love of Jesus will face opposition, hostility, rejection. And Mary's soul will be pierced by a sword.

Mary would suffer, naturally, seeing the rejection and betrayal of the son she loves. But Simeon's prophecy says more: Her role in the history of salvation is not finished with the mystery of the incarnation. She also has a role to play by the loving and sorrowful sharing of the sufferings of her son, in his passion and crucifixion.¹ And her motherly role will extend into eternity, and it will expand to include all of us as her children.

Today's memorial of our Lady of Sorrows follows yesterday's feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. They go

¹ *Mariology*, p. 99.

together. One focuses on the cross as the sign of the victory, of the kingship of Christ, who destroyed death and brought us back to God. The other focuses on the bitter suffering of Jesus and his mother, brought about by the sin of the world, and our own sin. We have them side by side, both part of the mystery of redemption accomplished by Christ.

Contemplating the sufferings of Mary, who remains united always to her son, we humbly thank her for her total surrender to God's plans for her. Let us bring to her our own sorrows as parents, grandparents, and parent figures. Let us place our children in her motherly hands and ask her to warm their hearts with her love, so that these children may always turn back to God in every circumstance of their lives.

Mariology: A Guide for Priests, Deacons, Seminarians and Consecrated Persons. Seat of Wisdom Books, Queenship Publishing, 2007. Pp 98-103, pp 647-648.

The Navarre Bible. Scepter Publishers 2013.