

## **DAY 31.**

### *The Sun is darkened.*

NOW, in the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole earth until the ninth hour, which with us is the twelfth hour, when the sun is the highest. But now the sun has withdrawn his light, and has put upon him his mourning garment, in order to show, as best he could, his sorrow and compassion for his Maker, Who was at that moment wrapp'd with such anguish and torments; as if the Father, Whose nature cannot suffer, nor have sorrow, nor weep, had given command to His creature to mourn in His stead, and to perform the funeral offices of His Son, and to be the companion of the spotless Virgin in her sorrow, who then alone wept for Christ's Passion. Perhaps, she was even then complaining gently to the Father in this way: "O most loving Father, am I alone His Mother? Are You not the Eternal Father of Your Son, Who hanged here in such pitiable affliction? Why do You allow me to weep alone, and to suffer this intolerable sorrow, which, certainly, is not due to me alone? Have You not long before borne witness, that this is Your beloved Son, in Whom You are well pleased? Where are now the signs of Your love to Him? He hangs here, not as the Son of God, not as the Son of the King, not as the friend of God, not even as some poor servant of God, but as a transgressor, guilty of death, forsaken, and humbled by God. Have You, then, forsaken Him Whom the disciples have forsaken? What has He done against You, that You delivered Him to His enemies? Is it because You are the Lord Almighty, and heeds nothing, that You are touched by no pity for Him in His affliction? Because You are a spirit, You can not feel? Because You dwell in heaven, have You no concern for what is done on earth? Because You are in glory, do You not behold and regard the contempt, and the wrong, and the reproach, and the affliction, and the dreadful death of Your only-begotten Son? Do You not see, O most just Judge, how the malice of the Jews rages madly against Your beloved Son, Who allowed Himself, like an innocent lamb, to be torn, and wounded,

and crucified, and slain, and His precious Blood to be poured out like water? Grant Yourself, O loving Father, to be touched with pity and compassion for Your wretched Son, for Your nature is goodness, and Your property is ever to have mercy, above all, on those who are wretched, and oppressed, and who suffer wrong. Come, too, and help His sorrowing Mother, whom You see in such agony, and alone with Your Son treading His wine-press!”

Now to these complaints of Christ’s tender Mother, we may imagine the Father of heaven to have made answer in this or in like manner: “Make no complaint to Me, O My chosen daughter, that for a little while I have forsaken you; for this I have done out of My goodness, for the increase of your glory and merits, that your affliction may be in harmony with My Son’s Passion, which He, with perfect resignation, must undergo even to the end. Think not that your prayers, and groans, and tears, have not come up before Me. Know by what is happening whether I have compassion for My own Son or not. For although no sorrow, no affliction, can fall upon My nature, yet I will do through My creatures what My Godhead cannot do. Lo! I will stir up and move the whole world to sorrow, and to weep bitter tears for My Son, so that all creatures shall celebrate with you the funeral of My Beloved Son. For all this world was made by Me, and as many creatures that live there, obey and serve Me. Only these hardened sinners oppose Me, for I, Myself, have given them the faculty of free will. You, therefore, O sun, withdraw your pleasant splendor, make the whole world sad, and become the companion of the blessed Virgin Mother in weeping for My Son. You, also, O Earth, tremble with horror at such great wickedness and cruelty, and at the crimes of the evil-minded men whom you bear on your shoulders; be horrified at the wrong and contempt inflicted upon Me. Marvel at My patience, loving-kindness, and longsuffering, that I suffer these things so long; shake with fear, and acknowledge yourself unworthy to drink in the precious Blood of My Son. And you, you hard rocks, chastise and reprove the hardheartedness of the Jews, and of all sinners, whom these fearful torments of My Son cannot soften, nor move their hearts to know Him, and receive My grace. O most cruel death, you devourer of life, that has not spared even My only Son. This malice shall fall back on your

own head; You shall be caught in the net which you have stretched out for My only One: Truly, you shall be slain by Him Whom you hoped to swallow up. Unjust and wicked are your judgments. You have devoured My Son along with the sinners of earth, because He wore a garment of earth, and the likeness of a sinner, although He was without sin. Therefore shall His innocent death fall back upon you; your strength shall be broken, and you shall be cast down from your lordship, because you have abused it against right and reason. It is sin you ought to correct, not to oppress the Just One. But you have smitten the just and good one along with the wicked. You have a zeal, indeed, for justice, but not according to knowledge and right reason. The vengeance, therefore, which you have wrongfully taken on My Son, shall deliver the whole human race from the punishment it deserves. And that you may know that you have been conquered, and that through life all your former power have been taken away from you, and that all your dominion has fallen back into nothing, give up now the dead, whom up to this time, for so many ages, you have held captive. For My Son, by the arms and power of His Cross, has gotten Himself the victory, and obtained possession of them, and has acquired the right to set them free.” Meanwhile, we may imagine what must have been this new sorrow of God’s Mother, when she saw the elements and senseless creatures give forth such signs of sorrow and compassion for her Son. How did her still recent tears, that had sprung from her former consolation, now begin to flow afresh in sweet and abundant streams, when she found that she had now so many companions in her sorrow!

Now the sun hid the brightness of his light, because Christ, the true Sun of Justice, had set over the whole world, and was hidden in darkness, and because the light of faith had failed above measure, save in the Virgin Mother, and in the thief, who confessed our Lord. The sun was also darkened, because he could not bear to look on the bitter passion, and contempt, and shame, and wrong, which those savage men were inflicting on their Maker.