

Jesus † Mary † Joseph

Chapter 13

Nearness of Death

Christ:

My child, in a little while this earthly life of yours will be over. Just how ready are you to enter into the next life? Man exists today, and tomorrow he is seen no more. When he is out of sight, he is quickly also out of mind. The human heart can be so dull and hard! It fixes its attention on things present. It often fails to provide for the things that are to come.

2. In the morning consider for a moment the fact that you may not live till evening. When evening comes do not be too confident that you will see the next morning. These thoughts should not make you gloomy, but practical. Live in such a way that death will never find you unprepared. Live each day as you would want to live the last day of your life. Too many die suddenly and unprepared. I have warned everyone: "The Son of Man will come at the hour when He is not expected."

3. How many have deceived themselves into thinking that they still have plenty of time. They were snatched unexpectedly from this life. How often have you heard that someone was killed in a fight; another was drowned; another fell and broke his neck? This man died while enjoying a game. Some die by fire; some by violence; some are destroyed by disease; some are killed at the hands of robbers. Thus death brings an end to all, and man's life suddenly passes away like a fleeting shadow.

Think:

Why should I refuse to face facts? Will I die any sooner if I think of death? Or am I going to escape death if I never think of it? The most terrible death which can come to me is the death which will find me in mortal sin. Every other aspect of death is a passing thing, but this last phase – the unprovided death – will hurt me forever.

Death, with all its uncertainties, is a fact. I should face facts and see what can be done about them. What can I do about death? I can live in such a way that no matter when death comes, it will find me in sanctifying grace.

Pray:

Lord, for those in mortal sin, death is the gateway to hell, but for those in sanctifying grace, it is the pathway to Heaven. Let my greatest desire in life be to live in such a way that I can die fearlessly at any moment. Let me fear sin more than death or any other earthly harm. Amen.

November 9th

Saint Theodore Tyro - Martyr in Asia Minor (†304)

Saint Theodore Tyro, one of the most celebrated of the oriental martyrs, was born of a noble family in the East, and enrolled while still a youth in the imperial army. Early in 306, when he had just joined the legion and marched with its soldiers into the Pont, the Roman Emperor issued an edict requiring all Christians to offer sacrifice. The young man was faced with the choice between apostasy and death. He declared before his commander that he was ready to be cut in pieces and offer up every limb to his Creator, who had died for him. Wishing to conquer him by gentleness, the commander left him in peace for a while, that he might think over his resolution.

He profited from his liberty to fortify other confessors for martyrdom, and in his ardor for the downfall of idolatry he set fire to a temple dedicated to the goddess Cybel, "the mother of the gods." He did not attempt to conceal his act, but when arrested, he admitted at once that he was the author of it, and that he had undertaken it to prevent the sacrileges committed every day in that place of abomination. The judge could not persuade him to renounce this "crime" and adore the empire's divinities; he therefore had him cruelly whipped and then shut up in a solitary cell with the order to give him nothing to eat and let him die of hunger.

Our Lord visited him during the night and consoled him, and He told his servant He Himself would nourish him invisibly. This visit filled him with such joy that he began to sing; and at the same moment, Angels in white robes appeared in his prison, to sing hymns of joy with him. The jailers and guardians all witnessed this spectacle, as did also the judge Publius who had condemned him, but none of them were touched by it. They gave him an ounce of bread and a flask of water every day, only to prolong his martyrdom. The Saint refused these offerings.

When the authorities made him fine promises and attempted to persuade him to conform, he protested that never would he say one word or make one gesture contrary to the fidelity he owed to his sovereign Lord. He was again beaten and tortured with iron hooks, then burnt with torches, and condemned finally to be burnt alive, to punish him for the fire he had ignited. He made the sign of the Cross, and filled with faith, hope and pure love of God, gave up to Him his beautiful soul, victorious and laden with merits. The year was 304. The Christians saw his soul rise to heaven like a flash of light and fire.

Sources: Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints, by Msgr. Paul Guérin (Bloud et Barral: Paris, 1882), Vol. 13; Little Pictorial Lives of the Saints, a compilation based on Butler's Lives of the Saints and other sources by John Gilmary Shea (Benziger Brothers: New York, 1894).

~*~*~ Today is also the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome ~*~*~

Daily Thoughts and Prayers For Our Beloved Dead Ninth Day

The Just die members of the Church and so continue. They remain united with us, as well as with God, by faith, hope and charity. Therefore, we should assist them as one member assists another.

Prayer: Our Father. 3 Hail Marys. Glory Be. De Profundis.

O Lord Jesus Christ, by Thy terrible Agony in the Garden, we beseech Thee to have pity on the Souls in Purgatory, particularly the soul who has the most to suffer because of us. Deliver it from the torments, that it may join the Heavenly throng in forever glorifying Thee.

Ejaculation: Hail O Cross, our only hope. (500 days)

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