



## OUR LADY OF 7 DOLORS (SORROWS)

### Opening Meditation

In the Sorrows of the Virgin Mary, we see a reflection of the suffering and bitter anguish of the human Christ. Just as Mary accepted the total mystery of Christ into her life, so may we see in our sorrow, our fear and humiliation, a dim but real participation in His passion and death, recalling that if we wish to follow Him, we must "take up our cross" each day. Let us pray that we may accept Christ's call, and become co-sufferers of His passion.

### 1. The Prophecy of Simeon

*Reading: Luke 2:25-35.*

When Mary and Joseph present the infant Jesus in the temple, Simeon predicts that a "sword" (of sorrow) will pierce Mary's soul.

As we reflect on this sorrow, let us be mindful of the dreams, desires and hopes of our own children. As parents, grandparents, godparents, and guardians of our children we want the best for our children. As we pray this dolor, let us ask Mary, who knew so well what it is to have her heart pierced, for the grace to face the reality of the pain and hurt our children face in this life. May the sorrow in our own hearts be touched with the grace to embrace our children no matter what they face in life.

### 2. The Flight into Egypt

*Reading: Matthew 2:13-15.*

When King Herod orders the death of all male children age two or younger, Mary and Joseph flee to Egypt with the infant Jesus

As we reflect on this sorrow, let us be mindful of all children who face abuse and death at the hands of family members or strangers who are full of greed, jealousy and envy. So many children lose their lives because others are more into raising themselves up to power than empowering others to achieve their goals. May the sorrow in our own hearts, over the abuse and death of innocent children, be healed by the touch of God's grace to heal our sorrow.

### 3. The Child Jesus Lost in the Temple

*Reading: Luke 2: 41-50.*

Mary and Joseph search for the child Jesus for three days, finding Him at last — after agonizing sorrow — in the temple.

As we reflect on this sorrow, let us be mindful of all the children who stray away from their families because of the abuse of drugs, alcohol or family issues of misunderstandings or quarrels. May the sorrow in our hearts because of the loss of a child be filled with God's forgiveness.

4. **Mary meets Jesus carrying the cross**

*Reading: Luke 23: 27-29.*

As Jesus makes His way to Calvary, condemned to crucifixion, He meets His mother, Mary. He is bruised, derided, cursed and defiled and her sorrow is absolute as Jesus drags His own cross up the hill of His crucifixion.

As we reflect on this sorrow, let us be mindful of the many times that we have met our children in their times of struggles, difficulties or troubles. May the sorrow in our hearts be healed by the strength in our belief that God is with us through the painful times in our lives.

5. **Mary at the foot of the cross**

*Reading: John 19: 25-30.*

Mary stands near her dying Son unable to minister to him as He cries "I thirst." She hears Him promise heaven to a thief and forgive His enemies. His last words, "Behold your mother," charge us to look on Mary as our mother.

As we reflect on this sorrow, let us be mindful of the pain present in the loss of a child. The pain in Mary's heart must have been overwhelming for her as she watched her son take his last breath. May the sorrow in our hearts over the death of all children be a moment to draw closer to God as we pray to receive healing and comfort in this moment of sorrow.

6. **Mary receives the body of Jesus**

*Reading: Psalm 130.*

Jesus is taken down from the cross and His body is placed in Mary's arms. The passion and death are over, but for His mother, grief continues. She holds His body in her arms.

As we reflect on this sorrow, let us be mindful of the sorrow that is present when a mother holds the body of her child. This grief is piercing and forever remains in the heart, never to leave. May the sorrow in our hearts for this mother be a continuous moment of prayer to be embraced by a loving and gentle God.

7. **Mary witnesses the burial of Jesus**

*Reading: Luke 23: 50-56.*

The body of Jesus is laid in the tomb. The most tragic day in history ends, Mary, alone in sorrow, awaits the Resurrection

As we reflect on this sorrow, let us be mindful of the sorrow on burying a child. The physical loss and pain of never being able to hold this child, laugh and cry with this child or give a loving embrace to this child again is piercing to the heart. May the sorrow in our hearts, for all mothers who have lost a child, be a living witness to the love of God in our lives.

**Prayer:**

Our Lady of Sorrows, you who knew the sorrow of a piercing heart because of the pain related to your Son, Jesus, help us to face our own sorrow. The witness you gave of bravery, strength, courage, living faith and love is so powerful for us. As we pray the sorrows that pierced your heart, help us to hold to the truths that dwell within us and guide us to always remain faithful to what is asked of us. We ask for your intercession with your Son, Jesus, to bless us with the graces we so desire to live the sorrows that are revealed to us in the events in our own lives, each and every day. Amen.