

September 15th: Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows

Gospel text (Lk 2:33-35): Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted and you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

«You yourself a sword will pierce»

Fr. Josep M^a SOLER OSB Abbot of Montserrat
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, in the celebration of the feast of our Lady of Sorrows, we hear the most unspeakable words in the mouth of old Simeon: "You yourself a sword will pierce" (Lk 2:35). From its context, we can assert this declaration does not only concern Jesus Christ's passion, but his missionary work, that will stir up the division of the people of Israel, and therefore, a painful grief in Mary's heart. All along Jesus' public life, the Virgin Mary will experience great sufferings upon seeing Jesus rebuked and threatened with death by the city authorities.

As the rest of Jesus' disciples, Mary has to learn to place her family relations in a different context altogether. She must also leave her Son because of the Gospel (cf. Mt 19:29), and have to learn not to appraise the Christ for his flesh, despite the fact He is flesh of her flesh. She is to crucify also her flesh (cf. Gal 5:24) to be able to transform herself into the image of Jesus Christ. But the height of her suffering, where she lives the cross more deeply, is Jesus' crucifixion and death.

Also in her pain, Mary is the model of perseverance of the evangelic doctrine while sharing Christ's suffering through her patience (cf. Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue 50). She has done it all her life, and most of all, during the Calvary. There she becomes the prototype and model for all Christians. Because she has been so closely linked to Christ's death, she is linked afterwards to his resurrection too (cf. Rm 6:5). In her excruciating pain, Mary's perseverance to abide by the Father's will,

grants her a new illumination for the benefit of the Church and of Mankind. Mary precedes us and helps us to follow Christ in our way of faith. And the Holy Spirit leads us to share with her this great adventure.