

37. Jesus Carries His Cross to Golgotha

When Pilate left the judgment seat, part of the soldiers followed him and drew up in file before the palace. A small band remained near the condemned. Twenty-eight armed Pharisees, among them those six furious enemies of Jesus who had assisted at His arrest on Mount Olivet, came on horseback to the forum in order to accompany the procession. The executioners led Jesus in to the center. Several slaves, dragging the wood of the cross, entered through the gate on the western side, and threw it down noisily at His feet. The two arms, which were lighter and provided with tenons, were bound with cords to the trunk, which was broader and heavier. The wedges, the little foot-block, and the board just finished for the inscription were carried along with other things by boys who were learning the executioners' trade.

As soon as the cross was thrown on the ground before Him, Jesus fell on His knees, put His arms around it, and kissed it three times while softly uttering a prayer of thanksgiving to His Heavenly Father for the Redemption of mankind now begun. Pagan priests were accustomed to embrace a newly erected altar, and in like manner the Lord embraced His cross, the eternal Altar of the bloody Sacrifice of expiation. But the executioners dragged Jesus up to a kneeling posture; and with difficulty and little help (and that of the most barbarous kind) He was forced to take the heavy beams upon His right shoulder and hold them fast with His right arm. I saw invisible angels helping Him, otherwise He would have been unable to lift the cross from the ground. As He knelt, He bent under the weight. While Jesus was praying, some of the other executioners placed on the back of the two thieves the arms of their crosses (not yet fastened to the trunk), and tied their upraised hands upon them by means of a stick around which

they twisted the cord. These crosspieces were not quite straight, but somewhat curved. At the moment of crucifixion they were fastened to the upper end of the trunk, which trunk—along with the other implements of execution—was carried after the condemned by slaves. Pilate's horsemen were now ready to start, and the trumpet sounded. Just then one of the mounted Pharisees approached Jesus, who was still kneeling under His load, and exclaimed: "It is all over with fine speeches now! Hurry up, that we may get rid of Him! Forward! Forward!" They jerked Him to His feet, and then fell upon His shoulder the whole weight of the cross, of that cross which, according to His own sacred words of Eternal Truth, we must carry after Him. And now that blessed triumphal procession of the King of Kings, so ignominious upon earth, so glorious in the sight of Heaven, began. Two cords were tied to the end of the cross, and by them two of the executioners held it up, so that it could not be dragged on the ground. Around Jesus, though at some distance, walked the four executioners holding the cords fastened to the fetter-girdle that bound His waist. His mantle was tied up under His arms. Jesus, with the wood of the cross bound on His shoulder, reminded me in a striking manner of Isaac carrying the wood for his own sacrifice on the mountain. Pilate's trumpeter gave the signal for starting, for Pilate himself with a detachment of soldiers intended to go into the city, in order to prevent the possibility of an insurrection. He was armed and on horseback, surrounded by his officers and a troop of cavalry. A company of about three hundred foot soldiers followed, all from the frontier between Switzerland and Italy.

The procession of the Crucifixion was headed by a trumpeter, who sounded his trumpet at every street corner and proclaimed the execution. Some paces behind him came a crowd of boys and other rude fellows, carrying drink, cords, nails, wedges, and baskets

of tools of all kinds, while sturdy servant men bore poles, ladders, and the trunks belonging to the crosses of the thieves. The ladders consisted of mere poles, through which long wooden pegs were run. Then followed some of the mounted Pharisees, after whom came a lad bearing on his breast the inscription Pilate had written for the cross. The crown of thorns, which it was impossible to leave on during the carriage of the cross, was taken from Christ's head and placed on the end of a pole, which this lad now carried over his shoulder. This boy was not very wicked.

And next came Our Lord and Redeemer, bowed down under the heavy weight of the cross, bruised, torn with scourges, exhausted, and tottering. Since the Last Supper of the preceding evening, without food, drink, and sleep, under continual ill-treatment that might of itself have ended in death, consumed by loss of blood, wounds, fever, thirst, and unutterable interior pain and horror, Jesus walked with tottering steps, His back bent low, His feet naked and bleeding. With His right hand He grasped the heavy load on His right shoulder, and with the left He wearily tried to raise the flowing garment constantly impeding His uncertain steps. The four executioners held at some distance the cords fastened to His fetter girdle. The two in front dragged Him forward, while the two behind urged Him on. In this way He was not sure of one step, and the tugging cords constantly prevented His lifting His robe. His hands were bruised and swollen from the cords that had tightly bound them, His face was covered with blood and swellings, His hair and beard were torn and matted with blood, the burden He carried and the fetters pressed the coarse woolen garment into the wounds of His body and the wool stuck fast to those that had been reopened by the tearing off of His clothes. Jeers and malicious words resounded on all sides. He looked unspeakably wretched and

tormented, though lovingly resigned. His lips moved in prayer, His glance was supplicating, forgiving, and suffering. The two executioners behind Him, who held up the end of the cross by means of ropes fastened to it, increased the toil of Jesus, for they jerked the ropes or let them lie slack, thus moving His burden from side to side. The procession was flanked by soldiers bearing lances.

Then came the two thieves, each led by two executioners holding cords fastened to their girdles. They had the curved crosspieces belonging to the trunk of their crosses fastened on their backs, with their outstretched arms bound to the ends of them. They wore only a short tunic around their loins; the upper part of their body was covered with a loose, sleeveless jacket open at the sides, and on their head was the cap of twisted straw. They were partly intoxicated by the drink that had been given them. The good thief, however, was very quiet; but the bad one was insolent and furious, and he cursed continually. The executioners were dark complexioned, short, thickset fellows, with short, black hair, crisp and scrubby. Their beard was sparse, a few little tufts scattered over the chin. The shape of their face was not Jewish. They were canal laborers, and belonged to a race of Egyptian slaves. They wore only a short tunic like an apron, and on their breast was a leathern covering without sleeves. They were, in every sense of the word, beastly. Behind the thieves rode one-half of the Pharisees closing the procession. Sometimes they rode together, and again singly along the whole line of the procession, urging them on and keeping order. Among the mob that led the way, carrying the implements of execution, were some lowborn Jewish lads who, of their own accord, had pushed themselves into the crowd.

At a considerable distance followed Pilate, his party preceded by a trumpeter on horseback. Pilate, in military costume, rode among his officers followed by a

troop of cavalry and three hundred foot soldiers. His train crossed the forum, and then passed out into a broad street.

The procession formed for Jesus wound through a very narrow back street, in order not to obstruct the way of the people going to the Temple, as well as to prove no hindrance to Pilate and his escort.

Most of the people had dispersed immediately after the sentence was pronounced, either to return to their own homes or to go to the Temple. They had already lost a great part of the morning, and so they had to hurry their preparations for the slaughtering of the Paschal lamb. The crowd of loiterers was nevertheless very great. It was a mixed company consisting of strangers, slaves, workmen, boys, women, and all kinds of rough people. They rushed headlong through the streets and byways, in order here and there to catch a glimpse of the mournful procession. The Roman soldiers in the rear kept them from swelling its numbers, and they were obliged consequently to plunge down the next bystreet and head off the procession again. Most of them, however, made straight for Golgotha. The narrow alley through which Jesus was first conducted was scarcely two paces wide, and it was full of filth thrown from the gates of the houses on either side. He had much to suffer here. The executioners were brought into closer contact with Him, and from the gates and windows the servants and slaves there employed threw after Him mud and kitchen refuse. Malicious rascals poured black, filthy, bad-smelling water on Him; yes, even children, running out of their houses, were incited by the rabble to gather stones in their aprons and, darting through the crowd, throw them at His feet with words of mockery and reviling. Thus did children do unto Him who had pronounced the children beloved, blessed, and happy.

38. Jesus' First Fall Under the Cross

Toward the end of that narrow street, or alley, the way turned again to the left, becoming broader and somewhat steep. Under it was a subterranean aqueduct extending from Mount Sion. I think it ran along the forum, where flowed a covered gutter down to the sheep pool near the sheep gate. I could hear the gurgling and rippling of the water in the pipes. Just here where the street begins to ascend, there was a hollow place often filled, after a rain, with mud and water. In it, as in many such places in the streets of Jerusalem, lay a large stone to facilitate crossing. Poor Jesus, on reaching this spot with His heavy burden, could go no farther. The executioners pulled Him by the cords and pushed Him unmercifully. Then did the Divine Cross-bearer fall full length on the ground by the projecting stone, His burden at His side. The drivers, with curses, pulled Him and kicked Him. This brought the procession to a halt, and a tumult arose around Jesus. In vain did He stretch out His hand for someone to help Him. "Ah! It will soon be over!" He exclaimed, and continued to pray. The Pharisees yelled: "Up! Raise Him up! Otherwise He'll die in our hands." Here and there on the wayside weeping women might be seen, and children whimpering from fear. With the aid of supernatural help, Jesus raised His head, and the terrible, the diabolical wretches, instead of alleviating His sufferings, put the crown of thorns again upon Him. When at last, with all kinds of ill-treatment, they dragged Him up again, they laid the cross once more upon His shoulder. And now with the greatest difficulty He had to hang His poor head, racked with thorns, to one side in order to be able to carry His heavy load on His shoulder, for the crown was broad. Thus Jesus tottered, with increased torture, up the steep and gradually widening street.

39. Jesus, Carrying His Cross, Meets His Most Holy and Afflicted Mother.

His Second Fall Under the Cross

The Blessed Mother of Jesus, who shared every suffering of her Son, had about an hour previously—when the unjust sentence was pronounced upon Him—left the forum with John and the holy women to venerate the places consecrated by His cruel Passion. But now when the running crowd, the sounding trumpets, and the approach of the soldiers and Pilate's cavalcade announced the commencement of the bitter Way of the Cross, Mary could no longer remain at a distance. She must behold her Divine Son in His sufferings, and she begged John to take her to some place that Jesus would pass. They left, in consequence, the vicinity of Sion, passed the judgment seat, and went through gates and shady walks which were open just now to the people streaming hither and thither, to the western side of a palace which had an arched gateway on the street into which the procession turned after Jesus' first fall. The palace was the residence of Caiaphas; the house on Sion was his official tribunal. John obtained from the compassionate porter the privilege of passing through and of opening the opposite gate. I was terrified when I saw the Blessed Virgin so pale, her eyes red with weeping, wrapped from head to foot in a bluish-green mantle, trembling and shuddering, going through this house with the holy women, John, and one of the nephews of Joseph of Arimathea. They could already distinguish the tumult and uproar of the approaching multitude only some houses off, the sound of the trumpet and the proclamation at the corners that a criminal was being led to execution. When the servant opened the gate, the noise became more distinct and alarming. Mary was in prayer. She said to John: "Shall I stay to behold it, or shall I hurry away?"

Oh, how shall I be able to endure it?" John replied: "If thou dost not remain, it will always be to thee a cruel regret." They stepped out under the gateway and looked to the right down the street, which was here somewhat rising, but which became level again at the spot upon which Mary was standing. The procession at this moment may not have been more than eighty paces distant from them. It was preceded by none of the rabble, though they were still following on the side and in the rear. Many of them, as I have said, were running through the neighboring street, to get other places from which they could obtain a look.

And now came on the executioner's servants, insolent and triumphant, with their instruments of torture, at sight of which the Blessed Mother trembled, sobbed, and wrung her hands. One of the men said to the bystanders: "Who is that woman in such distress?" And someone answered: "She is the Mother of the Galilean." When the miscreants heard this, they jeered at the sorrowing Mother in words of scorn, pointed at her with their fingers; and one of the base wretches, snatching up the nails intended for the crucifixion, held them up mockingly before her face. Wringing her hands, she gazed upon Jesus and, in her anguish, leaned for support against one of the pillars of the gate. She was pale as a corpse, her lips livid. The Pharisees came riding forward, then came the boy with the inscription—and oh! a couple of steps behind him, the Son of God, her own Son, the Holy One, the Redeemer! Tottering, bowed down, His thorn-crowned head painfully bent over to one shoulder on account of the heavy cross He was carrying, Jesus staggered on. The executioners pulled Him forward with the ropes. His face was pale, wounded, and blood-stained, His beard pointed and matted with blood. From His sunken eyes full of blood He cast, from under the tangled and twisted thorns of His crown, frightful to behold, a look full of earnest tenderness

upon His afflicted Mother, and for the second time tottered under the weight of the cross and sank on His hands and knees to the ground. The most sorrowful Mother, in vehemence of her love and anguish, saw neither soldiers nor executioners—saw only her beloved, suffering, maltreated Son. Wringing her hands, she sprang over the couple of steps between the gateway and the executioners in advance, and rushing to Jesus, fell on her knees with her arms around Him. I heard, but I know not whether spoken with the lips or in spirit, the words: “My Son!”—“My Mother!”

The executioners insulted and mocked. One of them said: “Woman, what dost thou want here? If thou hadst reared Him better, He would not now be in our hands.” I perceived, however, that some of the soldiers were touched. They obliged the Blessed Virgin to retire, but not one of them laid a finger on her. John and the women led her away, and she sank, like one paralyzed in the knees by pain, on one of the cornerstones that supported the wall near the gateway. Her back was turned toward the procession, and her hands came in contact with the obliquely projecting stone upon which she sank. It was a green veined stone. Where Mary's knees touched it, shallow hollow places were left, and where her hands rested, the impression remained. They were not very distinct impressions, but such as might be made by a stroke upon a surface like dough, for the stone was very hard. I saw that, under Bishop James the Less, it was removed into the first Catholic church, the church near the Pool of Bethsaida. As I have before said, I have more than once seen similar impressions in stone made by the touch of holy persons on great and remarkable occasions. This verifies the saying: “It would move the heart of a stone,” and this other: “This makes an impression.” The Eternal Wisdom, in His mercy, needed not the art of printing in order to leave to posterity a witness to holy things.

When the soldiers flanking the procession drove it forward with their lances, John took the Blessed Mother in through the gate, which was then closed.

The executioners meanwhile had dragged Our Lord up again, and laid the cross upon His shoulder in another position. The arms of the cross had become loose from the trunk to which they had at first been bound, and one had slipped down and become entangled in the ropes. Jesus now took them in His arms, and the trunk dragged behind a little more on the ground.

Here and there among the rabble following the procession with jeers and laughter, I saw the veiled figures of weeping women moving along with uneven steps.

40. Simon of Cyrene

Jesus' Third Fall Under the Cross

After going some distance up the broad street, the procession passed through a gateway in an old inner wall of the city. In front of this gate was a wide open space at which three streets met. There was a large stepping stone here, over which Jesus staggered and fell, the cross by His side. He lay on the ground, leaning against the stone, unable to rise. Just at this instant, a crowd of well-dressed people came along on their way to the Temple. They cried out in compassion: "Alas! The poor creature is dying!" Confusion arose among the rabble, for they could not succeed in making Jesus rise. The Pharisees leading the procession cried out to the soldiers: "We shall not get Him to Calvary alive. You must hunt up someone to help Him carry the cross." Just then appeared, coming straight down the middle of the street, Simon of Cyrene, a pagan, followed by his three sons. He was carrying a bundle of sprigs under his arm, for he was a gardener, and he had been working in the gardens

toward the eastern wall of the city. Every year about the time of the feast, he was accustomed to come up to Jerusalem with his wife and children, to trim the hedges. Many other laborers used to come for the same purpose. The crowd was so great that he could not escape, and as soon as the soldiers saw by his dress that he was a poor pagan laborer, they laid hold on him and dragged him forward to help carry the Galilean's cross. He resisted and showed great unwillingness, but they forcibly constrained him. His little boys screamed and cried, and some women that knew the man took charge of them. Simon was filled with disgust and repugnance for the task imposed upon him. Poor Jesus looked so horribly miserable, so awfully disfigured, and His garments were covered with mud; but He was weeping, and He cast upon Simon a glance that roused his compassion. He had to help Him up. Then the executioners tied one arm of the cross toward the end of the trunk, made a loop of the cords, and passed it over Simon's shoulder. He walked close behind Jesus, thus greatly lightening His burden. They rearranged the crown of thorns, and at last the dolorous procession resumed its march.

Simon was a vigorous man of forty years. He had no covering on his head. He wore a short, close-fitting jacket; his loins were bound with lappets, his legs with leathern straps, and his sandals turned up in sharp beaks at the toes. His little boys were dressed in tunics of colored stripes. Two of them were almost grown. They were named Rufus and Alexander, and later on they joined the disciples. The third was younger, and I have seen him still as a child with Stephen. Simon had not borne the cross long after Jesus when he felt his heart deeply touched.

41. Veronica and Her Veil

The street through which Jesus was now going was long and somewhat winding, and into it several side

streets ran. From all quarters respectable-looking people were on their way to the Temple. They stepped back, some from a pharisaical fear of becoming legally impure, others moved by a feeling of compassion. Simon had assisted the Lord with His burden almost two hundred paces when, from a handsome house on the left side of the street, up to whose forecourt (which was enclosed by a low, broad wall surmounted by a railing of some kind of shining metal) a flight of terraced steps led, there issued a tall, elegant looking woman, holding a little girl by the hand, and rushed forward to meet the procession. It was Seraphia, the wife of Sirach, one of the members of the Council belonging to the Temple. Owing to her action of this day, she received the name of Veronica from *vera* (true) and *icon* (picture, or image).

Seraphia had prepared some costly spiced wine with the pious design of refreshing the Lord on His dolorous journey. She had been waiting in anxious expectation and had already hurried out once before to meet the procession. I saw her veiled, a little girl (whom she had adopted as her own child) by the hand, hurrying forward at the moment in which Jesus met His Blessed Mother. But in the disturbance that followed, she found no opportunity to carry out her design, and so she hastened back to her house to await the Lord's coming.

As the procession drew near, she stepped out into the street veiled, a linen cloth hanging over her shoulder. The little girl, who was about nine years old, was standing by her with a mug of wine hidden under her little mantle. Those at the head of the procession tried in vain to keep her back. Transported with love and compassion, with the child holding fast to her dress, she pressed through the mob running at the side of the procession, in through the soldiers and executioners, stepped before Jesus, fell on her knees, and held up to Him the outspread end of the linen kerchief, with these words of entreaty: "Permit

me to wipe the face of my Lord!" Jesus seized the kerchief with His left hand and, with the flat, open palm, pressed it against His bloodstained face. Then passing it still with the left hand toward the right, which was grasping the arm of the cross, He pressed it between both palms and handed it back to Seraphia with thanks. She kissed it, hid it beneath her mantle, where she pressed it to her heart, and arose to her feet. Then the little girl timidly held up the mug of wine, but the brutal soldiers and executioners would not permit her to refresh Jesus with it. This sudden and daring act of Seraphia caused a stoppage in the procession of hardly two minutes, of which she made use to present the kerchief. The mounted Pharisees, as well as the executioners, were enraged at the delay, and still more at this public homage rendered to the Lord. They began, in consequence, to beat and pull Jesus. Veronica meanwhile fled back with the child to her house.

Scarcely had she reached her own apartment when, laying the kerchief on a table, she sank down unconscious. The little girl, still holding the mug of wine, knelt whimpering by her. A friend of the family, entering the room, found her in this condition. She glanced at the outspread kerchief and beheld upon it the bloody face of Jesus frightfully, but with wonderful distinctness, impressed. It looked like the face of a corpse. She roused Seraphia and showed her the Lord's image. It filled her with grief and consolation, and casting herself on her knees before the kerchief, she exclaimed: "Now will I leave all, for the Lord has given to me a memento!"

This kerchief was a strip of fine wool about three times as long as wide. It was usually worn around the neck, and sometimes a second was thrown over the shoulder. It was customary upon meeting one in sorrow, in tears, in misery, in sickness, or in fatigue, to present it to wipe the face. It was a sign of mourning and sympathy. In hot countries, friends presented

them to one another. Seraphia ever after kept this kerchief hanging at the head of her bed. After her death, it was given by the holy women to the Mother of God, and through the Apostles at last came into the possession of the Church.

Seraphia was a cousin of John the Baptist, her father being the son of Zachary's brother. She was from Jerusalem. When Mary, a little girl of four years, was placed among the young girls at the Temple, I saw Joachim, Anne, and some that had accompanied them going into Zachary's paternal house not far from the fish market. A very old relative of the family now occupied it, Zachary's uncle, perhaps, and Seraphia's grandfather. At the time of Mary's espousals with Joseph, I saw that Seraphia was older than the Blessed Virgin. She was related also to the aged Simeon who had prophesied at Jesus' Presentation in the Temple, and from early youth she was brought up with his sons. Simeon had inspired these young people with a longing after the Messiah. This waiting for salvation was, for a long time, like a secret affection among many good people; others at that time had no idea of such things. When Jesus at the age of twelve remained behind in Jerusalem to teach in the Temple, I saw Seraphia older than the Mother of Jesus and still unmarried. She sent Jesus food to a little inn outside of Jerusalem, where He put up when He was not in the Temple. It was at this same inn, a quarter of an hour from Jerusalem and on the road to Bethlehem, that Mary and Joseph, when going to present Jesus in the Temple after His birth, spent one day and two nights with the two old people. They were Essenians, and the wife was related to Johanna Chusa. They were acquainted with the Holy Family and Jesus. Their inn was an establishment for the poor. Jesus and the disciples often took shelter there; and in His last days, when He was preaching in the Temple, I often saw food sent thither by Seraphia. But at that time there were other

occupants in it. Seraphia married late in life. Her husband Sirach, a descendant of the chaste Susanna, was a member of the Council belonging to the Temple. He was at first very much opposed to Jesus, and Seraphia, on account of her intimate connection with Jesus and the holy women, had much to suffer from him. He had even on several different occasions confined her for a long time in a prison cell. Converted at last by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, he became more lenient, and allowed his wife to follow Jesus. At Jesus' trial before Caiaphas, both last night and this morning, he had, in company with Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and all well-disposed people, declared himself for Our Lord, and with them left the Sanhedrim. Seraphia was still a beautiful, majestic woman, although she must have been over fifty years old. At the triumphant entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, which we celebrate on Palm Sunday, I saw her among the other women with a child on her arm. She took her veil from her head and spread it joyfully and reverently in the Lord's path. It was this same veil with which she now went forward to meet the Lord in His dolorous, but victorious and triumphant procession, and remove in part the traces of His sufferings—this same veil that gave to its possessor the new and triumphant name of Veronica, and this same veil that is now held in public veneration by the Church.

In the third year after Christ's Ascension, the Roman Emperor sent officials to Jerusalem to collect proofs of the rumors afloat in connection with Jesus' death and resurrection. One of these officials took back with him to Rome Nicodemus, Seraphia, and a relative of Johanna Chusa, the disciple Epaphras. This last-named was merely a simple servant of the disciples, having formerly been engaged in the Temple as a servant and messenger of the priests. He was with the Apostles in the Coenaculum during the first days after Jesus' Resurrection, when

he saw Jesus as he frequently did afterward. I saw Veronica with the Emperor, who was sick. His couch was elevated a couple of steps, and concealed by a large curtain. The room was four-cornered, and not very large. I saw no window in it, but light entered from the roof in which there were valves that could be opened or closed by means of hanging cords. The Emperor was alone, his attendants in the antechamber. I saw that Veronica had brought with her, besides the veil, one of the linens from Jesus' tomb. She unfolded the former before the Emperor. It was a long, narrow strip of stuff, which she had once worn as a veil around her head and neck. The impression of Jesus' face was on one end of it, and when she held it up before the Emperor, she grasped the whole length of the veil in one hand. The face of Jesus was not a clean, distinct portrait, for it was impressed on the veil in blood; it was also broader than a painted likeness would have been, for Jesus had pressed the veil all around His face. On the other cloth that Veronica had with her, I saw the impression of Jesus' scourged body. I think it was one of the cloths upon which Jesus had been washed for sepulture. I did not see that these cloths made any impression on the Emperor, or that he touched them, but he was cured by merely looking upon them. He wanted to keep Veronica in Rome, and to give her as a reward a house, goods, and faithful servants, but she longed for nothing but to return to Jerusalem and to die where Jesus had died. I saw that she did return, with the companions of her journey. I saw in the persecution of the Christians in Jerusalem, when Lazarus and his sisters were driven into exile, that Seraphia fled with some other women. But being overtaken, she was cast into prison where, as a martyr for the truth, for Jesus, whom she had so often fed with earthly bread, and who with His own Flesh and Blood had nourished her to eternal life, she died of starvation.

42. The Weeping Daughters of Jerusalem. Jesus' Fourth and Fifth Falls Beneath the Cross

The procession had still a good distance to go before reaching the gate, and the street in that direction was somewhat declining. The gate was strong and high. To reach it, one had to go first through a vaulted arch, then across a bridge, then through another archway. The gate opened in a southwesterly direction. The city wall at this point of egress ran for a short distance, perhaps for some minutes, southward, then turned a little toward the west, and, finally, took a southerly direction once more around Mount Sion. On the right of the gate, the wall extended northward to the corner gate, and then turned eastward along the northern side of Jerusalem.

As the procession neared the gate, the executioners pressed on more violently. Close to the gate there was a large puddle of muddy water in the uneven road, cut up by vehicles. The barbarous executioners jerked Jesus forward; the crowd pressed, Simon of Cyrene tried to step sideways for the sake of convenience, thereby moving the cross out of its place, and poor Jesus for the fourth time fell so heavily under His burden into the muddy pool that Simon could scarcely support the cross. Jesus then, in a voice interrupted by sighs, though still high and clear, cried out: "Woe! Woe, Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered together thy children as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou dost cast Me so cruelly out of thy gate!" The Lord was troubled and in sorrow. The Pharisees turned toward Him and said mockingly: "The Disturber of the peace has not yet had enough. He still holds forth in unintelligible speeches," etc. They beat Him and pushed Him, and raising Him to His feet, dragged Him out of the rut. Simon of Cyrene meanwhile had become very much exasperated at the

barbarity of the executioners, and he exclaimed: "If you do not cease your villainy, I will throw down this cross even if you kill me also!"

Just outside the gate there branched from the highroad northward to Mount Calvary a rough, narrow road several minutes in length. Some distance farther, the highroad itself divided in three directions: on the left to the southwest through the Vale of Gihon toward Bethlehem; westward toward Emmaus and Joppa; and on the right, off to the northwest and running around Mount Calvary toward the corner gate which led to Bethsur. Through this gate by which Jesus was led out, one could see off toward the southwest and to the left the Bethlehem gate. These two gates of Jerusalem were next to each other.

In the center of the highroad and opposite the gate where the way branched off to Mount Calvary, stood a post supporting a board upon which, in white raised letters that looked as if they were done in paste, was written the death sentence of Our Saviour and the two thieves. Not far from this spot, at the corner of the road, a large number of women might be seen weeping and lamenting. Some were young maidens, others poor married women, who had run out from Jerusalem to meet the procession; others were from Bethlehem, Hebron, and the neighboring places, who, coming up for the feast, had here joined the women of Jerusalem.

Jesus again sank fainting. He did not fall to the ground, because Simon, resting the end of the cross upon the earth, drew nearer and supported His bowed form. The Lord leaned on him. This was the fifth fall of Jesus while carrying His cross. At sight of His countenance so utterly wretched, the women raised a loud cry of sorrow and pity and, after the Jewish manner of showing compassion, extended toward Him kerchiefs with which to wipe off the perspiration. At this Jesus turned to them and said: "Daughters of Jerusalem" (which meant, also, people from other

Jewish cities), "weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days shall come wherein they will say: 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck!' Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills: 'Cover us!' For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?" Jesus said some other beautiful words to the women, but I have forgotten them. Among them, however, I remember these: "Your tears shall be rewarded, Henceforth, ye shall tread another path," etc.

There was a pause here, for the procession halted awhile. The rabble bearing the instruments of torture went on ahead to Mount Calvary, followed by a hundred Roman soldiers detached from Pilate's corps. He himself had, at some distance, accompanied the procession as far as the gateway, but there he turned back into the city.

43. Jesus on Golgotha. The Sixth and The Seventh Falls of Jesus. His Imprisonment

The procession again moved onward. With blows and violent jerking at the cords that bound Him, Jesus was driven up the rough, uneven path between the city wall and Mount Calvary toward the north. At a spot where the winding path in its ascent turned toward the south, poor Jesus fell again for the sixth time. But His tormentors beat Him and drove Him on more rudely than ever until He reached the top of the rock, the place of execution, when with the cross He fell heavily to the earth for the seventh time.

Simon of Cyrene, himself fatigued and ill-treated, was altogether worn out with indignation and compassion. He wanted to help poor Jesus up again, but the executioners with cuffs and insults drove him

down the path. He soon after joined the disciples. All the lads and workmen that had come up with the procession, but whose presence was no longer necessary, were driven down also. The mounted Pharisees had ridden up by the smooth and easy winding path on the western side of Mount Calvary, from whose top one could see even over the city wall.

The place of execution, which was on the level top of the mount, was circular, and of a size that could be enclosed in the cemetery of our own parish church. It was like a tolerably large riding ground, and was surrounded by a low wall of earth, through which five pathways were cut. Five paths, or entrances, of this kind seemed to be peculiar to this country in the laying out of different places; for instance, bathing places, baptismal pools, and the Pool of Bethesda. Many of the cities also were built with five gates. This arrangement is found in all designs belonging to the olden times, and also in those of more modern date built in the spirit of pious imitation. As with all other things in the Holy Land, it breathed a deeply prophetic signification, which on this day received its realization in the opening of those five ways to salvation, the five Sacred Wounds of Jesus.

The Pharisees on horseback drew up on the western side beyond the circle, where the mountain sloped gently; that toward the city, up which the criminals were brought, was steep and rough. About one hundred Roman soldiers from the confines of Switzerland were stationed, some on the mountain, some around the circular wall of the place of execution. Some, too, were standing on guard around the two thieves. As space was needed, they were not at once brought up to the top of the mount, but with their arms still bound to the crosspieces were left lying on a slope where the road turned off to the south, and at some distance below the place of execution. A great crowd, mostly of the vulgar class, who had no fear of defilement, strangers, servants, slaves,

pagans, and numbers of women, were standing around the circle. Some were on the neighboring heights, and these were being constantly joined by others on their way to the city. Toward evening there had gathered on Mount Gihon a whole encampment of Paschal guests, many of whom gazed from a distance at the scene on Mount Calvary, and at times pressed nearer to get a better view.

It was about a quarter to twelve when Jesus, laden with the cross, was dragged into the place of execution, thrown on the ground, and Simon driven off. The executioners then pulled Jesus up by the cords, took the sections of the cross apart, and put them together again in proper form. Ah! How sad and miserable, what a terribly lacerated, pale and bloodstained figure was that of poor Jesus as He stood on that place of martyrdom! The executioners threw Him down again with words of mockery such as these: "We must take the measure of Thy throne for Thee, O King!" But Jesus laid Himself willingly upon the cross. Had it been possible for Him, in His state of exhaustion, to do it more quickly, they would have had no necessity to drag Him down. Then they stretched Him out and marked the length for His hands and feet. The Pharisees were standing around, jeering and mocking. The executioners now dragged Jesus up again and led Him, bound, about seventy steps northward down to a cave cut in the rock. It looked as if intended for a cellar, or cistern. They raised the door and pushed Him down so unmercifully that, without a miracle, His knees would have been crushed on the rough stone floor. I heard His loud, sharp cries of pain. The executioners closed the door above Him, and set guards before it. I accompanied Jesus on those seventy steps, and I think that I saw angels helping Him, supporting Him a little, that His knees should not be crushed. The stone under them became soft.

And now the executioners began their preparations.

In the center of the place of execution, the highest point of Calvary's rocky height, was a circular elevation, about two feet high, with a few steps leading to it. After taking the measure of the lower part of each of the three crosses, the executioners chiseled out holes in that little elevation to receive them. Those for the thieves were raised to the right and left of the eminence. Their trunks were rough, shorter than that of Jesus, and sawed off obliquely at the upper end. The crosspieces, to which their hands were still fastened, were at the moment of crucifixion attached tightly to the upper end of the cross. The executioners next laid Christ's cross on the spot upon which they intended to crucify Him, so that it could be conveniently raised and deposited in the hole made to receive it. They fitted the tenons of the two arms into the mortises made for them in the trunk, nailed on the foot-block, bored the holes for the nails and also for the title written by Pilate, hammered in the wedges under the mortised arms, and made hollow places here and there down the trunk. These were intended to receive the crown of thorns and Jesus' back, so that His body might rather stand than hang, thus preventing the hands from being torn by the weight and hastening death. In the earth behind the little eminence, they sank a post with a crossbeam around which the ropes for raising the cross could be wound. They made several other preparations of a similar nature.

44. Mary and the Holy Women Go to Golgotha

After that most painful meeting with her Divine Son carrying His cross before the dwelling of Caiaphas, the most afflicted Mother was conducted by John and the holy women, Johanna Chusa, Susanna, and Salome, to the house of Nazareth in the vicinity of the corner gate. Here the other holy

women, in tears and lamentations, were gathered around Magdalen and Martha. Some children were with them. They now went all together, in number seventeen, with the Blessed Virgin, careless of the jeers of the mob, grave and resolute, and by their tears awe-inspiring, across the forum, where they kissed the spot upon which Jesus had taken up the burden of the cross. Thence they proceeded along the whole of the sorrowful way trodden by Him and venerated the places marked by special sufferings. The Blessed Virgin saw and recognized the footprints of her Divine Son, she numbered His steps, pointed out to the holy women all the places consecrated by His sufferings, regulated their halting and going forward on this Way of the Cross, which with all its details was deeply imprinted in her soul.

In this manner, that most touching devotion of the early Church, first written by the sword of Simeon's prophecy on the loving mother-heart of Mary, was transmitted from her lips to the companions of her sorrows, and from them passed down to us. It is the sacred gift of God to the heart of the Mother whence it has descended from heart to heart among her children. Thus is the tradition of the Church propagated. If people could see as I do, such gifts would appear to them more replete with life and holiness than any other. To the Jews, all places in which holy events, events dear to the heart happened, were thenceforth sacred. They forgot no spot remarkable for some great occurrence. They raised upon it a monument of stones, and went thither at times to pray. And so arose the devotion of the Holy Way of the Cross, not from any afterthought, but from the nature of man himself and the designs of God over His people, and from the truest mother-love which, so to speak, first trod that way under the very feet of Jesus Himself.

The holy band of mourners now arrived at Veronica's dwelling, which they entered, for Pilate with his riders and two hundred soldiers, having turned

back at the city gate, was coming along the street, Here with tears and expressions of sorrow, the holy women gazed upon the face of Jesus impressed upon Veronica's veil, and glorified His goodness toward His faithful friend. Taking the vessel of aromatic wine which Veronica had not been permitted to present to Jesus, they went to the gate nearby and out to Golgotha. Their number was increased on the way by the addition of many well-disposed people who traversed the streets with a demeanor at once orderly and deeply impressed. This procession was almost greater than that which followed Jesus, inclusive of the rabble running after it.

The sufferings of the most afflicted Mother of Sorrows on this journey, at the sight of the place of execution and her ascent to it, cannot be expressed. They were twofold: the pains of Jesus suffered interiorly and the sense of being left behind. Magdalen was perfectly distracted, intoxicated and reeling, as it were, with grief, precipitated from agony to agony. From silence long maintained she fell to lamenting, from listlessness to wringing her hands, from moaning to threatening the authors of her misery. She had to be continually supported, protected, admonished to silence, and concealed by the other women.

They went up the hill by the gently sloping western side and stood in three groups, one behind the other, outside the wall enclosing the circle. The Mother of Jesus, her niece Mary Cleophas, Salome, and John stood close to the circle. Martha, Mary Heli, Veronica, Johanna Chusa, Susanna, and Mary Marcus stood a little distance back around Magdalen, who could no longer restrain herself. Still farther back were about seven others, and between these groups were some well-disposed individuals who carried messages backward and forward. The mounted Pharisees were stationed in groups at various points around the circle, and the five entrances

were guarded by Roman soldiers.

What a spectacle for Mary! The place of execution, the hill of crucifixion, the terrible cross outstretched before her, the hammers, the ropes, the dreadful nails! And all around, the brutal, drunken executioners, with curses completing their preparations! The crucifixion stakes of the thieves were already raised, and to facilitate ascent, plugs were stuck in the holes bored to receive them. The absence of Jesus intensified the Mother's martyrdom. She knew that He was still alive, she longed to see Him, and yet she shuddered at the thought, for when she should again behold Him it would be in suffering unutterable.

The Weather

Toward ten in the morning, when the sentence had been pronounced, a little hail fell at intervals. At the time of Jesus' journey to Calvary, the sky cleared and the sun shone out, but toward twelve it was partially obscured by a lurid, reddish fog.

45. Jesus Stripped for Crucifixion And Drenched With Vinegar

Four executioners now went to the prison cave, seventy steps northward, and dragged Jesus out. He was imploring God for strength and offering Himself once more for the sins of His enemies. They dragged Him with pushes, blows, and insults over these last steps of His Passion. The people stared and jeered; the soldiers, cold and grave, stood proudly erect keeping order; the executioners furiously snatched Him from the hands of His guards and dragged Him violently into the circle.

The holy women gave a man some money to take to the executioners together with the vessel of spiced wine and beg them to allow Jesus to drink it. The wretches took the wine but, instead of giving it to

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Jesus, they drank it themselves. There were two brown jugs standing near. In one was a mixture of vinegar and gall, and in the other, a kind of vinegar yeast. It may have been wine mingled with wormwood and myrrh. Some of this last-mentioned they held in a brown cup to the lips of the Saviour, who was still bound in fetters. He tasted it, but would not drink. There were eighteen executioners in the circle: the six scourgers, the four that led Jesus, the two that held the ropes, and six crucifiers. Some were busied around Jesus, some with the thieves, and they worked and drank alternately. They were short, powerfully built fellows, filthy in appearance, cruel and beastly. Their features denoted foreign origin; their hair was bushy, their beard scrubby. They served the Romans and Jews for pay.

The sight of all this was rendered still more frightful to me, since I saw what others did not see, namely, the evil one in his proper form. I saw, too, great, frightful-looking demons at work among those barbarous men, handing them what they needed, making suggestions, and helping them in every way. Besides these, I saw numberless little figures of toads, serpents, clawed dragons, and noxious insects, which entered into the mouth of some, darted into the bosom of others, and sat on the shoulders of others. They upon whom I saw these evil spirits were those that indulged in wicked thoughts of rage, or that uttered words of mockery and malediction. But above the Lord, I frequently saw during the Crucifixion great figures of weeping angels and, in a halo of glory, little angelic faces. I saw similar angels of compassion and consolation hovering above the Blessed Virgin and all others well-disposed to Jesus, strengthening and supporting them.

And now the executioners tore from Our Lord the mantle they had flung around His shoulders. They next removed the fetter-girdle along with His own, and dragged the white woolen tunic over His head.

Down the breast it had a slit bound with leather. When they wanted to remove the brown, seamless robe that His Blessed Mother had knit for Him, they could not draw it over His head, on account of the projecting crown of thorns. They consequently tore the crown again from His head, opening all the wounds afresh, tucked up the woven tunic and, with words of imprecation and insult, pulled it over His wounded and bleeding head.

There stood the Son of Man, trembling in every limb, covered with blood and welts; covered with wounds, some closed, some bleeding; covered with scars and bruises! He still retained the short woolen scapular over His breast and back, and the tunic about His loins. The wool of the scapular was dried fast in His wounds and cemented with blood into the new and deep one made by the heavy cross upon His shoulder. This last wound caused Jesus unspeakable suffering. The scapular was now torn ruthlessly from His frightfully lacerated and swollen breast. His shoulder and back were torn to the bone, the white wool of the scapular adhering to the crusts of His wounds and the dried blood on His breast. At last, they tore off His girdle and Jesus, our sweetest Saviour, our inexpressibly maltreated Saviour, bent over as if trying to hide Himself. As He appeared about to swoon in their hands, they set Him upon a stone that had been rolled nearby, thrust the crown of thorns again upon His head, and offered Him a drink from that other vessel of gall and vinegar. But Jesus turned His head away in silence. And now, when the executioners seized Him by the arms and raised Him in order to throw Him upon the cross, a cry of indignation, loud murmurs and lamentations arose from all His friends. His Blessed Mother prayed earnestly, and was on the point of tearing off her veil and reaching it to Him for a covering. God heard her prayer. At that same instant a man, who had run from the city gate and up through the crowd thronging the

way, rushed breathless, his garments girded, into the circle among the executioners, and handed Jesus a strip of linen, which He accepted with thanks and wound around Himself.

There was something authoritative in the impetuosity of this benefactor of his Redeemer, obtained from God by the prayer of the Blessed Virgin. With an imperious wave of the hand toward the executioners, he said only the words: "Allow the poor Man to cover Himself with this!" and, without further word to any other, hurried away as quickly as he came. It was Jonadab, the nephew of St. Joseph, from the region of Bethlehem. He was the son of that brother to whom, after the birth of Christ, Joseph had pawned the ass that was no longer necessary. He was not one of Jesus' courageous followers, and today he had been keeping at a distance and spying around everywhere. Already, on hearing of the stripping for the scourging, he was filled with sorrow; and when the time for the Crucifixion was drawing near, he was seized in the Temple by extraordinary anxiety. While the Blessed Mother on Golgotha was crying to God, a sudden and irresistible impulse took possession of Jonadab, drove him out of the Temple, and up to Mount Calvary. He indignantly felt in his soul the ignominy of Cham, who mocked at his father Noe intoxicated with wine, and like another Sem, he hurried to cover his Blessed Redeemer. The executioners who crucified Jesus were Chamites, that is, descendants of Cham. Jesus was treading the bloody wine press of the new wine of Redemption when Jonadab covered Him, Jonadab's action was the fulfillment of a prefiguring type, and it was rewarded.

46. Jesus Nailed to the Cross

Jesus was now stretched on the cross by the executioners, He had lain Himself upon it; but they pushed Him lower down into the hollow places, rudely drew

His right hand to the hole for the nail in the right arm of the cross, and tied His wrist fast. One knelt on His sacred breast and held the closing hand flat; another placed the long, thick nail, which had been filed to a sharp point, upon the palm of His sacred hand, and struck furious blows with the iron hammer. A sweet, clear, spasmodic cry of anguish broke from the Lord's lips, and His blood spurted out upon the arms of the executioners. The muscles and ligaments of the hand had been torn and, by the three edged nail, driven into the narrow hole. I counted the strokes of the hammer, but my anguish made me forget their number. The Blessed Virgin sobbed in a low voice, but Magdalen was perfectly crazed.

The bore was a large piece of iron like a Latin T, and there was no wood at all about it. The large hammer also was, handle and all, of one piece of iron, and almost of the same shape as the wooden mallet we see used by a joiner when striking on a chisel.

The nails, at the sight of which Jesus shuddered, were so long that when the executioners grasped them in their fists, they projected about an inch at either end. The head consisted of a little plate with a knob, and it covered as much of the palm of the hand as a crown-piece would do. They were three edged, thick near the head as a moderate sized thumb, then tapered to the thickness of a little finger, and lastly were filed to a point. When hammered in, the point could be seen projecting a little on the opposite side of the cross.

After nailing Our Lord's right hand, the crucifiers found that His left, which also was fastened to the crosspiece, did not reach to the hole made for the nail, for they had bored a good two inches from the fingertips. They consequently unbound Jesus' arm from the cross, wound cords around it and, with their feet supported firmly against the cross, pulled it forward until the hand reached the hole. Now,

kneeling on the arm and breast of the Lord, they fastened the arm again on the beam, and hammered the second nail through the left hand. The blood spurted up and Jesus' sweet, clear cry of agony sounded above the strokes of the heavy hammer. Both arms had been torn from their sockets, the shoulders were distended and hollow, and at the elbows one could see the disjointed bones. Jesus' breast heaved, and His legs were drawn up doubled to His body. His arms were stretched out in so straight a line that they no longer covered the obliquely rising crosspieces. One could see through the space thus made between them and His armpits.

The Blessed Virgin endured all this torture with Jesus. She was pale as a corpse, and low moans of agony sounded from her lips. The Pharisees were mocking and jesting at the side of the low wall by which she was standing, therefore John led her to the other holy women at a still greater distance from the circle. Magdalen was like one out of her mind. She tore her face with her fingernails, till her eyes and cheeks were covered with blood.

About a third of its height from below, there was fixed to the cross by an immense spike a projecting block to which Jesus' feet were to be nailed, so that He should be rather standing than hanging; otherwise His hands would have been torn, and His feet could not have been nailed without breaking the bones. A hole for the nail had been bored in the block, and a little hollow place was made for His heels. Similar cavities had been made all down the trunk of the cross, in order to prolong His sufferings, for without them the hands would have been torn open and the body would have fallen violently by its own weight.

The whole body of our Blessed Redeemer had been contracted by the violent stretching of the arms to the holes for the nails, and His knees were forcibly drawn up. The executioners now fell furiously upon

them and, winding ropes around them, fastened them down to the cross; but on account of the mistake made in the holes in the crosspiece, the sacred feet of Jesus did not reach even to the block. When the executioners saw this, they gave vent to curses and insults. Some thought they would have to bore new holes in the transverse arm, for that would be far less difficult than moving the foot block. Others with horrible scoffing cried out: "He will not stretch Himself out, but we will help Him!" Then they tied ropes around the right leg and, with horrible violence and terrible torture to Jesus, pulled the foot down to the block, and tied the leg fast with cords. Jesus' body was thus most horribly distended. His chest gave way with a cracking sound, and He moaned aloud: "O God! O God!" They had tied down His arms and His breast also that His hands might not be torn away from the nails. The abdomen was entirely displaced, and it seemed as if the ribs broke away from the breastbone. The suffering was horrible.

With similar violence the left foot was drawn and fastened tightly with cords over the right; and because it did not rest firmly enough over the right one for nailing, the instep was bored with a fine, flathead piercer, much finer than the one used for the hands. It was like an auger with a puncher attached. Then seizing the most frightful-looking nail of all, which was much longer than the others, they drove it with great effort through the wounded instep of the left foot and that of the right foot resting below. With a cracking sound, it passed through Jesus' feet into the hole prepared for it in the foot block, and through that again back into the trunk of the cross. I have seen, when standing at the side of the cross, one nail passing through both feet.

The nailing of the feet was the most horrible of all, on account of the distension of the whole body. I counted thirty-six strokes of the hammer amid the poor Redeemer's moans, which sounded to me so

sweet, so pure, so clear.

The Blessed Virgin had returned to the place of execution. At the sound of the tearing and cracking and moaning that accompanied the nailing of the feet, in her most holy compassion she became like one dying, and the holy women, supporting her in their arms, led her again from the circle just as the jeering Pharisees were drawing nearer. During the nailing and the raising of the cross which followed, there arose here and there, especially among the women, such cries of compassion as: "Oh, that the earth would swallow those wretches! Oh, that fire from Heaven would consume them!" But these expressions of love were answered with scorn and insult by Jesus' enemies.

Jesus' moans were purely cries of pain. Mingled with them were uninterrupted prayers, passages from the Psalms and Prophecies, whose predictions He was now fulfilling. During the whole time of His bitter Passion and until the moment of death, He was engaged in this kind of prayer, and in the uninterrupted fulfillment of the Prophecies. I heard all the passages He made use of and repeated them with Him, and when I say the Psalms, I always remember the verses that Jesus used. But now I am so crushed by the tortures of my Heavenly Bridegroom that I cannot recall them, I saw weeping angels hovering over Jesus during this terrible torture.

At the beginning of the Crucifixion, the commander of the Roman guard ordered the title written by Pilate to be fastened on its tablet at the head of the cross. This irritated the Pharisees, for the Romans laughed loudly at the words: "King of the Jews." After consulting as to what measures they should take to procure a new title, some of the Pharisees rode back to the city, once more to beg Pilate for another inscription.

While the work of Crucifixion was going on, some of the executioners were still chiseling at the hole

on the little elevation into which the cross was to be raised, for it was too small and the rock very hard. Some others, having drunk the spiced wine which they had received from the holy women, but which they had not given to Jesus, became quite intoxicated, and they felt such a burning and griping in their intestines that they became like men insane. They called Jesus a sorcerer, railed furiously at His patience, and ran more than once down the mount to gulp down asses' milk. Near the encampment of the Paschal guests were women with she-asses, whose milk they sold.

The position of the sun at the time of Jesus' Crucifixion showed it to be about a quarter past twelve, and at the moment the cross was lifted, the trumpet of the Temple resounded. The Paschal lamb had been slaughtered.

47. The Raising of the Cross

After the Crucifixion of Our Lord, the executioners passed ropes through a ring at the back of the cross, and drew it by the upper part to the elevation in the center of the circle. Then they threw the ropes over the transverse beam, or derrick, raised on the opposite side. Several of the executioners, by means of these ropes, lifted the cross upright, while others supported it with blocks around the trunk, and guided the foot to the hole prepared for it. They shoved the top somewhat forward, until it came into a perpendicular line, and its whole weight with a tremulous thud shot down into the hole. The cross vibrated under the shock. Jesus moaned aloud. The weight of the outstretched body fell lower, the wounds were opened wider, the blood ran more profusely, and the dislocated bones struck against one another. The executioners now shook the cross again in their efforts to steady it, and hammered five wedges into the hole around it: one in front, one to the right, another to the left,

and two at the back, which was somewhat rounded.

A feeling of terror and, at the same time, one akin to deep emotion, was felt by Jesus' friends on beholding the cross swaying in the air and, at last, plunging into place with a heavy crash, amid the jeering shouts of the executioners, the Pharisees, and the distant crowd, whom Jesus could now see. But along with those shouts of derision, there arose other sounds at that dreadful moment—sounds of love and compassion from His devout followers. In touching expressions of pity, the holiest voices on earth, that of His afflicted Mother, of the holy women, the beloved disciple, and all the pure of heart, saluted the "Eternal Word made Flesh" elevated upon the cross. Loving hands were anxiously stretched forth as if to help the Holy of Holies, the Bridegroom of souls, nailed alive to the cross, quivering on high in the hands of raging sinners. But when the upraised cross fell with a loud crash into the hole prepared for it, a moment of deep silence ensued. It seemed as if a new feeling, one never before experienced, fell upon every heart. Hell itself felt with terror the shock of the falling cross and, with cries of rage and blasphemy, rose up again against the Lord in its instruments, the cruel executioners and Pharisees. Among the poor souls and in Limbo, there arose the joy of anxious expectation about to be realized. They listened to that crash with longing hope. It sounded to them like the rap of the coming Victor at the door of Redemption. For the first time, the Holy Cross stood erect upon the earth, like another tree of life in Paradise, and from the Wounds of Jesus, enlarged by the shock, trickled four sacred streams down upon the earth, to wash away the curse resting upon it and to make it bear for Himself, the new Adam, fruits of salvation.

While our Saviour was thus standing upright upon the cross, and the cries of derision had for a few minutes been reduced to sudden silence, the flourish of trumpets and trombones sounded from the Temple.

It announced that the slaughter of the types, the Paschal lambs, had begun; and at the same time, with solemn foreboding, it broke in upon the shouts of mockery and the loud cries of lamentation around the true, slaughtered Lamb of God. Many a hard heart shuddered and thought of the Baptist's words: "Behold the Lamb of God, who hath taken upon Himself the sins of the world!"

The little eminence upon which the cross was raised was about two feet high. When the foot of the cross was placed near the hole, the feet of Jesus were about the height of a man above the ground; but when it was sunk into it, His friends could embrace and kiss His feet. A sloping path led up to it. Jesus' face was turned toward the northwest.

48. The Crucifixion of the Thieves

While Jesus was being nailed to the cross, the thieves were still lying on the eastern side of the mount, their hands bound to the crosspiece fastened on their shoulders, and guards keeping watch over them. Both were suspected of the murder of a Jewish woman who, with her children, was travelling from Jerusalem to Joppa. They were arrested under the disguise of wealthy merchants at a castle in that neighborhood. Pilate often made this castle his stopping place when he was engaged in military affairs. The thieves had been imprisoned a long time before being brought to trial and condemnation, but I have forgotten the details. The one commonly called "the left thief" was older than the other and a great miscreant. He was the master and seducer of the converted one. They are usually called Dismas and Gesmas. I have forgotten their right names, so I shall call them the good Dismas and the bad Gesmas.

Both belonged to that band of robbers on the Egyptian frontiers from whom the Holy Family, on the

flight to Egypt with the Child Jesus, received shelter for the night. Dismas was that leprous boy who, on Mary's advice, was washed by his mother in the water used for bathing the Child Jesus and instantly healed by it. The charity and protection which his mother, in spite of her companions, then bestowed upon the Holy Family, was rewarded by that outward, symbolical purification, which received its realization at the time of the Crucifixion when, through the Blood of Jesus, her son was inwardly cleansed from sin. Dismas had gone to ruin and he knew not Jesus; still he was not utterly bad, and the patience of the Lord had touched him. While lying on the mount, he spoke constantly of Jesus to his companion, Gesmas. He said: "They are dealing frightfully with the Galilean. The evil He has done by His new laws must be much greater than ours. But He has great patience, as well as great power, above all men." To which Gesmas responded: "Come now, what kind of power has He? Were He as powerful as they say, He could help us and Himself too." And thus they bandied words. When Jesus' cross was raised, the executioners dragged the thieves up to it with the words: "Now it's your turn." They unbound them from the crosspiece and proceeded with great hurry, for the sun was clouding over and all things betokened a storm.

The executioners placed ladders against the upright trunks and fastened the curved crosspieces to the top of them. Two ladders were now placed against each of the two crosses, and executioners mounted them. Meanwhile the mixture of myrrh and vinegar was given them to drink, their old doublets were taken off, and by means of ropes passed under their arms and thrown up over those of the cross, they were drawn up to their places. Their ascent was rendered the more painful by the shocks they received and the striking against the wooden pegs that were stuck through the holes in the trunk of the cross.

On the crossbeam and the trunk, ropes of twisted bark were knotted. The arms of the thieves were bent and twisted over the crosspieces; and around the wrists and elbows, the knees and ankles, cords were wound and twisted so tightly by means of those long wooden pegs that blood burst from the veins and the joints cracked. The poor creatures uttered frightful shrieks of pain. The good thief Dismas said to the executioners as they were drawing him up the cross: "Had you treated us as you did the poor Galilean, this trouble would have been spared you."

49. The Executioners Cast Lots For Jesus' Garments

At the place outside the circle upon which the thieves had lain, the crucifiers had meanwhile gathered Jesus' garments and divided them into several parts, in order to cast lots for them. The mantle was narrow at the top and wide at the bottom. It had several folds, and the breast was lined, thus forming pockets. The executioners tore it up into long strips, which they distributed among themselves. They did the same to the long white garment, which was closed at the opening on the breast with straps. Then they divided the long linen scarf, the girdle, the breast scapular, and the linen that was worn around the loins, all of which were soaked with the Lord's blood. But because they could not agree concerning the brown woven robe, which would have been useless to them if torn up, they brought out a board with numbers on it and some bean-shaped stones marked with certain signs. They threw the stones on the board in order to decide by lot whose the robe should be. Just at this point of the proceedings a messenger, sent by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, came running toward them to say that a purchaser had been found for the clothes of Jesus. So they bundled them up, ran down the mount, and sold them.

It was in this way that these sacred relics came into the possession of the Christians.

50. Jesus Crucified. The Two Thieves

The terrible concussion caused by the shock when the cross was let fall into the hole prepared for it drove the precious blood in rich streams from Jesus' thorn-crowned head, and from the wounds of His sacred feet and hands. The executioners now mounted ladders and loosened the cords with which they had bound the sacred body to the trunk of the cross, in order to prevent its tearing away from the nails when raised. The blood, whose circulation had been checked by the tightly bound cords and the horizontal position of the body, now with new force, owing to the loosening of the cords and the upright position, resumed its course. Jesus' torments were, in consequence, redoubled. For seven minutes He hung in silence as if dead, sunk in an abyss of untold pain, and for some moments unbroken stillness reigned around the cross. Under the weight of the thorny crown, the sacred head had sunk upon the breast, and from its countless wounds the trickling blood had filled the eyes, the hair, the beard, and the mouth—open, parched, and languishing. The sacred face, on account of the immense crown, could be uplifted only with unspeakable pain. The breast was widely distended and violently torn upward; the shoulders were hollow and frightfully stretched; the elbows and wrists, dislocated; and the blood was streaming down the arms from the now enlarged wounds of the hands. Below the contracted breast there was a deep hollow place, and the entire abdomen was sunken and collapsed, as if shrunk away from the frame. Like the arms, the loins and legs were most horribly disjointed. Jesus' limbs had been so violently distended, His muscles and the torn skin so pitifully stretched, that His bones could be counted one by

one. The blood trickled down the cross from under the terrible nail that pierced His sacred feet. The whole of the sacred body was covered with wounds, red swellings and scars, with bruises and boils, blue, brown and yellow, and with bloody places from which the skin had been peeled. All these wounds had been reopened by the violent tension of the cords, and were again pouring forth red blood. Later the stream became whitish and watery, and the sacred body paler. When the crusts fell off, the wounds looked like flesh drained of blood. In spite of its frightful disfigurement, Our Lord's sacred body presented upon the cross an appearance at once noble and touching. Yes, the Son of God, the Eternal sacrificing Himself in time, was beautiful, holy, and pure in the shattered body of the dying Paschal Lamb laden with the sins of the whole human race.

Mary's complexion was a beautiful bright olive tinged with red; and such, also, was that of her Divine Son. By the journeys and fatigue of His later years, His cheeks below the eyes and the bridge of His nose were somewhat tanned. His chest, high and broad, was free from hair, unlike that of John the Baptist, which was like a skin quite covered with hair. Jesus had broad shoulders and strong, muscular arms. His thighs also were provided with powerful, well-marked sinews, and His knees were large and strong, like those of a man that had travelled much on foot and knelt long in prayer. His limbs were long, the muscles of the calves strongly developed by frequent journeying and climbing of mountains. His feet were very beautiful and perfect in form, though from walking barefoot over rough roads the soles were covered with great welts. His hands, too, were beautiful, His fingers long and tapering. Though not effeminate, they were not like those of a man accustomed to hard work. His neck was not short, though firm and muscular. His head was beautifully proportioned and not too large, His forehead high and frank, His whole

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face a pure and perfect oval. His hair, not exceedingly thick, and of a golden brown, was parted in the middle and fell in soft tresses down His neck. His beard, which was rather short, was pointed and parted on His chin.

But now His hair was almost all torn off, and what was left was matted with blood, His body was wound upon wound, His breast was crushed and there was a cavity visible below it. His body had been stretched asunder, and the ribs appeared here and there through the torn skin. Over the projecting bones of the pelvis the sacred body was so stretched in length that it did not entirely cover the beam of the cross. The cross was somewhat rounded in the back, but flat in front, and hollowed out in the necessary places. The trunk was about as wide as it was thick. The several pieces of which the cross was formed were of different colored wood: some brown, some yellow, the trunk darker than the rest, like wood that had lain a long time in water.

The crosses of the thieves were rougher. They stood on the edge of the little eminence, to the right and left of Jesus' cross, and far enough from it for a man to ride on horseback between them. They were somewhat turned toward each other, and not so high as the Lord's. The thieves looked up to Jesus, one praying, the other jeering, and Jesus said something down from His cross to Dismas. The aspect of the thieves on the cross was hideous, especially that of the one to the left, who was a ferocious, drunken reprobate. They hung there distorted, shattered, swollen, and bound fast with cords. Their faces were livid, their lips brown from drink and confined blood, their eyes red, swollen, and starting from their sockets. They yelled and shrieked under the pressure of the cords. Gesmas cursed and reviled. The nails in the crosspiece forced their heads forward. They writhed convulsively, and in spite of the hard twisting around the wooden peg of the cords that bound their legs,

The Soldiers

one of them worked his foot up so that the bent knee stood out.

51. Jesus Mocked. His First Word on the Cross

After the crucifixion of the thieves and the distribution of the Lord's garments, the executioners gathered up their tools, addressed some mocking and insulting words to Jesus, and went their way. The Pharisees still present spurred up their horses, rode around the circle in front of Jesus, outraged Him in many abusive words, and then rode off. The hundred Roman soldiers with their commander also descended the mount and left the neighborhood, for fifty others had come up to take their place. The captain of this new detachment was Abenadar, an Arab by birth, who was later on baptized at Ctesiphon. The subaltern officer was Cassius. He was a kind of petty agent of Pilate, and at a subsequent period he received the name of Longinus. Twelve Pharisees, twelve Sadducees, twelve Scribes, and some of the Ancients likewise rode up the mount. Among the last-named were those Jews that had in vain requested of Pilate another inscription for the title of the cross. They were furious, for Pilate would not allow them even to appear in his presence. They rode around the circle and drove away the Blessed Virgin, calling her a dissolute woman. John took her to the women who were standing back. Magdalen and Martha supported her in their arms.

When the Pharisees and their companions, in making the rounds of the circle, came before Jesus, they wagged their heads contemptuously, saying: "Fie upon Thee, liar! How dost Thou destroy the Temple, and buildest it again in three days?" "He always wanted to help others, and He cannot help Himself! Art Thou the Son of God? Then, come down from the cross!" "Is He the King of Israel? Then let Him come down

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from the cross, and we will believe in Him." "He trusted in God. Let Him help Him now!" The soldiers, in like manner, mocked and said: "If Thou art the King of the Jews, help Thyself now!"

At the sight of the Redeemer's silently abandoning Himself to the full of His immeasurable sufferings, the thief on the left exclaimed: "His demon has now deserted Him"; and a soldier stuck a sponge filled with vinegar on a stick and held it before Jesus' face. He appeared to suck a little of it. The mocking went on, and the soldier said: "If Thou art the King of the Jews, help Thyself!" All this took place while the first detachment of soldiers was being relieved by that under Abenadar.

And now Jesus, raising His head a little, exclaimed: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" and then He prayed in a low tone. Gesmas cried out: "If Thou art the Christ, help Thyself and us!" The mocking continued. Dismas, the thief on the right, was deeply touched at hearing Jesus pray for His enemies. When Mary heard the voice of her Child, she could no longer be restrained, but pressed forward into the circle, followed by John, Salome, and Mary Cleophas. The captain of the guard did not prevent her.

Dismas, the thief on the right, received by virtue of Jesus' prayer an interior enlightenment. When the Blessed Virgin came hurrying forward, he suddenly remembered that Jesus and His Mother had helped him when a child. He raised his voice and cried in a clear and commanding tone: "How is it possible that ye can revile Him when He is praying for you! He has kept silence and patience, He prays for you, and you outrage Him! He is a Prophet! He is our King! He is the Son of God!" At this unexpected reproof out of the mouth of the murderer hanging there in misery, a tumult arose among the scoffers. They picked up stones to stone him on the cross. The Centurion Abenadar, however, repulsed their attack,

caused them to be dispersed, and restored order and quiet.

The Blessed Virgin felt herself strengthened by that prayer of Jesus. Gesmas was again crying to Jesus: "If Thou be the Christ, help Thyself and us!" when Dismas thus addressed him: "Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this man had done no evil. Oh, bethink thee of thy sins, and change thy sentiments!" Thoroughly enlightened and touched, he then confessed his crime to Jesus, saying: "Lord, if Thou dost condemn me, it will be just. But have mercy on me!" Jesus replied: "Thou shalt experience My mercy." At these words Dismas received the grace of deep contrition, which he indulged for the next quarter of an hour.

All the foregoing incidents took place, either simultaneously or one after the other, between twelve and half-past, as indicated by the sun, and a few moments after the exaltation of the cross. A great change was rapidly taking place in the souls of most of the spectators, for even while the penitent thief was speaking, fearful signs were beheld in nature, and all present were filled with anxiety.

52. The Sun Obscured. The Second and The Third Words of Jesus on the Cross

Until ten that morning, at which hour Pilate pronounced the sentence, hail had fallen at intervals, but from that time until twelve o'clock the sky was clear and the sun shone. At twelve, however, the sun became obscured by a murky red fog. About the sixth hour (but, as I saw, about half-past by the sun, for the Jewish mode of reckoning varied from the sun) that luminary began to be obscured in a manner altogether wonderful. I saw the celestial bodies, the stars and the planets, circling in their orbits and

passing one another. I descried the moon on the opposite side of the earth and then, by a sudden run or bound, looking like a hanging globe of fire, it flashed up full and pale above the Mount of Olives. The sun was enveloped in fog, and the moon came sweeping up before it from the east. At first, I saw to the east of the sun something like a dark mountain, which soon entirely hid it. The center appeared pale yellow, and around it was a red circle like a ring of fire. The sky became perfectly dark, and the stars shone out with a reddish gleam. Terror seized upon man and beast. The cattle bellowed and ran wildly about; the birds sought their hiding places, and lighted in flocks on the hills around Mount Calvary. One could catch them in his hands. The scoffers were silenced, while the Pharisees tried to explain these signs as natural phenomena, but they succeeded badly, and soon they, too, were seized with terror. All eyes were raised to the sky. Many beat their breast, wrung their hands, and cried: "His blood be upon His murderers!" Others far and near fell on their knees and implored Jesus' forgiveness, and Jesus, notwithstanding His agony, turned His eyes toward them. While the darkness was on the increase, the spectators gazing up at the sky and the cross deserted by all excepting Jesus' Mother and His nearest friends, Dismas, in deepest contrition and humble hope, raised his head to Jesus and said: "Lord, let me go to some place whence Thou mayest rescue me! Remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy Kingdom!" Jesus replied to him: "Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise!"

The Mother of Jesus, Mary Cleophas, Mary Magdalen, and John were standing around Jesus' cross, between it and those of the thieves, and looking up at the Lord. The Blessed Virgin, overcome by maternal love, was in her heart fervently imploring Jesus to let her die with Him. At that moment, the Lord cast an earnest and compassionate glance down upon

His Mother and, turning His eyes toward John, said to her: "Woman, behold, this is thy son! He will be thy son more truly than if thou hadst given him birth." Then He praised John, and said: "He has always been innocent and full of simple faith. He was never scandalized, excepting when his mother wanted to have him elevated to a high position." To John, He said: "Behold, this is thy Mother!" and John reverently and like a filial son embraced beneath the cross of the dying Redeemer Jesus' Mother, who had now become his Mother also. After this solemn bequest of her dying Son, the Blessed Virgin was so deeply affected by her own sorrow and the gravity of the scene that the holy women, supporting her in their arms, seated her for a few moments on the earthen rampart opposite the cross, and then took her away from the circle to the rest of the holy women.

I do not know whether Jesus pronounced all those words aloud with His sacred lips or not, but I perceived them interiorly when, before His death, He gave His Blessed Mother to John as his Mother and John to her as a son. In such contemplations many things are understood that are not set down in writing, and one can relate the least part of them only in ordinary language. What is seen in such visions is so clear that one believes and understands it at once, but it is impossible to clothe it in intelligible words. So on such an occasion one is not at all surprised to hear Jesus addressing the Blessed Virgin, not as "Mother," but as "Woman"; for one feels that in this hour in which, by the sacrificial death of the Son of Man, her own Son, the Promise was realized. Mary stood in her dignity as the Woman who was to crush the serpent's head. Nor is one then surprised that Jesus gave to her, whom the angel saluted: "Hail, full of grace!" John as a son, for everyone knows that his name is a name of grace, for there, all are what they are called. John was become a child of God and Christ lived in him. I felt that by these

words Jesus gave to Mary, as to their Mother, all those that, like John, receiving Him and believing in His Name, become the sons of God, and who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. I felt that the purest, the humblest, the most obedient of creatures, she who said to the angel: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord! Be it done to me according to Thy word!"—she who had become the Mother of the Eternal Word Incarnate, now that she understood from her dying Son that she was to be the spiritual Mother of another son, in the midst of her grief at parting and still humbly obedient, again pronounced, though in her heart, the words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord! Be it done to me according to Thy word!" I felt that she took at that moment for her own children all the children of God, all the brethren of Jesus. These things appear in vision so simple, so necessarily following as a consequence, though out of vision so manifold and complex, that they are more easily felt by the grace of God than expressed in words.

Fear and consternation filled Jerusalem. Fog and gloomy darkness hung over its streets. Many lay with covered heads in corners, striking their breasts. Others, standing on the roofs of the houses, gazed up at the sky and uttered lamentations. Animals were bellowing and hiding, birds were flying low and falling to the ground. Pilate had made a visit to Herod, and both were now looking in terror at the sky from that terrace upon which Herod had that morning, with so much state, watched Jesus insulted and maltreated by the mob. "This is not natural," they said. "Too much has certainly been done to Jesus." Then they went across the forum to Pilate's palace. Both were very uneasy, and they walked with rapid strides surrounded by their guards. Pilate turned away his head from Gabbatha, the judgment seat, from which he had sentenced Jesus to death. The forum was deserted. The people had hurried to their homes,

though some few were still running about with mournful cries, and several small groups were gathered in the public places. Pilate sent for some of the Jewish Ancients to come to his palace, and asked them what they thought the darkness meant. As for himself, he said, he looked upon it as a sign of wrath. Their God appeared to be angry at their desiring to put the Galilean to so violent a death, for He certainly was a Prophet and a King, but that he himself washed his hands, etc. But the Ancients, hardened in their obstinacy, explained it as a natural phenomenon not at all uncommon. Many were converted, also those soldiers that, at the arrest of Jesus on Mount Olivet, had fallen and again risen.

By degrees a crowd gathered before Pilate's palace. On the same spot upon which they had in the morning cried: "Crucify Him! Away with Him!" they now cried: "Unjust judge! His blood be upon His murderers!" Pilate had to surround himself with soldiers. That Zadoch who, in the morning, when Jesus was taken into the judgment hall, had loudly proclaimed His innocence, cried and shouted in such a way that Pilate was on the point of arresting him. Pilate sternly reproached the Jews. He had, he said, no part whatever in the affair. Jesus was their King, their Prophet, their Holy One whom they, and not he, had put to death. It was nothing to him (Pilate), for they themselves had brought about His death.

Anxiety and terror reached their height in the Temple. The slaughtering of the Paschal lamb had just begun when the darkness of night suddenly fell upon Jerusalem. All were filled with consternation, while here and there broke forth loud cries of woe. The High Priests did all they could to maintain peace and order. The lamps were lighted, making the sacred precincts as bright as day, but the consternation became only the greater. Annas, terribly tormented, ran from corner to corner in his desire to hide himself. The screens and lattices before the windows of

the houses were shaken, and yet there was no storm. The darkness was on the increase. In distant quarters of the city, the northwest section toward the walls, where there were numerous gardens and sepulchers, some of the latter fell in, as if the ground were shaken.

53. Jesus Abandoned. His Fourth Word on the Cross

After Jesus' third word to His Blessed Mother and John, an interval of gloomy silence reigned upon Golgotha, and many of the onlookers fled back to the city. The malicious revilings of the Pharisees ceased. The horses and asses of the riders huddled close to one another and drooped their heads. Vapor and fog hung over everything.

Jesus, in unspeakable torture, endured on the cross extreme abandonment and desolation of soul. He prayed to His Heavenly Father in those passages of the Psalms that were now being fulfilled in Himself. I saw around Him angelic figures. He endured in infinite torment all that a poor, crushed, tortured creature, in the greatest abandonment, without consolation human or divine, suffers when faith, hope, and love stand alone in the desert of tribulation, without prospect of return, without taste or sentiment, without a ray of light, left there to live alone. No words can express this pain. By this suffering Jesus gained for us the strength, by uniting our abandonment to the merits of His own upon the cross, victoriously to conquer at our last hour, when all ties and relations with this life and mode of existence, with this world and its laws, cease; and when therefore the ideas which we form in this life of the other world also cease. He gained for us merit to stand firm in our own last struggle when we too shall feel ourselves entirely abandoned. He offered His misery, His poverty, His pains, His desolation for us miserable

sinners, so that whoever is united with Jesus in the body of the Church must not despair at that last hour even if, light and consolation being withdrawn, he is left in darkness. Into this desert of interior night we are no longer necessitated to plunge alone and exposed to danger. Jesus has let down into the abyss of the bitter sea of desolation His own interior and exterior abandonment upon the cross, thus leaving the Christian not alone in the dereliction of death, when the light of heavenly consolation burns dim. For the Christian in that last hour of peril, there is no longer any dark and unknown region, any loneliness, any abandonment, any despair; for Jesus, the Light, the Truth, and the Way, blessed the dark way by traversing it Himself, and by planting His cross upon it, chased from it all that is frightful.

Jesus wholly abandoned, wholly deprived of all things, and utterly helpless, sacrificed Himself in infinite love. Yes, He turned His abandonment itself into a rich treasure by offering to His Heavenly Father His life, labors, love, and sufferings, along with the bitter sense of our ingratitude that thereby He might strengthen our weakness and enrich our poverty. He made before God His last testament, by which He gave over all His merits to the Church and to sinners. He thought of everyone. In His abandonment He was with every single soul until the end of time. He prayed too for those heretics who believe that being God, He did not feel His sufferings, and that as man He felt them only a little, or at least far less than another would have done. But while I was sharing in and sympathizing with Jesus' prayer, I heard these words as if coming from His lips: "We should, by all means, teach the people that Jesus, more keenly than any human being can conceive, endured this pain of utter abandonment, because He was hypostatically united with the Divinity, because He was truly God and man. Being in His Sacred Humanity wholly abandoned by the Father, He felt most perfectly that

bereavement, He drained to the dregs the bitter cup of dereliction, He experienced for the time what a soul endures that has lost its God forever.

And so when in His agony He cried out with a loud voice, He meant not only to make known His dereliction, but also to publish to all afflicted souls who acknowledge God as their Father that the privilege of recurring to Him in filial confidence He merited for them then and there. Toward the third hour, Jesus cried in a loud voice: "Eli, Eli, lamma sabac-thani!" which means: "My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me!"

When this clear cry of Our Lord broke the fearful stillness around the cross, the scoffers turned toward it and one said: "He is calling Elias"; and another: "Let us see whether Elias will come to deliver Him." When the most afflicted Mother heard the voice of her Son, she could no longer restrain herself. She again pressed forward to the cross, followed by John, Mary Cleophas, Magdalen, and Salome.

While the people around were lamenting and trembling with fear, a troop of about thirty distinguished men from Judea and the neighborhood of Joppa came riding up on horseback. They were on their way to Jerusalem for the celebration of the feast. When they beheld the frightful treatment to which Jesus had been subjected and the threatening appearances in nature, they expressed their horror aloud and cried out: "Were it not that the Temple of God is in it, this cruel city should be burned to the ground for having charged itself with such a crime."

Such expressions from strangers evidently of high rank encouraged the people. Loud murmurs and cries of grief resounded everywhere, and many of those similarly impressed retired together from the scene. The remaining spectators were now divided into two parties: one gave utterance to sorrow and indignation; the other continued to insult Jesus and rage against Him. The Pharisees, however, were disheartened.

They feared a rising of the populace, since great disturbance was even then prevailing in Jerusalem. They deliberated with the Centurion Abenadar, whereupon an order was given to close the city gate in the neighborhood of Mount Calvary, that communication with the city might thus be cut off. A messenger was sent to Pilate and Herod for a bodyguard of five hundred men to prevent an insurrection. In the meantime, the Centurion Abenadar did all in his power to secure peace and order. He forbade the Pharisees to insult Jesus, lest the people might be infuriated.

Soon after three o'clock the sky brightened a little, and the moon began to recede from the sun in an opposite direction. The sun, red and rayless, appeared surrounded by a mist, and the moon sank suddenly as if falling to the opposite side. By degrees the sunbeams shone out again, and the stars disappeared, but the sky still looked lowering. With returning light, the scoffers on Calvary again became bold and triumphant. Then it was that they said: "He is calling Elias." Abenadar commanded quiet and order.

54. The Death of Jesus. Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Words on the Cross

As it grew light, the body of Jesus could be seen on the cross, pale, weak, perfectly exhausted, becoming whiter from the great loss of blood. He said, I know not whether praying in voice audible to me alone, or half-aloud: "I am pressed like the wine which was once trodden here in the wine press. I must pour out all My blood until water cometh, and the shell becometh white, but wine shall here be made no more."

(For an explanation of these words, Anne Catherine was shown a vision, from which she related what follows:) I saw on Mount Calvary after the Deluge the Patriarch Japhet, a tall, dark-skinned old man,

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encamping with numerous flocks and descendants. Their huts were sunk in the earth, the roofs covered with sods upon which plants and flowers were growing. Grapevines were everywhere flourishing, and wine was made on Mount Calvary in a new way, over which Japhet himself presided. I saw also the various ways in which wine was formerly prepared and used, and many circumstances connected with the wine itself, of which I remember only the following: at first, the grapes were merely eaten; later on, they were pressed in stone troughs by means of wooden blocks, and lastly huge wooden cylinders and pestles were employed for the same end. But in the time of Japhet, I saw that a new kind of press was invented, in form very like the Holy Cross. The trunk of a tree, hollow and large in diameter, was placed upright, and in it were suspended the grapes in a sack through which the juice could run. Upon the sack pressed a pestle and block. On either side of the hollow trunk and directed toward the sack were arms which, on being worked up and down, crushed the grapes. The juice thus expressed flowed through five holes bored in the hollow trunk down into a vat cut in the rock. From this it ran into a vessel formed of two pieces of bark, each taken from a tree cut in half from top to bottom. The two halves, being put together, were then overlaid with thin wooden rods, and the cracks cemented with pitch. From this last vessel, the grape juice flowed into that rocky cellar like cave into which the Lord Jesus was thrust before His Crucifixion. At the time of Japhet it was a pure cistern. I saw that the cracks of the wooden vat were covered with sods and stones for greater protection. At the foot of the press and that of the stone vat, haircloth was laid before an opening in one of the cracks, to catch the skins which were always disposed of on that side. When the press was ready to receive them, the workmen filled the sack with grapes (which until wanted were stored away in the cistern),

hung it in the hollow upright, nailed it fast, placed the heavy pestle with its block in the open mouth of the sack, and began to work the levers in and out, thus making them strike against the sack of grapes, from which the wine flowed. I saw another workman busy at the top of the press, keeping the contents of the sack from making their way up above the block. These particulars reminded me of Jesus' Crucifixion, on account of the striking similarity between the press and the cross. They had also a long tube with a prickly head, like a hedgehog (perhaps it was a large thistle head), and this they pushed through the crack and the upright press whenever they became stopped up. This tube recalled the lance and sponge. I saw, standing around, leathern bottles and vessels of bark smeared with pitch. I saw many youths and boys, with girdles such as Jesus used to wear, working here. Japhet was very old. He was clothed in the skins of beasts and wore a long beard.

He regarded the new wine press with great satisfaction. There was celebrated a festival, and on a stone altar, animals that had been allowed to run in the vineyard, young asses, goats, and sheep, were sacrificed.

Jesus was now completely exhausted. With His parched tongue, He uttered the words: "I thirst!" And when His friends looked up at Him sadly, He said to them: "Could you not have given Me a drink of water?" He meant that during the darkness no one would have prevented their doing so. John was troubled at Jesus' words, and he replied: "O Lord, we forgot it!" Jesus continued to speak in words such as these: "My nearest friends must forget Me and offer Me no drink, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled." This forgetfulness was very bitter to Him. Hearing Jesus' complaint, His friends begged the soldiers and offered them money if they would reach to Him a drink of water. They would not do it, but instead

they dipped a pear-shaped sponge into vinegar, a little bark keg of which was standing near, and poured upon it some drops of gall. But the Centurion Abenadar, whose heart was touched by Jesus, took the sponge from the soldiers, pressed it out, and filled it with pure vinegar. Then he stuck into it a sprig of hyssop, which served as a mouthpiece for sucking, and fastened the whole to the point of his lance. He raised it in such a way that the tube should incline to Jesus' mouth and through it He might be able to suck the vinegar from the sponge.

Of some of the words that I heard the Lord speaking in admonition to the people, I remember only that He said: "And when I shall no longer have voice, the mouth of the dead shall speak"; whereupon some of the bystanders cried out: "He still blasphemeth!" But Abenadar commanded peace.

The hour of the Lord was now come. He was struggling with death, and a cold sweat burst out on every limb. John was standing by the cross and wiping Jesus' feet with his handkerchief. Magdalen, utterly crushed with grief, was leaning at the back of the cross. The Blessed Virgin, supported in the arms of Mary Cleophas and Salome, was standing between Jesus and the cross of the good thief, her gaze fixed upon her dying Son. Jesus spoke: "It is consummated!" and raising His head He cried with a loud voice: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit!" The sweet, loud cry rang through Heaven and earth. Then He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. I saw His soul like a luminous phantom descending through the earth near the cross down to the sphere of Limbo. John and the holy women sank, face downward, prostrate on the earth.

Abenadar the Centurion, an Arab by birth, and a disciple baptized later on at Ctesiphon, had, since the moment in which he had given Jesus the vinegar to drink, remained seated on his horse close to the eminence upon which the cross was raised, the forefeet

of the animal planted near it and, consequently, higher than the hind feet. Deeply affected, he gazed long, earnestly and fixedly into the thorn-crowned countenance of Jesus. The horse hung his head as if in fear, and Abenadar, whose pride was humbled, let the reins hang loose. When the Lord in a clear, strong voice uttered those last words, when He died with that loud cry that rang through Heaven, earth, and Hell, the earth quaked and the rock between Him and the thief on His left was rent asunder with a crashing sound. That loud cry, that witness of God, resounded like a warning, arousing terror and shuddering in mourning nature. It was consummated! The soul of Our Lord had left the body! The death cry of the dying Redeemer had roused all that heard it; even the earth, by its undulations, seemed to recognize the Saviour, and a sharp sword of sorrow pierced the hearts of those that loved Him. Then it was that grace penetrated the soul of Abenadar. The horse trembled under his rider, who was reeling with emotion; then it was that grace conquered that proud mind, hard as the rock of Calvary. He threw his lance to the ground and, with his great clenched fist, struck his breast vigorous blows, crying aloud in the voice of a changed man: "Blessed be God the Almighty, the God of Abraham and Jacob! This was a just Man! Truly, He is the Son of God!" And many of the soldiers, deeply affected by his words, followed his example.

Abenadar, who was now a changed being, a man redeemed, after his public homage to the Son of God would no longer remain in the service of His enemies, He turned his horse toward Cassius, the subaltern officer, known under the name of Longinus, dismounted, picked up his lance, presented it to him and addressed a few words both to him and the soldiers. Cassius mounted the horse and assumed the command. Abenadar next hurried down Mount Calvary and through the Valley of Gihon to the caves in the Valley of Hinnom, where he announced to the

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disciples hidden therein the death of the Lord, after which he hastened into the city and went straight to Pilate.

Terror fell upon all at the sound of Jesus' death cry, when the earth quaked and the rock neath the cross was split asunder. A feeling of dread pervaded the whole universe. The veil of the Temple was on the instant rent in twain, the dead arose from their graves, the walls in the Temple fell, while mountains and buildings were overturned in many parts of the world.

Abenadar rendered public testimony to his belief in Jesus, and his example was followed by many of the soldiers. Numbers of those present, and some of the Pharisees last come to the scene, were converted. Many struck their breast, wept, and returned home, while others rent their garments and sprinkled their head with dust. All were filled with fear and dread.

John at last arose. Some of the holy women, who until then were standing at a distance, now pressed into the circle, raised the Mother of Jesus and her companions, and led them away.

When the loving Lord of life, by a death full of torture, paid for sinners their debt, as man He commended His soul to His God and Father, and gave His body over to the tomb. Then the pale, chill pallor of death overspread that sacred vessel now so terribly bruised and quivering with pain. It became perfectly white, and the streams of blood running down from the numerous wounds grew darker and more perceptible. His face was elongated, His cheeks sunken, His nose sharp and pinched. His under jaw fell, and His eyes, which had been closed and full of blood, opened halfway. For a few instants He raised His thorn-crowned head for the last time and then let it sink on His breast under the burden of pain. His lips, blue and parted, disclosed the bloody tongue in His open mouth. His fingers, which had been contracted

around the heads of the nails, now relaxed and fell a little forward while the arms stretched out to their natural size. His back straightened itself against the cross, and the whole weight of His Sacred Body fell upon the feet. His knees bent and fell to one side, and His feet twisted a little around the nail that pierced them.

When Jesus' hands became stiff, His Mother's eyes grew dim, the paleness of death overspread her countenance, her feet tottered, and she sank to the earth. Magdalen, John, and the others, yielding to their grief, fell also with veiled faces.

When that most loving, that most afflicted Mother arose from the ground, she beheld the Sacred Body of her Son, whom she had conceived by the Holy Ghost, the flesh of her flesh, the bone of her bone, the heart of her heart, the holy vessel formed by the divine overshadowing in her own blessed womb, now deprived of all its beauty and comeliness and even of its most holy soul, given up to the laws of that nature which He had Himself created and which man had by sin abused and disfigured. She beheld that beloved Son crushed, maltreated, disfigured, and put to death by the hands of those whom He had come in the flesh to restore to grace and life. Ah! She beheld that Sacred Body thrust from among men, despised, derided, emptied, as it were, of all that was beautiful, truthful, and lovely, hanging like a leper, mangled on the cross between two murderers! Who can conceive the sorrow of the Mother of Jesus, of the Queen of Martyrs!

The sun was still obscured by fog. During the earthquake the air was close and oppressive, but afterward there was a sensible decrease in temperature. The appearance of Our Lord's corpse on the cross was exceedingly awful and impressive. The thieves were hanging in frightful contortions, and seemingly intoxicated with liquor. At last both became silent. Dismas was in prayer.

It was just after three o'clock when Jesus expired. When the first alarm produced by the earthquake was over, some of the Pharisees grew bolder. They approached the chasm made by it in the rock of Calvary, threw stones into it, fastened ropes together, and let them down; but as they could not reach the bottom of the abyss, they became a little more thoughtful and, comprehending in some degree why people were lamenting and beating their breast, they rode off from the scene. Some were entirely changed in their ideas. The people soon dispersed and went in fear and anxiety through the valley in the direction of the city, many of them being converted. Part of the band of fifty Roman soldiers strengthened the guard at the city gate until the arrival of the five hundred that had been asked for. The gate was locked. Other posts around were occupied by soldiers, to prevent a concourse of people and confusion. Cassius (Longinus) and about five of his soldiers remained inside the circle and lying around on the rampart. Jesus' relatives were near the cross. They sat in front of it, lamenting and weeping. Several of the holy women had returned to the city. All was lonely, still, and sad. Off in the distance, here and there, in the valley and on the remote heights, a disciple might be descried peering timidly and inquiringly toward the cross, and retiring quickly on the approach of anyone.

55. The Earthquake. Apparitions of the Dead in Jerusalem

When Jesus with a loud cry gave up His Spirit into the hands of His Heavenly Father, I saw His soul, like a luminous figure, penetrating the earth at the foot of the cross, accompanied by a band of luminous angels, among whom was Gabriel. I saw a great multitude of evil spirits driven by those angels from the earth into the abyss. Jesus sent many souls

from Limbo to re-enter their body, in order to frighten and warn the impenitent, as well as to bear witness to Himself.

By the earthquake at Jesus' death, when the rock of Calvary was split, many portions of the earth were up heaved while others sank, and this was especially the case in Palestine and Jerusalem. In the Temple and throughout the city, the inhabitants were just recovering somewhat from the fright caused by the darkness when the heaving of the earth, the crash of falling buildings in many quarters, gave rise to still more general consternation; and, to crown their terror, the trembling and wailing crowd, hurrying hither and thither in dire confusion, encountered here and there the corpses raised from the dead, as they walked about uttering their warnings in hollow voices.

The High Priests in the Temple had recommenced the slaughtering of the lambs, which had been interrupted by the frightful darkness. They were rejoicing triumphantly over the returning light when suddenly the ground began to quake, a hollow rumbling was heard, and the crash of toppling walls, accompanied by the hissing noise made by the rending of the veil, produced for the moment in the vast assemblage speechless terror broken only by an occasional cry of woe. But the crowd was so well-ordered, the immense edifice so full, the going and coming of the great number engaged in slaughtering so perfectly regulated—the act of slaughtering, the draining of blood, the sprinkling of the altars with it by the long row of countless priests amid the sound of canticles and trumpets—all this was done with so great accord, so great harmony of action, that the fright did not lead to general confusion and dispersion. The Temple was so large, there were so many different halls and apartments, that the sacrifices went on quietly in some, while fright and horror were pervading others, and in others still the priests managed to keep order. It

was not till the dead made their appearance in different parts of the Temple that the ceremonies were entirely interrupted and the sacrifices discontinued, as if the Temple had become polluted. Still even this did not come so suddenly upon the multitude as to cause them in their flight to rush precipitously down the numerous steps of the Temple. They dispersed by degrees, hurrying down one group at a time, while in some quarters of the building the priests were able to bring back the frightened worshippers and keep them together. Still, however, the anxiety, the fright of all, though different in degree, was something quite indescribable.

The appearance of the Temple at this moment may be pictured to oneself by comparing it to a great anthill in full and well-ordered activity. Let a stone be thrown into it or a stick introduced among the little creatures here and there, and confusion will reign around the immediate scene of disturbance, though activity may continue uninterruptedly in other groups, and soon the damaged places are covered and repaired.

The High Priest Caiaphas and his followers, owing to their desperate insolence, did not lose presence of mind. Like the sagacious magistrate of a seditious city, by threats, by the separation of parties, by persuasion, and all kinds of deceitful arguments, Caiaphas warded off the danger. By his demoniacal obstinacy especially, and his own apparent calmness, he prevented not only a general panic, so destructive in its consequences, but likewise hindered the people from construing those frightful warnings into a testimony of the innocent death of Jesus. The Roman garrison on the fortress Antonia did all that could be done to maintain order, and although the confusion and consternation were great and caused a discontinuance of the festal ceremonies, yet there was no insurrection. The blaze was reduced to a glimmering spark of anxiety, which the people, separating

by degrees, carried with them to their homes, and which was there for the most part by the activity of the Pharisees finally extinguished.

And so it was in general. I remember the following striking incidents: The two great columns at the entrance of the Holy of Holies in the Temple, between which hung a magnificent curtain, fell in opposite directions, the left-hand one to the south, the right-hand to the north. The beam which they supported gave way and the great curtain was, with a hissing noise, rent from top to bottom so that, opening on either side, it fell. This curtain was red, blue, white, and yellow. Many celestial spheres were described upon it, also figures like the brazen serpent. The people could now see into the Holy of Holies. In the northern wall near it was the little cell in which Simeon used to pray. A great stone was hurled upon it, and the roof fell in. In some of the halls the floor sank here and there, beams were displaced, and pillars gave way.

In the Holy of Holies, between the porch and the altar, an apparition of the murdered High Priest Zacharias was seen. He uttered threatening words, spoke of the death of the other Zacharias, also that of John, denominating the High Priests the murderers of the Prophets. He came from the opening made by the falling stone near Simeon's place of prayer, and addressed the priests in the Holy of Holies. Simon Justus was a pious High Priest, an ancestor of the aged priest Simeon who had prophesied on the occasion of Jesus' Presentation in the Temple. His two prematurely deceased sons now appeared as tall phantoms near the principal chair of instruction, and in menacing terms spoke of the murder of the Prophets, of the sacrifice of the Old Law, which was now at an end, and admonished all present to embrace the doctrine of the Crucified.

Jeremias appeared at the altar and uttered words of denunciation. The sacrifice of the Old Law was

ended, he said, and a new one had begun. These speeches and apparitions in places to which Caiaphas or the priests alone had access, were hushed up and denied. It was forbidden to speak of them under penalty of excommunication. And now there arose a great clamor, the doors of the sanctuary sprang open, a voice cried out: "Let us go hence!" and I saw the angels departing from the Temple. The altar of incense was elevated to some height and a vessel of incense tilted over. The shelf that held the rolls of Scripture fell in, and the rolls were scattered around. The confusion increased to such a degree that the time of day was forgotten. Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and many others left the Temple and went away. Corpses were lying here and there, others were wandering through the halls and uttering warning words to the people. At the sound of the voice of the angels fleeing from the Temple, the dead returned to their graves. The teacher's chair in the outer porch fell to pieces. Many of the thirty-two Pharisees who had ridden to Calvary just before Jesus expired, returned in the midst of this confusion to the Temple. As they had been converted at the foot of the cross, they looked upon all these signs with still greater consternation and, addressing some stern reproaches to Annas and Caiaphas, they quickly retired.

Annas, who was really, though in secret, Jesus' principal enemy who for a long time had headed all the hidden intrigues against Him and the disciples, and who had also instructed the false witnesses as to what they were to say, was so terrified that he became like one bereft of reason. He fled from corner to corner through the most retired apartments of the Temple. I saw him moaning and crying, his muscles contracted as if in convulsions, conveyed to a secret room where he was surrounded by several of his followers. Once Caiaphas clasped him tightly in his arms in order to raise his courage, but in

vain. The apparition of the dead cast him into utter despair. Caiaphas, although excessively alarmed, had in him so proud and obstinate a devil that he would not allow his terror to be seen. He bade defiance to all and, with a bold front, set his rage and pride against the warning signs of God and his own secret fright. But as he could no longer continue the sacred ceremonies, he hid and commanded others to hide all the events and apparitions not already known to the people. He gave out, and caused others to do the same, that these apparitions, indicative of God's anger, were due to the followers of the crucified Galilean, for their coming to the Temple had polluted it. Only the enemies of the sacred Law, he said, which Jesus had tried to overturn, had experienced any alarm, and many of the things that had happened could be ascribed to the witchcraft of the Galilean who, in death as in life, had disturbed the peace of the Temple. And so it came to pass that he silenced some by such words, and frightened others with threats. Many, however, were deeply impressed, though they concealed their sentiments. The feast was postponed until the Temple could be purified. Many of the lambs were not slaughtered, and the people dispersed by degrees.

The tomb of Zacharias under the Temple wall was sunken and destroyed, and in consequence, some stones fell out of the wall. Zacharias left it, but did not again return to it. I know not where he again laid off his body. Simon Justus' sons, who had arisen from their graves, laid theirs down again in the vault under the Temple mount, when Jesus' body was being prepared for burial.

While all these things were going on in the Temple, a similar panic was experienced in many other quarters of Jerusalem. Just after three o'clock, many tombs were violently shattered, especially in the northwestern section of the city where there were numerous gardens. I saw here and there the dead

lying in their winding sheets. In other places, there were only masses of rottenness, in others skeletons, and from many proceeded an intolerable stench. At Caiaphas' tribunal, the steps upon which Jesus stood when exposed to the mockery of the rabble were overturned, also a portion of the fireplace in the hall in which Peter's first denial took place. The destruction here was so great that a new entrance had to be made. It was in this place that the corpse of the High Priest Simon Justus appeared, to whose race belonged Simeon who had prophesied at Jesus' Presentation in the Temple. His apparition uttered some menacing words upon the unjust sentence that had here been pronounced. Several members of the Sanhedrim were present. The individuals that on the preceding night had given entrance to Peter and John, were converted. They fled to the caves in which the disciples were concealed. At Pilate's palace, the stone was shattered and the whole place upon which Pilate had exhibited Jesus to the multitude fell in. All things reeled under the powerful shaking-up they got, and in the court of the neighboring judgment hall, the place in which the bodies of the innocents murdered by Herod's orders were interred, fell in. In many other parts of the city, walls were overturned and others cracked, but no edifices were entirely destroyed. Pilate, perplexed and superstitious, was in the greatest consternation and wholly incapable of discharging the duties of his charge. The earthquake shook his palace. It rocked and trembled under him as he fled from room to room. The dead from the court below proclaimed to him his false judgment and contradictory sentence. He thought that those voices proceeded from the gods of Jesus the Prophet, so he locked himself up in a secret corner of his palace, where he burned incense and sacrificed to his own deities, to whom he also made a vow, that they might render those of the Galilean innocuous to him. Herod too was in his own

palace and, like one crazed from fear, he ordered every entrance to be bolted and barred.

There were about one hundred deceased belonging to all periods of time who arose in body from their shattered tombs both in Jerusalem and its environs. They went mostly in couples to certain parts of the city, encountering the frightened inhabitants in their flight, and testifying to Jesus in denunciatory words, few but vigorous. Most of the sepulchers stood solitary in the valleys, though there were many in the newly laid out portions of the city, especially among the gardens toward the northwest, between the corner gate and that leading to the place of crucifixion. There were besides, around and under the Temple, many secret graves long since forgotten.

Not all the dead whose corpses were exposed to view by the falling of their tombs arose. Many a one became merely visible, because the graves were in common. But many others, whose souls Jesus sent to earth from Limbo, arose, threw off the covering from their face and went, not walking, but as if floating, along the streets of Jerusalem to their friends and relatives. They entered the houses of their posterity, and rebuked them severely for the part they had taken in the murder of Jesus. I saw some of them meeting, as if they were friends or relatives, and going in couples through the streets of the city. I could see no movement of their feet under their long winding sheets. They passed along as if lightly hovering above the ground. The hands of some were enfolded in broad bands of linen, others hung down under the large sleeves that bound the arms. The covering of the face was thrown up over the head, and the pale, yellow countenance with its long beard looked dried and withered. Their voices sounded strange and unearthly, and these voices, joined to their incessant moving from place to place, unconcerned about all around, was their only external

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expression; indeed they seemed almost nothing but voice. They were clothed somewhat differently, each according to the custom at the time of his death, his position in society, and his age. On the crossways upon which Jesus' punishment was trumpeted as the procession moved on to Golgotha, they stood still and proclaimed glory to Jesus and woe to His murderers. The people standing afar hearkened, shuddered, and fled, as the dead floated toward them. I heard them on the forum in front of Pilate's palace crying aloud in threatening terms. I remember the words: "Cruel Judge!" The people fled into the most secret corners of their houses and hid. Intense fear pervaded the whole city. About four o'clock, the dead returned to their graves. Many other spirits appeared in different quarters after Christ's Resurrection. The sacrifice was interrupted and everything thrown into confusion. Only a very few of the people ate the Paschal lamb that evening.

Among the dead who arose on this occasion in and around Jerusalem (and there were at least one hundred), no relative of Jesus was found. The tombs in the northwestern section of Jerusalem were once beyond the precincts of the city, but when it was enlarged they were included in its limits. I had also a glimpse of other deceased persons who arose here and there in different parts of the Holy Land, appeared to their relatives, and bore witness to Jesus Christ's mission. I saw, for instance, Zadoch, a very pious man, who divided all his wealth between the poor and the Temple and founded an Essenian community near Hebron. He was one of the last Prophets before Christ. He had waited very earnestly for the appearance of the Messiah, he had many revelations upon the same, and communication with the ancestors of the Holy Family. This Zadoch, who lived about one hundred years before Jesus, I saw arise and appear to several persons in the region of Hebron. I saw once that his soul was among the first to return to his body, and

then I saw all those souls walking around with Jesus, as if they had again laid their body down. I saw also various deceased persons appearing to the disciples of the Lord in their hiding places, and addressing to them words of admonition.

I saw that the darkness and earthquake were not confined to Jerusalem and its environs. They extended throughout other regions of the country, yes, even in far distant places they spread terror and destruction. In Tirzah, the towers of the prison from which Jesus had released the captives were overthrown, as well as other buildings. In the land of Cabul, I saw that a great many places suffered injury. Throughout Galilee, where chiefly Jesus had journeyed, I saw isolated buildings in many places, and especially numerous houses belonging to the Pharisees who had persecuted the Lord most violently, toppling down over wife and child, while they themselves were away at the feast. The destruction around the Sea of Galilee was very remarkable. In Capharnaum many buildings were overturned. The place between Tiberias and the garden of Zorobabel, the Centurion of Capharnaum, was almost demolished. The entire rocky projection belonging to the Centurion's beautiful gardens near Capharnaum was torn away. The lake rushed into the valley and its waters flowed near to Capharnaum, which, before that, was fully half an hour's distance from it. Peter's house and the dwelling of the Blessed Virgin outside Capharnaum and toward the lake remained unharmed.

The Sea of Galilee was greatly disturbed. In some places its banks caved in, and in others they seemed to be pushed out, its shape thereby being notably changed. It began to assume that which it has at the present day, and, especially in its near surroundings, it can no longer be readily recognized. The change was particularly great at the southwest end of the sea, just below Tarichaea, where the long dike of black stone which separated the marsh from the

sea and gave a fixed direction to the course of the Jordan entirely gave way and occasioned great destruction.

On the eastern side of the sea, where the swine of the Gerasens plunged into the marsh, many places sank in; the same happened likewise in Gergesa, Gerasa, and throughout the entire district of Corozain. The mountain upon which Jesus had twice multiplied the loaves sustained a great shaking, and the stone upon which the bread was multiplied was rent in twain. In and around Paneas, many things were overturned. In the Decapolis half of the cities sank, and many places in Asia sustained severe damage: for instance, Nicaea, but chiefly many situated east and northeast of Paneas. In Upper Galilee too I saw great destruction. Most of the Pharisees found, on their return from the feast, dire distress in their homes, and news of it reached others while yet in Jerusalem. It was on this account that the enemies of Jesus were so dejected, and that they ventured not until Pentecost to molest His followers in any notable way.

On Mount Garizim I saw many objects belonging to the temple tumbling down. Above a well, which was protected by a little temple, stood an idol. Both idol and roof were precipitated into the well. At Nazareth, one half of the synagogue out of which His enemies had thrust Jesus, fell; and that part of the mountain down which they wanted to cast Him was torn away.

Many a mountain, valley, and city sustained great damage, and several changes were made in the bed of the Jordan. By the shocks upon the seashore and the inflowing of little streams, obstacles arose against the rushing water, so that the course of the river was in many places considerably turned aside. In Machaerus and the other cities under Herod's jurisdiction, the earthquake was not felt. They were situated outside the circle of warning and repentance,

like those men who did not fall in the Garden of Olives and who consequently did not rise again.

In many regions, the sojourn of evil spirits, I saw those spirits falling in great crowds with the toppling buildings and mountains. The quaking of the earth reminded me then of the convulsions of the possessed when the evil one felt that he had to depart. When, near Gerasa, a portion of that mountain from which the demon with the herd of swine had plunged into the swamp by the seashore rolled down into that same swamp, I saw rushing with it into the abyss, like an angry cloud, an immense multitude of evil spirits.

I think it was in Nicaea that I saw something of which I still remember, although imperfectly, the details. I saw a harbor in which lay many ships, and nearby a house from which rose a great tower. I saw there a man, a pagan, the custodian of the ships. It was his duty to climb up into the tower from time to time and gaze out over the sea, to find out whether ships were coming or if any assistance was needed. Hearing a roaring noise among the ships in the harbor, he became apprehensive of an enemy's approach. Hurrying quickly up into the watchtower, and looking out upon the ships, he beheld floating over them numerous dark figures that cried out to him in mournful tones: "If you desire to save these ships, steer them away from here, for we have to go into the abyss! Great Pan is dead." These are the only words that I distinctly remember of the apparitions. But they told him other things, and gave him many directions as to where and how, on a voyage which he was destined to take, he should make known what they now imparted to him. They exhorted him also when messengers would come and announce the doctrine of Him who had just died, to receive them well.

Through the power of the Lord, the evil spirits were forced to warn that good man and proclaim

their own disgrace. Then a violent storm arose, but the ships had already been secured. I saw at the same time the devils plunging with loud bellowing into the sea, and one half of the city swallowed up by the earthquake. The good man's house remained standing. Soon after that he sailed around in his ship for a long time, executing his commissions and making known the death of "The great Pan," as they called the Lord. Later on he went to Rome, where his statements excited intense wonder. I saw many other things connected with this man, but I have forgotten them. Among other things, I saw that one of the narratives of his travels became in repetition mixed up with what I had seen, and it was very far spread, but I do not clearly recollect how they were connected. I think the man's name sounded like Thamus, or Tramus.

56. Joseph of Arimathea Requests the Body of Jesus from Pilate

Quiet was scarcely restored to Jerusalem after all those frightful events, when Pilate, already so terrified, was assailed on all sides with accounts of what had occurred. The Council of the Jews also, as they had determined to do that morning, sent to him for permission to break the legs of the crucified, and thus put an end to their life, for they wanted to take them down from the cross, that they might not hang thereon upon the Sabbath. Pilate dispatched some executioners to Calvary for this purpose.

Just after that I saw Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Council, going to Pilate. He had already heard of Jesus' death, and with Nicodemus had concluded to bury the Lord's body in the new sepulcher hewn out of a rock in his own garden, not very far from Calvary. I think I saw him outside the gate as if examining, or reconnoitering, the premises. Some

few of his servants were already in the garden, cleaning it and arranging things inside the sepulcher. Nicodemus had gone to buy linen and spices for preparing the body for burial, and he was now waiting for Joseph.

Joseph found Pilate very anxious and perplexed, He begged openly and fearlessly that he might be allowed to take the body of Jesus, the King of the Jews, down from the cross, as he wanted to lay it in his own sepulcher. Pilate's anxiety increased on beholding so distinguished a man begging so earnestly to be permitted to honor the body of Jesus, whom he himself had caused to be ignominiously crucified. The innocence of Jesus recurred to him, making him still more uneasy, but he overcame himself, and asked: "Is He, then, already dead?" for only a few moments had elapsed since he sent executioners out to break the bones of the crucified, and thus end their life. He summoned the Centurion Abenadar, who was returned from the caves where he had spoken with some of the disciples, and asked him whether the King of the Jews was already dead. Abenadar in reply related to him the death of the Lord about three o'clock, His last words, and His loud cry, the quaking of the earth and the rending of the rock. Outwardly Pilate appeared merely to be surprised, since the crucified generally lived longer, but inwardly he was filled with trouble and alarm at the coincidence of those signs with Jesus' death. He wished perhaps to palliate in some measure his cruelty by at once expediting an order for Joseph of Arimathea, by which he gave him the body of the King of the Jews with permission to take it down from the cross and bury it. He was glad by so doing to be able to annoy the High Priests, who would rather have had Jesus dishonorably buried along with the two thieves. It was probably Abenadar himself whom Pilate dispatched to see the order executed, for I saw him present at the

taking down of Jesus from the cross.

Joseph of Arimathea took leave of Pilate and went to meet Nicodemus, who was awaiting him at the house of a well-disposed woman. She lived on the broad street near that narrow alley in which Our Lord, just at the commencement of His bitter Way of the Cross, was made to endure such ignominy. Nicodemus had purchased here a lot of aromatic plants and herbs for the embalming, for the woman was a vendor of such things. She procured elsewhere many kinds of spices that she herself did not have, also linen and bandages for the same purpose, all of which she rolled together into a package that could be easily carried. Joseph of Arimathea went himself and bought a winding sheet of cotton, very fine and beautiful, six ells long and several wide. His servants collected under a shed near the house of Nicodemus ladders, hammers, strong iron nails, water bottles, vessels, sponges, and all that was necessary for the work before them. The smaller objects they packed on a light litter, or handbarrow, almost like that upon which the disciples carried the body of John the Baptist from Herod's citadel of Machaerus.

57. The Side of Jesus Opened. The Legs of the Thieves Broken

Meanwhile all was silent and mournful on Golgotha. The crowd had timidly dispersed to their homes. The Mother of Jesus, John, Magdalen, Mary Cleophas, and Salome were standing or sitting with veiled heads and in deep sadness opposite the cross. Some soldiers were seated on the earthen wall, their spears stuck in the ground near them. Cassius was riding around, and the soldiers were interchanging words with their companions posted at some distance below. The sky was lowering; all nature appeared to be in mourning. Things were in this position when six executioners

were seen ascending the mount with ladders, spades, ropes, and heavy, triangular iron bars used for breaking the bones of malefactors.

When they entered the circle, the friends of Jesus drew back a little. New fear seized upon the heart of the Blessed Virgin lest the body of Jesus was to be still further outraged, for the executioners mounted up the cross, roughly felt the sacred body, and declared that He was pretending to be dead. Although they felt that He was quite cold and stiff, yet they were not convinced that He was already dead. John, at the entreaty of the Blessed Virgin, turned to the soldiers, to draw them off for a while from the body of the Lord. The executioners next mounted the ladders to the crosses of the thieves. Two of them with their sharp clubs broke the bones of their arms above and below the elbows, while a third did the same above the knees and ankles. Gesmas roared frightfully, consequently the executioner finished him by three blows of the club on the breast. Dismas moaned feebly, and expired under the torture. He was the first mortal to look again upon His Redeemer. The executioners untwisted the cords, and allowed the bodies to fall heavily to the earth. Then tying ropes around them, they dragged them down into the valley between the mount and the city wall, and there buried them.

The executioners appeared still to have some doubts as to the death of the Lord, and His friends, after witnessing the terrible scene just described, were more anxious than ever for them to withdraw. Cassius, the subaltern officer, afterward known as Longinus, a somewhat hasty, impetuous man of twenty-five, whose airs of importance and officiousness joined to his weak, squinting eyes often exposed him to the ridicule of his inferiors, was suddenly seized by wonderful ardor. The barbarity, the base fury of the executioners, the anguish of the Blessed Virgin, and the grace accorded him in that sudden

and supernatural impulse of zeal, all combined to make of him the fulfiller of a Prophecy. His lance, which was shortened by having one section run into another, he drew out to its full length, stuck the point upon it, turned his horse's head, and drove him boldly up to the narrow space on top of the eminence upon which the cross was planted. There was scarcely room for the animal to turn, and I saw Cassius reining him up in front of the chasm made by the cleft rock. He halted between Jesus' cross and that of the good thief, on the right of Our Saviour's body, grasped the lance with both hands, and drove it upward with such violence into the hollow, distended right side of the Sacred Body, through the entrails and the heart, that its point opened a little wound in the left breast. When with all his force he drew the blessed lance from the wide wound it had made in the right side of Jesus, a copious stream of blood and water rushed forth and flowed over his up-raised face, bedewing him with grace and salvation. He sprang quickly from his horse, fell upon his knees, struck his breast, and before all present proclaimed aloud his belief in Jesus.

The Blessed Virgin, John, and the holy women, whose eyes were riveted upon Jesus, witnessed with terror the sudden action, accompanied the thrust of the lance with a cry of woe, and rushed up to the cross. Mary, as if the thrust had transfixed her own heart, felt the sharp point piercing her through and through. She sank into the arms of her friends, while Cassius, still on his knees, was loudly confessing the Lord and joyfully praising God. He was enlightened; he now saw plainly and distinctly. The eyes of his body, like those of his soul, were healed and opened. All were seized with a sentiment of the deepest reverence at sight of the Redeemer's blood which, mixed with water, fell in a foamy stream into a hollow in the rock at the foot of the cross. Mary, Cassius, the

holy women, and John scooped it up in the drinking cups they had with them, poured it into flasks, and dried the hollow with linen cloths.¹

Cassius was entirely changed, deeply touched and humbled. He had received perfect sight. The soldiers present, touched also by the miracle they had witnessed, fell on their knees, striking their breast and confessing Jesus, from the wide opening of whose right side blood and water were copiously streaming. It fell upon the clean stone, and lay there foaming and bubbling. The friends of Jesus gathered it up with loving care, Mary and Magdalen mingling with it their tears. The executioners who meanwhile had received Pilate's order not to touch the body of Jesus, as he had given it to Joseph of Arimathea for burial, did not return.

The lance of Cassius was in several sections that slipped one into the other. When not drawn out, it looked like a stout staff of moderate length. The part that inflicted a wound was of iron, smooth and pear shaped, on the top of which a point could be stuck, and from the lower part two sharp, curved blades could be drawn when needed.

All the above took place around the cross of Jesus soon after four o'clock, while Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were making the purchase necessary for the burial of Christ. When the friends of Jesus on Golgotha were informed by Joseph of Arimathea's servants, who were come from cleaning and arranging the sepulcher, that their master had Pilate's permission to take down the Sacred Body and lay it in his own new tomb, John and the holy women returned

1. Sister Emmerich added: "Cassius, baptized Longinus, later on was ordained deacon and preached Christ. He always carried about with him some of the sacred blood, now dried up. It was found in his grave in Italy, in a city not far from the place in which Saint Clare lived. Near the city is a *green* lake in which there is an island. His body must have been taken there." Sister Emmerich appears, by her description, to designate Mantua, where such a tradition is preserved. The writer is ignorant as to which Saint Clare lived in the neighborhood.

at once to the city, to the quarter on Mount Sion, that the Blessed Virgin might take a little rest. They wanted also to get some things still necessary for the burial. The Blessed Virgin had a little dwelling among the buildings belonging to the Coenaculum. They did not go by the nearest gate, for that was closed and guarded on the other side by the soldiers that the Pharisees had called for when they feared an uprising of the populace. They went by one more to the south, the one that led to Bethlehem.

58. Some Localities of Ancient Jerusalem

On the eastern side of Jerusalem was the first gate south of the southeast angle of the Temple, which led into that quarter of the city called Ophel. The one to the north of the northeast corner was the sheep gate. Between these two gates was a third (though not as yet long in existence) that led to some streets which ran one above another on the east side of the Temple mount, and in which principally stonecutters and other laborers resided. Their dwellings adjoined the foundation walls of the Temple. Almost all the houses of these two streets belonged to Nicodemus, who had had them built. The stonecutters that occupied them either paid him rent or worked for him, for they had business relations with him and his friend, Joseph of Arimathea. The last-named owned large quarries in his native place, and carried on an active trade in marble. Nicodemus had not long before built a beautiful new gate for these streets; it is now called the gate of Moriah. As it was just finished, Jesus was the first to pass through it on Palm Sunday. He went through Nicodemus' new gate, through which no one before Him had passed, and He was buried in Joseph of Arimathea's new sepulcher, in which before Him no one had rested. Later on, this gate was walled up, and there is a

saying that the Christians will once again enter the city through it. Even in the present day, there is a walled-up gate in this region, called by the Turks "The Golden Gate."

If there were no walls to obstruct the course, a straight road from the sheep gate toward the west would strike almost between the northwest end of Mount Sion and through the center of Golgotha. From this gate to Golgotha in a straight line the distance was perhaps three-quarters of an hour, but from Pilate's house to Golgotha, it was in a straight line about five-eighths of an hour. The fortress Antonia rose from a projecting rock on the northwest of the Temple mount. When one turned to the left from Pilate's palace and passed westward through the arch, the fortress lay on his left. On one of its walls was an elevated platform that overlooked the forum, and from it Pilate was accustomed to address the populace, to publish new laws, for instance. When Jesus was carrying His cross inside the city, He often had Mount Calvary on His right. (Jesus' journey must have been made partly in a southwesterly direction). It led through the gate of an inner wall which ran off toward Sion, which quarter of the city stood very high. Beyond this wall and to the west, there was another quarter that contained more gardens than houses. Toward the outer wall of the city there were magnificent sepulchers with beautifully sculptured entrances, and above many of them pretty little gardens. In this quarter stood the house owned by Lazarus. It has beautiful gardens that extended toward where the outer western wall turned off to the south. There was, I think, near the great sheep gate a little private entrance through the city wall into those gardens. Jesus and His disciples, with Lazarus' permission, often made use of it in coming and going. The gate on the northwest corner opened in the direction of Bethsur, which lay more to the north than Emmaus and Joppa.

Several royal tombs stood to the north of the outer wall. This western and sparsely built portion of the city was the lowest of all. It sloped gently toward the city wall and then as gently rose again before reaching it. This second slope was covered with beautiful gardens and vineyards. Back of this ran a broad paved road inside the walls with paths leading to them and to the towers. The latter were not like ours, which have their stairs inside. On the other side of the wall outside the city, there was a declivity toward the valley, so that the walls around this lower quarter looked as if built on a raised terrace. Here too were found gardens and vineyards. Jesus' way to Calvary did not run through these gardens, for the quarter in which they were lay at the end of His journey northward to the right. It was thence Simon of Cyrene was coming when he met Jesus. The gate through which Jesus was led out of the city was not directly toward the west, but rather facing the southwest. On passing out of that gate and turning to the left, one found the city wall running southward for a short distance when it made a sharp turn to the west, and then ran again to the south around Mount Sion. On this left side of the wall and on the way to Sion rose a very strong tower like a fortress. On this same side and very near the gate that led to the place of execution, opened another. Of all the city gates, these two were nearest each other. The distance between them was not greater than that between the castle gate and Luding's gate here in Dülmen. This last-mentioned gate of Jerusalem opened westward into the valley, and from it the road ran to the left and a little southward toward Bethlehem. Somewhat beyond the gate of execution the road turned northward and ran straight to Calvary, which faced the city on the east and was very steep, but which on the west sloped gradually. Looking from this side toward the west, one could see for some distance

along the road leading to Emmaus. There was a field on the roadside, and there I saw Luke gathering herbs when, after the Resurrection, he and Cleophas on their way to Emmaus were met by Jesus. Toward ten o'clock on the morning of the Crucifixion, Jesus' face was turned to the northwest, that is, in the direction of the cross erected for Him on Calvary. When hanging on the cross, if He turned His head to the right, He could catch a glimpse of the fortress Antonia. All along the city wall, both north and east of Calvary, lay gardens, vineyards, and sepulchers. The cross of Jesus was buried on the northeast side and at the foot of Mount Calvary. Opposite the spot upon which the crosses were afterward discovered and to the northeast there were beautiful terraces covered with vines. Looking southward from the point upon which the cross stood on Calvary, one could see the house of Caiaphas away below the fortress of David.

59. Garden and Tomb Belonging to Joseph of Arimathea

This garden¹ was at least seven minute's distance from Mount Calvary, near the Bethlehem gate, and on the height that sloped down to the city wall. It was very beautiful with its tall trees, its seats, and its shady nooks. On one side it extended up to the

1. We must here remark that, in the four years during which Sister Emmerich related her visions, she described many changes connected with the Holy Places profaned and laid waste, yet always venerated either secretly or openly. She herself venerated them in vision. She saw many stones and fragments of rock, the witnesses of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord, placed by St. Helena, after her discovery of the Holy Places, in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher built by her. They were placed in a narrow space near one another, and put under the protection of the city. Sister Emmerich honored in vision the church of the Crucifixion, that of the Holy Sepulcher, and several parts of the Sepulcher itself over which chapels are now raised. But sometimes, when she venerated not so much the tomb itself as the site upon which the sepulcher stood, it seemed to her that she saw it in the vicinity, though still somewhat removed from the spot upon which the cross had stood.

height upon which rose the city wall. A person coming down into the valley from the northern side would perceive on entering the garden that the ground rose on his left up to the city wall. To the right and at the end of the garden lay a detached rock, in which was the sepulcher. Turning to the right, he would come to the entrance of the grotto which was facing the east, on rising ground and against the city wall. In either end of the same rock, north and south, there were two smaller grottos with low entrances. A narrow pathway ran around its western side. The ground in front of the grotto was higher than that of the entrance itself, so that to reach the door, one had to descend some steps, just as in another little tomb on the eastern side of the rock. The outer entrance was closed with latticework. The space inside the grotto was sufficiently great for four men to stand against the wall to the right and as many to the left, and yet permit the body to be carried between them by the bearers. The walls of the grotto rounded at the western side until they formed, just opposite the door, a broad but not very high niche. The rocky wall here formed an arching roof over the tomb, which was about two feet above the level of the ground, with space hollowed out on top to receive a corpse in its winding sheet. The tomb projected like an altar, being connected with the rock only on one side. There was room for one person to stand at the head, another at the foot, and still a third before the tomb even when the doors of the niche were closed. The doors were of copper, or some other metal, and opened to both sides, where there was space for them against the walls. They did not stand perpendicularly, but lay a little obliquely before the niche, and reached low enough to the ground for a stone laid against them to prevent their being opened. The stone intended for this purpose was now lying outside the entrance of the grotto. After the burial of the Lord

it was brought in for the first time and laid before the closed

doors of the tomb. It was large and somewhat rounded on the side that was to lie next the doors, because the wall near them was not at right angles. To open the doors, the immense stone was not first rolled out of the vault, for that, owing to the confined space, would have been attended with the greatest difficulty. But a chain let down from the roof was fastened to rings fixed in the stone. Then the chain being drawn up by the aid of several men exerting all their strength, the stone was swung to one side of the grotto, leaving the doors of the tomb free.

In the garden opposite the entrance to the grotto there was a stone bench. If one mounted to the roof of the grotto, which was covered with grass, he could descry the heights of Sion and some of the towers above the city walls. The Bethlehem gate, an aqueduct, and the Well of Gihon also could be seen from here. The rock inside was white veined with red and brown. The grotto was finished very neatly.

60. The Descent From the Cross

While there were only a few guards around the cross, I saw about five men coming through the valley from Bethania. They drew near the place of execution, looked up to the cross, and then stole away again. I think they must have been disciples. Three times I saw two men in the vicinity as if making examinations and anxiously deliberating together. They were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. The first time was during the Crucifixion. (Perhaps it was then that they sent to buy Jesus' garments from the soldiers). The second was when they came to see whether the crowd had dispersed. After looking around, they went to the tomb to make some preparations. The third time was when they returned from the tomb. They went right up to the cross,

looked up and all around, as if watching for a good opportunity, consulted as to the best plan of action for the task before them, and then went back to the city.

And now began the transport to Calvary of all that was necessary for the embalming. Besides the instruments to be used in taking the Sacred Body down from the cross, the servants took with them two ladders from a shed near Nicodemus' dwelling. Each of these ladders consisted of a single pole in which pieces of thick plank were so fitted as to form steps. They were provided with hooks, which could be hung higher or lower at pleasure, either to steady the ladder itself in some particular position or to hang on it the tools and other articles necessary for the work that was being done.

The good women from whom they had received the spices for the embalming packed everything nicely for them. Nicodemus had brought one hundred pounds of spices, equal to thirty-seven pounds of our weight, as has more than once been explained to me. They carried these spices around the neck in little kegs made of bark. One of the kegs contained some kind of powder. In bags made of parchment, or leather, were bunches of aromatic herbs. Joseph had with him also a box of ointment. Of what the box was composed I know not, but it was red with a blue rim. The servants, as already mentioned, carried in a handbarrow various kinds of vessels, leathern bottles, sponges, and tools. They took with them likewise fire in a closed lantern.

The servants left the city before their master and by another gate (I think the Bethlehem gate) and went out to Mount Calvary. On their way through the city, they passed a house to which the Blessed Virgin with the other women and John had retired, in order to make some preparations for the Lord's burial. They joined the servants, whom they followed at a little distance. There were about five women,

some of whom carried large bundles of linen under their mantles. It was a custom among the women, whenever they went out toward evening or upon any secret mission of piety, to envelop their whole person in a long strip of linen at least a yard in width. This they did very skillfully. They began with one arm, and then wound the linen so closely about the lower limbs that they could not take a long step. I have seen them entirely enveloped in this way, the linen brought up cleverly around the other arm and even enveloping the head. On this occasion there was something striking in the dress, for it looked to me like a robe of mourning.

Joseph and Nicodemus also were in mourning attire: false sleeves, maniples, and wide girdles of black, and their long and flowing mantles which they had drawn over their head were of a dark gray color. Their wide mantles covered all that they were carrying. Both directed their steps toward the gate of execution.

The streets were quiet and lonely. General terror kept the inhabitants in their homes. Many were prostrate in penance, and only a few were observing the prescriptions for the festival. When Joseph and Nicodemus arrived at the gate, they found it closed, and the streets and walls around beset by soldiers. They were those for whom the Pharisees asked after two o'clock when they were fearing a tumult, and they had not yet been remanded. Joseph presented them Pilate's written order to be allowed to pass. The soldiers expressed their readiness to comply with it, but explained at the same time that they had already vainly tried to open the gate, that probably it had received some damage from the earthquake shock, and that the executioners sent out to break the bones of the crucified had to return through the corner gate. But as soon as Joseph and Nicodemus grasped the bolt, the gate opened of itself with perfect ease.

It was still cloudy and foggy when they reached Mount Calvary, where they found their servants and the holy women, the latter sitting in front of the cross and in tears. Cassius and several converted soldiers stood like changed men, timidly and reverently, at some distance. Joseph and Nicodemus told the holy women and John of all that they had done to save Jesus from the ignominious death inflicted upon the thieves, and heard from them in return with what difficulty they had warded off the breaking of the Lord's bones, and how the Prophecy had been fulfilled. They told also of how Cassius had pierced the Sacred Body with his lance. As soon as the Centurion Abenadar arrived, they began sadly and reverently that most holy labor of love, the taking down from the cross and preparing for burial of the Sacred Body of their Master, their Lord, their Redeemer.

The most holy Virgin and Magdalen were seated upon the right side of the little mound between the cross of Dismas and that of Jesus. The other women were busied arranging the spices and linens, the water, the sponges, and the vessels. Cassius also drew near when he saw Abenadar approaching, and imparted to him the miracle wrought on his eyes. All were extremely touched. Their movements were marked by an air of solemn sadness and gravity. They worked with hearts full of love, but without many words. Sometimes the silence in which the sacred duties were quickly and carefully being rendered was broken by a deep sigh or a vehement exclamation of woe. Magdalen gave way unrestrainedly to her grief. Her emotion was violent. No consideration, not even the presence of so many around her, could make her repress it.

Nicodemus and Joseph placed the ladders behind the cross and mounted, carrying with them a very long strip of linen, to which three broad straps were fastened. They bound the body of Jesus under the

arms and knees to the trunk of the cross, and the arms they fastened in the same way at the wrists. Then by striking upon strong pegs fixed against the points of the nails at the back of the cross, they forced out the nails from Jesus' hands, which were not very much shaken by the blows. The nails fell easily out of the wounds, for they had been enlarged by the weight of the body which, supported now by means of the linen band, no longer rested upon them. The lower part of the body, which in death had sunk down on the knees, rested now in a sitting posture upon a linen band that was bound up around the hands on the arms of the cross. While Joseph was striking out the left nail and allowing the left arm to sink down gently on the body, Nicodemus was binding the right arm in the same way to the cross, also the thorn-crowned head, which had fallen upon the right shoulder. The right nail was then forced out, and the arm allowed to sink into the band that supported the body. Abenadar the Centurion had meanwhile, though with great effort, been driving out the enormous nail from the feet.

Cassius reverently picked up the nails as they fell out, and laid them down together by the Blessed Virgin. Next, removing the ladders to the front of the cross and close to the Sacred Body, they loosened the upper band from the trunk of the cross, and hung it on one of the hooks of the ladder. They did the same to the two other bands, which they hung on two of the lower hooks. Thus with the gently lowered bands, the Sacred Body sank by degrees to where the Centurion Abenadar, mounted on portable steps, was waiting to receive it. He clasped the limbs below the knees in his arms and descended slowly, while Nicodemus and Joseph, holding the upper part in their arms, gently and cautiously, as if carrying a beloved and very severely wounded friend, came down the ladders step by step. In this way did that most sacred,

that most terribly maltreated body of the Redeemer reach the ground.

This taking down of Jesus from the cross was inexpressibly touching. Everything was done with so much precaution, so much tenderness, as if fearing to cause the Lord pain. Those engaged in it were penetrated with all the love and reverence for the Sacred Body that they had felt for the Holy of Holies during His life. All were looking up with eyes riveted, and accompanying every movement with raising of hands, tears, and gestures of pain and grief. But no word was uttered. When the men engaged in the sacred task gave expression to their reverent emotion it was as if involuntary, as if they were performing some solemn function; and when necessary to communicate directions to one another, they did it in few words and a low tone. When the blows of the hammer by which the nails were driven out resounded, Mary and Magdalen, as well as all that had been present at the Crucifixion, were pierced with fresh grief, for the sound reminded them of that most cruel nailing of Jesus to the cross. They shuddered, as if expecting again to hear His piercing cries, and grieved anew over His death proclaimed by the silence of those blessed lips. As soon as the Sacred Body was taken down, the men wrapped it in linen from the knees to the waist, and laid it on a sheet in His Mother's arms which, in anguish of heart and ardent longing, were stretched out to receive it.

61. The Body of Jesus Prepared For Burial

The Blessed Virgin was seated upon a large cover spread upon the ground, her right knee raised a little, and her back supported by a kind of cushion made, perhaps, of mantles rolled together. There sat the poor Mother, exhausted by grief and fatigue, in

the position best suited for rendering love's last, sad duties to the remains of her murdered Son. The men laid the Sacred Body on a sheet spread upon the Mother's lap. The adorable head of Jesus rested upon her slightly raised knee, and His body lay outstretched upon the sheet. Love and grief in equal degrees struggled in the breast of the Blessed Mother. She held in her arms the body of her beloved Son, whose long martyrdom she had been able to soothe by no loving ministrations; and at the same time she beheld the frightful maltreatment exercised upon it, she gazed upon its wounds now close under her eyes. She pressed her lips to His blood-stained cheeks, while Magdalen knelt with her face bowed upon His feet.

The men meanwhile had retired to a little cave that lay deep on the southwestern side of the mount. There they completed their preparations for the burial and set all things in order. Cassius and a number of soldiers who had been converted to the Lord remained standing at a respectful distance. All the ill-disposed had returned to the city, and those now present served as a guard to prevent the approach of anyone likely to interrupt the last honors being shown to Jesus. Some of them, when called upon, rendered assistance here and there by handing different articles.

The holy women helped in various ways, presenting when necessary vessels of water, sponges, towels, ointments, and spices. When not so engaged, they remained at a little distance attentively watching what was going on. Among them were Mary Cleophas, Salome, and Veronica, but Magdalen was always busied around the Sacred Body. Mary Heli, the Blessed Virgin's elder sister, and who was already an aged matron, was sitting apart on the earth wall of the circle, silently looking on. John lent constant assistance to the Blessed Virgin. He went to and fro between the women and the men, now helping the

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former in their task of love, and afterward assisting the latter in every way to prepare all things for the burial. Everything was thought of. The women had leathern water bottles, which they opened, and pressed the sides together to pour out their contents, also a vessel nearby on burning coals. They gave Mary and Magdalen clear water and fresh sponges according as required, squeezing into leathern bottles those that had been used. I think the round lumps that I saw them squeezing out must have been sponges.

The Blessed Virgin's courage and fortitude, in the midst of her inexpressible anguish, were unshaken.¹ Her sorrow was not such as could cause her to permit the marks of outrage and torture to remain upon the Sacred Body, and so she immediately began earnestly and carefully to wash and purify it from every trace of ill-usage. With great care she opened the crown of thorns in the back and, with the assistance of others, removed it from Jesus' head. Some of the thorns had penetrated deeply, and that the removal of the crown might not by disturbing them enlarge the wounds, they had first to be cut off. The crown was deposited near the nails. Then with a pair of round, yellow pincers,² Mary drew from the wounds the long splinters and sharp thorns still sunken in

1. As Sister Emmerich, in her yearly contemplation of the Passion, was toward evening contemplating the Descent from the Cross, Good Friday, March 31, 1820, she suddenly fell in presence of the writer into a deathlike faint. On returning to consciousness, though still in great suffering, she related what follows: "When I gazed on the body of Jesus in the lap of the Blessed Virgin, I thought: 'See, how courageous she is! She has not fainted even once!' My guide instantly rebuked me for this thought—in which there was more of admiration than compassion—and said: 'Suffer then what she endured!' and on the instant, sharp anguish like a sword cut through my soul. I became like one in death agony, and I still feel the pain of it." She did indeed suffer that pain for a long time, and it brought on an illness that well-nigh ended in death.

2. Sister Emmerich said: "I remember these pincers by their likeness to the scissors with which Samson was robbed of his hair." Once before she related what follows: "Dalila had a singular-looking pair of scissors in her hand. They were round and as large as the segment of a large apple. When pressed together, they opened of themselves. They looked like a kind of instrument for pinching, like squeezing-pincers. They consisted of two broad, thin, rounded blades of metal whose sharp ends crossed each other when closed for cutting, and separated when not in use." In her meditations upon the third year of Jesus' public life, Saturday, the 21st Sivan (June the 7th), Sister

Emmerich saw Jesus keeping the Sabbath in the Levitical city of Misael, in the tribe of Aser, and in consequence of some extracts from the Book of Judges read on that occasion, she had visions on the life of Samson.

the Lord's head, and showed them sadly to the compassionate friends standing around. The thorns were laid by the crown, though some of them may have been kept as tokens of remembrance.

The face of the Lord was hardly recognizable, so greatly was it disfigured by blood and wounds. The torn hair of the head and beard was clotted with blood. Mary washed the head and face and soaked the dried blood from the hair with sponges. As the washing proceeded, the awful cruelties to which Jesus had been subjected became more apparent, and roused emotions of compassion, sorrow, and tenderness as she went from wound to wound. With a sponge and a little linen over the fingers of her right hand, she washed the blood from the wounds of the head, from the broken eyes, the nostrils, and the ears. With the little piece of linen on the forefinger, she purified the half-opened mouth, the tongue, the teeth, and the lips. She divided into three parts the little that remained of His hair.³ One part fell on either side of the head, and the

3. Let us here make the following remark. Sister Emmerich, when speaking of important historical personages, was accustomed to mention into how many parts their hair was divided; and she appeared to attach certain significance to the words: "Eve divided her hair into two parts; but Mary, into three." No opportunity presented itself for an explanation of these words, which probably would have thrown some light upon the hair in relation to sacrifices, vows, funerals, consecrations, etc. She once said in speaking of Samson: "He wore his thick, long, yellow hair in seven braids wound around his head, like a burganet, or kind of helmet. Above his forehead and temples, they formed a roll which was confined in a net or bag. His strength did not indeed lie in his hair as such, but his hair was a witness of the sacred vow he had made to let it grow in God's honor. The powers that depended upon those seven braids, or tresses, were the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. He must have already broken his vow and lost many graces, when he allowed this sign of the Nazarites to be cut. I saw, however, that Dalila did not cut off all his hair. I think the roll above his forehead was left. He retained the grace to repent and do penance, which he did most earnestly and thereby received strength to destroy his enemies. Samson's life is prophetic and figurative."

third over the back. The front hair, after disengaging and cleansing it, she smoothed behind His ears. When the sacred head had been thoroughly cleansed, the Blessed Virgin kissed the cheeks and covered it. Her care was next directed to the neck, the shoulders, the breast, and the back of the Sacred Body, the arms and the torn hands filled with blood. Ah, then was the terrible condition to which it had been reduced displayed in all its horror! The bones of the breast, as well as all the nerves, were dislocated and strained and thereby become stiff and inflexible. The shoulder upon which Jesus had borne the heavy cross was so lacerated that it had become one great wound, and the whole of the upper part of the body was full of welts and cuts from the scourges. There was a small wound in the left breast where the point of Cassius' lance had come out, and in the right side was opened that great, wide wound made by the lance, which had pierced His heart through and through. Mary washed and purified all these wounds, while Magdalen, kneeling before her, frequently lent assistance, though for the most part she remained at Jesus' feet, bathing them for the last time, more with her tears than with water, and wiping them with her hair.

The head, the upper part of the body, and the feet of the Lord had now been cleansed from blood. The Sacred Body still lay in Mary's lap, bluish white, glistening like flesh drained of blood, with here and there brown stains of coagulated blood that looked like red moles, and red places where the skin had been torn off. The Blessed Virgin covered the parts as they were washed, and began to embalm the wounds, commencing with those of the head. The

holy women knelt by her in turn, presenting to her a box from which, with the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, she took out something like salve, or precious ointment, with which she filled and anointed all the wounds. She put some upon the hair also, and I saw her taking the hands of Jesus in her own left hand, reverently kissing them, and then filling the wide wounds made by the nails with the ointment, or sweet spices. The ears, nostrils, and wound of Jesus' side, she likewise filled with the same. Magdalen was busied principally with the feet of Jesus. She repeatedly wiped and anointed them, but only to bedew them again with her tears, and she often knelt long with her face pressed upon them.

I saw that the water used was not thrown away, but poured into the leathern bottles into which the sponges had been squeezed. More than once I saw fresh water brought by some of the men, Cassius or some other soldier, in the leathern bottles and jugs that the women had brought with them. They procured it at the well of Gihon, which was so near that it could be seen from the garden of the sepulcher.

When the Blessed Virgin had anointed all the wounds, she bound up the sacred head in linen, but the covering for the face, attached to that of the head, she did not as yet draw down. With a gentle pressure, she closed the half-broken eyes of Jesus, and kept her hand upon them for a little while. Then she closed the mouth, embraced the Sacred Body of her Son, and weeping bitter tears, allowed her face to rest upon His. Magdalen's reverence for Jesus did not permit her to approach her face to His. She pressed it to His feet only.

Joseph and Nicodemus had already been standing awhile at some distance waiting, when John drew near the Blessed Virgin with the request that she would permit them to take the body of Jesus, that they might proceed in their preparations for

the burial, as the Sabbath was near. Once more Mary closely embraced Jesus, and in touching words took leave of Him. The men raised the Most Sacred Body in the sheet upon which it was resting in the lap of His Mother, and carried it down to the place where the burial preparations were to be made. Mary's grief, which had been somewhat assuaged by her loving ministrations to Jesus, now burst forth anew, and, quite overcome, she rested with covered head in the arms of the women. Magdalen, as if fearing that they wanted to rob her of her Beloved, with outstretched hands ran some steps after the Sacred Body, but soon she turned back again to the Blessed Virgin.

They carried the body of Jesus a little distance down from Calvary's summit to a cave on the side of the mount in which there was a beautiful flat rock. It was here that the men had prepared the place for embalming. I saw first a linen cloth, open worked something like a net. It looked as if it had been pierced with a sharp instrument, and was like the large so-called hunger cloth (*Hungertuch*) that is hung up in our churches during Lent. When as a child I saw that cloth hanging up, I used to think it was the same that I had seen at the preparations for the Lord's burial.⁴ Perhaps it was pierced like a net in order to allow the water used in washing to flow through it. I saw another large cloth opened out. They laid the body of the Lord on the open worked one, and some of them held the other over it. Nicodemus and Joseph knelt down and, under cover of this upper cloth, loosened from the

4. *Hungertuch*, or hunger cloth, is a large white linen cloth which, in the diocese of Münster, is suspended during Lent from the ceiling of the churches. It is hung in a zigzag way on cords either between the choir and the nave, or before the high altar. Some parts of it are made of net upon which are embroidered representations of the Five Wounds, or the instruments of the Passion, etc. It makes upon souls capable of receiving it a deep and noble impression that gives rise to aspirations after the virtues of chastity, mortification, abstinence, and leads to the practice of holy meditation.

lower part of Jesus' body the bandage that they had bound around it from the knees to the hips when taken down from the cross. They removed likewise that other covering which Jonadab, the nephew of His foster father Joseph, had given Him before the Crucifixion. Thus with great regard to modesty, they sponged, under cover of the sheet held over it, the lower part of the Lord's body. Then, linen bands being stretched under the upper part of the Sacred Body and the knees, it was raised, still under cover of the sheet, and the back treated in the same way without turning the body over. They washed it until the water squeezed from the sponges ran clean and clear. After that they poured water of myrrh over the whole body, and I saw them laying it down and reverently, with their hands, stretching it out at full length, for it had stiffened in the position in which, when in death it had sunk down upon the cross, the knees bent. Under the hips they laid a linen strip, one ell in width and about three in length, almost filled the lap with bunches of herbs and fine, crisp threadlike plants, like saffron, and then sprinkled over all a powder, which Nicodemus had brought with him in a box. The bunches of herbs were such as I have often seen on the celestial tables⁵ laid upon little green and gold plates with blue rims. Next

5. In a certain kind of interior and figurative consolation and refreshment vouchsafed Sister Emmerich, she often felt as if transported to the heavenly banquet and, with childlike delight, she described the wonderfully beautiful arrangement of the dishes, the sparkling brilliancy of the vessels. She often spoke of the vegetables served up, describing their species and form even to the stamens of their blossoms and the number of their leaves. She frequently mentioned, as having been set before herself, delicate herbs placed in an upright position side by side on golden plates rimmed with blue; and said more than once how greatly she had been strengthened in her intense sufferings, both of soul and of body, by partaking of such herbs, some of them like bitter cress and others like myrrh. Sometimes also it was fruit of various kinds that produced that effect. By frequent observation, it was discovered that these figurative consolations sometimes signified the efforts she was to make at overcoming, conquering, renouncing self, and they were sent her under the form and nature that best symbolized those efforts: namely, herbs and fruits. Or again, they were meant as refreshment and rewards. The color, material, and form of the vessels also had their proper signification. "The partaking of these viands," she said, "does not consist in eating as in ordinary life, and yet in a far higher degree do they nourish and satisfy. The whole grace and strength of God, of which the fruit set before me is the type and perfect expression, passes over into the receiver." Of such herbs Sister Emmerich was reminded by the sight of the aromatic plants and spices used at the burial of Jesus.

they tightly bound the linen strip around the whole, drew the end up between the sacred limbs, and stuck it under the band that encircled the waist, thus fastening it securely. After this they anointed the wounds of the thighs, scattered sweet spices over them, laid bunches of herbs between the limbs all the way down to the feet, and bound the whole in linen from the feet up.

John once more conducted the Blessed Virgin and the other holy women to the sacred remains of Jesus. Mary knelt down by Jesus' head, took a fine linen scarf that hung around her neck under her mantle and which she had received from Claudia Procla, Pilate's wife, and laid it under the head of her Son. Then she and the other holy women filled in the spaces between the shoulders and the head, around the whole neck and up as far as the cheeks with herbs, some of those fine threadlike plants, and the costly powder mentioned before, all of which the Blessed Virgin bound up carefully in the fine linen scarf. Magdalen poured the entire contents of a little flask of precious balm into the wound of Jesus' side, while the holy women placed aromatic herbs in the hands and all around and under the feet. Then the men covered the pit of the stomach and filled up the armpits and all other parts of the body with sweet spices, crossed the stiffened arms over the bosom, and closely wrapped the whole in the large white sheet as far as the breast, just as a child is swathed. Then having fastened under one of the armpits the end of a broad linen band, they wound it round the arms, the hands, the head, and down

A Touching Miracle

again around the whole of the Sacred Body until it presented the appearance of a mummy. Lastly, they laid the Lord's body on the large sheet, six ells long, that Joseph of Arimathea had bought, and wrapped it closely around it. The Sacred Body

was laid on it crosswise. Then one corner was drawn up from the feet to the breast, the opposite one was folded down over the head and shoulders, and the sides were doubled round the whole person.

While all were kneeling around the Lord's body, taking leave of it with many tears, a touching miracle was exhibited before their eyes: the entire form of Jesus' Sacred Body with all its wounds appeared, as if drawn in brown and reddish colors, on the cloth that covered it. It was as if He wished gratefully to reward their loving care of Him, gratefully to acknowledge their sorrow, and leave to them an image of Himself imprinted through all the coverings that enveloped Him. Weeping and lamenting, they embraced the Sacred Body, and reverently kissed the miraculous portrait. Their astonishment was so great that they opened the outside wrapping, and it became still greater when they found all the linen bands around the Sacred Body white as before and only the uppermost cloth marked with the Lord's figure.

The cloth on the side upon which the body lay received the imprint of the whole back of the Lord; the ends that covered it were marked with the front likeness. The parts of this latter, to produce the perfect form, had to be laid together, because the corners of the cloth were all crossed over the body in front. The picture was not a mere impression formed by bleeding wounds, for the whole body had been tightly wrapped in spices and numerous linen bands. It was a miraculous picture, a witness to the creative Godhead in the body of Jesus.

I have seen many things connected with the subsequent history of this holy winding sheet, but I

cannot recall them in their precise order. After the Resurrection it, along with the other linens, came into the possession of Jesus' friends. Once I saw a man carrying it off with him under his arm when he was starting on a journey. I saw it a second time in the hands of the Jews, and I saw it long in veneration among the Christians of different places. Once a dispute arose about it, and for its settlement, the holy winding sheet was thrown into the fire; but rising miraculously above the flames, it flew into the hands of the Christians.

At the prayer of holy men, three impressions of the holy image were taken off, both the back and the picture formed on the folds of the front. These impressions were consecrated by contact with the original and the solemn intention of the Church. They have even effected great miracles. I have seen the original, somewhat damaged, somewhat torn, held in veneration by some non-Catholic Christians of Asia. I have forgotten the name of the city, but it is situated in a large country near the home of the Three Kings. In those visions I also saw something connected with Turin and France and Pope Clement I, as well as something about the Emperor Tiberius, who died five years after the death of Christ, but I have forgotten it.

62. The Sepulture

The men now laid the Sacred Body on the leathern litter, placed over it a brown cover, and ran two poles along the sides. I thought right away of the Ark of the Covenant. Nicodemus and Joseph carried the front ends on their shoulders; Abenadar and John, the others. Then followed the Blessed Virgin, her elder sister Mary Heli, Magdalen, and Mary Cleophas. The group of women that had been seated at some distance, Veronica, Johanna Chusa, Mary

Marcus; Salome, the wife of Zebedee; Mary Salome, Salome of Jerusalem, Susanna, and Anna, a niece of St. Joseph. She was the daughter of one of his brothers, and had been reared in Jerusalem. Cassius and his soldiers closed the procession. The other women, namely, Maroni of Naim, Dina the Samaritan, and Mary the Suphanite were at the time with Martha and Lazarus in Bethania.

Two soldiers with twisted torches walked on ahead, for light was needed in the grotto of the sepulcher. The procession moved on for a distance of about seven minutes singing Psalms in a low, plaintive tone, through the valley to the garden of the tomb. I saw on a hill on the other side of the valley James the Greater, the brother of John, looking at the procession, and then going off to tell the other disciples, who were hiding in the caves.

The garden of the sepulcher was not laid out with any view to regularity. The rock in which the sepulcher was cut lay at one end, entirely overgrown with verdure. The front of the garden was protected by a quickset hedge, inside of which at the entrance was a little enclosure formed of stakes, upon which rested long poles held in place by iron pegs. Outside the garden and also to the right of the sepulcher stood some palm trees; the other vegetation consisted chiefly of bushes, flowers, and aromatic plants.

I saw the procession halt at the entrance of the garden. It was opened by removing some of the poles, which were afterward used as levers for rolling away the stone from the door of the grotto. Before reaching the rock, they took the cover from the litter, raised the sacred body, and placed it upon a narrow board which had previously been covered with a linen cloth. Nicodemus and Joseph took one end of the board; the other two, the upper end, which was covered. The grotto, which was perfectly new, had been cleaned out and fumigated by Nicodemus'

servants. It was very neat inside and was ornamented by a beautifully carved coping. The funeral couch was broader at the head than at the foot. It was cut out in the form of a body swathed in its bands and winding sheet, and slightly elevated at the head and foot.

The holy women sat down upon a seat opposite the entrance of the grotto. The four men carried the Lord's body down into it, set it down, strewed the stone couch with sweet spices, spread over it a linen cloth, and deposited the sacred remains upon it. The cloth hung down over the couch. Then, having with tears and embraces given expression to their love for Jesus, they left the cave. The Blessed Virgin now went in, and I saw her sitting on the head of the tomb, which was about two feet from the ground. She was bending low over the corpse of her Child and weeping. When she left the cave, Magdalen hurried in with flowers and branches, which she had gathered in the garden and which she now scattered over the Sacred Body. She wrung her hands, and with tears and sighs embraced the feet of Jesus. When the men outside gave warning that it was time to close the doors, she went back to where the women were sitting. The men raised the cloth that was hanging over the side of the tomb, folded it around the Sacred Body, and then threw the brown cover over the whole. Lastly, they closed the brown doors, probably of copper or bronze, which had a perpendicular bar on the outside crossed by a transverse one.¹ It looked like a cross. The great stone, intended for securing the doors and which was still lying outside the cave, was in shape almost like a chest² or tomb, and was large enough for a man to lie at full length upon it. It was very heavy. By

1. Sister Emmerich does not say whether these bars were separate from the doors and were placed against them when closed. or whether they were panelings which formed the figure of which she speaks.

2. Very likely Sister Emmerich meant by this those large, old-time chests, or trunks, in which the peasants of her country kept their clothes. In shape these chests slope downward, the bottom being smaller than the lid; and it was on this account, no doubt, that the Sister was led to the comparison of a monument, for they are indeed not unlike the form of a tomb. She herself had a similar box, which she called her

chest. It was in this way she frequently described that stone, without, however, rendering its appearance perfectly clear to the mind of her hearer.

means of the poles brought from the garden entrance, the men rolled it into place before the closed doors of the tomb. The outside entrance was secured by a light door of wickerwork.

All that took place in the grotto was by torchlight, for it was dark in there. I saw during the burial several men lurking around in the neighborhood of the garden and of Mount Calvary. They looked timid and sorrowful. I think they were disciples who, in consequence of Abenadar's account of what was going on, had ventured forth from their caves and come hither. They now appeared to be returning.

63. The Return From the Burial. The Sabbath

It was now the hour at which the Sabbath began. Nicodemus and Joseph returned to the city by a little private gate which, by special permission I think, Joseph had been allowed to make in the city wall near the garden. They had previously informed the Blessed Virgin, Magdalen, John, and some of the women, who wanted to return to Mount Calvary to pray and to get some things they had left there, that this gate, as well as that of the Coenaculum, would be opened to them whenever they would knock. Mary Heli, the Blessed Virgin's aged sister, was conducted back to the city by Mary Marcus and some other women. The servants of Nicodemus and Joseph went back to Mount Calvary for the tools and things they had left here.

The soldiers went to join the guard at the gate

of execution, while Cassius rode to Pilate with the lance. He related all that had happened to him, and promised to bring him an exact account of all that might still take place, if he would give him command of the guard which the Jews, as had already been reported, would not fail to ask of him. Pilate

listened with secret dismay, but treated Cassius as an enthusiast, and impelled by disgust and superstition, ordered him to put the lance outside the door.

When the Blessed Virgin and her companions were returning with their vessels and other things from Mount Calvary, where they had again poured out their tears and prayers, they espied coming toward them a troop of soldiers headed by a torch-bearer. The women halted on both sides of the road until the crowd passed. The soldiers were going up to Calvary, perhaps to take away and bury the crosses before the Sabbath. When they had passed, the holy women continued their way to the little private gate.

Peter, James the Greater, and James the Less met Joseph and Nicodemus in the city. All wept. Peter was especially vehement in his expressions of grief. He embraced Joseph and Nicodemus with tears, accused himself, lamented that he had not been present at the death of the Lord, and thanked them for bestowing upon Him a tomb. All were quite beside themselves with sorrow. They agreed that the door of the Coenaculum should be opened upon their knocking, and then separated, in order to seek the other disciples who were scattered in various directions.

Later I saw the Blessed Virgin and her companions knocking at the Coenaculum and being admitted, then Abenadar, and by degrees most of the Apostles and several of the disciples entered. The holy women retired to the apartments occupied by the Blessed Virgin. They took some refreshment and

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spent some moments in tears and mourning, relating to one another all that had happened. The men changed their garments, and I saw them standing under the lamp celebrating the Sabbath. Then they ate lambs at the different tables around the Coenaculum, but without any ceremony. It was not the Paschal lamb. They had already eaten that yesterday. All were in great trouble and sadness. The holy women also prayed with Mary under a lamp. Later, when it had grown quite dark, Lazarus, Martha, the widow Maroni of Naim, Dina the Samaritan, and

Mary the Suphanite were admitted. They were come from Bethania to keep the Sabbath. Once more was sorrow renewed by the narrations of each.

64. The Imprisonment of Joseph of Arimathea. The Holy Sepulcher Guarded

Joseph of Arimathea left the Coenaculum at a late hour and, with some of the disciples and holy women, started for his home. They were proceeding sadly and timidly along the streets of Sion when an armed band dashed suddenly from their place of concealment in the neighborhood of Caiaphas' judgment hall and laid hands upon Joseph of Arimathea. His companions fled with cries of terror. I saw that they imprisoned the good Joseph in a tower of the city wall not very far from the judgment hall. Caiaphas had committed the care of this seizure to pagan soldiers, who celebrated no Sabbath. The intention was to let Joseph die of starvation, and to keep his disappearance secret.

On the night between Friday and Saturday, Caiaphas and some of the chief men among the Jews held a consultation upon what ought to be done with regard to the wonderful events that had just taken place, and their effect upon the people. It was far in the night when they went to Pilate to

tell him that as *that seducer said, while He was still alive*, "After three days I will rise again," it would be right "to command the sepulcher to be guarded until the third day; otherwise His disciples might come and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He is risen from the dead,' and the last error would be worse than the first."

Pilate wanted to have nothing more to do with the affair, so he said to them: "You have a guard. Go, guard it as you know." He, however, appointed Cassius to keep watch and give him an account of all that he observed. Thereupon I saw twelve men leaving the city before sunrise. They were accompanied by soldiers not habited in the Roman uniform. They were Temple soldiers, and looked to me like halberdiers, or life-guardsmen. They took with them lanterns on long poles, in order to be able to distinguish things clearly in the dark, and also to have light in the gloomy sepulcher.

When, on their arrival, they assured themselves that the Sacred Body was safe, they fastened a string across the doors of the tomb proper and another from that to the stone lying before them. Then they sealed the two together with a seal in the form of a half-moon. The twelve men returned afterward to the city, and the guard took up a position opposite the outer door of the sepulcher. Five or six took turns in watching, while some others presented themselves occasionally with provisions from the city. Cassius never left his post. He remained most of the time in the sepulcher itself, sitting or standing before the entrance to the tomb, and in such a position that he could see that side at which rested the feet of the Lord. He had received great interior graces and had been admitted to the clear understanding of many mysteries. As such a condition, being almost all the time in a state of wonderful interior enlightenment, was something so new to him, he was, as it were, transported out of himself, wholly regardless

of external things. He here became entirely changed, a new man. He spent the day in penance, thanksgiving, and adoration.

65. The Friends of Jesus on Holy Saturday

As I have said, I saw yesterday evening¹ the men in the Coenaculum celebrating the Sabbath and then taking a repast. They were about twenty in number. They were clothed in long white garments girdled at the waist, and were gathered together under a hanging lamp. When they separated after the repast, some went to take their rest in adjoining apartments, others to their own homes. Today² I saw most of them remaining quietly in the house, assembling at intervals for prayer and reading, and occasionally admitting some newcomer.

In the house occupied by the Blessed Virgin there was a large hall with several little recesses cut off by hangings and movable partitions. These were private sleeping places. When the holy women returned from the sepulcher, they put everything they brought back again into its place, and lighted the lamp that was hanging from the center of the ceiling. Then they gathered under it around the Blessed Virgin, and took turns in praying most devoutly. They were all in deep sorrow. After that they partook of some refreshment, and were soon joined by Martha, Maroni, Dina, and Mary who, after celebrating the Sabbath in Bethania, had come hither with Lazarus. The last-named went to the men in the Coenaculum. When, with tears on both sides, the death and burial of the Lord had been recounted to the newly arrived, and the hour was far advanced, some of the men, among them Joseph of Arimathea, left the supper room, called for the women that wanted to return to their homes

1. Good Friday.

2. Holy Saturday.

in the city, and took their leave. It was on the way that that armed band seized Joseph near the judgment hall of Caiaphas, and cast him into the tower.

The women who had remained with the Blessed Virgin now retired, each to her own screened sleeping place. They veiled their heads in long linen scarves, and sat for a little while in silent grief on the ground, leaning on the sleeping covers that were rolled up against the wall. After some moments, they arose, spread out the covers, laid aside their sandals, girdles, and some articles of dress, enveloped themselves from head to foot, as they were accustomed to do on retiring to rest, and lay down on their couches for a short sleep. At midnight they rose again, dressed, folded the couch together, assembled once more under the lamp around the Blessed Virgin, and prayed in turn.

When the Blessed Virgin and the holy women, notwithstanding their great suffering, had discharged this duty of nocturnal prayer (which I have frequently seen practiced since by the faithful children of God and holy persons, either urged thereto by special grace, or in obedience to a rule laid down by God and His Church), John and some of the disciples knocked at the door of the women's hall. He and the other men had previously prayed, like the women, under the lamp in the Coenaculum. The holy women at once enveloped themselves in their mantles and, along with the Blessed Virgin, followed them to the Temple.

It was about the same time that the tomb was sealed, that is about three o'clock in the morning, that I saw the Blessed Virgin with the other holy women, John, and several of the disciples, going to the Temple. It was customary among many of the Jews to visit the Temple at daybreak the morning after the eating of the Paschal lamb. It was in consequence opened about midnight, because the sacrifices on that morning began very early. But today,

on account of the disturbance of the feast and the defilement of the Temple, everything had been neglected, and it seemed to me as if the Blessed Virgin, with her friends, wanted to take leave of it. It was there that she had been reared, there she had adored the Holy Mystery, until she herself bore in her womb that same Holy Mystery, that Holy One who, as the true Paschal Lamb, had been so barbarously immolated the day before. The Temple was, according to the custom of this day, open, the lamps lighted, and even the vestibule of the priests (a privilege granted to this day) was thrown open to the people. But the sacred edifice, with the exception of a few guards and servants, was quite deserted; marks of yesterday's disorder and confusion lay everywhere around. It had been defiled by the presence of the dead, and at the sight of it, the thought arose in my mind: "How will it ever be restored?"

Simeon's sons and Joseph of Arimathea's nephews, the latter of whom were very much grieved at the news of their uncle's arrest, welcomed the Blessed Virgin and her companions and conducted them everywhere, for they had the care of the Temple. Silently they gazed, with mingled feelings of awe and adoration, at the work of destruction, the visible marks of God's anger. Only here and there were a few words spoken, to recount the events of the preceding day.

Yesterday's destruction was evidenced in many different ways, for no attempt at repair had yet been made. Where the vestibule joined the sanctuary, the wall had so given way that a person could easily creep through the fissure, and the whole threatened to fall. The beam above the rent curtain before the sanctuary had sunk; the pillars that supported it had declined from each other at the top; and the curtain, torn in two, hung down at the sides. So great an opening was made in the wall of the vestibule by the huge stone that had been precipitated

from the north side of the Temple near Simeon's oratory upon the spot on which Zacharias appeared, that the Blessed Virgin could pass through without difficulty. This brought her to the great teacher's chair, from which the Boy Jesus had taught, and from this spot she could see through the torn curtain into the Holy of Holies, something that would not have been possible before. Here and there, likewise, walls were cracked, portions of the floor sunk in, beams displaced, and pillars leaning out of their proper direction.

The Blessed Virgin visited with her companions all places rendered sacred to her by the presence of Jesus. Kneeling down, she kissed them, recalling with tears and in a few touching words the particular remembrances connected with each. Her companions imitated her example, kneeling and kissing the hallowed spots.

The Jews regarded with extraordinary reverence all places in which anything held sacred by them had happened. They touched and kissed them, prostrating with their faces upon them, and I could never feel surprised at such manifestations. When one knows and believes and feels that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is a living God, who dwelt among His people in His Temple, His House, at Jerusalem, the wonder would be if they did not venerate such places. Whoever believes in a living God, in a Father and Redeemer and Sanctifier of mankind, His children, wonders not that, impelled by love, He is still living among the living. He feels that he owes to Him and to everything connected with Him more love, honor, and reverence than to earthly parents, friends, teachers, superiors, and princes. The Temple and the holy places were to the Jews what the Most Blessed Sacrament is to Christians. But there were among them some blind and some enlightened, just as there are amongst us some that, adoring not the living God in our midst, are fallen into the superstitious

service of the gods of the world. They reflect not upon these words of Jesus: "Whoever denies Me before men, him also will I deny before My Heavenly Father." People that unceasingly serve the spirit and falsehood of the world in thoughts and words and works, that cast aside all exterior worship of God, say indeed, if perchance they have not cast off God Himself as altogether *too exterior* for them: "We adore God in spirit and in truth." But they do not know that these words mean in the Holy Ghost and in the Son, who took flesh from Mary, the Virgin, and who bore witness to the truth; who lived amongst us, who died for us on earth, and who will be with His Church in the Blessed Sacrament until the end of time.

The Blessed Virgin and her companions thus reverently visited many parts of the Temple. She showed them where, as a little girl, she had first entered the sacred edifice, and where on the south side she had been educated until her espousals with St. Joseph. She pointed out to them the scene of her marriage, that of Jesus' Presentation, and that of Simeon's and Annas' prophecies. At this point she wept bitterly, for the prophecy had been fulfilled, the sword had pierced her soul. She showed where she had found Jesus when a Boy teaching in the Temple, and she reverently kissed the teacher's chair. They went also to the offering box into which the widow had put her mite, and to the spot upon which the Lord forgave the woman taken in adultery. After they had thus with reverential touching, tears, prayers, and recalling of reminiscences, honored all the places rendered venerable by Jesus' presence, they returned to Sion.

The Blessed Virgin did not leave the Temple without many tears and deep grief, for its ruins and its desolate aspect on that day, once so sacred, bore witness to the sins of her people. She thought of Jesus weeping over it, and of His prophecy: "Destroy

this Temple, and in three days I will build it up again." She thought of how the enemies of Jesus had destroyed the temple of His body, and she longed for the third day upon which that word of Eternal Truth would be fulfilled.

Returned to the Coenaculum on Sion at daybreak, the Blessed Virgin retired with her companions to her own dwelling on the right of the courtyard. At the entrance John left them and joined the men in the Coenaculum, upwards of twenty in number, who spent the whole Sabbath in the Supper room, mourning the death of their Master and praying by turns under the lamp. I saw them occasionally and very cautiously admitting newcomers, and conferring with them in tears. All experienced an inward reverence for John and a feeling of confusion in his presence, since he had been at the death of the Lord. But John was full of love and sympathy toward them, and, simple and ingenuous as a child, he gave place to everyone. Once I saw them eating. They remained very silently together, and the house was closed. They were safe from attack, for the house belonged to Nicodemus, and they had hired it for the Paschal Supper.

Again I saw the holy women assembled until evening in the hall which was lighted by a lamp, the doors being closed and the windows covered. Sometimes they ranged round the Blessed Virgin under the lamp for prayer; or sometimes they retired alone to their several recesses, enveloped their heads in mourning veils, and sat on flat boxes strewn with ashes (the sign of grief), or prayed with the face turned to the wall. Before they assembled under the lamp for prayer, they always laid aside their mourning veils and left them in the little recesses. I saw also that the weak among them took a little nourishment, but the others fasted.

More than once my gaze was directed to the holy women, and I always saw them as just described,

praying or mourning in a darkened hall. When my meditation turned to the Blessed Virgin dwelling in thought upon our Saviour, I sometimes saw the holy tomb and about seven guards sitting or standing opposite the entrance. Close to the doors of the rocky cave, in which was the real tomb, the tomb proper, stood Cassius. He moved not from the spot, he was silent and recollected. I saw the closed doors of the tomb and the stone lying before them. But through the doors, I could see the body of the Lord lying just as it had been left. It was environed with light and splendor, and rested between two adoring angels, one at the head, the other at the foot. When my thoughts turned to the holy soul of our Redeemer, there was vouchsafed me a vision of His descent into Hell so great, so extended, that I have been able to retain only a very small portion. I shall, however, relate what I can of it.

66. Some Words on Christ's Descent Into Hell

When Jesus with a loud cry gave up His most holy soul, I saw it as a luminous figure surrounded by angels, among them Gabriel, penetrating the earth at the foot of the holy cross. I saw His Divinity united with His soul, while at the same time, it remained united to His body hanging on the cross. I cannot express how this was. I saw the place whither the soul of Jesus went. It seemed to be divided into three parts. It was like three worlds, and I had a feeling that it was round, and that each one of those places was a kind of locality, a sphere separated from the others.

Just in front of Limbo, there was a bright, cheerful tract of country clothed in verdure. It is into this that I always see the souls released from Purgatory entering before being conducted to Heaven. The Limbo in which were the souls awaiting Redemption

was encompassed by a gray, foggy atmosphere, and divided into different circles. The Saviour, resplendent and conducted in triumph by angels, pressed on between two of these circles. The one on the left contained the souls of the Leaders of the people down to Abraham, that on the right, the souls from Abraham to John the Baptist. Jesus went on between these two circles. They knew Him not, but all were filled with joy and ardent desire. It was as if this place of anxious, distressed longing was suddenly enlarged. The Redeemer passed through them like a refreshing breeze, like light, like dew, quickly like the sighing of the wind. The Lord passed quickly between these two circles to a dimly lighted place in which were our first parents, Adam and Eve. He addressed them, and they adored Him in unspeakable rapture. The procession of the Lord, accompanied by the first human beings, now turned to the left, to the Limbo of the Leaders of God's people before the time of Abraham. This was a species of Purgatory, for here and there were evil spirits, who in manifold ways worried and distressed some of those souls. The angels knocked and demanded admittance. There was an entrance, because there was a *going in*; a gate, because there was *an unlocking*; and a knocking, because the One that was coming had to be announced. It seemed to me that I heard the angel call out: "Open the gates! Open the doors!" Jesus entered in triumph, while the wicked spirits retired, crying out: "What hast Thou to do with us? What dost Thou want here? Art Thou now going to crucify us?" and so on. The angels bound them and drove them before them. The souls in this place had only a vague idea of Jesus, they knew Him only slightly; but when He told them clearly who He was, they broke forth into songs of praise and thanksgiving. And now the soul of the Lord turned to the circle on the right, to Limbo proper. There He met the soul of the good

thief going under the escort of angels into Abraham's bosom, while the bad thief, encompassed by demons, was being dragged down into Hell. The soul of Jesus addressed some words to both and then, accompanied by a multitude of angels, of the redeemed, and by those demons that were driven out of the first circle, went likewise into the bosom of Abraham.

This space, or circle, appeared to me to lie higher than the other. It was as if a person climbed from the earth under the churchyard up into the church itself. The evil spirits struggled in their chains, and wanted not to enter, but the angels forced them on. In this second circle were all the holy Israelites to the left, the Patriarchs, Moses, the Judges, the Kings; on the right, the Prophets and all the ancestors of Jesus, as also His relatives down to Joachim, Anne, Joseph, Zachary, Elizabeth, and John. There were no demons in this circle, no pain nor torment, only the ardent longing for the fulfillment of the Promise now realized. Unspeakable felicity and rapture inundated these souls as they saluted and adored the Redeemer, and the demons in their fetters were forced to confess before them their ignominious defeat. Many of the souls were sent up to resuscitate their bodies from the tomb and in them to render ocular testimony to the Lord. This was the moment in which so many dead came forth from their tombs in Jerusalem. They looked to me like walking corpses. They laid their bodies again upon the earth, just as a messenger of justice lays aside his mantle of office after having fulfilled his superior's commands.

I now saw the Saviour's triumphant procession entering another sphere lower than the last. It was the abiding place of pious pagans who, having had some presentiment of truth, had ardently sighed after it. It was a kind of Purgatory, a place of purification. There were evil spirits here, for I saw some idols. I saw the evil spirits compelled to confess the

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deception they had practiced. I saw the blessed spirits rendering homage to the Saviour with touching expressions of joy. Here, too, the demons were chained by the angels and driven forward before them.

And thus I saw the Redeemer passing rapidly through these numerous abodes and freeing the souls therein confined. He did a great many other things, but in my present miserable state I am unable to relate them.

At last I saw Him, His countenance grave and severe, approaching the center of the abyss, namely, Hell itself. In shape it looked to me like an immeasurably vast, frightful, black stone building that shone with a metallic luster. Its entrance was guarded by immense, awful-looking doors, black like the rest of the building, and furnished with bolts and locks that inspired feelings of terror. Roaring and yelling most horrible could plainly be heard, and when the doors were pushed open, a frightful, gloomy world was disclosed to view.

As I am accustomed to see the heavenly Jerusalem under the form of a city, and the abodes of the blessed therein under various kinds of palaces and gardens full of wonderful fruits and flowers, all according to the different degrees of glory, so here I saw everything under the appearance of a world whose buildings, open spaces, and various regions were all closely connected. But all proceeded from the opposite of happiness, all was pain and torment. As in the sojourns of the blessed all appears formed upon motives and conditions of infinite peace, eternal harmony and satisfaction, so here are the disorder, the malformation of eternal wrath, disunion, and despair.

As in Heaven there are innumerable abodes of joy and worship, unspeakably beautiful in their glittering transparency, so here in Hell are gloomy prisons without number, caves of torment, of cursing, and despair. As in Heaven there are gardens most wonderful to behold, filled with fruits that afford

divine nourishment, so here in Hell there are horrible wildernesses and swamps full of torture and pain and of all that can give birth to feelings of detestation, of loathing, and of horror. I saw here temples, altars, palaces, thrones, gardens, lakes, streams, all formed of blasphemy, hatred, cruelty, despair, confusion, pain, and torture, while in Heaven all is built up of benedictions, of love, harmony, joy, and delight. *Here* is the rending, eternal disunion of the damned; *there* is the blissful communion of the saints. All the roots of perversity and untruth are here cultivated in countless forms and deeds of punishment and affliction. Nothing here is right, no thought brings peace, for the terrible remembrance of divine justice casts every damned soul into the pain and torment that his own guilt has planted for him. All that is terrible here, both in appearance and reality, is the nature, the form, the fury of sin unmasked, the serpent that now turns against those in whose bosom it was once nourished. I saw there also frightful columns erected for the sole purpose of creating feelings of horror and terror, just as in the Kingdom of God they are intended to inspire peace and the sentiment of blissful rest, etc. All this is easily understood, but cannot be expressed in detail.

When the gates were swung open by the angels, one beheld before him a struggling, blaspheming, mocking, howling, and lamenting throng. I saw that Jesus spoke some words to the soul of Judas. Some of the angels forced that multitude of evil spirits to prostrate before Jesus, for all had to acknowledge and adore Him. This was for them the most terrible torment. A great number were chained in a circle around others who were in turn bound down by them. In the center was an abyss of darkness. Lucifer was cast into it, chained, and thick black vapor mounted up around him. This took place by the Divine Decree. I heard that Lucifer (if I do not mistake) will be

freed again for awhile fifty or sixty years before the year 2000 A.D. I have forgotten many other dates that were told me. Some other demons are to be freed before Lucifer, in order to chastise and tempt mankind. I think that some are let loose now in our own day, and others will be freed shortly after our time.

It is impossible for me to relate all that was shown me. It is too much. I cannot reduce it to order, I cannot arrange it. I am also so dreadfully sick. When I try to speak of these things, they rise up before my eyes, and the sight is enough to make one die.

I saw too the redeemed souls in countless numbers leaving the places of their purification, leaving Limbo, and accompanying the soul of the Lord to a place of bliss below the heavenly Jerusalem. It was there that some time ago I saw a deceased friend of mine. The soul of the good thief entered with the rest and again saw the Lord, according to His promise, in Paradise. I saw prepared here for the delight and refreshment of the souls celestial tables such as were often shown me in visions vouchsafed for my consolation.¹

I cannot say exactly the time of these events, nor their duration, neither can I repeat all that I saw and heard, because some things were incomprehensible even to myself, and others would be misunderstood. I saw the Lord in many different places, even on the seas. It seemed as if He sanctified and delivered every creature; everywhere the evil spirits fled before Him into the abyss. Then I saw the soul of the Lord visiting many places on the earth. I saw Him in Adam's tomb under Golgotha. The souls of Adam and Eve came again to Him there. He conversed with them, and I saw Him as if under the earth, going with them in many directions, visiting tomb after tomb of the Prophets. Their souls

1. See Note, p. 336.

entered their bodies, and Jesus explained many mysteries to them. Then I saw Him with this chosen band, among whom was David, visiting many scenes of His own life and Passion, explaining to them the typical events that had there taken place, and with inexpressible love pointing out to them their fulfillment.

Among other places, I saw Him with these souls at that of His Baptism, where numerous figurative events had happened. He explained them all and, deeply touched, I beheld the everlasting mercy of Jesus in permitting the grace of His own holy baptism to flow upon them for their greater advantage.

It was unspeakably touching to see the soul of the Lord encompassed by those happy, blessed spirits shining through the dark earth, through rocks, through the water and the air, and lightly floating over the surface of the ground.

These are the few points that I can remember of my meditations, so full, so extended, upon the descent of the Lord into Hell after His death, and of His releasing the souls of the just Patriarchs of the earliest times. But besides this vision relating to time, I saw one connected with eternity, in which I was shown His mercy toward the poor souls on this day. I saw that, every year on the solemn celebration of this day (Good Friday) by the Church, He casts upon Purgatory a glance by which many souls are released. I saw that even today, Holy Saturday, upon which day I had this contemplation, He released from their place of purification some souls that had sinned at the time of His Crucifixion. I saw today the release of many souls, some unknown and others known to me, though I cannot name any of them.

(Being in a state of ecstasy today, Sister Emmerich related what follows:)

The first descent of Jesus into Limbo was the fulfillment of early types, and in itself a type whose fulfillment is effected by today's releasing of the poor

souls. The descent into Hell that I saw was a vision of time past, but the freeing of the souls today is a lasting truth. The descent of Jesus into Hell was the planting of the tree of grace, the tree of His own sacred merits, for the poor souls; and the constant recurrence of today's releasing of those souls is the fruit brought forth by that tree of grace in the spiritual garden of the ecclesiastical year. The Church Militant must cultivate the tree and gather the fruits, in which the Church Suffering must be allowed to share, since it can do nothing for itself. So it is with all the merits of the Lord. We must labor with Him, in order to share in them. We must eat our bread in the sweat of our brow. All that Jesus did for us in time brings forth fruit for eternity, but we must in time cultivate and gather that fruit, otherwise we shall not enjoy it in eternity. The Church is a most provident mother. Her year is in time the most complete garden of fruits for eternity. Her year contains a supply sufficient for the wants of all. Woe to the slothful and faithless laborers in that garden who, in any way, allow to go to waste a grace that might have restored health to the sick, strength to the weak, or furnished food to the hungry! On the Day of Judgment, the Master of the garden will demand an account of even the least blade of grass.

THE RESURRECTION. THE ASCENSION. THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST

1. The Eve of the Holy Resurrection

At the close of the Sabbath, John, Peter, and James the Greater visited the holy women, to mourn with them and to console them. On their departure, the holy women enveloped themselves again in their mourning mantles, and retired to pray in the recesses strewn with ashes.

I saw an angel appear to the Blessed Virgin. He announced to her that the Lord was near, and bade her to go out to the little

gate belonging to Nicodemus. At these words, Mary's heart was filled with joy. Without saying a word to the holy women, wrapped in her mantle, she hastened to the gate in the city wall through which she had come on her return from the garden of the tomb.

It may have been almost nine o'clock when, in a solitary place near the gate, I saw the Blessed Virgin suddenly halt in her hurried walk. She gazed as if ravished with joyous longing up at the top of the wall. Floating down toward her in the midst of a great multitude of the souls of the ancient Patriarchs, I saw the most holy soul of Jesus, resplendent with light and without trace of wound. Turning to the Patriarchs and pointing to the Blessed Virgin, He uttered the words: "Mary, My Mother!" and appeared to embrace her. Then He vanished. The Blessed Virgin sank on her knees and kissed the ground upon which He had stood. She left the impress of her knees and feet upon the stone. Inexpressibly

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consoled, she hurried back to the women, whom she found busied preparing ointment and spices on a table. She did not tell them what had happened, but she consoled and strengthened them in faith.

The table at which the holy women were standing had an under support with crossed feet, something like a dresser, and it was covered with a cloth that hung down to the floor. I saw lying on it bunches of all kinds of herbs mixed and put in order, little flasks of ointment and nard water, and several flowers growing in pots, among which I remember one, a striped iris, or lily. The women packed them all in linen cloths. During Mary's absence, Magdalen, Mary Cleophas, Johanna Chusa, and Mary Salome went to the city to buy all these things. They wanted to go early next morning to scatter them over the body of Jesus in its winding sheet and pour upon it the perfumed water. I saw a part of it brought by the disciples from the dealer and left at the house without their going in to speak to the women.

After that I had a glimpse of Joseph of Arimathea praying in his prison cell. Suddenly the cell shone with light, and Joseph

heard his name pronounced. I saw the roof raised just where the cornice joined it to the wall, and a radiant figure letting down a strip of linen that reminded me of one of those in which the body of Jesus had been wrapped. The figure commanded Joseph to climb up by holding on to it. Then I saw Joseph grasp the linen with both hands and, supporting his feet on the projecting stones of the wall, climb to the opening, a distance of about twelve feet. The roof immediately resumed its position when Joseph reached it, and the apparition disappeared. I do not know whether it was the Lord Himself or an angel that released him.

I saw him running unnoticed a short distance along the city wall to the neighborhood of the Coenaculum, which was situated near the south wall of Sion. He climbed down and knocked at the door. The

disciples were assembled with closed doors. They were very sorrowful over Joseph's disappearance, for they credited the report that he had been thrown into a sewer. When they opened the door and he entered, their joy was as great as that which they experienced later on when Peter, freed from his prison, appeared before them. Joseph told them all about the apparition he had had. They were greatly rejoiced and consoled by his account; they gave him food and thanked God. He left Jerusalem that night and fled to Arimathea, his native place, where he remained until he received news that he might return to Jerusalem without fear of danger.

After the close of the Sabbath, I saw Caiaphas and some other High Priests in the house of Nicodemus, to whom, with an air of assumed benevolence, they were putting many questions. I do not now remember what subject they were discussing, but Nicodemus remained true and firm in his defense of the Lord, and so they parted.

All was quiet and silent around the holy sepulcher. About seven guards were in front and around it, some sitting, others standing. The whole day long Cassius maintained his stand inside the sepulcher at the entrance of the tomb proper, leaving it scarcely for a few moments. He was still absorbed in recollection. He was in expectation of something that he knew was going to happen, for extraordinary grace and light had been vouchsafed to him. It was night; the lanterns before the tomb shed a dazzling light. I saw the Sacred Body wrapped in its winding sheet just as it had been laid on the stone couch. It was surrounded, by a brilliant light and, since the burial, two angels had in rapt adoration guarded the sacred remains, one at the head, the other at the foot. They looked like priests. Their whole attitude, their arms crossed on their breast, reminded me of the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant, excepting that they had no wings. The whole tomb, and

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especially the resting place of the Lord, reminded me in a striking manner of the Ark of the Covenant at different periods of its history. The light and the presence of the angels may have been in some degree visible to Cassius, and it may have been on that account that he stood gazing so fixedly at the closed doors of the tomb, like one adoring the Most Blessed Sacrament.

And now I saw the blessed soul of Jesus floating with the released spirits of the ancient Patriarchs through the rock into the tomb, and showing them all the marks of ill-treatment upon His martyred body. The linen bands and winding sheet seemed to have been removed, for I saw the Sacred Body full of wounds; and it seemed as if, in some mysterious way, the indwelling Divinity displayed before the souls the blessed body in the whole extent of its cruel laceration and martyrdom. It appeared to me perfectly transparent, its inmost parts disclosed to the eye. Its wounds, its sufferings, its pains could be seen even to their very depths. The souls gazed in mute reverence; they appeared to be sobbing and weeping with compassion.

My next vision was so mysterious that I cannot relate the whole of it in an intelligible manner. It was as if the soul of Jesus, though without restoring the Sacred Body to life by a perfect union with it, was transported in and with the body from the tomb. The two adoring angels raised the tortured body, not in an upright position, but just as it lay in the tomb, and floated with it up to Heaven. The rock trembled as they passed through. Then it seemed to me that Jesus, between countless choirs of adoring angels ranged on either hand, presented His wounded body before the throne of His Heavenly Father. Jesus' body seemed to have been resuscitated in a manner similar to that in which those of many of the Prophets had been assumed by their souls after the death of Jesus and taken into the

Mary Follows Her Son's Footsteps

Temple. They were not really alive, nor did they have again to die, for they were laid down by their souls without any forcible separation from each other. I saw that the souls of the ancient Patriarchs did not accompany the Lord's body to Heaven.

I remarked a trembling in the rock of the sepulcher. Four of the guards had gone to the city to get something; the three others fell to the ground unconscious. They ascribed the shock to an earthquake, but knew nothing of the cause. Cassius, however, was very much agitated and frightened, for he had a clear view of what had happened without fully understanding it. He kept to his post, and with great devotion awaited what would next take place. Meanwhile the absent soldiers returned.

When the spices were prepared and packed in linen cloths ready to be taken to the tomb, the holy women again retired to their recesses and lay down on their couches to rest, because they wanted to start before daylight for Jesus' tomb. They had more than once expressed their anxiety as to the success of their design. They were full of dread lest the enemies of Jesus might waylay them when they went out. But the Blessed Virgin consoled them. She bade them take some rest and then go courageously to the tomb, for no harm would befall them. And so they went to rest.

It was about eleven o'clock at night when the Blessed Virgin, moved by love and ardent desire, could no longer remain in the house. She rose, wrapped herself in a gray mantle, and went out alone. I thought: Ah! How can they allow that Blessed Mother, so full of sorrow and alarm, to go out alone under such circumstances. I saw her going sadly to the house of Caiaphas and then to Pilate's palace, which was a long way back into the city. And thus she traversed alone the whole way passed over by Jesus bearing His cross. She went through the deserted streets and paused at every spot upon which

some special suffering or outrage had befallen the Lord. She looked like one seeking something lost. She frequently knelt down, felt around on the stones with her hand, and touched her lips to them, as if reverently touching and kissing something sacred, namely, the blood of Jesus. She beheld around her everything sanctified by contact with Jesus bright and shining, and her soul was entirely lost in love and adoration.

She went on until she approached Mount Calvary, when she stood quite still. It was as if the apparition of Jesus with His sacred, martyred body stepped before her. One angel preceded Him, the two adoring angels of the tomb were at His side, and a multitude of released souls followed Him. He seemed not to walk, but looked like a corpse floating along, environed with light. I heard a voice proceeding from Him, which related to His Mother what He had done in Limbo. Now, He continued, He was about to come forth from the tomb alive, in a glorified body, and He bade her await Him near Mount Calvary, on the stone upon which He had fallen. Then I saw the apparition going to the city, and the Blessed Virgin kneeling and praying on the spot indicated by the Lord. It may now have been past twelve o'clock, for Mary had spent a considerable time in the Way of the Cross.

Then I saw the Lord's procession going over the whole of the same dolorous way. In a mysterious manner, the angels gathered up all the sacred substance, the flesh and the blood, that had been torn from Jesus during His Passion. I saw that the nailing to the cross, the raising of the same, the opening of the sacred side, the taking down from the cross, and the preparing of the holy body for burial, were shown to the souls in Jesus' train. The Blessed Virgin also saw it all in spirit. She loved and adored.

Afterward it was as if the Lord's body rested again

in the holy sepulcher. With it was all that had been torn from it during the Passion and replaced in an incomprehensible manner by the angels. I saw it as before, wrapped in the funereal bands and winding sheet, environed with dazzling splendor, the two adoring angels at the head and the foot of the tomb.

When the morning sky began to clear with a streak of white light, I saw Magdalen, Mary Cleophas, Johanna Chusa, and Salome, enveloped in mantles, leaving their abode near the Coenaculum. They carried the spices packed in linen cloths, and one of them had a lighted lantern. They kept all hidden under their mantles. The spices consisted of fresh flowers for strewing over the sacred body, and also of expressed sap, essences, and oils for pouring over it. The holy women walked anxiously to the little gate belonging to Nicodemus.

2. The Resurrection of the Lord

The blessed soul of Jesus in dazzling splendor, between two warrior angels and surrounded by a multitude of resplendent figures, came floating down through the rocky roof of the tomb upon the sacred body. It seemed to incline over it and melt, as it were, into one with it. I saw the sacred limbs moving beneath the swathing bands, and the dazzling, living body of the Lord with His soul and His Divinity coming forth from the side of the winding sheet as if from the wounded Side. The sight reminded me of Eve coming forth from Adam's side. The whole place was resplendent with light and glory.

And now I had another vision. I saw the apparition of a dragon with a human head coiling itself up out of the abyss, as if right under the tomb upon which the Lord had been lying. It lashed its serpent like tail, and turned its head angrily toward the Lord. The risen Redeemer held in His hand a delicate white staff, on whose top floated a little standard. He placed

one foot upon the dragon's head, and struck three blows of the staff upon its tail. At each stroke, the monster seemed to contract, and at last sank into the earth, first the body, then the head, the human face still turned upward. I saw a similar serpent lurking around at the moment of Christ's conception. It reminded me of the serpent in Paradise and, I think, this vision bore reference to the Promise: "The seed of the woman shall crush the serpent's head." The whole vision appeared to me symbolical of victory over death, for while I was watching the crushing of the serpent's head, the tomb of the Lord vanished from my sight.

Now I saw the Lord floating in glory up through the rock. The earth trembled, and an angel in warrior garb shot like lightning from Heaven down to the tomb, rolled the stone to one side, and seated himself upon it. The trembling of the earth was so great that the lanterns swung from side to side, and the flames flashed around. The guards fell stunned to the ground and lay there stiff and contorted, as if dead. Cassius saw indeed the glory that environed the holy sepulcher, the rolling away of the stone by the angel, and his seating himself upon it, but he did not see the risen Saviour Himself. He recovered himself quickly, stepped to the stone couch, felt among the empty linens, and left the sepulcher, outside of which, full of eager desire, he tarried awhile to become the witness of a new and wonderful apparition. At the instant the angel shot down to the tomb and the earth quaked, I saw the risen Lord appearing to His Blessed Mother on Mount Calvary. He was transcendently beautiful and glorious, His manner full of earnestness. His garment, which was like a white mantle thrown about His limbs, floated in the breeze behind Him as He walked. It glistened blue and white, like smoke curling in the sunshine. His wounds were very large and sparkling; in those of His hands, one could easily insert a finger. The

lips of the wounds formed the sides of an equilateral triangle which met, as it were, in the center of a circle, and from the palm of the hand shot rays of light toward the fingers. The souls of the early Patriarchs bowed low before the Blessed Mother, to whom Jesus said something about seeing her again. He showed her His wounds, and when she fell on her knees to kiss His feet, He grasped her hand, raised her up, and disappeared.

The holy women, when the Lord arose from the dead, were near the little gate belonging to Nicodemus. They knew nothing of the prodigies that were taking place; they did not know even of the guard at the sepulcher, for they had remained shut up in their house the whole of the preceding day, the Sabbath. They anxiously inquired of one another: "Who will roll away for us the stone from the doors?" Full of longing desire to show the last honors to the sacred body in the tomb, they had entirely lost sight of the stone. They wanted to pour nard water and precious balm over the sacred body and scatter their flowers and aromatic shrubs upon it; for to the spices of yesterday's embalming, which Nicodemus alone had procured, they had contributed nothing. They wished therefore to offer now to the body of their Lord and Master the most precious that could be obtained.

Salome had shared with Magdalen in defraying most of the cost. She was not the mother of John, but another Salome, a rich lady of Jerusalem, a relative of St. Joseph. At last the holy women concluded to set the spices on the stone before the tomb and to wait till some disciple would come who would open it for them. And so they went on toward the garden.

Outside the tomb the stone was rolled to the right, so that the doors, which were merely lying to, could now be easily opened. The linens in which the sacred body had been enveloped were on the tomb in the following order: the large winding sheet in which it had been wrapped lay undisturbed, only empty and

fallen together, containing nothing but the aromatic herbs; the long bandage that had been wound around it was still lying twisted and at full length just as it had been drawn off, on the outer edge of the tomb; but the linen scarf with which Mary had enveloped Jesus' head lay to the right at the head of the tomb. It looked as if the head of Jesus was still in it, excepting that the covering for the face was raised.

When, as they approached, the holy women noticed the lanterns of the guard and the soldiers lying around, they became frightened, and went a short distance past the garden toward Golgotha. Magdalen, however, forgetful of danger, hurried into the garden. Salome followed her at some distance, and the other two waited outside.

Magdalen, seeing the guard, stepped back at first a few steps toward Salome, then both made their way together through the soldiers lying around and into the sepulcher. They found the stone rolled away, but the doors closed, probably by Cassius. Magdalen anxiously opened one of them, peered in at the tomb, and saw the linens lying empty and apart. The whole place was resplendent with light, and an angel was sitting at the right of the tomb. Magdalen was exceedingly troubled. She hurried out of the garden of the sepulcher, off through the gate belonging to Nicodemus, and back to the Apostles. Salome, too, who only now entered the sepulcher, ran at once after Magdalen, rushed in fright to the women waiting outside the garden, and told them of what had happened. Though amazed and rejoiced at what they heard from Salome, they could not resolve to enter the garden. It was not until Cassius told them in a few words what he had seen, and exhorted them to go see for themselves, that they took courage to enter. Cassius was hurrying into the city to acquaint Pilate of all that had taken place. He went through the gate of execution. When with beating heart the women entered the sepulcher and drew near the holy tomb,

they beheld standing before them the two angels of the tomb in priestly robes, white and shining. The women pressed close to one another in terror and, covering their faces with their hands, bowed tremblingly almost to the ground. One of the angels addressed them. They must not fear, he said, nor must they look for the Crucified here. He was alive, He had arisen, He was no longer among the dead. Then the angel pointed out to them the empty tomb, and ordered them to tell the disciples what they had seen and heard, and that Jesus would go before them into Galilee. They should, continued the angel, remember what the Lord had said to them in Galilee, namely, "The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of sinners. He will be crucified and, on the third day, He will rise again." The holy women, shaking and trembling with fear, though still full of joy, tearfully gazed at the tomb and the linens, and departed, taking the road toward the gate of execution. They were still very much frightened. They did not hurry, but paused from time to time and looked around from the distance, to see whether they might not possibly behold the Lord, or whether Magdalen was returning.

Meanwhile Magdalen reached the Coenaculum like one beside herself, and knocked violently at the door. Some of the disciples were still asleep on their couches around the walls, while several others had risen and were talking together. Peter and John opened the door. Magdalen, without entering, merely uttered the words: "They have taken the Lord from the tomb! We know not where"—and ran back in great haste to the garden of the sepulcher. Peter and John followed her, but John outstripped Peter.

Magdalen was quite wet with dew when she again reached the garden and ran to the tomb. Her mantle had slipped from her head down on her shoulders, and her long hair had fallen around loose. As she was alone, she was afraid to enter the sepulcher at once, so she waited out on the step at the entrance.

She stooped down, trying to see through the low doors into the cave and even as far as the stone couch. Her long hair fell forward as she stooped, and she was trying to keep it back with her hands, when she saw the two angels in white priestly garments sitting at the head and the foot of the tomb, and heard the words: "Woman, why weepest thou?" She cried out in her grief: "They have taken my Lord away! I know not where they have laid Him!" Saying this and seeing nothing but the linens, she turned weeping, like one seeking something, and as if she must find Him. She had a dim presentiment that Jesus was near, and even the apparition of the angels could not turn her from her one idea. She did not appear conscious of the fact that it was an angel that spoke to her. She thought only of Jesus; her only thought was: "Jesus is not here! Where is Jesus?" I saw her running a few steps from the sepulcher and then returning like one half-distracted and in quest of something. Her long hair fell on her shoulders. Once she drew the whole mass on the right shoulder through both hands, then flung it back and gazed around. About ten steps from the sepulcher and toward the east, where the garden rose in the direction of the city, she spied in the gray light of dawn, standing among the bushes behind a palm tree, a figure clothed in a long, white garment. Rushing toward it, she heard once more the words: "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" She thought it was the gardener. I saw that he had a spade in his hand and on his head a flat hat, which had a piece of something like bark standing out in front, as a protection from the sun. It was just like that I had seen on the gardener in the parable which Jesus, shortly before His Passion, had related to the women in Bethania. The apparition was not resplendent. It looked like a person clad in long, white garments and seen at twilight. At the words: "Whom seekest thou?" Magdalen at once answered: "Sir, if

thou hast taken Him hence, show me where thou hast laid Him! I will take Him away!" And she again glanced around, as if to see whether he had not laid Him someplace near. Then Jesus, in His well-known voice, said: "Mary!" Recognizing the voice, and forgetting the crucifixion, death, and burial now that He was alive, she turned quickly and, as once before, exclaimed: "Rabboni!" (Master'). She fell on her knees before Him and stretched out her arms toward His feet. But Jesus raised His hand to keep her off, saying: "Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brethren, and say to them: I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and to your God." At these words the Lord vanished. It was explained to me why Jesus said: "Do not touch Me," but I have only an indistinct remembrance of it. I think He said it because Magdalen was so impetuous. She seemed possessed of the idea that Jesus was alive just as He was before, and that everything was as it used to be. Upon Jesus' words that He had not yet ascended to His Father, I was told that He had not yet, since His Resurrection, presented Himself to His Heavenly Father, had not yet thanked Him for His victory over death and for Redemption. I understood by those words that the first fruits of joy belong to God. It was as if Jesus had said that Magdalen should recollect herself and thank God for the mystery of Redemption just accomplished and His conquest over death. After the disappearance of the Lord, Magdalen rose up quickly and again, as if in a dream, ran to the tomb. She saw the two angels, she saw the empty linens, and hurried, now certain of the miracle, back to her companions.

It may have been about half-past three o'clock when Jesus appeared to Magdalen. Scarcely had she left the garden when John approached, followed by Peter. John stood outside the entrance of the cave and stooped down to look, through the outer doors of the sepulcher, at the half-opened doors of the

tomb, where he saw the linens lying. Then came Peter. He stepped down into the sepulcher and went to the tomb, in the center of which he saw the winding sheet lying. It was rolled together from both sides toward the middle, and the spices were wrapped in it. The bandages were folded around it, as women are accustomed to roll together such linens when putting them away. The linen that had covered the sacred face was lying to the right next the wall. It too was folded. John now followed Peter to the tomb, saw the same things, and believed in the Resurrection. All that the Lord had said, all that was written in the Scriptures, was now clear to them. They had had only an imperfect comprehension of it before. Peter took the linens with him under his mantle. Both again went back by the little gate belonging to Nicodemus, and John once more got ahead of Peter.

As long as the sacred body lay in the tomb, the two angels sat one at the head, the other at the foot, and when Magdalen and the two Apostles came, they were still there. It seems to me that Peter did not see them. I heard John afterward saying to the disciples of Emmaus that, on looking into the tomb, he saw one angel. Perhaps it was through humility that he forbore to mention it in his Gospel, that he might not appear to have seen more than Peter.

Now, for the first time, I saw the guards arise from where they were lying on the ground. They took their lances, also the lanterns that were hanging on poles at the door of the entrance and shedding their light into the cave, and hurried in evident fear and trepidation to the gate of execution and into the city.

Meanwhile, Magdalen had reached the holy women and told them of the Lord's apparition. Then she too hurried on to the city through the neighboring gate of the execution, but the others went again to the garden, outside of which Jesus appeared to them in

a white flowing garment that concealed even His hands. He said: "All hail!" They trembled and fell at His feet. Jesus waved His hand in a certain direction while addressing to them some words, and vanished. The holy women then hastened through the Bethlehem gate on Sion, to tell the disciples in the Coenaculum that they had seen the Lord and what He had said to them. But the disciples would not at first credit Magdalen's report, and, until the return of Peter and John, they looked upon the whole affair as the effect of women's imagination.

John and Peter, whom amazement at what they had seen had rendered silent and thoughtful, met on their way back James the Less and Thaddeus, who had set out after them for the tomb. They too were very much agitated, for the Lord had appeared to them near the Coenaculum. Once I saw Peter, as they went along, suddenly start and tremble, as if he had just got a glimpse of the risen Saviour.

3. The Guards Statements

About an hour after the Resurrection, Cassius went to Pilate, who was resting on his couch. Full of emotion, Cassius related all that had passed, the trembling of the rock, the descent of the angel, the rolling away of the stone, the empty winding sheet. Jesus, he said, was certainly the Messiah, certainly the Son of God. He was risen, He was no longer in the tomb. Pilate heard every detail with secret terror but, letting nothing appear, he said to Cassius: "Thou art a visionary! Thou didst act very unwisely by standing in the tomb of the Galilean. His gods have thereby acquired full power over thee, and it was they who conjured up all kinds of magic pictures before thee. I advise thee to say nothing of all this to the High Priest, else it will be worse for thee." He pretended to believe that Jesus had been stolen away by the disciples, and that the guards had reported what

they did in order to hide their own negligence; or because they were bribed, or even perhaps because they too had been bewitched. When Cassius left, Pilate again offered sacrifice to his gods.

Four of the soldiers returned from the tomb and went directly to Pilate with the same report. But he would listen to nothing more, and sent them to Caiaphas. The other guards went to a large court near the Temple in which a number of aged Jews were gathered. These latter consulted together and came to the conclusion that they would, with money and threats, force the guards to report that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus. But when the guards objected that their companions, who had informed Pilate of the whole affair, would contradict them, the Pharisees promised to make it all right : with Pilate.

Meanwhile the four guards who had been dismissed by Pilate arrived, but they adhered strictly to the account they had given to the Governor. The report of Joseph of Arimathea's deliverance, in some unaccountable way, through the closed prison doors was already noised abroad and when the Pharisees, wishing to cast upon the soldiers the suspicion of having had an understanding with the disciples for the carrying off of Jesus' body, threatened them with severe punishment if they did not forthwith produce it, the men replied that they could no more do that than could the guard in Joseph of Arimathea's prison bring him back after he had disappeared. They defended themselves stoutly, and by no species of bribery could they be reduced to silence. Yes, they spoke even freely and openly of Friday's iniquitous judgment, and declared that it was on that account the Paschal ceremonies had been interrupted. The four soldiers were seized and imprisoned. Jesus' enemies spread the report that His body had been stolen by the disciples; and the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians caused the lie to be everywhere propagated, to be published in every synagogue

in the whole world, accompanying it with slanderous abuse of Jesus. Their lies profited them little, for after Jesus' Resurrection, many souls of holy deceased Jews appeared here and there to those of their descendants still susceptible of grace and holy impressions, and frightened their hearts to conversion. To many of the disciples also who, shaken in faith and disheartened, were dispersed throughout the country, similar apparitions appeared to console and strengthen them in faith.

The rising of the dead bodies from their tombs after the death of Jesus had no similarity whatever with the Lord's Resurrection. Jesus arose in His renewed, glorified body, walked for some days alive upon the earth, and, in that same body, ascended into Heaven in the sight of His friends. But those other bodies were only corpses given to the souls merely as so many coverings. They were again laid down by them to await with us all the Resurrection of the last day. Lazarus was raised from the dead, but he really lived and afterward died for the second time.

I saw the Jews beginning to purify, to wash and scour the Temple. They strewed aromatic herbs, also ashes from the bones of the dead, and offered expiatory sacrifices. They cleared away the rubbish, covered the marks of the earthquake with boards and tapestry, and finished the Paschal solemnities interrupted on the day of the feast.

With threats of punishment and excommunication, they tried to suppress all remarks and murmurs. They explained the disturbance of the feast and the damage done the Temple as effects of the earthquake and the presence of the unclean at the sacrifices. They brought forward something from a vision of Ezechiel upon the risen dead, but I do not now remember how they applied it. Thus they quieted the people, for many had taken part in the crime. But it was only the great crowd of the obstinate and the

incorrigible; all the better disposed were converted. They kept silence until Pentecost, when they proclaimed aloud their faith, later also in their native places through the teaching of the Apostles. The High Priests consequently began to lose courage. As early as the time of Stephen's ministry as deacon, Ophel and the eastern quarter of Sion could no longer contain the multitude of believers, so that they had to extend their huts and tents beyond the city, across the Vale of Cedron to Bethania.

Annas was like one possessed. He was obliged to be confined, and he never again appeared in public. Caiaphas became like a madman devoured by secret rage. Simon of Cyrene went to the Apostles after the Sabbath, asking to be received among the baptized followers of Jesus.

4. The First Love Feast (Agape) After The Resurrection

In the open entrance hall outside that of the holy Last Supper, Nicodemus prepared a repast for the Apostles, the holy women, and the disciples. Thomas was not present at it. He kept himself in absolute retirement. All that took place at this feast was in strict accordance with Jesus' directions. During the holy Last Supper, He had given Peter and John, who were sitting by Him and whom He ordained priests, detailed instructions relative to the Blessed Sacrament, with the command to impart the same to the other Apostles, along with some points of His early teachings.

I saw first Peter and then John communicating to the eight other Apostles, who were standing around them in a circle, what the Lord had entrusted to them, and teaching them the way in which He wished this Sacrament to be dispensed and the disciples instructed. All that Peter taught was repeated in the selfsame manner by John. The Apostles had

put on their festal garments. Peter and John had, besides, a stole crossed on their breast and fastened with a clasp. The eight Apostles wore a stole over one shoulder and across the breast and back. It fastened under the arm with a clasp crosswise. Peter and John had been ordained priests by Jesus; the others looked still like deacons.

After that instruction, the holy women, nine in number, entered the hall. Peter addressed them in some words of instruction. I saw John at the door receiving into the house of the master of the feast seventeen (as I counted) of the most trusty disciples, those that had been longest with the Lord. Zacheus, Nathanael, Mathias, Barsabas, and others were there. John served them while they were washing their feet and putting on festal garments, long white robes and girdles. Matthew was sent back to Bethania after Peter's discourse, in order there to reproduce, at a similar repast given in the house of Lazarus, the instructions just heard and the ceremonies witnessed. There were many disciples present at this feast.

And now a table was prepared in the entrance hall. It was so long that the seats of some of the disciples extended beyond the hall and into the courtyard, planted with trees, that surrounded the Coenaculum. Three avenues were left open to the tables, in order to approach them with the viands. The holy women now sat together at one end of the same table with the men. They too wore long white garments. They were veiled, but without their faces being concealed. They sat cross-legged on little stools that had a kind of upright at the backs. Peter and John sat opposite each other at the center of the table. They closed the men's row, and then began the women's. The couches used at this feast were not like those at the Last Supper. They were low cushions. They looked as if they were woven, and were scarcely long enough to receive the upper part

of the body, for they hardly reached below the knees. Each had before him a cushion raised upon two higher feet, which were fastened into cross-uprights. It stood in an oblique direction. All reclined near the table, the feet of one at his neighbor's back. At Simon's house and at the Last Supper, the guests reclined on stools of a different kind, the feet turned entirely out.

The meal was conducted with ceremony. The guests prayed standing and ate lying, while Peter and John taught. At the end of the meal, a flat, ribbed loaf was placed before Peter, which he divided into small pieces as marked by the ribs. These he distributed right and left on two plates. A large cup was next sent round, and out of it each one drank. Although Peter blessed the bread, yet it was not a sacrament, only an agape, a love feast. Peter said that they should all desire to be one as was the bread that they were eating and the wine they were drinking. After that they sang Psalms, standing.

When the tables were moved aside, the holy women retired to an apartment in the form of a half circle at the end of the hall. The disciples ranged on either side, while the Apostles walked up and down teaching and imparting to these ripe disciples all they durst concerning the Blessed Sacrament. This was like the first catechetical instruction after Jesus' death. I saw also that they walked around among one another extending hands joyously declaring that they would have all things in common, would resign all things for one another, and would live perfectly united. A feeling of deep emotion stole over them. I saw them flooded with light and, as it were, dissolving into one another. All seemed to resolve into a pyramid of light in which the Blessed Virgin appeared to be not only the apex, but the radiant center of all. All graces flowed in streams from Mary down upon the Apostles, and from them back again through her to the Lord. This vision was symbolical

of their union and the reciprocal relations existing among them.

Matthew, in the court of Lazarus' house, taught a great many more of the disciples who were not so well instructed as the others. They had the same kind of a meal and went through similar ceremonies.

5. Communion of the Holy Apostles

Early in the morning, Peter and John went with Andrew into the hall of the Last Supper and vested in their priestly robes, while the other Apostles entered the ante hall. Pushing aside the folds of woven tapestry, the three Apostles entered the Holy of Holies, which was curtained in so as to form a little chamber. The ceiling, which was not so high as that of the hall, could be opened by a hanging cord ornamented with tassels, to admit light from the windows in the roof of the hall. The Holy Communion table stood therein. The chalice with the remains of the Wine that Jesus had consecrated and the plate with what was left of the consecrated Bread were standing in the compartments formed like a tabernacle in a niche in the wall. A lamp was hanging, one branch of it lighted, before the Blessed Sacrament. They lighted the lamp of sacrifice that was suspended in the center of the hall, carried the Communion table forward into the hall, placed the Blessed Sacrament on it in its case, and extinguished the lamp in the Holy of Holies. The other Apostles, Thomas among them, took their places around the table. Of the Bread consecrated by Jesus, the Blessed Sacrament of His Body, there was still a great deal on the little plate, which stood on top of the chalice, the whole concealed under a bell-shaped cover surmounted by a knob. A white veil was thrown over it. Peter drew out the leaf from the base, spread the cover upon it, and placed on it the plate with the Blessed Sacrament. Andrew and John were standing

behind him in prayer. Peter and John, bowing reverently, received the Blessed Sacrament. Then Peter sent the plate around, and each one communicated himself. Into the chalice, in which there was not so much of the Wine consecrated by Jesus, they poured some wine and water, and drank of it. After that they sang Psalms and prayed, covered the chalice, and carried it, along with the table, back to its place. This was the first divine service that I saw celebrated.

Thomas went after that to some little place near Samaria with a disciple from that part of the country.

6. The Disciples Going to Emmaus. Jesus Appears to the Apostles in the Hall of the Last Supper

Luke had been among the disciples only a short time, but he had, before joining them, received John's baptism. He was present at the love feast and the instruction upon the Blessed Sacrament delivered by Matthew in the evening at Lazarus', in Bethania. After the instruction he went, troubled and doubting, to Jerusalem where he spent the night in John Mark's house.

There he met several other disciples, among them Cleophas, a grandson of Mary Cleophas' paternal uncle. He had been at the instructions and the love feast given in the house of the Last Supper. The disciples were talking about Jesus' Resurrection and expressing their doubts. Luke and Cleophas, especially, were wavering in faith. As, moreover, the commands of the High Priests were again made known, that no one should harbor the disciples of Jesus or supply them with food, both resolved to go together to Emmaus. They left the assembly. On leaving John Mark's house, one turned to the right and went around out of the city in a northerly direction, and

the other took a route on the opposite side, as if not wishing to be seen together. One went straight out of the city, the other made his way between the walls and out by the gate, beyond which they again met upon a hill. They carried each a staff, and a bundle at his side. Luke had a leathern pocket. I saw him frequently stepping aside from the road and gathering herbs.

Luke had not seen the Lord during those last days, and had not been present at His instructions at Lazarus'. He had been more in the disciples' inn at Bethania and with the disciples in Machaerus. He had not long been a declared disciple, though he had always gone around with the rest and was very desirous of knowing what was going on.

I felt that both these disciples were anxious and doubting, and that they wanted to talk over all they had heard. They were especially put out at the Lord's being so ignominiously crucified! They could not understand how the Redeemer and Messiah could have been so shamefully ill-treated.

About the middle of their journey, Jesus drew near to them from a side path. As soon as they saw Him, they went more slowly, as if wanting to let the stranger go on ahead, as if fearing to be overheard. But Jesus likewise slackened His pace, and stepped out on the road only after they were somewhat in advance. I saw Him walking behind them for a little while, then drawing near and asking of what they were talking.

Where the road branched off outside of Emmaus (a pretty, clean little place) Jesus appeared as if He wanted to take that which ran southward to Bethlehem. But the two disciples constrained Him to go with them into a house that stood in the second row of the city. There were no women in it, and it appeared to me to be a public house, for it looked as if a feast had lately been held in it. Some signs of it were still to be seen. The room was quadrangular and very

neat. The table was covered, and reclining cushions lay around it, of the same kind as those used at the love feast on Easter day. A man put on it a honeycomb in a woven basket-like vessel, a large, four cornered cake, and a small, thin, almost transparent Passover loaf. This last was set before the Lord as being the guest. The man that put the cake on the table appeared to be good, and he wore an apron, as if he were a cook or a steward. He was not present at the solemn breaking of the Bread. The cake was marked by lines, the spaces between them being about two fingers wide. A knife was lying on the table. It was white, as if made of stone or bone, not straight, but bent crooked, and only as large as one of our large blades. Before eating the bread, they notched along the lines with the sharp edge of the knife, which edge was only at the point. For this reason they had to hold it near the point. The morsel previously notched they then broke off.

Jesus reclined at the table with the two disciples and ate with them of the cake and honey. Then taking the small cake, the ribbed one, He broke off a piece that He afterward divided into three with the short, white bone knife. These He laid on the little plate, and blessed. Then He stood up, elevated the plate on high with both hands, raised His eyes, and prayed. The two disciples stood opposite Him, both intensely moved, and as it were transported out of themselves. When Jesus broke the little pieces, they opened their mouth and stretched forward toward Him. He reached His hand across the table and laid the particle in their mouth. I saw that as He raised His hand with the third morsel to His own mouth, He disappeared. I cannot say that He really received it. The morsels shone with light after He had blessed them. I saw the two disciples standing a little while as if stupefied, and then casting themselves with tears of emotion into each other's arms.

This vision was especially touching on account of

the Lord's mild and loving manner, the calm joy of the two disciples even before they knew Him, and their rapture as soon as they recognized Him and after He had disappeared. Cleophas and Luke hurried back at once to Jerusalem.

On the evening of the same day, many of the disciples and all the Apostles excepting Thomas assembled with Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea in the hall of the Last Supper, the doors being closed. They stood ranged in a triple circle under the lamp that hung from the center of the ceiling, and prayed. They seemed to be engaged in some after-celebration of mourning or thanksgiving, for the Paschal solemnities ended today in Jerusalem. All wore long white garments. Peter, John, and James the Less were vested in robes that distinguished them from the rest, and they held rolls of writing in their hands. Around their white, flowing garment, which was somewhat longer behind than before, they wore a girdle more than a hand in breadth. From it depended to below the knees scalloped strips, black like the girdle, and covered with large white letters. The girdle was knotted in the back, the ends crossing and reaching as low down as the strips in front. The sleeves were very wide, and one served as a pocket in which the prayer rolls could be stuck. Above the elbow of the left arm hung a broad maniple tripped with tassels of the same color and embroidered in the same way as the girdle. Peter wore a stole around his neck. It was broader from the shoulders down than it was around the neck, and was crossed and fastened on the breast with a little blank shield in the form of a heart and ornamented with stones. The two other Apostles wore their stoles crossed under the arm, and had shorter strips to their girdles. When in prayer, all laid their hands crosswise on their breast. The Apostles occupied the inner circle under the lamp; the two others were formed by the disciples. Peter, between John and James, stood with

his back turned to the closed entrance of the house of the Last Supper; two only were behind him, and the circle was not closed in front of him, but open toward the Holy of Holies.

The Blessed Virgin was, during the whole celebration, with Mary Cleophas and Magdalen in the hall outside, which opened into the supper room. Peter preached at intervals during the prayers.

I was surprised to see that although Jesus had appeared to Peter, John, and James, yet the greater number of the Apostles and disciples would not fully believe in His Resurrection. They still felt uneasy, as if His apparition was not a real and corporeal one, only a vision, a phantom, similar to those the Prophets had had.

All had ranged again for prayer after Peter's instruction when Luke and Cleophas, hurrying back from Emmaus, knocked at the closed doors of the courtyard and received admittance. The joyful news they related somewhat interrupted the prayer. But scarcely was it again continued when I saw all present radiant with joyful emotion, and glancing in the same direction. Jesus was come in through the closed doors. He was robed in a long white garment simply girded. They did not appear to be really conscious of His approach, until He passed through the circles and stood in their midst under the lamp. Then they became very much amazed and agitated. He showed them His hands and feet and, opening His garment, disclosed the Wound in His side. He spoke to them and, seeing that they were very much terrified, He asked for something to eat. I saw rays of light proceeding from His mouth. The Apostles and disciples were as if completely ravished.

And now I saw Peter going behind a screen, or hanging tapestry, into a recess of the hall which one might fail to remark, since the screen was like the entire wainscoting. In the center of this recess, on the Paschal hearth, stood the Blessed Sacrament.

There was a side compartment into which they had pushed the table, which was one foot high, after they had eaten reclining around it under the lamp. On this table stood a deep oval dish covered with a little white cloth, which Peter took to the Lord. In the dish were a piece of fish and some honey. Jesus gave thanks and blessed the food, ate and gave a portion of it some, but not to all. To His Holy Mother also and the other women, who were standing in the doorway of the outer hall, He likewise distributed some.

After that I saw Him teaching and imparting strength. The circles around Him were still triple, the ten Apostles forming the inmost. Thomas was not there. It appeared wonderful to me that part of Jesus' words and instructions was heard by the ten Apostles only, though I ought not to say *heard*, for I did not see Jesus moving His lips. He was resplendent. Light streamed over them from His hands, His feet, His side, His mouth, as He breathed upon them. It flowed in upon them. They became interiorly recollected, and felt themselves endued with power to forgive sins, to baptize and heal and impose hands; and I saw that, if they drank any poisonous thing, it would be without receiving harm from it. But here I saw no talking with the mouth, no hearing with the ears. I knew not how it was, but I felt that Jesus did not impart these gifts with words, that He spoke not in words, and that all did not hear what He said; but that He infused these gifts substantially, with a substance as it were, with a flashing of light in upon their soul. Still, I do not know whether the Apostles felt that they had received them in this way, or whether they thought that they had simply heard the words uttered naturally. I felt, however, that it was only the innermost circle, the Apostles, that took or received these gifts. To me it was like an interior speech, but without a whisper, without the softest word.

Jesus explained to the Apostles several points of

Holy Scripture relative to Himself and the Blessed Sacrament, and ordered the Latter to be venerated at the close of the Sabbath solemnities. He spoke of the Sacred Mystery of the Ark of the Covenant; of the bones and relics of ancestors and their veneration, thus to obtain their intercession; of Abraham, and of the bones of Adam which he had had in his possession and which he had laid on the altar when offering sacrifice. Another point relating to Melchisedech's sacrifice, which I then saw, I have forgotten, although it was very remarkable. Jesus further said that the colored coat which Jacob gave to Joseph was an emblem of His own bloody sweat on the Mount of Olives. At these words, I saw that coat of many colors. It was white with broad red stripes. It had three black cords on the breast, with a yellow ornament in the middle. It was full around the body so that things could be put into it as into a kind of pocket, and girded at the waist. It was narrow below and had slits at the side to afford more room for walking. It reached to the ankles, was longer behind than before, and on the breast, was open down to the girdle. Joseph's ordinary dress reached only to the knee.

Jesus likewise told the disciples that Adam's bones, which had been preserved in the Ark of the Covenant, Jacob gave to Joseph along with the many colored coat. I saw then that Jacob gave them to Joseph without the latter's knowing what they were. Jacob's love prompted him to bestow them upon Joseph as a means of protection, as a treasure, because he knew that his brothers did not love him. Joseph carried the bones hanging on his breast in a little pouch formed of two leathern tablets, not square, but rounded on top. When his brothers sold him, they took from him only the colored coat and the undergarment, leaving him a bandage round his loins and a scapular on his breast. It was under the latter that the little pouch hung. On going into Egypt,

Jacob questioned Joseph about that treasure and revealed to him that it was Adam's bones. Again I saw the bones under Mount Calvary. They were white as snow and still very hard. Some of Joseph's own bones were preserved in the Ark of the Covenant.

Jesus spoke too of the Mystery contained in the Ark of the Covenant. He said that that Mystery was now His Body and Blood, which He gave to them forever in the Sacrament. He spoke of His own Passion and of some wonderful things relating to David of which they were ignorant and which He explained. Lastly, He bade them go in a couple of days to the region of Sichar, and there proclaim His Resurrection. After that He vanished. I saw the Apostles and disciples going around among one another, perfectly intoxicated with joy. They opened the doors, went in and out, and assembled again under the lamp, to sing canticles of praise and thanksgiving.

7. The Apostles Preaching The Resurrection

On that same night a part of the Apostles, at Jesus' bidding, betook themselves to Bethania, while the rest set out for Jerusalem. The older disciples remained in Bethania to teach the younger and weaker in the Faith, which they did partly at the house of Lazarus and partly in the synagogue. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea were staying at Lazarus'. The holy women were in a neighboring building surrounded by the same moat and courtyard that enclosed Lazarus' house. It had an entrance on the street, and was formerly occupied by Magdalen and Martha.

The Apostles went with a troop of disciples, among them Luke, in the direction of Sichar. Peter said joyfully as they were setting out: "We shall go to the sea and catch fish," by which words he meant souls. They separated and went different ways, teaching

at the inns and in the public places of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus. This was a preparation for the conversions of Pentecost.

They met together again at the inn outside Thanath-Silo. Thomas also, with two disciples, joined them as they were gathered at a meal prepared for them by Silvan's father, who had care of the inn. The Apostles told Thomas of the apparition of the risen Saviour in their midst. But he raised his hands to silence them, and said that he would not believe it until he had touched His wounds. He did the same before the disciples when they declared to him that they had seen the Lord. Thomas had kept a little aloof from the followers of Jesus, and was thereby somewhat weakened in faith.

Peter taught till late at night in the school of Thanath-Silo. He spoke out quite freely of how the Jews had dealt with Jesus. He related many things of His last predictions and teachings, of His unspeakable love, of His prayer on Mount Olivet, and of Judas' treachery and wretched end. The people were very much amazed and troubled at all they heard, for they loved Judas, who in Jesus' absence, had assisted many by his readiness to serve them, and had even wrought miracles. Peter did not spare himself. He recounted his flight and denial with bitter tears. His hearers wept with him. Then with still more vehement expressions of sorrow, he told of how cruelly the Jews had treated Jesus, of His rising again on the third day, of His appearing first to the women, then to some of the others, and lastly to all in general, and he called upon all present that had seen Him to witness to His words. Upwards of a hundred hands were raised in answer to his call. Thomas, however, remained silent and responded by no sign. He could not bring himself to believe. Peter then called upon the people to leave all things, to join the new Community, and to follow Jesus. He invited the less courageous to go to Jerusalem, where

the Faithful would share all they had with them. There was, he said, no reason to fear the Jews, for they were now themselves afraid. All were very much impressed by Peter's words, and many were converted. They wanted the Apostles to remain longer with them, but Peter said that they must go back to Jerusalem.

The Apostles cured many sick persons in Thanath-Silo, among whom were some lunatics and some possessed. They went about these cures just as Jesus had done, that is, they breathed upon the sick, they imposed hands while leaning over them. Some of these invalids Jesus had passed without curing on the occasion of His last visit to the place. The inhabitants of Thanath-Silo were very friendly toward the Apostles. The disciples performed no cures, but they served the others, carrying, lifting, and leading the sick. Luke, who was a physician, now became quite a nurse.

I saw the Mother of God in Bethania. She was quiet and grave, more deeply absorbed in feelings of holy awe than in natural sorrow. Mary Cleophas was remarkably amiable and, of all the women, most like Mary. I often saw her leaning over her gently and consoling her in the most touching manner.

Magdalen, in her sorrow and love, was above all fear. She was perfectly heroic and without a thought of danger. She took no rest, but often left the house, hurried through the streets with streaming hair, and wherever she found listeners, whether in their homes or in public places, she accused them as the murderers of the Lord, vehemently recounting all they had done to the Saviour, and announcing to them His Resurrection. If she found no one to listen to her, she wandered through the gardens and told it to the flowers, the trees, and the fountains. Oftentimes a crowd gathered around her, some compassionating her, others insulting her on account of her past life. She was little esteemed by the crowd, for

she had once given great scandal. I saw that her present violent conduct scandalized some of the Jews, and about five of them wanted to seize her, but she passed straight through them and went on as before. She had lost sight of the whole world, she sighed only after Jesus.

During the dispersion of the disciples and the Passion of the Lord, Martha had a heavy duty to fulfill and she still discharged it. Though torn with grief, she had to see to everything, to lend a helping hand everywhere. She had to feed the dispersed and wandering, attend to their wants, provide nourishment for all. Her assistant in all this, as well as in the cooking, was Johanna Chusa, a widow whose husband had been a servant of Herod.

Simon of Cyrene was now in Bethania with the disciples, among whom he found his two sons. He was a pious man from Cyrene who was accustomed to sojourn in Jerusalem during the Paschal time, working for different families that knew him, doing up gardens and cutting hedges. He took his meals sometimes in this house, sometimes in that. He was perfectly silent and upright. His sons were already some time among strangers and with the disciples without his knowing it, as occasionally happens to the children of the poor.

In those days, the emissaries of the High Priests went throughout Jerusalem, visiting all the houses whose owners kept up communication with Jesus and the disciples, discharging them from whatever public employments they might happen to hold, and arresting any of Jesus' followers found there. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea had, since Christ's burial, nothing more to do with the Jews. Joseph of Arimathea was something like an Elder of a congregation. He always stood among the Jews like a man who, by his unobtrusive merit and multiplied good works modestly performed, had won the esteem of even the wicked. What very much rejoiced me was

to see how Veronica's husband condescended to her when she told him that she would rather separate from him than from the crucified Jesus. I saw that he too was discharged from his public office. But I was informed that he bore it more for love of his wife than for love of Jesus. The Jews, moreover, caused the ways and paths to the Holy Sepulcher on Mount Calvary to be obstructed by ditches and hedges, because they had become a resort for many, and diverse moving incidents and miracles took place in them.

Pilate's interior disquietude drove him from Jerusalem. Herod, a couple of days previously, had gone to Machaerus, but finding no rest there, he proceeded to Madian. Here, where they had once refused to receive the Lord, they now opened the gates to the murderer.

I saw Jesus appearing in many places during these days, and lastly in Galilee, in a valley across the Jordan in which was a large school. Many people were standing together, speaking about Him and expressing their doubts upon the report of His Resurrection. He appeared among them, and vanished again after some words. I saw Him appearing in this way in different localities.

The Apostles very quickly returned from the region of Sichar. They sent a messenger on ahead to Bethania, to announce their return and to direct several of the disciples to go to Jerusalem for the Sabbath. Others were commanded to celebrate it in Bethania, for they already had a certain law and order. The Apostles only passed through the different places on the road without stopping. Thaddeus, James the Less, and Eliud went in their travelling dress, and ahead of the rest, to see the Blessed Virgin and Mary Cleophas at John Mark's. As they had not seen the newcomers for a considerable time, the holy women were very much rejoiced. I saw that James was carrying on his arm a priestly vestment, a mantle, which the holy women

in Bethania had made for Peter, and which he was taking to the house of the Last Supper.

It was so late when the Apostles assembled in the house of the Last Supper that they could not partake of the meal prepared for them. They had to begin the Sabbath solemnities. They at once put on their robes of ceremony, preceded of course by the customary foot washing. The lamps were lighted, and I already remarked some departure from the Jewish Sabbatical ceremonies. First, the curtains were opened in front of the Holy of Holies, and the seat upon which Jesus had reclined at table at the institution of the Holy Eucharist was placed before it. They spread a cover over it, and laid upon it their prayer rolls. Peter knelt before it, John and James a little in the rear, the rest of the Apostles behind them, and then came the disciples. When they knelt they bowed their heads to the ground, burying their faces in their hands. The cover was removed from the chalice, but the white linen cloth was still left hanging over it. Only those disciples were present who were already initiated into the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament, just as those chiefly had been taken on the journey to Sichar who had seen the Lord after His Resurrection that they might be able to attest the fact.

Peter, with John and James at his side, delivered a meditation, or prayer, in which the holy Institution of the Lord and also His Passion were considered, and an interior sacrifice of prayer was offered. After that, standing under the lamp, they began the usual ceremonies of the Sabbath. When all was over, they took a repast in the outer hall. In the Supper Hall itself, I saw no more eating going on after the institution of the Holy Eucharist, excepting perhaps the taking of bread and wine.

On the occasion of His apparition through the closed doors, Jesus had taught the Apostles that addition to the service of the Sabbath which relates

to the Blessed Sacrament.

The Blessed Virgin was taken to Jerusalem by Mary Marcus; and Veronica, who now went round with her openly, accompanied them, along with Johanna Chusa from Bethania.

The Blessed Virgin liked to be in Jerusalem, for she could there go alone in the twilight and darkness over the Way of Jesus' Passion, pray and meditate on the places upon which He had suffered or had fallen. And as she could not reach them all, on account of the Jews' having hedged some of them in and filled others up, she made the Holy Way at home, also, or in the open air, for she had all the distances and the numbers connected with it deeply engraven in her soul, and thus she constantly revived, in her compassionate contemplations, the whole of that sorrowful journey of her Son.

It is a certainty that after the death of her Son, the Blessed Virgin was the first to begin the devotion of the Way of the Cross and the practice of meditating upon the bitter Passion, a practice that she ever after continued.

8. The Second Love Feast (Agape). Thomas Puts His Hand Into the Marks of Jesus' Wounds

After the close of the Sabbath, the Apostles having laid aside their robes of ceremony, I saw a great meal spread in the outer hall. It was a love feast, such as had taken place on the preceding Sunday. Thomas must have celebrated the Sabbath somewhere in the neighborhood, for I did not see him come in till after the meal, when they had again returned to the Supper Room. It was still early in the evening; the lamps were not yet lighted. Several of the Apostles and disciples were in the hall, and I saw others entering. They robed themselves again in long white garments, and prepared for

prayer as on the preceding occasion. Peter, John, and James again put on the vestments that distinguished them as priests.

While these preparations were being made, I saw Thomas entering the Supper Room. He passed through the Apostles who were already robed, and put on his own long white garment. As he went along, I saw the Apostles accosting him. Some caught him by the sleeve, others gesticulated with the right hand as they spoke, as if emphatically protesting against him. But he behaved like one in a hurry to vest and as if he could not credit the account given him of the wonderful things which had happened in that place. While all this was going on, a man entered the hall. He appeared to be a servant. He wore an apron and had in one hand a little lighted lamp, in the other a rod terminating in a hook. With the latter he drew down the lamp that was suspended from the center of the ceiling, lighted it, and again pushed it up. Then he left the hall! And now I saw the Blessed Virgin, Magdalen, and another woman come into the house. The Blessed Virgin and Magdalen entered the hall, Peter and John going to meet them. The third woman remained in the antechamber. The entrance hall was opened into the Supper Room, also some of the side halls. The exterior doors leading into the courtyard, as well as those of the court itself, were shut. A great many disciples were gathered in the side halls.

As soon as Mary and Magdalen entered, the doors were closed and all ranged for prayer. The holy women remained reverently standing on either side of the door, their arms crossed upon their breast. The Apostles kneeling before the Holy of Holies, prayed again as before; then standing under the lamp, they sang Psalms, choir and choir. Peter stood before the lamp, his face toward the Holy of Holies, John and James the Less at his side. Right and left of the lamp were the other Apostles. The side toward the Holy of Holies

was left free. Peter stood between the two, his back to the door, so that the two holy women were standing behind him at some distance.

After some time there was a pause in the assembly, an intermission of prayer, or as if prayer was at an end, and they began to speak of going to the Sea of Tiberias and of how they would disperse. But soon they assumed an expression of rapt attention, called up by the approach of the Lord. At the same moment, I saw Jesus in the courtyard. He was resplendent with light, clothed in white garments and a white girdle. He directed His steps to the door of the outer hall, which opened of itself before Him and closed behind Him. The disciples in the outer hall saw the door opening of itself, and fell back on both sides to make room. But Jesus walked quickly through the hall into the Supper Room and stepped between Peter and John who, like all the other Apostles, fell back on either side.

Jesus did not enter walking properly so called, that is, in the usual way of mortals, and yet it was not a floating along, or hovering, as I have seen spirits doing. It reminded me, as I saw them all falling back, of a priest in his alb passing through a crowded congregation. Everything in the hall appeared to become suddenly large and bright. Jesus was environed with light. The Apostles had fallen back from the radiant circle, otherwise they would not have been able to see Him.

Jesus' first words were: "Peace be to you!" Then He spoke with Peter and John, and rebuked them for something. They had departed a little from His directions, in order to follow their own ideas about something, and consequently they had not met with success. It related to some of the cures they had sought to effect on their return from Sichar and Thanath-Silo. They had not followed Jesus' directions to the letter, and therefore had not been entirely successful. They had done something according

to their own ideas. Jesus told them that if it happened again, they should act otherwise. Jesus now stepped under the lamp, and the Apostles closed around Him. Thomas, very much frightened at the sight of the Lord, timidly drew back. But Jesus, grasping his right hand in His own right hand, took the forefinger and laid the tip of it in the wound of His left hand; then taking the left hand in His own left, he placed the forefinger in the wound of His right hand; lastly, taking again Thomas' right hand in His own right, He put it, without uncovering His breast, under His garment, and laid the fore and middle fingers in the wound of His right side. He spoke some words as He did this. With the exclamation: "My Lord, and my God!" Thomas sank down like one unconscious, Jesus still holding his hand. The nearest of the Apostles supported him, and Jesus raised him up by the hand. That sinking down and rising up had some peculiar signification.

When Jesus grasped Thomas' hand, I saw that His wounds were not like bloody marks, but like little radiant suns. The other disciples were very greatly touched by this scene. They leaned forward, without, however, crowding, to see what the Lord was allowing Thomas to feel. I saw the Blessed Virgin during the whole time of Jesus' stay, perfectly motionless, as if absorbed in calm, deep interior recollection. Magdalen appeared more agitated, yet manifesting far less emotion than did the disciples.

Jesus did not disappear immediately after Thomas' declaration of faith. He still continued to speak to the Apostles, and asked for something to eat. I saw a little oval dish brought to Him again from the partitioned recess in which the table stood. It was not precisely like that presented to Him the first time. There was on it something that looked like a fish, of which He ate, then blessed and distributed what was left to those around Him, beginning with Thomas.

Jesus then told them why He stood in the midst

of them, although they had abandoned Him, and why He did not place Himself nearer to those that had remained faithful to Him. He told them also that He had commissioned Peter to confirm his brethren, and explained why He had given him that charge. Then turning to them all, He told them why He wished to give them Peter for a leader, although he had so recently denied Him. He must, He said, be the shepherd of the flock, and He enlarged upon Peter's zeal.

John brought on his arm from the Holy of Holies the large, colored, embroidered mantle which James had received from Mary and on which, in those last days, the holy women had worked at Bethania. Besides that, he brought also a hollow, slender staff, high and bent at the top like a shepherd's crook. It was shining and looked like a long pipe. The mantle was white with broad red stripes; and on it were embroidered, in colors, wheat, grapes, a lamb, and other symbols. It was wide, and long enough to reach to the feet. It was fastened over the breast with a little four-cornered metal shield, and bordered down the front with red stripes which were crossed by shorter ones on which were letters. It had a collar and a kind of hood, of a sky-blue color, which could be drawn up over the neck and head.

Peter next knelt down before Jesus, who gave him to eat a round morsel, like a little cake. I do not remember seeing any plate, nor do I know where Jesus got the morsel, but I do know that it shone with light. I felt that Peter received with it some special power, and I saw also strength and vigor poured into his soul when Jesus breathed upon him. This action of Jesus was not a simple, ordinary breathing. It was words, a power, something substantial that Peter received, but not merely spoken words. Jesus put His mouth to Peter's mouth, then to his ears, and poured that strength into each of the three. It was not the Holy Spirit Himself, but

something that the Holy Spirit was to quicken and vivify in Peter at Pentecost. Jesus laid His hands on him, gave him a special kind of strength, and invested him with chief power over the others. Then He placed upon him the mantle that John, who was standing next to Him, was holding on his arm, and put the staff into his hand. While performing this action, Jesus said that the mantle would preserve in him all the strength and virtue that He had just imparted to him, and that he should wear it whenever he had to make use of the power with which he had been endued.

Peter addressed the assembly in his new dignity. He had become as it were a new being, a man full of vigor and energy. His hearers were greatly moved; they listened with tears. He consoled them, alluded to many things that Jesus had before told them, and which were now being fulfilled. He told them, as I still remember, that Jesus, during His Passion of eighteen hours, had borne insult and outrage from the whole world. In that discourse mention was made of how much was wanting to the completion of Jesus' thirty-four years. While Peter was speaking, Jesus vanished. No alarm, no exclamations of surprise broke in upon the attention with which Peter's words were received. He appeared to be endowed with strength entirely new. The discourse ended, they sang a Psalm of thanksgiving. Jesus addressed neither His Blessed Mother nor Magdalen.

9. Jesus Appears to the Holy Apostles At the Sea of Galilee

Before going to the sea, the holy Apostles went over the Way of the Cross to Mount Calvary, and thence to Bethania, from which place they took with them some disciples. They went by different routes and in several companies to the Sea of Galilee. Peter went with John, James the Greater, Thaddeus,

Nathanael, John Mark, and Silas, seven in all, to Tiberias, leaving Samaria to the left. All chose routes remote from cities. They went to a fishery outside Tiberias, which Peter had held on lease, but which was now rented by another man, a widower with two sons. They took a repast with this man, and I heard Peter saying that he had not fished here for three years.

They went aboard two ships, one somewhat larger and better than the other. They gave to Peter the choice of the former, into which he mounted with Nathanael, Thomas, and one of the fisherman's servants. In the second ship were John, James, John Mark, and Silas. Peter would not suffer another to row. He wanted to do it himself. Although so distinguished by Jesus, he was exceedingly humble and modest, especially before Nathanael, who was polished and educated.

They sailed about the whole night with torches, casting the nets here and there between the two ships, but always drawing them in empty. At intervals they prayed and sang Psalms. When day was beginning to dawn, the ships approached the opposite side of the mouth of the Jordan, on the eastern shore of the sea. The Apostles were worn out and wanted to cast anchor. They had laid aside their garments while fishing, retaining only a linen bandage and a little mantle. When about resuming their clothing preparatory to taking a little rest, they saw a figure standing behind the reeds on the shore. It was Jesus. He cried out: "Children, have you any meat?" They answered: "No!" Then He cried out again, telling them to cast the net to the west of Peter's ship. They did it, and John had to sail round to the other side of the ship. And now the net was so heavily filled that John recognized Jesus, and called to Peter across the silent deep: "It is the Lord!" At these words Peter instantly girded his coat about him, leaped into the water, and waded through the reeds

to the shore where Jesus was standing. But John pushed on in a boat, very light and narrow, that was fastened to his ship. Two of this kind were hooked together. They pushed one before the other, and crossed over it to land. It held only one man, and was needed only for shallow water near the land.

While the Apostles were on the sea fishing, I saw the Saviour floating out of the Valley of Josaphat and surrounded by many souls of the ancient Patriarchs whom He had freed from Limbo, also by others that had been banished to different places, caves, swamps, and deserts. During the whole period of these forty days, I saw Jesus, when not among the disciples, with the holy souls. They were principally from Adam and Eve down to Noe, Abraham, and other ancient leaders of the people. He went over all places remarkable in His life, showing them all things, and instructing them upon what He had done and suffered for them, whereby they became indescribably quickened and through gratitude purified. He taught them, in a certain measure at this time, the mysteries of the New Testament, by which they were released from their fetters. I saw Him with them in Nazareth, in the Crib Cave and Bethlehem, and in every place in which anything remarkable had happened to Him. One could distinguish, by a certain weakness or vigor in the appearance of the souls, whether they animated men or women when on earth. I saw them in long, narrow garments that fell around them in shining folds, and floated behind in a long train. Their hair did not look like ordinary hair, but like rays of light, each of which signified something. The beards of the men were composed of similar rays. Though not distinguished by any external sign, yet I recognized the kings, and especially the priests that from the time of Moses had anything to do with the Ark of the Covenant. In the journeys of the Saviour I always saw them floating around Him, so that here too the spirit of order

reigned in everything. The movements of these apparitions were exceedingly graceful and dignified. They seemed to float along, not exactly in an upright position, but inclining gently forward. They did not touch the earth like bodies that have weight, but appeared to hover just above the ground.

I saw the Lord arrive at the sea in company with these souls while the Apostles were still fishing. Back of a little mound on the shore there was a hollow in which was a covered fireplace, for the use of the shepherds, perhaps. I did not see Jesus kindling a fire, catching a fish, or getting one in any other way. Fire and fish and everything necessary appeared at once in presence of the souls as soon as ever it entered into the Lord's mind that a fish should here be prepared for eating. How it happened, I cannot say.

The spirits of the Patriarchs had a share in this fish and in its preparation. It bore some signification relative to the Church Suffering, to the souls undergoing purification. They were in this meal bound to the Church Militant by visible ties. In the eating of this fish, Jesus gave the Apostles an idea of the union existing between the Church Suffering and the Church Militant. Jonas in the fish was typical of Jesus' stay in the lower world. Outside the hut was a beam that served for a table.

I saw all this before Jesus crossed the mound and went down to the sea. Peter did not swim, he waded through the water. The bottom could be seen, although the water was tolerably deep. Peter was already standing by Jesus when John came up. Those on the ship now began to cry to them to help draw in the net. Jesus told Peter to go bring in the fish. They drew the net to land, and Peter emptied it on the shore. In it were one hundred and fifty-three different kinds of fishes. This number signified that of the new believers who were to be gained at Thebez. There were on the ships several people in the employ of the fishermen

of Tiberias, and they took charge of the ships and the fish, while the Apostles and disciples went with Jesus to the hut whither He invited them to come and eat. When they entered, the spirits of the Patriarchs had vanished. The Apostles were very much surprised to see the fire and a fish, not of their own catching, also bread and honeycakes.¹ The Apostles and disciples reclined by the beam while Jesus played the host. He handed to each on a little roll a portion of the fish from the pan. I did not see that the fish became less. He gave to them also of the honey cakes and then reclined with them at table and ate. All this took place very quietly and solemnly.

Thomas was the third of those that had on the ship a perception of Jesus' presence. But they were all timid and frightened, for Jesus was more spirit like than before, and the whole meal and the hour had in them something full of mystery. No one dared ask a question. A feeling of holy awe stole over them and gave rise to solemn silence. Jesus was wrapped in a mantle, His wounds not visible.

After the meal, I saw Jesus and the Apostles rise from table. They walked up and down the shore, and at last stood still while Jesus solemnly addressed Peter: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these?" Peter timidly answered. "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee!" Jesus said to him: "Feed My lambs!" And at the same instant I saw a vision of the Church and the Chief Pastor, I saw him teaching and guiding the first Christians, and I saw the baptizing and cleansing of the new Christians, who appeared like so many tender lambs.

After a pause, Jesus again said to Peter: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" (They were walking all the time, Jesus occasionally turning and pausing while they regarded Him with attention). Peter very timidly and humbly, for he was thinking of his

1. Sister Emmerich says they were toasted cakes of flour and honey. A larger one lay between two smaller ones. They were called honey-rusks.

denial, again answered: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee!" Jesus again addressed him solemnly: "Feed My sheep!" Again I had a vision of the rising Church and her persecutions. I saw the Chief Bishop gathering together the numerous scattered Christians, protecting them, providing them with shepherds, and governing them.

After another pause and still walking, Jesus said once more: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" I saw that Peter grew troubled at the thought that Jesus asked him so often, as if He doubted his love. It reminded him of his thrice-repeated denial, and he answered: "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee!" I saw that John was thinking: "Oh, what love must Jesus have, and what ought a shepherd to have, since He thrice questions Peter, to whom He confides His flock, concerning his love!" Jesus again said: "Feed My sheep! Amen, amen, I say to thee: when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself, and didst walk where thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not. Follow Me!"

Jesus turned again to go on. John walked with Him, for Jesus was saying something to him alone, but what it was I could not hear. I saw that Peter, noticing this, asked the Lord while pointing to John: "Lord, what will become of this man?" Jesus, to rebuke his curiosity, answered: "So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee? Follow thou Me!" And Jesus turning again, they went forward.

When Jesus said for the third time: "Feed My sheep!" and that Peter would in his old age be bound and led away, I had a vision of the spreading Church. I saw Peter in Rome bound and crucified, also the martyrdom of the saints. Peter too had a vision of his own martyrdom and of John's future sufferings. While Jesus was predicting his death to Peter, the latter glanced at John and very naturally thought:

"Shall not this man whom Jesus loves so dearly be crucified like Him?" Putting the question to Jesus, he was answered with a rebuke. I had at this moment a vision of John's death in Ephesus. I saw him stretch himself out in his grave, address some words to his disciples, and die. After his death I saw his body no longer on earth, but in a place as resplendent as the sun off toward the southeast, and it seemed as if John here received something from above that he transmitted to the earth. I became aware also that some understand these words of Jesus falsely and think they mean: "I will that he *so* remain," or "If I will that he *so* remain." But they mean: "If I will that *he remains*." They therefore that heard these words thought that John would not die. But he did die. I had on this occasion, as I have said, a vision of his death and his subsequent sojourn.

The Apostles and disciples went on a little farther with Jesus, who was instructing them upon their future conduct. He then vanished before them eastward of the sea toward Gerasa and they returned to Tiberias, though not by a route that would lead them past the place in which Jesus had given them to eat.

Of the fish that the Apostles caught, none were used at that meal. When Jesus said that they should bring them ashore, Peter threw them in rows at Jesus' feet, that they might be numbered. By this it was acknowledged that they had caught the fish not by themselves and for themselves, but by His miraculous power and for Him. When the fish were deposited on the shore, Jesus said to the Apostles: "Come and eat!" and conducted them over the little hill, or mound, where the sea could no longer be seen, to the mud hut over the furnace. Jesus did not at once place Himself at table, but went to the pan and brought to each a portion of fish on a piece of bread. He blessed the portions and they shone with light. The honey cakes were not in the pan. They

were already prepared, and lay in a pile one above the other. Jesus distributed them, and when all were served, He too ate with them. There was only one fish in the pan, but it was larger than any they had caught. There was some mystery connected with this meal. The presence of the souls of the Patriarchs and others, their participation in the preparation of the meal, and the subsequent call of Peter, gave me to understand that in this spiritual meal the Church Suffering, the holy souls, should be committed to Peter's care, should be incorporated with the Church Militant, and the Church Triumphant, in short, that they should occupy a third place in the Church as a whole. I cannot explain how this was to be done, but I had in vision this intimate conviction. It was in reference to this also that Jesus closed with the prophecy of Peter's death and John's future.

Jesus next went with the souls of the ancient Patriarchs to the country in which He had driven the demons into the swine. There He released some other souls that had been confined in dreary and desolate regions, for there were many possessed in these parts, and innocent people had here been murdered whose souls, according to God's decrees, were here condemned to sojourn.

Jesus went with the souls to Paradise also, which I distinctly saw as beautiful as ever. He explained to them all that their first parents had lost by their fall, and what a happiness it was for them that He could free them from its effects. I saw that the souls sighed indeed after Redemption, though ignorant of the way in which it was to be effected, just as men on earth had only vague notions on the same point. Jesus walked with them and instructed them in a manner suited to their peculiar condition, as He had done in His communications with men upon earth. I again understood that man was created to fill up the places of the angelic choirs that had fallen from Heaven. If the Fall had not taken place, men would

have multiplied only until that number was reached, and then creation would have come to an end. But by the Fall, a dispersing, an arbitrary scattering, a transplanting arose mixed up with impurity and darkness; therefore is the punishment of death a necessary consequence, a real benefit, a real kindness to man. As to what is said of the end of the world, this much is certain: it will not end until all the wheat is separated from the chaff and those choirs of the fallen angels filled up with it.

I saw Jesus with the souls on great battlefields, explaining to them how they had been led to salvation. As He was speaking, I saw visions of the battles and everything connected with them, just as if they were going on under my eyes. I never saw anyone terrified in these ghostlike encounters. It was like a pleasant breeze blowing over the country, and joy abounded in all creatures. Jesus went with the ancient Patriarchs to those regions also into which the Apostles were first to carry the Gospel, and blessed them with His presence. In this way, He visited the whole universe.

When Peter, with the three Apostles and the three disciples, returned that afternoon to the fisherman Aminadab, who for the last two years had had possession of Peter's fishery, they took a meal with him. Peter related the miracle that they had witnessed, the apparition of the Lord, the meal, and the abundant draught of fish, and gave an instruction on leaving all things and following the Lord. The old fisherman, on seeing the ship approaching laden with fish and hearing from his sons who accompanied it an account of the same miracle, resolved at once to abandon all his worldly goods. The fish were distributed among the poor, the fishery was handed over to another, and he went that night with his two sons, Isaac and Josaphat, to join the disciples. Their route lay for some distance along the west side of the sea, and then turned off inland. The fisherman's intention

was not perfectly pure. He thought that by leaving all he had he would get something in return.

Toward dawn the next morning, the Apostles reached a synagogue of considerable size. It stood in an open field, surrounded by inns, and formed the central point of three villages. A great many disciples were here assembled, to whom Peter related the miracle of the draught of fishes and the meal, and repeated the words of Jesus. He taught in the school, taking for his subject the miraculous draught and the following of the Lord. There was a large gathering of people here, among them many sick, also some possessed. Peter was the only one that healed on this occasion, and he did it in the name of Jesus; the other Apostles and disciples served and taught. All the good and those best disposed toward Jesus' doctrine were here gathered from the whole country around. Peter spoke also of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection, told how the Apostles had seen Him, and invited his hearers to follow Him. The people were carried away by Peter's words, for his whole deportment had undergone an entire change since the last two apparitions. He was full of inspiration, full of gentleness. He so touched the hearts of these people that all wanted to follow him right away, and he had to command many of them to go back to their homes.

10. Jesus Appears to the Five Hundred

From that last place, which was some hours south of Tiberias, Peter went with the other Apostles, the disciples, and many of the people westward to an elevated region which had on the north an extraordinarily fertile valley. Even in the depth of winter, it was covered with beautiful, tall grass, for there was a brook running through it; but in hot weather it was parched. Sometimes the whole valley was inundated

by the rains that flowed down the mountains in streams. Up on this plateau they came to a hill, around which lay houses with gardens behind them extending up its sides. The hill was not much higher than the houses themselves. Five pathways planted with hedges and trees ran up the hill, whose summit afforded ample space for about a hundred people to walk about freely. From it the view extended far around the country and over the Galilean sea. It was a very beautiful prospect. At no great distance arose the mountain of the multiplication of the loaves, and it was in this region that Jesus delivered His Sermon on the Mount. The well of Capharnaum was at the base of this elevated plateau. The rest of the Apostles, many of the disciples, and all the holy women were here, besides the Mother of God and Veronica. Peter's wife and daughter, the wives of Andrew and Matthew were come down from Bethsaida, along with many others. The Apostles and disciples knew that they were all to meet here. They scattered around, some under sheds, some in the open air. Peter related to the Apostles and the women the miraculous draught of fishes, and then went with them up the mountain, upon which the people had already been ranged by some of the disciples.

There was on it a hollow place in whose center stood a teacher's pillar overgrown with moss. One could mount into it as into a pulpit. The hollow in which the pillar stood was furnished with steps in tiers, so that the numerous audience could see over one another. Peter placed five Apostles on the five several pathways that led up the mountain, and they taught the people, because all could not hear him, on account of the crowd. He himself stood on the pillar in the center, the Apostles, disciples, and many of the people around him, and published the Passion, the Resurrection, the apparitions of the Lord, and the obligation of following Him.

And now I saw Jesus approaching by the same

route that Peter had come. He went up the mountain. The holy women, who were standing on one of the paths, prostrated before Him, and He spoke to them as He passed. As, resplendent with light, He stepped in through the crowd, many shuddered and became alarmed. These did not remain faithful. Then Jesus went to the pillar on which Peter was standing. Peter resigned his place and took up a position opposite Jesus, who now addressed the multitude. He spoke of abandoning one's relatives, of following Him, and of the persecution that they would have to endure. About two hundred of His hearers withdrew when they heard Him talking of such things. All these were gone away, said Jesus. He had spoken to them mildly in order not to scandalize the weak. He uttered some very grave words upon the sufferings and persecution of those that would follow Him upon earth, and He alluded to their eternal reward. He addressed these remarks to the Apostles and disciples, as He had once before done in His last instruction in the Temple. He told them that they should at first remain in Jerusalem. When He should have sent them the Spirit, they should baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and should at once establish a Community. Then He told them how they should disperse, form distant Communities, meet together once more, again separate for far-off countries, and receive at last the Baptism of blood.

While Jesus was speaking, the spirits of the ancient Patriarchs encircled the whole assembly, though invisibly. Jesus vanished. His disappearance was like a light suddenly extinguished in their midst. Many fell prostrate on their face. Peter again taught and prayed. This was Jesus' principal apparition in Galilee, where He taught and gave proof to all of His Resurrection. The other apparitions were more secret.

Peter, Thaddeus, Andrew, and James the Less, I

saw after that in another place, where they healed many sick whom lately in the region of Sichar they could not cure. Their fault was that, wishing to imitate the great dignity and reserve of Jesus in His demeanor, they did something extraordinary, they assumed an air of importance. They did not give humbly what they had received, but they gave it as coming from themselves, therefore success was not theirs. But now I saw them (and the sight touched me greatly) humbling themselves, kneeling down by the sick, and begging their pardon for failing to assist them. The sick were all cured. There were people even from Cedar among them. The cured went with the Apostles to Bethania for the Sabbath.

11. Love Feast (Agape) in Bethania And in the House Of the Last Supper. The Destruction Of the Holy Places By the Jews

I saw the Apostles in Bethania, whither they were followed by about three hundred of the Faithful, among them fifty women. They had given over their goods to the Community. The Blessed Virgin also had come from Jerusalem to Bethania, and was stopping in Martha and Magdalen's house. There was a great Love Feast of bread-breaking and passing round of the cup held in the open hall of Lazarus' court.

Peter afterward gave an instruction before a great multitude. There were some spies among the listeners. When Peter announced that they should leave all and join the Community, and that he would give them what they needed, the spies laughed derisively. He had nothing himself, they said, He was only a poor fisherman, a vagrant, who could hardly support

his wife at home. Peter still continued to teach, more on the command of Jesus than from any interior, quickening sentiment which the Apostles received only with the Holy Ghost. He now spoke in the assemblies, excepting when the crowd was very great, for then he ordered some of the others to teach on various points. Since his reception of the mantle from Jesus and the meal of fish (which indeed was not a natural fish), at which he had received special power, he had become quite another being. All recognized him as the head, the mouth, the hand of the Community. At Jesus' prediction on the seashore respecting Peter's death and John's future, at the command, "Feed My lambs!" I felt that Peter, in his successors, was forever to provide for the guiding and feeding of the flocks, while John should stand ever at the source of the water that was to refresh and irrigate the meadow and quicken the sheep. It seemed to me that Peter's influence belonged more to time, more to the exterior condition, and therefore was it divided among his successors; but that John's was more interior, that it consisted more in inspiration, in the sending abroad of inspired messengers. Peter was more like the rock, the edifice; John more like a wind, a cloud, a thunderstorm, a son of thunder, a voice sender. Peter was more like the frame, the cords, and the tone of a harp; John was the sighing of the breeze through its strings, I am unable to express in more significant words what I inwardly perceived.

About fifty soldiers, the same that seized the Lord on Mount Olivet, came from Jerusalem to Bethania. They were guards belonging to the Temple and the High Priests. Some deputies also of the Sanhedrin made their appearance at the Council House in Bethania, and summoned the Apostles before them. Peter, John, and Thomas presented themselves and replied boldly and openly to the charge that they convened assemblies and occasioned disturbance

among the people. Soldiers were placed at Lazarus'. The deputies from Jerusalem interrogated the Apostles publicly before the Council House. The magistrates of Bethania opposed them, saying that if they knew anything against those men, they ought to take them into custody, but that they must not disturb the peace of the place by the presence of soldiers. Peter, in order to avoid giving offense, dismissed one hundred and twenty-three of the assembled Faithful. Those from the greatest distance were directed to remain at the dwellings in the neighborhood, for they already had all things in common. The fifty women also withdrew and lived together in separate abodes. Peter gave orders for all to return to Bethania before the day of Christ's Ascension.

The Apostles, on leaving Bethania, went to the house of the Last Supper near Jerusalem, where they prayed under the lamp before the Holy of Holies. There were about seven disciples with them. They could no longer reach the house of the Last Supper through the city, for the road on that side had been partly destroyed by the Jews. They had to go to the left of the Temple, and strike into the road taken by Peter and John on Maundy Thursday. There were numerous inns for the accommodation of strangers on this road, and the people living around these parts were not of pure Jewish origin. The Jews had expelled from their society and from public offices all that declared themselves for Jesus and that fraternized with the disciples. The places upon which Jesus fell during His sorrowful journey to Calvary, or at which something noteworthy had happened, they cut through with ditches. The ways leading to the sections chiefly inhabited or frequented by the followers of Jesus, they walled up. It appeared to me very strange to see a person caught in such a street as in a blind alley, and have to turn round and come out again. Sometimes the friends of Jesus again opened the ways to Calvary by night. All places

around Jerusalem especially consecrated by the presence or the sufferings of Jesus, and on that account held in particular veneration by His followers, were maliciously laid waste by the Jews. The charming sites upon which Jesus had taught and tarried were rendered impassable and closed in with hedges. In some places they actually dug pitfalls into which the pious pilgrim might fall, but I saw some of those vicious Jews plunging into them themselves. Mount Calvary was rendered unapproachable by hedges and beams. Its summit was dug up and the earth scattered like manure over the paths, also over the five grassy, heart-shaped plots that were formed by the pathways running up to the place of crucifixion. When they had taken away the mound that encircled the place of crucifixion, there remained a white stone. In it was a four-cornered hole about an ell deep, in which the cross had been planted. I saw the workmen toiling with crowbars, trying to upturn that stone, but the more they tried, the deeper it sank, so they buried it at last under some rubbish. The Holy Sepulcher alone was left unmolested, for that was Nicodemus' property. Christ's head, while in the tomb, lay toward the east. If a person on leaving the cave went around toward the south, he would have the sun directly above him, and the west on his right.

I was interiorly instructed that all demolishers of representations of the Holy Way of the Cross, of Crucifixes, chapels or churches, of ancient devotions, of holy exercises and practices, and in general of all objects that draw us into closer relation with the history of Redemption, whether in building, picture, and writing, or by custom, festival, and prayer, will be judged with the enemies of Jesus' bloody footsteps and as belonging to them.

12. The Majesty and Dignity of the Blessed Virgin

On the evening of the following day, I saw the Apostles and twenty of the disciples in the hall at prayer under the lamp. The Blessed Virgin, all the holy women, Lazarus, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Obed were present. The prayer over, John addressed the Apostles, and Peter, the disciples. They spoke in words full of mystery of their relations to the Mother of the Lord and what she should be to them. During this instruction of the two Apostles, which they based on a communication received from Jesus, I saw the Blessed Virgin hovering over the assembly in a shining, outspread mantle whose folds embraced them all, and on her head descended a crown from the Most Holy Trinity through the open heavens above her. I no longer saw her kneeling outside the hall in prayer, and I had the conviction that Mary was the legitimate head of them all, the temple that enclosed them all. I think this vision was symbolical of what God designed to take place for the Church at this moment through the exposition of the Apostles upon Mary's dignity.

Toward nine o'clock, I saw a meal set in the outer hall. The guests wore festal robes and Mary her wedding garment. When at prayer, however, she wore a white mantle and veil. She sat between Peter and John at the table of the Apostles, who were seated, their back to the court, the door of the hall in view. The other women and disciples were seated right and left at separate tables. Nicodemus and Joseph served. Peter carved the lamb, just as Jesus had done the Paschal lamb. At the end of the meal, there was a breaking of bread and a passing around of blessed (not consecrated) bread and wine.

After that I saw the Blessed Virgin with the Apostles in the Supper Room. She was standing between Peter and John under the lamp. The Holy of Holies

was open, and they were praying on their knees before it.

When midnight had sounded, the Blessed Virgin, kneeling, received the Blessed Sacrament from Peter. He carried the Bread that had been consecrated and broken by Jesus on the little plate belonging to the chalice. At that instant I saw Jesus appear to her, though not visible to the others. Mary was penetrated with light and splendor. She was still in prayer. I saw that the holy Apostles were very reverent in their manner toward her. Mary next went to the little dwelling on the right of the entrance into the court of the Coenaculum, in which she now had her apartment. Here standing she recited the Magnificat, the Canticle of the three youths in the fiery furnace, and the 130th Psalm. The day was beginning to dawn when I saw Jesus entering through the closed doors. He spoke long to her, telling her that she was to help the Apostles, and explaining what she was to be to them. He gave her power over the whole Church, endued her with His strength, His protecting influence, and it was as if His light flowed in upon her, as if He penetrated her through and through. I cannot express it. A covered way of mats across the court to the house of the Last Supper was made for the Blessed Virgin, so that she could go from her little room to the Holy of Holies and the choir of the Apostles and disciples. John also resided in the little dwelling. When Jesus appeared to Mary in her cell, I saw her head encircled by a crown of stars as it had been at her Communion.

It was revealed to me also that as often as the Blessed Virgin communicated, the form of the Bread remained in her unchanged from one Communion to another, so that she always adored in her breast the Sacramental Presence of the God-Man. During a period of persecution, after the stoning of St. Stephen, the Apostles for a time refrained from consecrating. But even then the Church was not without the Blessed

Sacrament, for It was preserved in the living tabernacle of Mary's most holy heart. I also learned at the same time that this was a grace entirely special, and that it could be imparted to the Blessed Virgin alone.

13. Increase of the Community

The number of the Faithful continued to increase. Many came to join them, especially from the Galilean Sea, with asses laden with baggage. It kept some busy procuring them quarters. They generally stopped first at the disciples' inn outside Bethania, where the disciples dwelt in turn to receive the strangers, and give them advice and directions. The newcomers were sent by them to Lazarus, who owned many houses and dwellings. Many of them lived at Jerusalem also, in the quarter of Mount Sion. Only a few poor Jews were scattered around here. There were numerous old walls of extraordinary thickness, and vacant lots on which I saw asses grazing. Strangers who had come for the feast pitched their tents around this quarter. Besides the house of the Last Supper, there was another on Mount Sion, a very large, dilapidated old building (the Citadel of David), and numbers of the Faithful found shelter under its surroundings. They dwelt in huts, or in lodgings adjoining them. I saw that people dwelt below in the massive walls, while on their top were erected tents of coarse tapestry.

The Chaldeans from Sikdor, whom Jesus had directed to the Centurion of Capharnaum, and who had from there returned to their homes, were now come back again in great numbers with their beasts of burden and baggage. Their beasts and packs were standing in the inner court of the large, dilapidated building. The Jews did not molest them; only the road to the Temple mount and to the quarter of the city belonging to it was entirely walled up on the

side of Mount Sion near the Pool of Bethsaida where the Christians were stopping. The Community was thereby completely separated, cut off from the Jews.

I saw the newcomers resigning, for the good of the Community, quantities of stuffs of fine and coarse, white and yellowish wool, carpets, canvas for tents, all in great rolls. Nicodemus and Joseph managed everything. Garments for religious service and Baptism were made out of some, and some was given to the needy, all of whom were cared for.

There was, at the Pool of Bethsaida, an old synagogue formerly used only by strangers come for the feast. It stood at some elevation above the pool. The Apostles now appropriated it to their own use. In it the newcomers assembled to be instructed by some of the Apostles. But all these strangers were not at once admitted to the Community, much less to the house of the Last Supper. I saw neither the Apostles nor the disciples, nor these newly arrived again frequenting the Temple. True, the Apostles, having received the Holy Ghost, went there after Pentecost, but it was only that they might preach to the assembled multitude. Their Temple was the house of the Last Supper that sheltered the Blessed Sacrament. The Mother of all was the Blessed Virgin. The Apostles consulted with her, and she was for them like an Apostle herself.

Peter's wife and daughter, Mark's wife, and other women had now come from Bethsaida to Bethania, where they dwelt under tents. They had no communication whatever with the men. They came into the presence of the Apostles only for instruction, and they employed themselves in weaving and twisting long strips of stuff and coarse covers for tents, many of them working at the same time upon one piece. The Blessed Virgin also, along with Martha and Magdalen, worked at embroidery, sometimes reclining, sometimes walking about, work in hand. I saw the Blessed Virgin embroidering in delicate colors figures

something like an Apostle, or the Lord Himself, on a yellow, brown, or sky-blue ground. The figures were not so enveloped in mantles as formerly. Once they embroidered a representation of the Most Holy Trinity. It was like God the Father handing the cross to the Son, who looked like a High Priest. From both proceeded the Holy Ghost, though not in the form of a dove, for instead of wings there were arms. The figures were arranged more in a triangular form than one below the other. I have seen in the earliest churches of that period vestments that Mary had embroidered.

The Apostles themselves lent a hand in preparing the dwellings of the newcomers. They carried to them wood and matting and wicker partitions, and worked hard. The poor were provided with clothing, and even their food was prepared for them, for Lazarus had contributed toward the foundation of a general fund.

The holy women, among whom was the wife of Zacheus, busied themselves in helping the newly arrived women. No one had anything of his own. He that brought something with him gave it up, and he that had nothing, received something. The house of Simon the Leper was crowded with disciples. Simon himself no longer dwelt in it, for he had resigned it to the Community, and he now lived among the brethren. On the flat roof of the house there was formed, by means of movable wicker partitions, a kind of hall in which was placed an orator's chair. It was reached from outside by steps in the wall. They built everywhere, they put up tents and sheds, they made use of every corner of walls and old buildings. There were also many vacant dwellings both here and in Jerusalem, for numbers of Jews went away after the Crucifixion.

The newly converted and the baptized became so numerous after Pentecost that the Apostles had to negotiate with the Jewish magistrates for procuring

suitable dwelling-places for the newcomers. They sent Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Nathanael, and others well known among the Jews, to the magistrates who were assembled, about twenty in number, in a hall over the gate of the women's porch. Three places outside the city and distant from the usual routes were assigned the converts: one to the west of Bethania, between it and Bethphage, where some huts and sheds were already put up; and two others south of Bethania, distant also from the highroads. In exchange for these, the disciples were to vacate the inn on the road outside Bethania, nor should they live permanently or put up at the inn beyond Jerusalem and on the road to Bethlehem, where Mary had stopped before her Purification in the Temple. I saw the magistrates indicating from the Temple the regions named, the deputies carrying back the news to the Community, some parties of the Faithful going thither, and Peter and John pointing out to them sites for building. Supplies of all kinds were transported on asses, and water in great leathern bottles, to the place between Bethania and Bethphage, where there was no water. But when the Christians began to dig a well, water at once gushed forth. I saw Simon of Bethania, who had had a household of his own and understood domestic economy, under an awning near the Pool of Bethesda, and he appeared to be noting down on a roll of parchment the goods and chattels of the people, who had brought with them sheep, goats, doves, and great birds with red beaks and legs. All were distributed to those in need of them, also covers and woollen stuffs for clothing. Admirable order was observed in this distribution. The women received their portion through the hands of women; the men, from men. There were people from the most widely scattered regions, who did not understand one another's language, but who with the greatest love handed over their property for distribution. The Apostles alone understood all.

Magdalen and Martha gave up their houses at Bethania to the new converts, and Lazarus delivered over all that he owned to the Community. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea did the same. They assumed the charge of providing for the Community and distributing the alms. But when they were ordained priests, Peter appointed deacons in their place.

14. The Days Immediately Preceding the Ascension

Jesus communicated with the Apostles quite naturally in those last days. He ate and prayed with them, walked with them in many directions, and repeated all that He had before told them. He appeared also to Simon of Cyrene as he was working in a garden between Bethphage and Jerusalem. Jesus, resplendent with light, approached him as if floating in the air. Simon fell on his knees and kissed the ground at Jesus' feet, who signed to him with His hand to keep silence, and then vanished. Some others that were working nearby likewise saw Jesus, and they too fell on their knees like Simon. When Jesus was walking with the Apostles around Jerusalem, some of the Jews perceived the apparition, and were terrified. They ran to hide themselves, or to shut themselves up in their houses. Even the Apostles and disciples accompanied Him with a certain degree of timidity, for there was in Him something too spiritual for them. Jesus appeared also in other places, Bethlehem and Nazareth for instance, to those especially with whom He and His Blessed Mother had formerly had intercourse. He scattered blessings everywhere, and they that saw Him believed and joined the Apostles and disciples.

On the last day but one before the Ascension, I saw Jesus with five of the Apostles approaching Bethania from the east, whither the Blessed Virgin

also, with other holy women, was coming from Jerusalem. Many of the Faithful were gathered around Lazarus'. They knew that Jesus was soon to leave them, and they wanted to see Him once more and bid Him goodbye. When Jesus had entered the house, these people were admitted into the spacious courtyard and the gates closed. Jesus took with the Apostles and disciples some refreshments standing, and to the latter, who were weeping bitterly, He said: "Why do ye weep, dear brethren? Behold this Woman! She is not weeping!" and He pointed to His Blessed Mother, who was standing with the holy women at the entrance of the hall. A long table was set in the court for the numerous strangers. Jesus went out to them, blessed little rolls, and distributed them, after which He gave them a sign to retire. And now His Blessed Mother humbly approached, to present to Him a petition. But Jesus, checking her with a gesture of His hand, told her that He could not grant it. Mary thanked most humbly, and withdrew.

Jesus took a singularly touching leave of Lazarus. He gave him a shining morsel, blessed him, and extended to him His hand. Lazarus, who generally remained hidden in his own house, did not accompany Jesus when He left for Jerusalem with the Apostles and disciples. They took the Palm Sunday route, though with many turnings into side ways. They went in four companies, allowing considerable distance to intervene between them. The Eleven went on with Jesus; the holy women followed last. I saw Jesus shining with light, a conspicuous figure in their midst. The marks of His wounds were not always visible to me, but when I did see them, they were brilliant as the sun. All were anxious and greatly depressed. Some were in tears; others were talking to one another, saying: "He has often before vanished from us," for they did not want to think that He would really leave them. Peter and John alone appeared more calm, as if they understood the

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Lord better, for Jesus often spoke to them interiorly and explained to them many things. He often disappeared and then suddenly reappeared in their midst, as if desirous of preparing them for His final departure.

The way ran past charming little gardens where Jews were busy weaving and clipping the hedges, on which lovely bushes covered with flowers were growing in the form of pyramids. The laborers often covered their faces with their hands, fell to the earth, or fled among the shrubbery, I know not whether from fright and terror or from deep emotion. I do not know whether they saw the Lord, or whether they could not see Him. Once I heard Jesus saying to the disciples: "After all these places shall have been converted to the Faith by your preaching, and after others shall have driven the Faithful away and laid all things waste—then shall come a sad time. Ye do not as yet comprehend Me, but when ye will for the last time celebrate with Me the Last Supper, then ye will understand Me better."

Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea had prepared a meal, which was served in the entrance hall of the house of the Last Supper. The hall opened on all sides, and a passage ran from the left through the courtyard, which was planted with trees, to the little house with the kitchen hearth built near the surrounding wall. The covered walks on the right were opened into the courtyard, and here were set the tables for the disciples. They consisted of long planks only. The table for Jesus and The Eleven was prepared in the entrance hall. On it stood little mugs and a large dish ornamented with delicate foliage, in which lay a fish along with some small rolls. On the disciples' table were fruits and three-cornered dishes containing honeycombs. Flat bone knives were placed around. Near every dish lay three slices of bread, for there was one dish for every three of the guests.

Jesus' Last Love Feast

The sun had set and it was beginning to grow dark when Jesus drew near with the Apostles. The Blessed Virgin, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea received Him at the gate. He went with His Blessed Mother into her little abode, while the Apostles proceeded to the entrance hall. When the disciples and holy women arrived somewhat later, Jesus joined The Eleven in the hall. The table, only one long side of which they occupied, was higher than those in general use. The Apostles reclined on cross-seats, but Jesus stood. At His side reclined John, who was more cheerful than the others. He was just like a child in disposition, now quickly troubled, and again full of consolation and joy. The lamp over the table was lighted. Nicodemus and Joseph served. I saw the Blessed Virgin standing at the entrance of the Supper Room. Jesus blessed the fish, the bread, and the herbs, and passed them around with words of earnest instruction. I saw His words like rays of light issuing from His mouth and entering that of the Apostles, into some quickly, into others slowly, according to their greater or less desire, their greater or less hunger after the teaching of Jesus. At the end of the meal, Jesus blessed the cup, drank from it, and then passed it around. This, however, was not a consecration.

The love feast over, all assembled outside the hall under the trees. Jesus addressed to them a long instruction, and ended by giving them His blessing. To His Blessed Mother, who was standing in front of the holy women, He extended His hand. All were very much affected, and I felt that Magdalen ardently longed to embrace Jesus' feet. But she restrained her desire, for His demeanor was so grave that He inspired holy fear. When He left them, they wept very much. It was not, however, an exterior weeping; it was like the weeping of the soul. I did not see the Blessed Virgin shedding tears. I never saw her actually weeping excepting when she lost Jesus,

a Boy of twelve, on her return journey from the Paschal festival, and again when she stood under the cross after His death. The assembly broke up before midnight.

15. Jesus' Ascension into Heaven

On the night before His wonderful Ascension, I saw Jesus in the inner hall of the house of the Last Supper with the Blessed Virgin and The Eleven. The disciples and the holy women were praying in the side halls. In the Supper Room the Communion Table was standing under the lighted lamp, and on it the Paschal Bread and chalice. The Apostles were in their robes of ceremony. The Blessed Virgin was opposite Jesus who, as on Maundy Thursday, was consecrating bread and wine.

I saw the Blessed Sacrament entering the mouths of the Apostles in the form of a luminous body, and Jesus' words at the consecration of the wine flowing into the chalice like a stream of red light.

During the last days, Magdalen, Martha, and Mary Cleophas received the Blessed Sacrament.

Toward morning, Matins were solemnly recited as usual under the lamp, Jesus again imparted to Peter jurisdiction over the others, again laid upon him the mantle of which I have spoken, and repeated what He had said on the mountain by the Sea of Tiberias. He gave some instructions also on Baptism and the blessing of water. During Matins and the instructions, I saw seventeen of the most confidential disciples standing in the hall behind the Blessed Virgin.

Before leaving the house, Jesus presented the Blessed Virgin to the Apostles and disciples as their Mother, their Mediatrix, and their Advocate, and she bestowed upon Peter and all the rest her blessing, which they received bowing very low. At that instant I beheld Mary raised upon a throne, a sky-blue mantle around her, a crown upon her head. This was

symbolical of her dignity as Queen of Mercy.

At dawn of day Jesus left the house of the Last Supper with The Eleven. The Blessed Virgin followed them closely; the disciples, at some little distance. They passed through the streets of Jerusalem where all was quiet, the inhabitants still buried in sleep. At each moment the Lord became more earnest, more rapid in speech and action. On the preceding evening He appeared to me much more sympathetic in His words to His followers. I recognized the route that they took as that of the Palm Sunday procession. I saw that Jesus went with them over all the paths trodden by Him during His Passion, in order to inspire them by His teachings and admonitions with a lively appreciation of the fulfillment of the Promise. In every place in which some scene of His Passion had been enacted, He paused a moment to instruct them upon the accomplishment of the words of the Prophets, upon the Promises, and to explain the symbolical relation of the place to the same. On those sites which the Jews had laid waste, over which they had thrown heaps of stones, through which they had opened ditches, or which they had rendered impassable in other ways in order to prevent their being venerated, Jesus ordered the disciples in His train to go on ahead and clear away all obstructions, which they quickly did. Then bowing low as He passed, they allowed Him to take the lead again while they followed. Just before the gate that led out to Mount Calvary, they turned aside from the road to a delightful spot shaded by trees. It was one of several places of prayer that lay around Jerusalem. Jesus paused to teach and comfort the little flock. Meanwhile, day dawned brightly; their hearts grew lighter, and they even began to think that Jesus would still remain with them.

New crowds of believers arrived, but I saw no women among them. Jesus again took the road that led to Mount Calvary and the Holy Sepulcher. But

He did not follow it up to those points; He turned off and went around the city to the Mount of Olives. Some of the places on these roads consecrated to prayer and sanctified by Jesus' teaching, and which had been laid waste or hedged in by the Jews, were now restored by the disciples. The tools for their work they found in the gardens on their way. I remember round shovels that looked like our bake oven shovels.

Jesus paused awhile with the crowd in an exceedingly cool and lovely spot covered with beautiful long grass, I was surprised to see that it was nowhere trodden down. The multitude that here surrounded Jesus was so great that I could no longer count them. Jesus spoke to them a very long time, like one who is about closing his discourse and coming to a conclusion. His hearers divined that the hour of parting was near, and yet they had no idea that the time still intervening was to be so short. The sun was already high, was already far above the horizon. I know not whether I express it rightly, for in that country it seems to me the sun is not so high as it is here. It always appears to me as if it were nearer to one. I do not see it as here, rising like a small globe. It shines there with far more brilliancy. Its rays are, on the whole, not so fine. They often look like a broad pathway of light, Jesus and His followers tarried here fully an hour. By this time the people in Jerusalem were all on the alert, amazed at the crowds of people they descried around Mount Olivet. Out of the city, too, crowds were pouring in bands. They consisted of all that had gone out to meet Jesus on Palm Sunday. The narrow roads were soon thronged, though around Jesus and His own, the space was left free.

The Lord went only to Gethsemani and from the Garden of Olives up to the summit of the mount. He did not set foot upon the path on which He had been arrested. The crowd followed as in a procession,

ascending by the different paths that encircled the mount. Many even pressed through the fences and garden hedges. Jesus at each instant shone more brightly and His motions became more rapid. The disciples hastened after Him, but it was impossible to overtake Him. When He reached the top of the mountain, He was resplendent as a beam of white sunlight. A shining circle, glancing in all the colors of the rainbow, fell from Heaven around Him. The pressing crowd stood in a wide circle outside, as if blending with it. Jesus Himself shone still more brightly than the glory about Him. He laid the left hand on His breast and, raising the right, turned slowly around, blessing the whole world. The crowd stood motionless. I saw all receive the benediction. Jesus did not impart it with the flat, open hand, like the rabbis, but like the Christian Bishops. With great joy I felt His blessing of the whole world.

And now the rays of light from above united with the glory emanating from Jesus, and I saw Him disappearing, dissolving as it were in the light from Heaven, vanishing as He rose. I lost sight of His head first. It appeared as if one sun was lost in another, as if one flame entered another, as if a spark floated into a flame. It was as if one were gazing into the full midday splendors of the sun, though this light was whiter and clearer. Full day compared with this would be dark. First, I lost sight of Jesus' head, then His whole person, and lastly His feet, radiant with light, disappeared in the celestial glory. I saw innumerable souls from all sides going into that light and vanishing on high with the Lord. I cannot say that I saw Him becoming apparently smaller and smaller like something flying up in the air, for He disappeared as it were in a cloud of light.

Out of that cloud, something like dew, like a shower of light fell upon all below, and when they could no longer endure the splendor, they were seized with

amazement and terror. The Apostles and disciples, who were nearest to Jesus, were blinded by the dazzling glare. They were forced to lower their eyes, while many cast themselves prostrate on their faces. The Blessed Virgin was standing close behind them and gazing calmly straight ahead.

After some moments, when the splendor began to diminish, the whole assembly in deep silence—their souls swayed by varying emotions—gazed fixedly up at the brightness, which continued visible for a long time, I saw two figures appear in this light. They looked small at first, but seemed to grow larger and larger as they descended. They were clothed in long white garments, and each held a staff in one hand. They looked like Prophets. They addressed the multitude, their voices like trumpets resounding loud and clear. It seemed to me that they could surely be heard in Jerusalem. They made no motion, stood perfectly still, and said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking up to Heaven? This Jesus who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come as you have seen Him going into Heaven."¹ After these words the figures vanished. The brightness remained for a while longer and then disappeared like daylight retiring before the darkness of night. The disciples were quite out of themselves, for they now comprehended what had happened to them. The Lord had left them and gone to His Heavenly Father! Many, stunned by grief and amazement, fell to the earth. When the glare had entirely died away, they arose again, and the others gathered around them. They formed groups, the Blessed Virgin stepped forward, and so they stood for some time longer recovering themselves, talking together, and gazing upward. At last, the Apostles and disciples went back to the house of the Last Supper, and the Blessed Virgin

1. These words were not repeated by Sister Emmerich. She merely said: "They spoke some words." The writer has transcribed them from the Acts of the Apostles.

followed. Some were weeping like children that refuse to be comforted, others were lost in thought. The Blessed Virgin, Peter, and John were very calm and full of consolation. I saw, however, some among the different groups who remained unmoved, unbelieving, and full of doubts. They withdrew from the rest.

On the top of Mount Olivet, from which Jesus ascended, there was a level rock. On it He stood addressing the multitude before He blessed them and the cloud of light received Him. His footsteps remained impressed on the stone, and on another the mark of one hand of the Blessed Virgin. It was past noon before the crowd entirely dispersed.

The Apostles and disciples now felt themselves alone. They were at first restless and like people forsaken. But by the soothing presence of the Blessed Virgin they were comforted, and putting entire confidence in Jesus' words that she would be to them a mediatrix, a mother, and an advocate, they regained peace of soul.

A certain fear stole over the Jews in Jerusalem. I saw many closing doors and windows, others gathering together in groups. During the last days, they had experienced some peculiar feelings of alarm, which today were greatly intensified.

On the following days I saw the Apostles always together and the Blessed Virgin with them in the house of the Last Supper. At the last repast of Jesus, and ever after, I saw Mary when at prayer and the breaking of bread always opposite Peter, who now took the Lord's place in the prayer circle and at meals. I received at the time the impression that Mary now held a position of high importance among the Apostles, and that she was placed over the Church.

The Apostles kept themselves very much aloof. I saw no one out of the great crowd of Jesus' followers going to them into the house of the Last Supper.

They guarded more against persecution from the Jews and gave themselves up to more earnest and well regulated prayer than did the disciples dispersed in bands throughout the other apartments of the same house. The latter went in and out more freely. I saw many of them also very devoutly traversing the way of the Lord by night.

At the election of Mathias to the Apostolate, I saw Peter in the house of the Last Supper. He was clothed in his episcopal mantle and was standing in the center of the circle formed by the Apostles. The disciples were gathered in the open side halls. Peter proposed Joses Barsabas and Mathias, both of whom were standing off among the bands of disciples. There were some among these that wanted to be chosen in Judas' place. The two mentioned had never thought of such a thing, and had no desires on the subject. Next day the lots were cast, Barsabas and Mathias being excluded from the assembly. When it was found that the lot had fallen on Mathias, someone went into the disciples' apartments and led him to the Apostles.

16. The Holy Day of Pentecost

The whole interior of the Last Supper room was, on the eve of the feast, ornamented with green bushes in whose branches were placed vases of flowers. Garlands of green were looped from side to side. The screens that cut off the side halls and the vestibule were removed; only the gate of the outer court was closed. Peter in his episcopal robe stood at a table covered with red and white under the lamp in front of the curtained Holy of Holies. On the table lay rolls of writing. Opposite him in the doorway leading from the entrance hall stood the Blessed Virgin, her face veiled, and behind her in the entrance hall stood the holy women. The Apostles stood in two rows turned toward Peter along either side of the

hall, and from the side halls, the disciples ranged behind the Apostles took part in the hymns and prayers. When Peter broke and distributed the bread that he had previously blessed, first to the Blessed Virgin, then to the Apostles and disciples who stepped forward to receive it, they kissed his hand, the Blessed Virgin included. Besides the holy women, there were in the house of the Last Supper and its dependencies one hundred and twenty of Jesus' followers.

After midnight there arose a wonderful movement in all nature. It communicated itself to all present as they stood in deep recollection, their arms crossed on their breast, near the pillars of the Supper Room and in the side halls, silently praying. Stillness pervaded the house, and silence reigned throughout the whole enclosure.

Toward morning I saw above the Mount of Olives a glittering white cloud of light coming down from Heaven and drawing near to the house. In the distance it appeared to me like a round ball borne along on a soft, warm breeze. But coming nearer, it looked larger and floated over the city like a luminous mass of fog until it stood above Sion and the house of the Last Supper. It seemed to contract and to shine with constantly increasing brightness, until at last with a rushing, roaring noise as of wind, it sank like a thunder cloud floating low in the atmosphere. I saw many Jews, who espied the cloud, hurrying in terror to the Temple. I myself experienced a childlike anxiety as to where I should hide if the stroke were to follow, for the whole thing was like a storm that had suddenly gathered, that instead of rising from the earth came down from Heaven, that was light instead of dark, that instead of thundering came down with a rushing wind. I felt that rushing motion. It was like a warm breeze full of power to refresh and invigorate.

The luminous cloud descended low over the house,

and with the increasing sound, the light became brighter. I saw the house and its surroundings more clearly, while the Apostles, the disciples, and the women became more and more silent, more deeply recollected. Afterward there shot from the rushing cloud streams of white light down upon the house and its surroundings. The streams intersected one another in sevenfold rays, and below each intersection resolved into fine threads of light and fiery drops. The point at which the seven streams intersected was surrounded by a rainbow light, in which floated a luminous figure with outstretched wings, or rays of light that looked like wings, attached to the shoulders. In that same instant the whole house and its surroundings were penetrated through and through with light. The five-branched lamp no longer shone. The assembled Faithful were ravished in ecstasy. Each involuntarily threw back his head and raised his eyes eagerly on high, while into the mouth of everyone there flowed a stream of light like a burning tongue of fire. It looked as if they were breathing, as if they were eagerly drinking in the fire, and as if their ardent desire flamed forth from their mouth to meet the entering flame. The sacred fire was poured forth also upon the disciples and the women present in the antechamber, and thus the resplendent cloud gradually dissolved as if in a rain of light. The flames descended on each in different colors and in different degrees of intensity. After that effusion of heavenly light, a joyous courage pervaded the assembly. All were full of emotion, and as if intoxicated with joy and confidence. They gathered around the Blessed Virgin who was, I saw, the only one perfectly calm, the only one that retained a quiet, holy self-possession. The Apostles embraced one another and, urged by joyous confidence, exclaimed: "What were we? What are we now?" The holy women too embraced. The disciples in the side halls were similarly affected, and the Apostles hastened

out to them. A new life full of joy, of confidence, and of courage had been infused into all. Their joy found vent in thanksgiving. They ranged for prayer, gave thanks and praised God with great emotion. The light meanwhile vanished. Peter delivered an instruction to the disciples, and sent several of them out to the inns of the Pentecost guests.

Between the house of the Last Supper and the Pool of Bethesda there were several sheds and public lodging houses for the accommodation of guests come up for the feast. They were at this time very numerous, and they too received the grace of the Holy Ghost. An extraordinary movement pervaded all nature. Good people were roused interiorly, while the wicked became timid, uneasy, and still more stiff-necked. Most of these strangers had been encamped here since the Pasch, because the distance from their homes rendered a journey to and fro between that feast and Pentecost altogether impracticable. They were become, by all that they had seen and heard, quite intimate and kindly disposed toward the disciples, so that the latter, intoxicated with joy, announced to them the Promise of the Holy Ghost as fulfilled. Then too did they become conscious of a change within their own souls and, at the summons of the disciples, they gathered around the Pool of Bethesda.

In the house of the Last Supper, Peter imposed hands on five of the Apostles who were to help to teach and baptize at the Pool of Bethesda. They were James the Less, Bartholomew, Mathias, Thomas, and Jude Thaddeus. The last-named had a vision during his ordination. It seemed to him that he was clasping to his breast the Body of the Lord.

Before departing for the Pool of Bethesda to consecrate the water and administer Baptism, they received on their knees the benediction of the Blessed Virgin. Before Jesus' Ascension, this ceremony was performed standing. On the following days I saw

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this blessing given whenever the Apostles left the house, and also on their return. The Blessed Virgin wore on such occasions, and generally when she appeared among the Apostles in her post of dignity, a large white mantle, a creamy white veil, and a scarf of sky-blue stuff that hung from her head down both sides to the ground. It was ornamented with embroidery, and was held firmly on the head by a white silken crown.

Baptism at the Pool of Bethsaida had been arranged by Jesus Himself for this day's feast, and the disciples had, in consequence, made all kinds of preparations at the pool, as well as in the old synagogue that they had appropriated for their own use. The walls of the synagogue were hung with tapestry, and from the building down to the pool a covered tent-way was erected.

The Apostles and disciples went in solemn procession, two by two, from the house of the Last Supper to the Pool. Some of the disciples carried a leathern bottle of holy water and an asperges. The five Apostles upon whom Peter had imposed hands separated, each taking one of the five entrances to the pool, and addressed the people with great enthusiasm. Peter stepped upon the teacher's chair that had been prepared for him in the third circle of the Pool, counting from the outside one. This terrace was the broadest. The hearers filled all the terraces of the pool. When the Apostles spoke, the multitude hearkened in amazement, for everyone listened to what sounded to him his own language. It was owing to this astonishment of the people that Peter lifted up his voice, as is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. (*Acts 2:14-40*).

As many presented themselves for Baptism, Peter, assisted by John and James the Less, solemnly blessed the water. The holy water, which they had brought in a leathern bottle from the house of the Last Supper, Peter sprinkled in fine streams far over

the pool with an asperges. The preparations for Baptism and the Baptism itself occupied the whole day. The neophytes approached Peter's chair in bands and by turns, the other Apostles preaching and baptizing at the entrances. The Blessed Virgin and the holy women were busy in the synagogue near the pool, distributing the white garments to the neophytes. The sleeves of these garments were bound over the hands with black bands, which were taken off after Baptism and laid together in a pile. The neophytes leaned upon a railing. The water was scooped up in a basin and then with the hand poured three times over the head. It flowed again through a channel into the pool below. One basin held enough water for about ten couples. Every two baptized gave place to two neophytes upon whom they laid their hands as sponsors. Those baptized here today were they that had received John's baptism only. The holy women too were baptized. The people added to the Community today amounted to three thousand. That evening the Apostles and disciples returned to the house of the Last Supper, where they took a repast and distributed blessed bread. Then came the evening prayer.

The Jews offered today in the Temple little baskets containing two small loaves made of this year's grain. The baskets were deposited one upon another, until they formed high heaps, and they were afterward distributed to the poor. Once I saw that the High Priest had in his hand a bunch of ears, thick like maize. Something like roots also was offered, and some kind of fruit unknown to me. The strangers under the sheds had asses laden with them, and the people made purchases of them. The bread was of their own baking. The Apostles offered only the two loaves through Peter.

On the following days also, preaching and baptizing went on at the pool. Before the Apostles and disciples went down for these duties, they received the blessing of the Blessed Virgin.

17. The Church at the Pool of Bethsaida

The Pool of Bethsaida lay in a ravine of the valley that separated Mount Sion from the Temple and the rest of that quarter of the city, and which declined eastward into the Valley of Josaphat. It seemed to have been constructed in such a way as to cut off the view of the Temple on the west, for on one side one could not see all around, as could be done on the others. The way to it was indeed broad enough, but the walls were partly overturned and the road was full of grass and sedge. Just at that point it ran down into a ravine which became greener in proportion to its depth. From the pool could be seen off to the southwest an angle of the Holy of Holies. The sheep pool lay to the north of the Temple near the cattle market, and was entirely enclosed by a wall. From the house of the Last Supper, which stood on the eastern height of Mount Sion, the way led to the Pool of Bethsaida first to the east around the height of Sion, then wound in a half-circle to the north, then turned to the west, and lastly eastward again down into a curve. The whole of this quarter of Sion as far as the pool and across down into the Valley of Josaphat, presented an appearance of desolation. In the dilapidated buildings were formed dwellings for the poor, on the slopes grew groves of juniper trees, and the hollows were covered with high grass and reeds. The Jews shunned this locality, so the new converts now began to settle in it.

The Pool of Bethsaida was oval in form and surrounded by five terraces, like an amphitheater. Five flights of steps led down to the pool from these terraces to the little trough like skiffs in which the sick who were seeking a cure were laid when waiting to be sprinkled by the bubbling waters. There was also in the pool a copper pump, which arose to nearly the height of a man above the surface of the water

and was about as large around as a churn. A little wooden bridge with a railing led to it. I saw by the bridge a tube and piston, which were connected with the pump. When the piston was forced down, a valve was opened and a stream of water squirted out of the pump. By changes made in the opening, the stream could be increased or diminished and made to flow in different directions. The top of the pump could be closed also, and from side jets the streams could be made to spurt all around, like water from a watering pot. I often saw the sick in the skiffs rowing up to the pump to receive the streams over them. The entrance to the Pool was usually closed. It was opened for the sick only. This pump was out of use, and on the feast of Pentecost was not yet repaired, but a few days later I saw it restored. The terrace walls contained little vaulted halls in which were stone benches hollowed out in the form of a trough. They were for the accommodation of the sick. They could from all sides look down upon the pool, to see whether the waters were being stirred or not. The lowest terrace, the one nearest the pool, was provided with little parapets, or bars. The bottom of the pool was covered with shining white sand, through which three springs bubbled up and sometimes jetted above the surface of the water. The blood of the animals offered in sacrifice flowed through pipes under the altar in the Temple down into the Pool. With its surroundings and the old buildings in its vicinity, the pool covered a very large area. Before reaching it, one had to pass a wall through which there were only three openings. To the east of the pool, the valley made a steep descent, but westward, back of the pool, it was less deep and was spanned by a little bridge. The north side too was steep and overgrown, and on the northeast was a road conducting to the Temple. But it was now gone to ruin and altogether impracticable. Little footpaths, however, led into the city, so that one did not have to

go by the public gates. Jesus had often made use of these paths.

The whole pool had hitherto been out of use, for it as well as its surroundings had been allowed to fall to decay. Like many old sanctuaries of our own day, it was quite neglected. Only some poor people with lively faith still held it in veneration and visited it. After the healing of the paralytic by Jesus, the pool was again more frequented, though all the more hateful to the Pharisees. The outer walls were in some places quite in ruins, and many parts of the terraces were in a dilapidated condition. But now all was repaired. The fallen walls were partly replaced by movable screens, and from the pool to the synagogue was raised a covered tent-way.

The old synagogue, which was now erected into a church, was less hemmed in by buildings than the house of the Last Supper, whose court on one side adjoined a row of houses. I saw the Apostles and disciples, after the Feast of Pentecost, working continually at the interior arrangements of the Church. Peter, John, Andrew, and James the Less took turns in preaching at three different places around the pool and on the third terrace, upon which was Peter's chair of instruction. A great many of the Faithful were always in attendance, and I often saw them prostrate on the ground in ardent prayer. Words cannot say what activity reigned throughout the whole Community at all times. Weaving, plaiting, and every kind of work for the new church and for the poor were carried on.

The church was a large, long, quadrangular edifice with real windows high up in the walls. By means of steps in the wall, one could mount up on the outside to the flat roof, which was surrounded by a gallery. On it were three little cupolas that could be opened like draught holes. The inside, on the two lengths and one of the ends, was furnished with stone benches for the congregation, and the

building was in all respects turned into a church. At one end was the altar, at such a distance from the wall that sufficient space was left behind for a sacristy, which was formed by wickerwork screens that reached from the altar to the side walls. These screens were covered in front with fine white stuff, on the other side with coarser. The altar was portable. It consisted of a long, four-cornered piece of wood covered, and resting on three steps. On either side, however, there was only a single step, which could be opened to allow carpets to be laid in, and the back of the altar likewise opened to receive the vestments. On it was a bell-shaped tabernacle with a fine white cover closed in front by two little metallic shields. There was a knob on top, by which it could be lifted. On either side of the tabernacle were branched lamps with burning wicks. The whole altar was enclosed by a white curtain with colored stripes, which was supported by a canopy. It hung down only a little below the top of the altar. The canopy itself formed a niche and depended by five straps from the hand of a figure embroidered by the holy women. It represented an old man in the robes of a High Priest, a triangular halo around the head. It stood in a bowed posture, as if looking down through an opening in the cover, one hand outstretched as if giving a blessing, the other grasping the five straps of the canopy. The curtain was in one piece at the back, but in front it could be drawn to either side or closed with metal clasps.

From the raised altar down to the pulpit was a space set aside apart for the choir ceremonies of the Apostles and disciples. After the holy Resurrection I saw them assembled every day in the Last Supper room for prayer in choir. The Apostles stood along either side of the hall facing the Holy of Holies, while the disciples occupied the vestibule thrown open for the occasion. They sang and prayed, choir and choir. I saw Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea,

and Obed present also. The Blessed Virgin usually stood under the middle entrance of the vestibule, her face turned toward the Holy of Holies. She wore the long white mantle and was veiled. Jesus had Himself arranged the choral service, and about the time of the eating of the fish at Tiberias, or perhaps during the meal itself, explained to the Apostles the mysterious signification of this religious ceremony. He had repeated the same on the occasion of Thomas' touching His sacred wounds and giving testimony of his faith. Once also I saw that Jesus appeared to them while they were chanting in choir before daybreak. They daily assembled twice, in the evening till after dark, and before dawn in the morning. Below the pulpit the congregation was cut off from the choir by a grating, through many places of which the Blessed Sacrament could be reached to them. It was almost like the grating seen in cloisters. On either side of the pulpit there were small doors by which the Apostles and disciples could enter the choir. The congregation was arranged in a certain order, the women separate from the men.

I saw the Apostles and disciples going in procession with the Blessed Sacrament from the house of the Last Supper to the new church. Before setting out, Peter, standing in the entrance to the courtyard and surrounded by about twenty of the disciples, delivered a public discourse before many people. He spoke in fiery words. Many Jews ran to hear, and tried to interrupt him by advancing objections, but their efforts were fruitless. The discourse over, the procession wound down to the new church near the Pool, Peter bearing in his hands the chalice containing the Blessed Sacrament. The chalice was covered with a white linen, something like a bag, which was suspended from his neck. The Blessed Virgin walked after the Apostles with the other women and the disciples. A part of the way was hung with screens of matting, and in the vicinity of the church, the

road was even covered in with awnings. The Blessed Sacrament was placed in the new tabernacle on the altar. The tray full of blessed bread had also been brought.

The floor of the church, like that of the house of the Last Supper in these latter days, was covered with colored carpets. The Faithful entered barefoot.

The Blessed Sacrament was deposited in a vessel whose cover could be turned to one side. It lay in morsels on a plate that covered the bottom of the vessel and which could be raised by means of a handle, the more conveniently to get at them.

18. Peter Celebrates the First Holy Mass in the Last Supper Room

On the eighth day after Pentecost, I saw the Apostles busily engaged the whole night in the house of the Last Supper, praying, etc. At daybreak they went with many of the disciples into the Temple, to which the Blessed Virgin and the holy women had preceded them. There appeared to be a feast going on, for in front of the entrance a triumphal arch had been erected upon which stood a figure holding a conqueror's sword. Beneath this arch Peter addressed a great crowd of people in powerful language. He told them openly that no punishment, neither scourging nor crucifixion, should deter them from publicly proclaiming Jesus Christ. He then entered the Temple and preached from the teacher's chair that Jesus had so often occupied. Once I heard all the Apostles and disciples interrupting Peter's discourse with a loud "Yes," as if in confirmation of his words. Afterward, when they were engaged in prayer, I saw a cloud of light hovering over the Temple, and such rays streaming down upon them that the tiny flames of the lamps looked quite dim and red compared with them.

Toward eight o'clock that morning, they left the

Temple. In the court of the heathens they formed in a long procession, two by two, first the Apostles, after them the disciples, then the baptized and the newly converted. They proceeded across the cattle market to the sheep gate, out into the Valley of Josaphat, and thence up Sion to the house of the Last Supper. The Blessed Virgin and the other women had left the Temple some time previously, in order to kneel alone before the Blessed Sacrament and pray. Magdalen prayed in the entrance hall sometimes standing, sometimes kneeling, or again prostrate on the ground, her arms outstretched. The other women had retired into their cells adjoining the church of Bethsaida. There they dwelt two together, occupying their time in washing and preparing the baptismal garments for the neophytes, and with the arrangement of such things for distribution.

When the procession reached the court of the Last Supper house, the new converts were ranged in order by the Apostles outside the entrance hall. Peter and John went into the house and escorted the Blessed Virgin to the door of the entrance hall. She was clothed in robes of ceremony. She wore the long white mantle with the embroidered facing down the sides, and over her veil the narrow scarf that hung down on either side and was kept in place by a wreath. Peter addressed the new converts and presented them to the Blessed Virgin as to their common Mother. He led them forward in bands of about twenty, one after another, and they received the benediction of the Blessed Virgin.

After that I saw solemn service celebrated in the Last Supper room, into which the side halls and entrance hall were thrown open. In the sanctuary over the altar hung a festal wreath of green leaves and flowers. On either side of the chalice, that used at the Last Supper, were lighted lamps. The chalice was raised on a stand of some kind, and concealed under a little white cover. There was also on the

altar a smaller chalice and some bread, both covered, and behind them a plate upon which stood two vessels, one for water, the other for wine. The plate was put aside; then the water vessel was placed at one end of the altar, the wine vessel at the other.

Peter, vested in his episcopal mantle, celebrated holy Mass. John and James the Less served him. I saw all the ceremonies performed just as Jesus had performed them at the institution of the Holy Eucharist: the Offertory, the pouring of wine into the chalice, the washing of the fingers, and the Consecration. Wine and water were poured at different sides of the altar, on one end of which were lying the rolls of Scripture. They were written in two columns and, by means of pegs placed higher or lower on the desk that supported them, they could be rolled or unrolled. When one leaf was read, it was thrown over the desk. There were many leaves lying one over another. After Peter had communicated, he handed his two assistants the Sacrament, the Bread and the Chalice. Then John handed the Sacrament first to the Blessed Virgin, then to the Apostles and the six disciples, who afterward received priestly ordination, and to many others. The communicants were kneeling, before them a narrow linen cloth, which two held on either side. I did not see the Faithful partake of the chalice.

The six disciples who now received ordination were thereby advanced to a rank above the disciples, though below that of the Apostles. Mary brought the vestments for them and laid them on the altar. The disciples ordained were Zacheus, Nathanael, Joses Barsabas, Barnabas, John Mark, and Eliud, a son of the aged Simeon. They knelt, two by two, before Peter, who addressed them and read prayers from a little roll. John and James held lights in one hand and laid the other on their shoulders, while Peter imposed his on their head. Peter cut some hair from their head and placed it on the altar in the little

plate; then he anointed their head and fingers from a box that John was holding. The vestments were next put on, the stole being crossed first under the arm and then in front over the breast. I saw that the ceremonies, though more solemn, were shorter than at the present day. At the close of the solemnity, Peter blessed the Faithful with the large chalice of the Last Supper in which reposed the Blessed Sacrament.

Mary and the other women went after that to the church of the Pool of Bethsaida. The Apostles, disciples, and the neophytes went thither also in procession with singing. Mary prayed there kneeling before the altar in the choir. Peter gave an instruction from the pulpit in reference to the order to be observed in the new Community. No one, he said, was to have more than the others. All must share what they had and provide for the poor newcomers. His discourse, moreover, embodied thanks for the Saviour's graces, and blessings upon the Community.

Baptism was next administered, and several of the Apostles were engaged in it. Two laid their hands upon the neophytes who, holding the railing of the little bridge that led to the pump, bowed their head to the stream issuing from it. Peter, who had put on his girdle over his white garment, turned the stream three times with his hand over the head of the neophyte, pronouncing the words at the same moment. I often saw a radiant cloud dissolving over the baptized, or a ray of light falling upon them, I saw that they were marvelously strengthened and, as it were, transfigured, transformed. It was most touching to see people from far-off countries leaving all that belonged to them, and coming hither to form one with the Community of Jesus. At the edge of the pool burned a light on a pole, just such a one as those used by the guards at the Holy Sepulcher.

That evening in the entrance hall of the house of the Last Supper, a meal was spread during which

the Blessed Virgin sat at table with the Apostles, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and Lazarus.

19. First General Communion of The New Converts. Choice of the Seven Deacons

All the baptized since Pentecost were instructed in the Bethsaida church upon the Most Blessed Sacrament and prepared for Its reception by six of the Apostles robed in long white garments. They received It at the Holy Mass celebrated by Peter in the Bethsaida church, assisted by two of the Apostles. Peter wore over his long, white robe and broad girdle with its flowing ends, a mantle that was taken out from the chest formed in the back of the altar. It was red and shining gold. It was like a large cape, deep in the back and pointed in front; and it fell so low over the shoulders that only the girdle could be seen at the side. It was fastened on the breast with three little shields. On the middle one just in front of the breast was the representation of a figure holding a loaf in one hand. The lowest shield, that nearest the points, or the ends of the mantle, bore on it a cross. On either shoulder was a figure formed of precious stones.

The altar was covered first with a red and over that a white transparent cloth, on which was laid another little white linen cloth like a corporal. On an oval plate lay a little pile of white bread sliced very thin and furrowed with lines for breaking. Beside it stood a white bowl with a foot like a low chalice, or ciborium, in which after being consecrated by Peter the bread broken into morsels was placed for distribution among the Faithful. Besides all this, the chalice used at the Last Supper was standing full of wine on the altar. When, during Holy Mass, Peter uttered the words of consecration over the bread and wine, I saw the bread become luminous, while above the altar, as if issuing from a cloud,

appeared a resplendent hand. It accompanied the movements of Peter's hand as he blessed the bread and wine, and did not disappear till all dispersed after receiving Communion.

The Apostles and disciples were the first to receive the Blessed Sacrament from Peter after his own Communion. When the bowl, or ciborium, was emptied, Peter replenished it from the plate on the altar, and then proceeded with the distribution of the Sacred Species. The chalice also was handed by him to the Apostles and to all the others. The communicants were so numerous that the church could not contain them, and many had to stand outside. The first to receive Holy Communion left the church in order to allow others to enter. The communicants did not kneel, but while receiving stood reverently bowed.

Before choosing the seven deacons, I saw the Apostles gathered around Peter in the Last Supper room, where they assisted him in a solemn ceremony. They accompanied him to the Holy of Holies, where John laid upon him the mantle, another placed the miter on his head, and another put the crosier into his hand. After all had received Communion from Peter, robed in his sacred vestments and surrounded by the Apostles, he addressed in the entrance hall a large crowd of disciples and new converts. He said among other things that it was not becoming for the Word of God to be neglected for the care of clothing and nourishment; consequently Lazarus, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea could not with propriety longer oversee the temporal interests of the Community as they had hitherto done, for they now had become priests. Then he added some words relative to the order observed in the distribution of alms, of household affairs, of widows and orphans. Stephen, a slender, handsome youth, stepped forward and offered himself for the services needed. Among others that did the same, I recognized Parmenas, who was one of the elder disciples. There were among them some

Moors, still very young, who had not yet received the Holy Ghost. Peter laid his hands upon them and the stole crossed under their arm. While he did so a light was infused upon those that had not yet received the Holy Ghost. After that the treasures and goods of the Community were delivered over to the seven deacons, and for their accommodation was assigned Joseph of Arimathea's house, which was not far from that of John Mark. John Mark helped them. The money was carried on asses, and consisted of bags filled with different kinds of coins. Some were like little stalks twisted into screws, others like stamped plate strung together on a little chain, and others again were in small, oval leaves. Most of the movables consisted of large packs of different stuffs, coverlets, clothing, also numbers of vessels and various kinds of furniture suitable for plain housekeeping.

On the day following the giving over of Joseph of Arimathea's house to the deacons, I saw the Apostles dispersing into Judea.

Peter wrought more miracles than all the others. He drove out devils, raised the dead—yes, I even saw an angel going before him to the people and telling them that they should do penance and ask Peter for help.

I saw the healing of the lame man. It was about three hours after noon when Peter and John went up to the Temple with several of the disciples. Mary and some of the holy women went too. A lame man had been brought on a litter and laid at the door of the Temple. Peter and John, on their arrival, exchanged some words with him. Then I saw Peter standing under an awning in the open square on the south side of the Temple, his back turned to that part of the edifice in which was the altar of sacrifice, and addressing the people in a fiery speech. During his instruction I saw the door of egress beset by soldiers and priests conferring together. And now I saw Peter and John, as they turned again toward

the Temple, accosted by the lame man and petitioned for alms. He was lying outside the door, a perfect cripple, leaning on the left elbow, while vainly striving to raise something with the crutch in his right hand. Peter said to him: "Look up!" and when the man obeyed, he continued: "I have no silver nor gold, but what I have, I give to thee! In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk!" Peter raised him by the right hand, while John grasped him under the shoulder. The man, full of joy and vigor, stood upon his feet, and I saw him leaping about cured, and running with shouts of triumph through the halls of the Temple.

Twelve Jewish priests who were there seated on their chairs looked, with outstretched necks, in the direction of the tumult, and as the crowd around the cured man increased at every moment, they left their seats and withdrew. Peter and John went into the forecourt, and I saw the former mounting the teacher's chair from which Jesus had taught as a Boy of twelve. The cured man was standing before him encompassed by a multitude of people, some from the city, others strangers from a distance. Peter preached long and in words full of inspiration. It was already dark when I saw him, along with John and the cured man, seized by the Temple soldiers and thrown into a prison near the judgment hall in which he had denied the Lord. Next day all three were taken by the soldiers, and with much ill-usage, up the same flight of steps upon which Jesus had stood, and there tried by Caiaphas and the other priests. Peter spoke with great warmth, after which they were set free.

The rest of the Apostles had passed the night in the house of the Last Supper in continual prayer for the prisoners. When Peter and John returned and told them all that had taken place, their joy burst out into a loud act of thanksgiving, and the whole house shook, as if the Lord wanted to remind

them thereby that He was still among them and had heard their prayer. Upon that, James the Less said that Jesus, when He appeared to him alone on the mountain in Galilee, had told him that after Peter and John, on going up to the Temple, would be imprisoned and then set free, they should keep themselves somewhat retired for awhile.

On this news, I saw the Apostles shutting up everything, and Peter, with the Blessed Sacrament suspended round his neck in a bag, going with the others to Bethania. They made the journey in three bands. The Mother of God and other women went also. While in Bethania, the Apostles preached enthusiastically at the disciples' inn, at Simon's, and at Lazarus'. When they again returned to Jerusalem, they were more enthusiastic, more determined than ever. Peter, when teaching in the house of the Last Supper and in the church at the Pool of Bethesda, declared that now was the time to discover who had preserved the Spirit sent by Jesus, now was the time to labor, to suffer persecution, and to give up all things. Whoever did not feel himself strong enough for this should depart. I saw that about a hundred of those that had most recently joined the Community withdrew from the great crowd in the Bethesda church.

When Peter, accompanied by John and seven other Apostles, went again to teach in the Temple, he found numbers of sick lying on litters under tents in the Valley of Josaphat. Many others were lying around the Temple in the court of the heathens and even up as far as the steps. I saw Peter performing most of the cures. The others did indeed effect some, but they helped Peter more than they cured. Peter cured those only that believed and were desirous of joining the Community. In those places in which the sick lay in two rows opposite each other, I saw cured, Peter willing it, those upon whom his shadow fell, while he was busied with the opposite row.

THE LIFE OF MARY AFTER CHRIST'S ASCENSION

1. The Blessed Virgin Goes with John To the Neighborhood of Ephesus

About one year after the Crucifixion of Our Lord, Stephen was stoned, though no further persecution of the Apostles took place at that time. The rising settlement of new converts around Jerusalem, however, was dissolved, the Christians dispersed, and some were murdered. A few years later, a new storm arose against them. Then it was that the Blessed Virgin, who until that time had dwelt in the small house near the Coenaculum and in Bethania, allowed herself to be conducted by John to the region of Ephesus, where the Christians had already made settlements. This happened a short time after the imprisonment of Lazarus and his sisters by the Jews and their setting out over the sea. John returned again to Jerusalem, where the other Apostles still were. James the Greater was one of the first of the Apostles who, after the division of the different countries had been made, left Jerusalem and started for Spain. I saw him on his departure in Bethlehem, where he concealed himself in the Crib Cave and then with his companions secretly wandering through the country, for there were spies in search of them with orders to prevent their leaving Palestine. But James had friends in Joppa, and he succeeded in embarking. He sailed first to Ephesus in order to visit Mary, and thence to Spain. Shortly before his death, he visited Mary and John a second time in their home at Ephesus. Here Mary told him that

his death would soon take place in Jerusalem. She encouraged and consoled him. James took leave of her and his brother John, and started for Jerusalem. It was at this period that he was brought into contact with Hermogenes and his pupil, both of whom he converted by his miracles. James was several times apprehended and taken before the Synagogue. I saw that shortly before Easter, while he was preaching on a hill in an open square of Jerusalem, he was arrested. It must have been about this time, for I saw the customary encampments around the city. James was not imprisoned long. He was sentenced to death in the same place of trial as Jesus. The whole place, however, had undergone a change. Those sites upon which Jesus had trodden were no longer in existence, and I have always thought that none other ever after trod the same. I saw James led out toward Mount Calvary. He continued his preaching all along the way, and thereby made many converts. When they bound his hands, he remarked: "Ye can bind my hands, but ye cannot bind the blessing, ye cannot bind my tongue!" A lame man was sitting by the roadside. He called to James, begging him to extend his hand and help him. James responded: "Come thou to me, and reach out thine hand to me!" The lame man arose, seized the fettered hands of the Apostle, and was cured. I saw also the man that had denounced him. He was named Josias. His heart smote him. He hurried to the Apostle and begged forgiveness. He declared himself for Christ and was likewise put to death. James asked him whether he desired Baptism, and when Josias answered yes, he embraced and kissed him, saying: "Thou wilt be baptized in thy blood!" I saw a woman running with her blind child to James on the place of execution, and imploring its restoration to sight.

James was at first stationed near Josias on an elevated place, and the sentence proclaimed aloud. Then he was laid on a large stone, his hands bound

to it, his eyes blindfolded, and his head struck off. This took place in the twelfth year after Jesus' death, or between 46 and 47 after the Birth of Christ. I did not see James present at the death of the Blessed Virgin in Ephesus. There was another in his place, a relative of the Holy Family, and one of the first among the seventy-two disciples. Mary died in the year 48 after the Birth of Christ, thirteen years and two months after Christ's Ascension. This was shown me in numbers, not in writing. First, I saw IV, and then VIII, which denoted the year 48; lastly, I saw XIII, and two full months.

The Blessed Virgin's dwelling was not in Ephesus itself, but from three to four hours distant. It stood on a height upon which several Christians from Judea, among them some of the holy women related to her, had taken up their abode. Between this height and Ephesus glided, with many a crooked curve, a little river. The height sloped obliquely toward Ephesus. From the southeast one beheld the city as if lying just before him, at the foot of a mountain, but on nearer approach, he found the latter stretching still further away. From Ephesus, before which I saw great avenues with yellow fruit strewing the ground, narrow footpaths led up to this wild, overgrown height, upon which, to the circumference of about an hour, stretched a very solitary but fertile plain covered with smooth-trunked, wide-spreading trees, and containing clean rocky caves. These latter had, by means of light woodwork, been converted into hermitages by the early Christian settlers who had fled thither for refuge. These abodes, along with others that stood alone scattered here and there over the whole country, gave the region the appearance of a little village. From the top of this elevated plain, which was nearer to the sea than Ephesus, one could see both the city itself and the sea with its numerous islands. Not very far from the Christian settlement rose a castle whose occupant appeared to be

a deposed king. John often visited him and finally converted him. At a later period, this place became a bishopric. Among the Christians settled here, I saw women, children, and some men. Not all of these people had intercourse with the Blessed Virgin. Only some holy women came now and then for a visit, or to render her some assistance, for they saw to her needs. The locality was very retired and seldom visited by anyone, for no highway ran through it. The people of Ephesus did not trouble themselves about the little colony, and so they lived as if forgotten. The soil was fruitful, and the settlers owned some gardens and orchards. The only animals I saw in this place were wild goats.

Before John brought the Blessed Virgin to this settlement, he had built for her a dwelling of stone very similar to her own at Nazareth. It stood among trees, and was divided into two apartments by the fireplace in the center. The fire was on the earth opposite the entrance, in a kind of furnace formed by the wall, which rose up on either side like steps to the roof of the house. In it was cut the flue, from which the smoke escaped through a tube that protruded above the flat roof.

The front room of the house was separated from the back by wicker screens placed on either side of the fireplace. Similar screens rested against the walls, right and left, the whole length of the house. They were used to form little apartments when needed, and could be easily put aside when the room was to be used as one. Mary's maidservant used one of them as a sleeping apartment, and the others were occupied by the holy women of the settlement when they happened to come on a visit of some length.

To the right and left on either side of the fireplace, light doors opened through the wicker partition into the two back rooms, whose end walls were rounded and very pleasing to the eye, covered as

they were with neatly wrought woodwork. The roof was rounded on the sides, and the beams above it were bound with wainscoting and twisted work, and ornamented with some simple imitation of foliage. In the most remote space of the rounded end Mary had her oratory, before which hung a curtain. Here in a niche in the wall was a kind of closet which, like a certain kind of tabernacle, could be made to open and close by revolving. In it was a Crucifix about the length of one's arm. The arms were set into the trunk in an obliquely raised direction like that of Christ. This most simply carved Crucifix was, I think, made by the Blessed Virgin herself and John. It was constructed of three different kinds of wood: the whitish trunk was cypress wood, one arm of a brownish color was cedar, the other, which was yellowish, was made from wood of the palm tree. The top piece that supported the inscription was of polished yellow olive wood. The foot of the Crucifix was set firmly in a stone like Christ's in the rock of Calvary. At its foot lay a strip of parchment on which were inscribed some words of the Saviour. The figure representing the Lord was formed simply of dark-colored lines cut into the cross. On either side of the Crucifix stood a pot of flowers. I saw also lying near the cross a little linen, of which I had the intuitive knowledge that it was the one with which the Blessed Virgin, after the taking down of the Sacred Body from the cross, had cleansed the wounds from blood; for as soon as I saw the little cloth, I had a vision of that exercise of her most sacred mother-love, in which she held the little linen in the same way as does the priest at the holy Mass when he is purifying the chalice. Mary had a similar Crucifix, though only half as large, in the alcove in which she slept.

On the right of the oratory and against the rounded wall, was the alcove of the Blessed Virgin. It was formed of two lightly woven screens of sapwood

in its natural color. These stood at the head and the foot of the couch respectively; in front hung two curtains of tapestry that could be drawn and looped to either side. The couch was placed along the wall, which too was hung with tapestry. It was the length and breadth of a small bed, and consisted of a wooden frame about a foot and a half high. Over it a tester was stretched and fastened on the knobs of the four corners. The sides of the frame also were covered with tapestry, which hung down to the floor and was fringed with tassels. A round roll served as a pillow. The cover was of brownish checkered stuff. The ceiling of this little sleeping apartment was the loftiest in the house. It too was formed of wickerwork and, from the four corners to the center, ran up into a concave dome from which was suspended a branched lamp.

Here, on the last days before her death, I saw the Blessed Virgin lying entirely enveloped in a white sleeping sheet; even her arms were wound up in it. The veil over her head was thrown up in cross-folds, but when conversing with men, she lowered it. Even her hands were uncovered only when she was alone. During those last days, I did not see her taking anything excepting the juice of a grapelike fruit with yellow berries, which the maid pressed out for her into a little cup.

By the wall to the left of the oratory and directly opposite the alcove, a recess was formed by means of wicker screens in which clothes and other things were kept. Besides some veils and girdles and the upper garment that Mary always wore when making the holy Way of the Cross, there hung in that recess two long robes, one white, the other sky-blue. The latter was a very delicate blue, and there was likewise a mantle of the same color. This was the robe in which Mary was married to Joseph. I saw too that Mary kept near her many of the garments of her Divine Son, among them His woven tunic.

From that recess to the alcove extended a curtain by which the oratory could be concealed. When at work, Mary used to sit before this curtain and just between the recess and the alcove.

In this most silent and solitary little dwelling, from which the abodes of the other settlers were distant about a quarter of an hour, lived the Blessed Virgin alone with her maid, who procured for her the little that she needed for her support. There was no man in the house, and only at times was Mary visited by John or some other travelling Apostle and disciple. Once I saw John entering the house, He was thin and looked older. He wore a long white garment girdled in folds, but which was now tucked up. He laid it aside on entering, and taking out another from under his mantle, put it on instead. There was an inscription in letters on this second one. He laid a maniple on his arm. The Blessed Virgin was in a little private room from which the maid conducted her to John. She was enveloped in a white robe and looked very weak, Her face was, as it were, transparent and white as snow. She appeared to be soaring upward on the wings of her ardent desires. Her whole life after her Son's Ascension into Heaven was stamped by an ever-increasing longing to be freed from earth. She retired with John to her oratory, pulled a band, or strap, upon which the tabernacle in the niche revolved and disclosed the Crucifix of the length of one's arm standing between two vases of natural flowers. After Mary and John had prayed long on their knees before the Crucifix, the latter arose and took from a metal box a roll of fine woolen stuff. Opening this, he took out a small piece of white bread, in shape four-cornered, that was carefully folded in white linen cloths. It was the Most Blessed Sacrament, which with some words he gave to Mary. He presented to her no cup.

2. Mary's "Holy Way of the Cross" Near Ephesus. She Visits Jerusalem

In the neighborhood of her dwelling, the Blessed Virgin had herself erected the Stations of the Holy Way of the Cross. I saw her at first going alone and measuring off all the special points of the bitter Passion according to the number of steps which, after the death of her Son, she had so often counted. At the end of each definite number, she raised a memorial stone in remembrance of the special suffering there endured by her Divine Son. I saw her with a sharp instrument, a stylus, recording what there had taken place and how many steps it was to it. If a tree happened to be standing on that particular spot, she marked it as one of the Stations, of which there were twelve. The way led to a grove, and there was the Holy Sepulcher represented by a cave in the side of a hill. After all the Stations were definitively marked, the Blessed Virgin made the Holy Way with her maid in silent meditation. When they reached a Station, they sat down, meditated upon the mystery and its signification, and prayed. By degrees, the whole route was improved and more beautifully arranged. John gave orders for regular monuments to be set up. I saw also the cave representing the Sepulcher being cleared out and made more suitable for prayer. The memorial stones lay in hollows of greater or less depth, which were covered with grass and flowers and surrounded by a hedge. They were of polished white marble. The thickness of the underlying surface could not be seen, on account of the grass. The Faithful, when performing this devotion, carried a cross about a foot in length with a support which they placed in the little hollow on the upper surface of the stone while they were meditating, either kneeling or prostrate on their face. The path that ran in a hollow around the stone was wide enough for two persons to walk side by side. There were

twelve such stones. When the devotion was ended, each was covered with a mat. The sides and base of all bore similar inscriptions in Hebrew characters, but the hollow places in which they rested differed, some being larger, others smaller. The First Station, or that of the Mount of Olives, was in a little vale. There was a small cave in it, in which several could kneel together. The Mount Calvary Station was the only one not in a hollow. It was on a hill. For that of the Holy Sepulcher, one had to cross another hill on whose opposite side stood the memorial stone in a hollow. Thence one descended to the foot of the hill and into the tomb itself, in which later on Mary's remains rested. I think this tomb is still in existence under the surface of the earth, and that it will come to light someday.

Whenever I saw Mary making the Holy Way of the Cross, she wore an over garment that fell in folds down the back as far as the feet. It was laid over the shoulders and was fastened under the collar by a button. It was girded round the waist, thus taking in the brownish under dress. It appeared to be a festal robe, for in accordance with ancient Jewish customs, a similar one had been worn also by Anne. Her hair was concealed under a yellowish cap, which was pointed on the forehead and gathered together in folds at the back of the head. A black veil of soft material hung down far below the waist. In this dress I saw her making the Way of the Cross. She had worn it at the Crucifixion under the mantle of prayer, or mourning, which entirely enveloped her, and she wore it now only when performing this devotion. When at work in the house, she laid it aside.

The Blessed Virgin was now very advanced in years, but she had in her appearance no other mark of age than that of a great longing, which at length effectuated her glorification. She was inexpressibly grave. I never saw her laugh. The older she grew, the whiter and more transparent became her face.

She was thin, but I saw no wrinkle, no sign of decay in her. She was like a spirit.

Once I saw the Blessed Virgin and five other women making the Holy Way, along which she went first. She was perfectly white and transparent, indescribably touching to look upon. It seemed to me that she was now making the devotion for the last time. Among the holy women who were praying with her, there were several that had become acquainted with her in the first year of Jesus' teaching. One was a relative of the Prophetess Anna, and another was the granddaughter of a maternal aunt of Elizabeth. I saw two of the women making the Way of the Cross by turns every morning and evening.

After Mary had lived three years in the settlement near Ephesus, she conceived a great desire to visit Jerusalem, so John and Peter escorted her thither. Several Apostles were there assembled, of whom I remember Thomas. I think it was a Council, and Mary assisted the Apostles with her advice. On her arrival, I saw her in the evening twilight visiting, before she entered the city, the Mount of Olives, Mount Calvary, the Holy Sepulcher, and all the Holy Places around Jerusalem. The Mother of God was so sad, so moved by compassion, that she could scarcely walk. Peter and John supported her under the arms.

A year and a half before her death, she made one more journey from Ephesus to Jerusalem, and I saw her again visiting the Holy Places. She was unspeakably sorrowful, and she continually sighed: "O my Son! My Son!" When she came to the back gate of that palace where she had first seen Jesus passing with the cross and where He fell, she was so agitated by the painful remembrance that she too sank to the ground. Her companions thought her dying. They removed her to Sion, upon which the Coenaculum was still standing, and in one of whose buildings she took up her abode. For several days she

appeared to be so weak and so near death that her friends began to think of preparing her a tomb. She herself made choice of a cave on Mount Olivet, and the Apostles had a beautiful tomb built there by a Christian stonecutter. Many were of the opinion that she would really die; and so the report of her death spread abroad. But she recovered sufficient strength to journey back to Ephesus where, a year and a half later, she did indeed die. The tomb prepared for her on Mount Olivet was ever after held in reverence, and at a later period a church was built over it. John Damascene, as I was told in vision, wrote from hearsay that the Blessed Virgin died in Jerusalem and was buried there. Her death, her Assumption into Heaven, and the site of her tomb, as I believe, God has allowed to be subjects of uncertain tradition that the pagan sentiments of the time might not penetrate Christianity, for the Blessed Virgin might otherwise have been adored as a goddess.

3. The Apostles Arrive to Be Present at the Blessed Virgin's Death

As the Blessed Virgin felt her end approaching, in accordance with the directions of her Divine Son, she called the Apostles to her by prayer. She was now in her sixty-third year. At the time of Christ's birth she was in her fifteenth. Before His Ascension Jesus had made known to His most holy Mother what she should say at the end of her earthly career to the Apostles and some of the disciples who should be with her. He told her also that she should bless them, and that it would conduce very much to their welfare and eternal salvation. He entrusted to her also certain spiritual labors for the general good, which being accomplished, her longing after Heaven was to be realized. Jesus had at the same time made known to Magdalen that she was to live concealed

in the wilderness, and that Martha was to establish a community of women. He added that He Himself would always be with them.

At the prayer of the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles received, through angels, an admonition to repair to her at Ephesus. In the various places in which they were, they had erected little churches here and there. Many of them were constructed merely of plaited rods, or branches, covered with clay, but all were of the same form as Mary's house, that is, three-cornered in the back. They were provided with altars for the celebration of Holy Mass. The journeys of the Apostles, so distant, so exceedingly remote, were not made without divine assistance. Although they themselves were perhaps unconscious of it at the time, yet I do not doubt that they passed through many dangers in a supernatural manner. I often saw them walking unnoticed through the midst of a crowd, I have likewise seen that the miracles wrought by them among the various pagan nations were very numerous and of a different kind from those recorded of them in the Holy Scriptures. They labored everywhere according to the peculiar needs of the people. I saw that they carried about them the bones of the Prophets or those of the first Christian martyrs, which relics they placed before them in time of prayer or when offering the Holy Sacrifice.

When called to Mary, Peter was in the region of Antioch with another Apostle. Andrew, who had shortly before been in Jerusalem, but had there been persecuted, was not far from Peter. I saw them both on their way to Ephesus at places not very distant from each other. They passed the nights in those open inns that are met along the roads in hot countries. As Peter was lying one night near a wall, a resplendent youth approached him, took him by the hand, and bade him arise and hasten to Mary. On the way, the youth said, he would meet Andrew. Peter, who had grown stiff from age and fatigue,

rose to a sitting posture and, clasping his hands round his knees to support himself, listened to the angel's words. Then he stood up, put on his mantle, girded himself, took his staff, and started on his journey. He soon came up with Andrew, who had been called by the same apparition. After travelling some distance they were met by Thaddeus, who also had received a similar warning. They journeyed together to Mary, with whom they found John.

Jude Thaddeus and Simon were in Persia when they received their summons, Thomas, who was in stature thick and short and had reddish-brown or auburn hair, was of all the Apostles the farthest off. He arrived only after Mary's death. When the angel came to call him, he was praying in a hut built of reeds. With one very poor, simple servant, I saw him sailing alone in a little boat far over the waters. Then he journeyed across the country, turning aside from all the cities. A disciple now accompanied him. Thomas was in India when he received the warning. Before receiving it he had determined to go into Tartary, and he could not bring himself to change his plans. He always wanted to do so much, therefore it was that he was often behind time. So off he started northward almost across China, where Russia now is.¹ Here he was called a second time. He obeyed the summons and hurried to Ephesus. The servant with him was a Tartar whom he had baptized. Thomas did not return to Tartary after Mary's death. He was pierced with a lance in India. I have seen that he set up a stone in this last-named country, upon which he knelt in prayer, and upon which the marks of his knees remained impressed. He told the people that when the sea would reach that stone, another would here preach Jesus Christ.

John had shortly before been in Jericho, for he often journeyed to Palestine, He usually abode in

1. Asiatic Russia.

Ephesus, however, and the country around. Bartholomew was in Asia east of the Red Sea. He was handsome and very active, his complexion fair and his forehead high. He had large eyes, black curly hair, and a short, crisp beard, black and parted on the chin. He had already converted a king and all the royal family. Paul was not summoned. Those only were called that were related or acquainted with the Holy Family. Peter, Andrew, and John were the first to reach the Blessed Virgin's house. She was already near death. She was lying calmly on her couch in her sleeping place. I saw the maidservant looking very sorrowful in this and that corner of the house, also outdoors, where she prayed prostrate with outstretched arms. I saw also two of Mary's sisters and five disciples coming together to the house. All looked tired and exhausted. They carried staves of various kinds, each according to his rank. They wore, under their hooded mantles of white wool, long albs of the same material fastened all the way down the front with little leather straps slit in the middle over little rolls like buttons. Both mantle and alb were girded high when travelling. Some had a pouch hanging from their girdle at the side. They embraced each other tenderly when they met. Many wept from mingled feelings of joy and sorrow at meeting on such an occasion. On entering the house, they laid aside their mantles, staves, pouches, and girdles; allowed their white robes to fall in broad folds down to their feet, and each put on a wide girdle inscribed with letters, which he had brought with him. Then with deep emotion they drew near Mary's couch to salute her, though she could now say only a few words. I did not see the travelers taking anything on their arrival, excepting some kind of beverage from a little flask, with which each one came provided. They did not sleep in the house, but outside under light awnings, which were put up on posts against the walls, and which were divided off and

enclosed by movable screens and wickerwork.

I saw that the first to arrive prepared in the front apartment of the house a place suitable for prayer and offering the Holy Sacrifice. There was an altar covered with a red and over that a white cloth, and on it stood a Crucifix, white like mother-of-pearl, and in shape like a Maltese cross. The cross could be opened. It contained five compartments, likewise cross-shaped. The middle one held the Most Blessed Sacrament, while the others were intended respectively for chrism, oil, cotton, and salt. It was not quite a span, or nine inches, in length. Each of the Apostles when travelling carried one like it on his breast. It was in this cross that Peter took to Mary the Holy Communion, during the reception of which the Apostles stood bowing low, ranged in two rows from the altar down to her couch. The altar, before which was a stand with rolls of Scripture hanging over it, was not in the center of the front apartment, where the fireplace stood, for that was still in use. It was placed near the wall on the right, and was put up and taken down every day.

When the Apostles went all together into Mary's little sleeping chamber in order to take leave of her, they wore their long white albs and broad mantles. The screens that separated the front from the back of the house had been removed. The disciples and holy women remained standing in the front apartment. I saw that Mary sat upright, that the Apostles knelt in turn at the side of her couch, and that she prayed over each and blessed him with her hands laid upon him crosswise. She did the same to the disciples and to the women. One of the latter, who stood quite bent in two over Mary, received an embrace from her. When Peter stepped up to the couch, I saw that he had a roll of Scriptures in his hand. Mary then addressed them in a body, and did all that Jesus had in Bethania directed her to do, I saw also that she told John what was to be done

with her remains, and that he should see that her clothes were divided between her own maidservant and a maiden of the neighborhood who came sometimes to render her service. As she spoke, she pointed to the press, or partition, and I saw the maid going to it, opening and closing it.

4. Death, Burial, and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin

And now the altar with its covers, one red, the other white, was placed in front of the Crucifix of the Blessed Virgin's own oratory. Peter here celebrated the Holy Mass with the same ceremonies as I had seen him first observe in the church at the Pool of Bethesda. Tapers, not lamps, were burning on the altar. Mary was in a sitting posture on her couch during the whole celebration. Peter was vested in the large mantle and the pallium, whose colors glanced from white to red. These he wore over the white robe. The four Apostles assisting him were also vested in festal mantles. After the Communion, Peter gave the Blessed Sacrament to all present. During this Holy Mass, Philip arrived from Egypt. Weeping bitterly, he received the benediction of the Blessed Virgin, and after the others the Blessed Sacrament.

Peter bore the Blessed Sacrament to Mary in the cross hanging on his breast, and John carried on a shallow dish the chalice containing the Most Sacred Blood. This chalice was white, small as if for pouring, and of the same shape as that used at the Last Supper. Its stem was so short that it could be held with two fingers only. Thaddeus now brought forward a little incense basin. Peter first gave the Blessed Virgin the last anointing, just as that Sacrament is administered at the present day. Next he administered Holy Communion, which she received sitting up without support. Then she sank back again

on her pillow, and after the Apostles had offered a short prayer, she received the chalice from John, but not now in so upright a posture.

After Communion, Mary spoke no more. Her countenance, blooming and smiling as in youth, was raised above. I no longer saw the roof of her chamber, and the lamp appeared to be suspended in the open air. A pathway of light arose from Mary up to the heavenly Jerusalem, up to the throne of the Most Holy Trinity. On either side of this pathway I saw clouds of light out of which gazed angelic faces. Mary raised her arms to the Heavenly Jerusalem. Her body with all its wrappings was floating so high above the couch that I could see under it. A figure of light, also with upraised arms, appeared to issue from Mary. The two choirs of angels united under this figure and soared up with it, as if separating it from the body, which now sank back upon the couch, the hands crossed upon the breast. Many holy souls, among whom I recognized Joseph, Anne, Joachim, John the Baptist, Zachary, and Elizabeth, came to meet her. But up she soared, followed by them, to her Son, whose Wounds were flashing light far more brilliant than that which surrounded Him. He received her and placed in her hand a scepter, pointing at the same time over the whole circumference of the earth. At last I saw, and the sight filled me with joy, a multitude of souls released from Purgatory and soaring up to Heaven, and I received the surety that every year, on the feast of Mary's Assumption, many of her devout clients are freed from Purgatory. The hour of Mary's death was made known to me as that of None, at which time also Jesus had died on the cross. Peter and John likewise must have seen the glory of Mary's blessed soul, for their faces were turned upward, but the other Apostles were kneeling bowed to the ground. The body of the Blessed Virgin lay radiant with light upon the couch, the eyes closed, the hands crossed upon the breast. All

present knelt, adoring God.

At last the women covered the blessed remains with a sheet, put all the furniture of the house aside and covered it, even covering the fireplace. Then they veiled themselves and prayed together in a space in the front of the house, sometimes kneeling, sometimes sitting. The Apostles too enveloped their head with the scarf they wore about their shoulders, and ranged in order for prayer. They took turns, two at a time, to kneel and pray at the head and feet of the blessed remains. I saw them exchanging places with one another four times in the day, and I likewise saw them making the Way of the Cross.

Andrew and Matthias were busy preparing the place of burial, which was the little grotto that Mary and John had arranged at the end of the Way of the Cross, to represent the Holy Sepulcher of Christ. It was not so large as Jesus' tomb, being scarcely as high as a man, and was surrounded by a little garden hedged in by stakes. A pathway ran obliquely down into it, and the stone couch, which was like a narrow altar, was hollowed on top to the shape of a body enveloped in its winding sheet, the head being a trifle higher than the foot. The Station of Mount Calvary (the Crucifixion) was on a hill nearby. No cross was erected on it, but there was one cut out on the stone. Andrew was especially active in preparing the grotto, and setting up a door firmly in front of the tomb proper.

The blessed body was prepared by the women for burial. Among them I remember having seen a daughter of Veronica and John Mark's mother. They brought spices and pots of fresh herbs, in order to embalm it according to the Jewish custom. They closed the house, and worked by the light of lamps. They opened up the apartment back of the fireplace and removed the screens that enclosed the little alcove used by the Blessed Virgin as a sleeping place, in order to have more room for their work of embalming. The

wicker screens of the alcove were not again replaced, for immediately after the obsequies they, along with those of the clothes press, were put out of sight by the maidservant. Only the altar was allowed to remain standing before the Crucifix in Mary's sleeping apartment. The whole house had now become like a little chapel in which the Apostles prayed and celebrated the most holy and unbloody Sacrifice. While the women were preparing the holy body for burial, the Apostles prayed, choir and choir, sometimes in the front apartment, sometimes outside the house. The women went about their task most devoutly and reverently, just as had been done when preparing the most Sacred Body of Jesus for burial. The body of the Blessed Virgin was lifted in the linen of the deathbed and laid in a long basket, which had a lid and which was filled with covers, so that when lying on them, it rose above the edge. The body was of a dry, indescribable whiteness as if shining with light, and of so little weight that, like a mere husk, it could be raised quite easily on the hands. The face was fresh and blooming. The women cut off some locks of hair to keep as relics. They laid bunches of herbs around the neck and throat, under the arms, and in the armpits.

Before the holy body was shrouded in its white garments and enveloped in the winding sheets, Peter celebrated the Unbloody Sacrifice on the altar of the oratory and gave Holy Communion to the other Apostles. After that Peter and John approached the body in their mantles of ceremony. John carried a vessel of oil, with which Peter anointed, in the form of a cross and with accompanying prayers, the forehead, hands, and feet of the holy body, which was afterward entirely enveloped in linens by the women. They placed on the head a wreath of flowers, white, red, and sky-blue, as a symbol of Mary's virginity, and over the face a transparent veil, through which it could be seen encircled by the wreath. The feet

also, which were bound up in aromatic herbs, could be traced through the linens that enveloped them. The arms and hands were bound crosswise on the breast. Thus prepared, the holy body was laid in a coffin of snow-white wood with a tightly fitting, arched cover, which was fastened down at the head, the foot, and in the middle, with gray straps. The coffin was then laid on a litter. Everything was done with the utmost solemnity, and all were penetrated with deep emotion. The sorrow of the mourners was more human and more openly expressed than at Jesus' burial, at which holy awe and reverence predominated.

When it was time to bear the coffin to the grotto, one half-hour distant, Peter and John raised it from the litter and carried it in their hands to the door of the house, outside of which it was again laid on the litter, which Peter and John then raised upon their shoulders. Six of the Apostles thus carried it in turn. The coffin hung between the bearers as in a cradle, for the poles of the litter were run through leathern straps, or matting. Some of the Apostles walked before the coffin praying, and after it came the women. Lamps, or lanterns on poles, were carried.

Before reaching the grotto, the litter was set down. Four of the Apostles bore the coffin in, and placed it in the hollow of the tomb. All went, one by one, into the grotto, where they knelt in prayer before the holy body, honoring it and taking leave of it. Then the tomb was shut in by a wicker screen that extended from the front edge of the tomb to the top of the vaulted wall above. Before the entrance of the grotto they made a trench, which they planted so thickly with blooming flowers and bushes covered with berries that one could gain access to it only from the side, and that only by making his way through the underwood.

On the night following the burial took place the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into Heaven.

Life of Jesus Christ

I saw on this night several of the Apostles and holy women in the little garden, praying and singing Psalms before the grotto. I saw a broad pathway of light descend from Heaven and rest upon the tomb. In it were circles of glory full of angels, in the midst of whom the resplendent soul of the Blessed Virgin came floating down. Before her went her Divine Son, the marks of His Wounds flashing with light. In the innermost circle, that which surrounded the holy soul of Mary, the angels appeared like the faces of very young children; in the second circle, they were like those of children from six to eight years old; and in the outermost, like the faces of youths, I could clearly distinguish only the face, the rest of the figure consisting of perfectly transparent light. Encircling the head of the Blessed Virgin like a crown, was a choir of blessed spirits. I know not what those present saw of all this. But I saw that some gazed up in amazement and adoration, while others cast themselves prostrate in fright upon the earth. These apparitions, becoming more and more distinct as they approached nearer, floated over the grotto, and another pathway of light issued from it and arose to the heavenly Jerusalem. The blessed soul of Mary, floating before Jesus, penetrated through the rock and into the tomb, out of which she again arose radiant with light in her glorified body and, escorted by the entire multitude of celestial spirits, returned in triumph to the heavenly Jerusalem.

Next day, when the Apostles were engaged in choir service, Thomas made his appearance with two companions. One was a disciple named Jonathan Eleasar, and the other a servant from the most remote country of the Three Holy Kings. Thomas was greatly grieved when he heard that the Blessed Virgin was already buried. He wept with an abundance of tears quite astonishing to behold, for he could not forgive himself for coming so late. Weeping bitterly he threw himself, with Jonathan at his side, on the spot upon

which the blessed soul of Mary had left her body, and afterward knelt long before the altar. The Apostles, who had not interrupted their choir-chanting on account of his coming, now gathered around him, raised him up, embraced him, and set before him and his companions bread, honey, and some kind of beverage in little jugs. After that they accompanied him with lights to the tomb. Two disciples bent the shrubbery to one side. Thomas, Eleasar, and John went in and prayed before the coffin. Then John loosened the three straps that bound it, for it rose high enough above the trough like couch to admit of being opened. They stood the lid of the coffin on one side and, to their intense astonishment, beheld only the empty winding sheets lying like a husk, or shell, and in perfect order. Only over the face was it drawn apart, and over the breast slightly opened. The swathing bands of the arms and hands lay separate, as if gently drawn off, but in perfect order. The Apostles gazed in amazement, their hands raised. John cried out: "She is no longer here!" The others came in quickly, wept, prayed, looking upward with raised arms, and finally cast themselves on the ground, remembering the radiant cloud of the preceding night. Then rising, they took the winding sheet just as it was, all the grave linens, and the coffin to keep as relics, and returned to the house by the Holy Way, praying and singing Psalms.

When they entered the house, John laid the folded linens on a little flap-table before the altar. Thomas and the others were in prayer, but Peter went a little apart, as if pondering some mystery. After that I saw him celebrating divine service at the altar before Mary's Crucifix, and the Apostles standing in order behind him, praying and singing. The women were standing in the doorways and by the walls of the fireplace.

The young servant that had come with Thomas looked quite unlike any of those present. He had

small eyes, high cheekbones, forehead and nose remarkably flat, and his complexion was brownish. He was already baptized. He was perfectly innocent, and obeyed orders simply. He did all that he was told, remained standing or sitting wherever they told him to do so, turned his eyes in any direction indicated to see whatever was pointed out to him, and smiled upon everyone. When Thomas wept, he wept also. He always remained with Thomas, and I saw him dragging immense stones when Thomas was building a chapel.

I often saw the Apostles and disciples standing together in circles and relating where they had been and giving their experience.

Before the Apostles left Mary's house to journey again into distant parts, they rendered the grotto of the tomb wholly inaccessible by raising an embankment of earth before the entrance. At the rear, however, they made a low passage to the back wall of the tomb proper and an opening in the wall, by which one could look down upon it. This passage was known only to the holy women. Above the grotto they built a chapel of wood and wickerwork, and hung it with mats and tapestry. The little altar consisted of a stone slab; the step, too, was of stone. Behind the altar hung a strip of stuff on which was sewed or embroidered quite simply, in the colors of her festal robes, a picture of Mary. The little garden in front of the tomb, and especially the whole of Mary's Way of the Cross, was beautified by them. While engaged in this task of love, they prayed continually and chanted Psalms. The apartment of the house in which Mary had had her oratory and sleeping alcove was converted into a little church. Mary's maid continued her abode in the front part of the house, and two of the disciples were left there by Peter for the benefit of the Faithful dwelling in that section of the country.

The Apostles, with tears and embraces, took leave

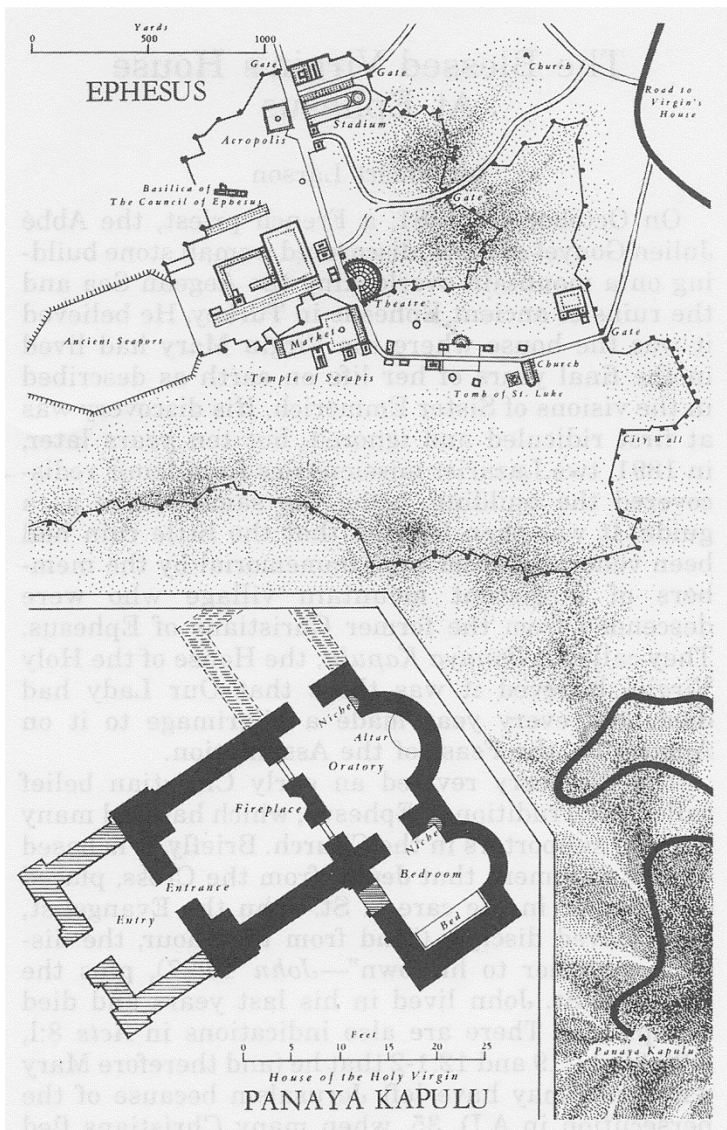
of one another after they had once more celebrated solemn service in Mary's house. An Apostle or disciple often returned at different times to pray there. I saw also that here and there, out of devotion and in reverence for the Blessed Virgin, churches were built by the Faithful in the same style as her house, and that her Way of the Cross and her tomb were for a long time devoutly visited by the Christians. I had a vision of those early times, just after Mary's Assumption into Heaven: A woman living near Ephesus, who entertained great love for Mary, visited her house. On her return she caused an altar like that she had seen there to be made, and covered it with a very costly cloth of tapestry. The woman was very poor, and had to defray the debt she thereby incurred by the sale of a piece of her property. Finding herself after some time in dire distress, she went, though very sorrowfully, to a married Christian and sold to her the beautiful altar cloth. But when the feast of Mary's Assumption came round, I saw the poor woman very much troubled at no longer having the cloth with which to adorn her little altar. She went very humbly to the house of the purchaser, who meanwhile had given birth to twins, and begged her to lend her for the feast the cloth she had sold her, that she might adorn with it the altar of the Blessed Virgin. But the present owner would not hear to lending it, and her husband repulsed the poor woman with the words: "Mary is dead and needs not the cloth; but my wife who bought it needs it." The poor woman went away sad, and complained to Mary of her want. Next night, I saw the Blessed Virgin appear to the sleeping couple. She looked displeased and told them that, as a punishment of their hard and unchristian sentiments toward the poor devout woman, their children would die and they themselves become poorer than the one whose request they had spurned. The couple awoke, and looked upon it at first as an empty dream. But on

finding the twins dead, they recognized their offense with bitter lamentations. With many tears the husband took the cloth to the poor woman for the feast. Both husband and wife did penance. They received forgiveness from Mary, and the punishment in store for them was averted.

The Blessed Virgin's House At Ephesus by **Robert Larson**

On October 18, 1881, a French priest, the Abbé Julien Gouyet of Paris, discovered a small stone building on a mountain overlooking the Aegean Sea and the ruins of ancient Ephesus in Turkey. He believed it was the house where the Virgin Mary had lived in the final years of her life on earth as described in the visions of Sister Emmerich. His discovery was at first ridiculed and ignored, but ten years later, in 1891, two Lazarist missionaries from Izmir rediscovered the building, using the same source as a guide. It was then learned that the little ruin had been venerated from time immemorial by the members of a distant mountain village who were descended from the former Christians of Ephesus. They called it *Panaya Kapulu*, the House of the Holy Virgin, believed it was there that Our Lady had died, and every year made a pilgrimage to it on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption.

The discovery revived an early Christian belief called the Tradition of Ephesus, which has had many learned supporters in the Church. Briefly, it is based on the statement that Jesus, from the Cross, placed His Mother in the care of St. John the Evangelist, His beloved disciple ("and from that hour, the disciple took her to his *own*"-*John* 19:27), plus the fact that St. John lived in his last years and died at Ephesus. There are also indications in *Acts* 8:1, 9:26-30, 11:19 and 12:1-2 that he (and therefore Mary with him) may have left Jerusalem because of the persecution in A.D. 35, when many Christians fled



from the Holy City and the Holy Land. These texts also show that he was not there for the next fourteen years, during which time it may be presumed that Mary was still alive.

Ephesus also is the site of the ancient Church of St. Mary, one of the oldest churches in the world dedicated to the Virgin. It was built in the time of the Emperor Constantine, about A.D. 330, when Christians were first permitted to worship publicly in the Roman empire. At this time it was unusual—and some scholars think not permitted—for churches to be named in honor of saints except in places made sacred by their residence or deaths.

The Tradition of Ephesus is referred to in the writings of St. Epiphanius of Salamis (A.D. 315-403) and, as such, is the oldest known early Christian belief of which there is record concerning Our Lady's last earthly home. In spite of its antiquity, however, it remained little known, and in time was almost completely eclipsed by another more popular, though later, belief, i.e., that Jerusalem was the site of the Blessed Virgin's death and Assumption. The Tradition of Ephesus was never completely forgotten, however. In the seventeenth century the eminent church historian, Tillemont, adopted it; and in the eighteenth century the learned Pope Benedict XIV (pontificate 1740-1758) wrote in a treatise on *Christ's Last Words from the Cross* that "St. John, departing for Ephesus, took Mary with him, and it was there that the Blessed Mother took her flight to Heaven."

Following the discovery of the House of the Virgin, Pope Leo XIII blessed the first international pilgrimage to it, and in 1896 discontinued indulgences formerly attached to the "Tomb of the Virgin" at Jerusalem. His successor, St. Pius X, greatly encouraged devotion to the shrine. And in 1951 Pope Pius XII, the pope who defined the dogma of the Blessed Virgin Mary's Assumption into Heaven,

removed a text from the Breviary which referred to the tradition of Jerusalem. He also elevated the Tomb of St. John, the Church of St. Mary and the House of the Virgin to the status of Holy Places, a privilege later made permanent by Pope John XXIII—thus making of Ephesus, as it were, a new Holy City for the modern world.

By that time interest in the House of the Virgin had been aroused to such an extent that a road was built up to it and the isolated ruin on the mountain was restored. Since then it has been visited by increasing numbers of pilgrims from all over the world, including Pope Paul VI, who was there on July 26, 1967, and Pope John Paul II, who visited it on November 30, 1979.