



KEEP ME COMPANY FOR 15 MINUTES

Our Lady to Sr. Lucia, 10th December 1925

First Saturday of the Month



The Fifth Joyful Mystery

Losing and Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

Let us look for Jesus through Mary

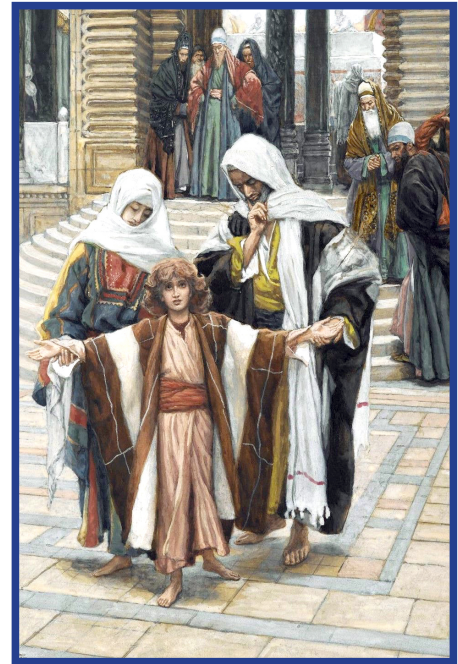
Introduction:

In fulfilment of our First Saturday reparatory devotion, today we will meditate on the 5th Joyful Mystery: The loss and finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple from among the doctors of the Law.

Let us contemplate this Mystery by considering the role of the Mother of God in our lives, especially in her support and help, so that we can always find Jesus in our way to Heaven.

Meditation Setting

Let us imagine the scene as represented in Christian iconography: in a spacious hall of the Temple of Jerusalem the Child Jesus is surrounded by the doctors of the law in their ornate robes. Jesus, His countenance radiant with divine brilliance, speaks confidently of the sacred Scriptures, astonishing the doctors who listen intently. At a certain moment, Our Lady and Saint Joseph appear at the entrance to the hall, and beholding Him, they admired their Son as He taught the wise men of Israel.



"Jesus Found in the Temple"
Tissot

Preparatory Prayer

O Most Holy Virgin of Fatima, intercede for us with your Divine Son and obtain for us from Him the graces necessary for us to contemplate well this Mystery of the Rosary. When we reflect on this, let us remember to put heavenly pursuits first, and to seek Jesus diligently whenever we have the misfortune of losing Him, in the full certainty that you will always help us to find Him on our journey towards Heaven. Amen.

Gospel of Saint Luke (2, 46-49):

Three days later, they found him in the Temple. He was sitting among the teachers, listening, and asking questions.

All who heard the Child were amazed at his intelligence and answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him: "My son, why have you acted like this with us? Behold your father and I were distressed, looking for you." Jesus replied, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my father's house?"

I - OCCUPY YOURSELF WITH THE THINGS OF GOD

Saint Luke writes that Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem every year according to the custom of the feast, and they were taking the Child Jesus with them. It was the custom among the Israelites, that during the pilgrimage to the temple (at least on the way back) the men walked separately from the women, while the boys accompanied their father or mother at ease. But unknown to Mary and Joseph, the Redeemer, who then was twelve years old, stayed behind in Jerusalem. The Virgin Mother thought that Jesus was with Joseph, and he thought Him in the company of Mary.



“Jesus in the Temple both hearing and answering Questions” Hole

1. In the Temple, among the doctors

As Saint Alphonsus de Liguori observes, the holy Child spent those three days in promoting the glory of his Eternal Father with fasts, vigils, and prayers, and in attending the offering of sacrifices which were prefigurations of his own future sacrifice on the Cross. To have some food, says St. Bernard, he had to beg for it as an alms, and to rest He had no bed other than the bare earth. When Mary and Joseph did not find Him in the caravan, with great distress they began to look for Him. Returning to Jerusalem, they found him finally on the third day, in the temple, among the doctors, who were amazed at the questions and answers of that extraordinary boy.

2. Intent on His Father’s business

In earthly life there is no pain that can be compared to the one a soul who, desirous of loving Jesus, suffers in the fear that for some reason they have distanced themselves from Him.

This was exactly the pain of Mary and Joseph in those days, for their humility made them believe that they had become unworthy of having such a great treasure in their custody. That is why when Mary, meeting her Son, to express her pain to Him, said: “Son, why did you do that to us? Behold your father and I have been looking for you in anguish.” And Jesus replied, “Why are you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

3. Spiritual priorities

From the contemplation of this Mystery, we can gather some precious teachings that should lead us to good purposes. According to Saint Alphonsus, one of these is that we must renounce everything that separates us from the love of God above all things, including human creatures that keep us from promoting His glory.

Another valuable teaching is that God lets Himself be found by those who seek Him, and always grant us the necessary graces to meet Him on our spiritual journey, especially the graces of conversion and change of life when we embrace the paths of holiness.

So, I must ask myself: am I willing to renounce the earthly things that draw me away from divine love and service? Have I sought to “find” God in my life, especially when I distance myself from Him by giving in to my bad inclinations, vices, and defects?

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II - THE PAIN OF LOSING JESUS

Filled with affliction, Our Lady and Saint Joseph began to look for Jesus among the travellers from the caravan they were in and did so for three days. These were days of acute suffering, especially for the divine Mother, who could not resign herself to having lost her Jesus.

1. One of the most intense pains

Mary's grief and pain over the loss of Jesus was undoubtedly most intense, notes Saint Alphonsus. Pain that was made all the more cruel by the fact that firstly, in the company of Jesus She did not suffer at all as in other pains; secondly, because her humility made her believe that Jesus had distanced Himself from her due to some negligence in his service. For this matter those three days were too long for her and seemed like centuries, full of bitterness and tears. In a word, for the love that this holy Mother had for her Son, she suffered more in this loss of Jesus than any other martyr in the torment of deprivation of life.

2. Pain that comforts afflicted souls

Holy authors advise us that this pain of Mary should serve as a comfort to those souls who are desolate, and do not feel joy in the presence of their Lord, as perhaps they once did.

Mary no doubt wept over the absence of her Son. But if the Lord is absent from the eyes of the soul that loves Him, not for that reason is He absent from the heart. He hides himself so as to be sought with yet more desire and love. But whoever wants to find Jesus must seek Him, not among the delights and pleasures of the world, but amidst crosses and mortifications as Mary sought Him: “Your father and I were in anguish looking for you.”

3. Source of confidence, especially for sinners

Moreover, in this world we must seek no other good than Jesus. Truly unhappy and miserable are those souls who have lost God. If then, Mary wept for the absence of her Son, how much more should those sinners who have lost divine grace? But the greatest misfortune for these poor souls, says St. Augustine, is that if they lose an ox, they do not stop looking for it; if missing one sheep they spare no diligence to find it; if they lose a donkey, they have no more rest; but if they lose the highest Good, which is God, they eat, drink and remain unconcerned. In our case, if we have the misfortune of losing Jesus because of sin, let us say, full of trust to Our Lady: “Mary, my most lovable Mother, if through my misfortune and sins I have lost Jesus, I beseech you, by the merits of your sorrows, to help me seek and find Him swiftly—never to lose Him again, and to remain with Him for all eternity.”

III - FINDING JESUS THROUGH MARY

Among the teachings that we must draw from this Mystery, there is another of paramount importance, that is, we must always seek Jesus, and we must do it through Our Lady. That way we will be sure of finding Him.

1. The means by which we come to Jesus

As Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort states, the Holy Virgin is the means by which Our Lord Himself came to us, and that is also the means we must use to go to Him. For She is not like other creatures which, if we were to cling to them, could drive us away from God instead of bringing us closer to Him. Mary's strongest inclination is to unite us with Jesus Christ, her Son, and the strongest inclination of the Son is that one goes to Him through his holy Mother. This is how we honour and please Him.

2. Our Lady never abandons her devotees

Since Our Lady is the safe, straight, and immaculate way to go to Jesus Christ and find him perfectly, it is through Her that souls called to tread the paths of holiness must find Him.

If we are afraid to seek Jesus Christ directly because of his infinite greatness or because of our lowliness, or even because of our sins, let us implore the help and intercession of Mary, our Mother. She is good and tender, she is so charitable that she repels none of those who ask for her intercession, no matter how sinful they may be. Therefore, just as the saints assure, it has never been heard since the world began that anyone who has recourse to the Holy Virgin with trust and perseverance was ever rejected.

3. Shortest and most perfect way to find Jesus

Resorting to the protection of Our Lady is the shortest way to find Jesus Christ, either because in her there is no danger of going astray, or because in her one walks with more joy and ease, and therefore more readily. The Blessed Virgin is a perfect way to go and unite with Jesus Christ, because She is the most perfect and the holiest of pure creatures, and Jesus Christ, who came perfectly to us, chose no other way on his great and wonderful journey. Our Lady is also the safe way to go to Jesus Christ, because the characteristic of the Holy Virgin is to lead us safely to Jesus Christ, as the very nature of Jesus Christ is to lead us safely to the eternal Father.

All this is the teaching of the great Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort. Let us be convinced that the more present Mary is in our prayers, contemplations, actions, and sufferings, the more perfectly shall we find Jesus Christ, who is always with Mary, great, powerful and active, more than in any other creature in the universe. Let us therefore enter this heavenly path which is Mary Most Holy and let us walk by that path day and night, until we reach full union with Jesus in Heaven

Conclusion

At the end of this meditation, let us turn our hearts to Our Lady and raise our supplications pleading with her to intercede for us with her Divine Son. Obtain for us, O Mother, the grace of never losing Him on our path towards sanctification and, if we have the misfortune of separating from Him, Let us humbly hasten to seek Him anew through you, our sure, swift, and perfect path to finding Him always. Amen.

