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Holy Saturday: A Day of Silence and Conversion

The Prelate's Holy Saturday Reflections broadcast on EWTN world radio

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Today the Church observes a day of silence. The body of Christ lies in the tomb, and the Church meditates in amazement about what we have done to Our Lord. She keeps silence in order to learn from the Master

how to contemplate his shattered body.

Each of us can and must join in this silence of the Church. And on considering that we are the ones responsible for his death, we will strive to keep our passions quiet, and also our rebellions—everything that separates us from God. But this is not mere passivity; it's a grace God grants us when we ask for it in the presence of the dead body of his Son, determined to remove from our lives whatever distances us from Him.

Holy Saturday is not a sad day. The Lord has conquered the devil and sin, and in a few hours He will also conquer death by means of his glorious Resurrection. He has reconciled us to the heavenly Father; now we are children of God! We must make resolutions that show our gratitude, certain that we can overcome all obstacles of every kind

if we remain closely united to Jesus through prayer and the sacraments.

The world is hungry for God, even without being aware of it. People are eager to have someone speak to them about the joyous reality of meeting the Lord, and as Christians that is our job. Let us have the courage of those two men—Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea—who let human respects influence them during Christ's lifetime, but when the definitive moment came they dared to ask Pilate for the dead body of Jesus in order to bury it. Let us also have the courage of those holy women who bought the spices as soon as He died and went to embalm his body without fear of the soldiers who guarded the tomb.

At the hour of general confusion, when everyone considers it his right to insult, laugh, and scoff at Jesus, they say: Give us that body, for it is

ours. With what care they take it down from the Cross, gazing in astonishment at those Wounds! Let us ask pardon, saying in the words of St. Josemaría Escrivá: “I will go with them to the foot of the Cross; I will press my arms tightly around the cold, dead body of Christ with the fire of my love. I will unnail it with my reparation and mortifications. I will wrap it in the new winding-sheet of my clean life. And I will bury it in the living rock of my breast, where no one can tear it away from me. There, Lord, take your rest!” (*The Way of the Cross*, xiv, 1).

We can understand why they would place the dead body of the Son in the arms of the Mother before burying it. Mary alone was able to say that she understood perfectly his love for mankind, for she alone had not caused those sorrows. The most pure Virgin speaks for us; she speaks to make us react, so that we might

experience her sorrow, which is conjoined to the sorrow of Christ.

Let us draw from this resolutions of conversion and of apostolate, that we might identify ourselves more closely with Christ by being completely taken up with souls. Let us ask the Lord to transmit to us the salvific efficacy of his Passion and Death. Let us consider the panorama that opens before us: everyone around us is waiting for Christians to make known to them the wonders of encountering God. It is necessary that this Holy Week—and every day thereafter—be for us a qualitative leap, a decisive affirmation of the Lord that becomes the whole purpose of our lives. We have to communicate to many persons the new Life Jesus obtained by means of the Redemption.

Let us go to Mary most holy, the Virgin of Solitude, the Mother of God

and our Mother, “that she might help us understand”—as St. Josemaría put it—“that we must make of our lives the life and death of Christ. We must die through mortification and penance so that Christ might live in us by means of Love. Then we can follow in his footsteps with zeal to co-redeem all souls. Only if we give our lives for others can we live the life of Jesus Christ and become one with Him.”

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