Lesson One

THE LAMB OF GOD

Many hundred years after Moses had led the Hebrew people out of Egypt the Messiah was born. During all this time God watched over his Chosen People. He sent them many holy men and prophets to teach them how to live in the right way and how to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

St. John the Baptist, Our Lord's cousin, was the greatest of all the prophets. He was sent to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus by preaching to them and leading them to fast and do penance for their sins. Many of those who listened to St. John thought he was the Messiah whom God had promised to send into the world to redeem us from our sins, but St. John said: No, I am not the Redeemer;

*“I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord and make straight His path. But there hath stood one in the midst of you whom you know not, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose.”*

When Jesus was thirty years old He went to the river Jordan, where St. John was preaching penance to the people and baptizing them. When St. John saw Jesus coming to him, he said to his followers:

“*Behold, the Lamb of God; behold Him* *who taketh away the sins of the world.”*

While Jesus was being baptized in the Jordan by St. John the heavens opened and the Holy

Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven said:

*"Thou art my beloved* *Son; in Thee I am well pleased.''*

After this Jesus went about through all the country for three years preaching to the people. He told them plainly that He was the Son of God who had come down from Heaven to save the world. He worked many wonderful miracles in the sight of the multitude, so that every-one might know He was the Son of God. Many people believed in Him and followed Him from place to place, listening to His words and learning how to live. But there were also wicked people in Jerusalem in those days who did not love God or keep His Commandments. These people cared only for themselves, for money, and fine houses and beautiful clothes, and they despised Our Lord, because He was poor. They would not listen to Him or believe what He said. The Messiah they wanted was one who would make them richer and give them more power and glory in this world.

Our Saviour told these people that God would punish them for their wickedness and that they would go to hell when they died unless they were sorry for their sins and did penance. This made them angry at Our Saviour and they wanted to kill him.

A few days before Our Lord died He went to Bethany and found that Lazarus had been dead

and buried four days. Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus, had such faith in Our Lord that they believed He would not have let Lazarus die had He been there at the time, and now in answer to their prayers He called Lazarus back from the grave.

The next day, when Our Saviour started to go over Mount Olivet to Jerusalem, riding on an ass of the people came out to meet Him. They spread their garments and flowers before Him

on the path and waved palm branches in their hands, and all the multitude welcomed Him as the Messiah and shouted: hosannas to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!

HYMN FOR PALM SUNDAY

All glory, praise and honor

To Thee, O Christ, we bring,

And sing like Sion's children,

Hosannas to Our King.

For Thou art king, Lord Jesus,

Of David's royal line,

And blest are all who serve Thee

And call Thy name divine.

The saints and holy angels

Exalt in heaven Thy name,

And men on earth forever

Thy glory shall proclaim.

As came the Jews to meet Thee

With palms upon the way.

So we with prayerful voices

Lift up our songs today.

As they loud praises paid Thee

Upon the road of pain,

So we with sounding music

Salute Thy endless reign.

As their devotion pleased Thee,

So be our offering,—

The song, the prayer, the praises,

We bring Thee, gentle King.

*~ Tr. D. J. Donahoe~*

THOUGHTS FOR US

Only those who were ready to receive Our Lord were blessed by His coming. It was to those who followed St. John's advice and did penance for their sins that he pointed out Our Saviour as the Lamb of God. People who were thinking about themselves and their riches were at home attending to business or enjoying themselves. They did not know that the Saviour was born into the world, and when they saw and heard Him they refused to believe in Him. Unless our hearts are pure and unselfish we will not hear the voice of Jesus nor understand His message.

*See Worksheet One*

Lesson Two

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

On the Thursday immediately following Palm Sunday Our Lord went into Jerusalem to the house of a friend to celebrate the feast of the Passover with His Apostles. He knew the city was full of His enemies and wicked men who wanted to kill Him, but He was not afraid. He came into the world not to do His own will, but to do the will of His Father and die for our salvation.

When the father of a family knows he is going to die he calls his children to his bedside. He bids them good-bye and tells them how much he loves them and what he wants them to do after he is dead. Every good child loves to remember his father's last words and is careful to obey his last wishes. And every Christian loves to dwell on the things that were said and done at Our Lord's Last Supper.

After Our Saviour had eaten the Paschal lamb with His Apostles, in just the same manner that the Children of Israel ate the first Paschal lamb on the night before Moses led them out of Egypt, He told them that the time appointed by His Father for Him to die on the cross had come. He told them that this was the last time that He would eat with them before He died, and gave them His last messages for all of us. He said:

“My little children, love one another, as I have loved you, and let not your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many mansions, and I go to prepare a place for you and I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you also may be. Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name that will I do, and if you shall ask me anything in my name that also will I do.

If you love me, keep my Commandments. He that keepeth my Commandments, he it is that loveth me. He that loveth me, shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will show myself to him. If anyone love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and we will stay with him.

These things have I spoken to you while I am yet with you, but the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and will bring to your mind whatsoever I have said to you.

My peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled nor let it be afraid, for as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you. These things have I spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be filled.

A NEW COMMANDMENT I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friend. You are my friends if you do the things that I command you.

I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when the Holy Ghost is come, He will teach you all truth, and the things that are to come He will show you.”

CONTENT

Were all the heavens an overladen bough

Of ripened benediction lowered above me,

What could I crave, soul-satisfied as now

That thou dost love me?

The door is shut. To each unsheltered blessing

Henceforth I say, "Depart! What wouldst thou of me?"

Beggared I am of want, this boon possessing,

That thou dost love me.

 *~Father Tabb ~*

THOUGHTS FOR US

Before Our Lord was born the Hebrew people were scattered over the whole world, and many of them turned away from God and neglected His Commandments. But all who remained faithful to God returned to Jerusalemevery year to celebrate the feast of the Passover on the day which we now call Holy Thursday.

When Jesus was twelve years old He went up to Jerusalem with His parents and kinsfolk to celebrate the feast of the Passover, and remained in the temple for three days, teaching the doctors and asking them questions. He explained to them the meaning of the prophecies and showed them that it was the time foretold for the coming of the Son of God.

Every year after this Our Lord returned to Jerusalem to celebrate this feast, but the people did not know that he was the Messiah until St. John pointed Him out as the Lamb of God who was to take away the sins of the world.

Every time a priest says Mass he repeats the words of St. John three times, saying: Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who takes away the sins of the world.

O TENDER JESUS.

*St. Bernard*

O tender Jesus, let me feel

Thy love with ever growing zeal,

And by Thy presence bring to me

The power Thy glorious truths to see.

Upon my lonely couch at night

Thy love shall fill my heart with light;

In crowded throngs, or all alone

I'll seek the glory of Thy throne.

As Mary sought Thee at the tomb,

So in the morn to Thee I'll come;

And worship with that warm desire

Which lights the soul with living fire.

Upon the ground my tears shall flow,

Thy wounds shall bow my head in woe;

While prostrate at Thy sacred feet

I’ll cling to Thee in love complete.

I’ll follow where Thy steps have trod,

And kiss with tears the sacred sod;

That in Thy love my soul shall live,

That grace and favor Thou may'st give.

 *~Tr. D. J. Donahoe ~*

*See Worksheet Two*

Lesson Three

JESUS PRAYS IN THE GARDEN

Bordering on the path that led from Jerusalem up Mount Olivet there was a beautiful garden called Gethsemane. There were so many olive trees in it that it was sometimes called the garden of olives. After Our Lord had eaten the Last Supper with His Apostles and given them His farewell messages, hewent with them to this garden to pray.

They all walked in silence through the streets of Jerusalem out through the gate and down across the brook Kedron, which ran along by the foot of Mount Olivet. When they began to ascend the mountain, Jesus said to His Apostles: All of you will lose faith in me to-night and desert me, as the prophet foretold: I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. But after I shall be risen again I shall go before you into Galilee.

The Apostles were surprised at His words. They could not imagine that the time would ever come when they would lose faith in their beloved Master. St. Peter, whom Our Lord had made the head of His Church, said: “*Although all the others* *lose faith in Thee, yet I will never lose faith in* *Thee.”*

And Jesus said to Peter: “*Amen, amen, I say to thee, that in this night before the cock crow thou wilt deny me thrice.”*

But Peter answered: “*Yea, Lord, though I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee.”*  And all the other Apostles said thesame thing.

When Jesus reached the Garden of Gethsemane He said to His Apostles: “*Sit you here while I* *go yonder and pray.”*

And taking Peter, John and James with Him, He went a little way into the garden and then said to them: “*My soul is sorrowful* *even unto death. Stay you here and watch* *with me.”* And He went a little further into the garden and fell upon His face and prayed: *My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from*

*me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.*

After a while He came back to the place whereHe had left St. Peter and His own cousins, Johnand James, and He found them sleeping. He saidto Peter: *What! could you not watch one hour with me? Watch ye and pray that ye enter not into temptation.* And after this Jesus went back andprayed to His Heavenly Father a second time: *My Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, Thy will be done.*

And comingagain to His chosen disciples, He found themsleeping, and His heart was filled with bitter sorrow.Even His dearest friends were asleep whenthey should have been watching and praying withHim.Jesus knew it was His Father's will that Heshould die on the Cross to save us from our sins,and He willingly laid down His life for us toprove to us how much He loved us. But the trialwas hard to His human nature, and the thoughtof the dreadful death that awaited Him on theCross filled His soul with suffering, so he wentback into the garden once more and prayed toHis Heavenly Father for strength. After He hadassured His Heavenly Father of His willingnessto obey His will to the end, angels from Heavencame and comforted Him.

Then Jesus arose, and returning to His disciples, said to them: *Sleep ye now and take your rest, for* *behold the hour is at hand when the Son of Man* *shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise,* *let us go, for behold he is at hand that will betray* *me.*

While Jesus was thus speaking, Judas Iscariot, one of the Apostles, came into the garden, bringing with him a crowd of soldiers with swords and clubs, and coming up to Jesus, he said: Hail, Rabbi, and kissed Him. Then Jesus said: Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss? And turning to the crowd, He asked: Whom seek ye?

And they answered: Jesus of Nazareth, and Jesus said: I am he, and the crowd fell backward to the ground.

Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest, but Jesus touched the man's ear and healed it, and, turning to Peter, He said to him: Put up again thy sword into its place, for all that take the sword shall perish by the sword. Do you not know that I could ask my Father and He would send me more than twelve legions of angels, but how then shall the will of my Father be fulfilled? Shall I not drink the chalice which my Father has given me to drink? And turning to His enemies, Jesus said: You come out with swords and clubs to arrest me, as if I were a robber. I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not lay hands on me.

All the Apostles fled, leaving Jesus alone with His enemies, and they laid hold of Him and hound Him with cords and brought Him to Caiphas, the high priest. Peter followed afar off, and when the soldiers brought Jesus into the hall where Caiphas was sitting with his friends, Peter entered the courtyard and sat with the servants around the fire. He wanted to see what was going to happen to Jesus. But when he was asked if he was a friend of Jesus, he became frightened and denied his Master three times before the cock crew.

THOUGHTS FOR US

One of the twelve men whom Our Lord had chosen for His special friends and Apostles was a wicked traitor named Judas Iscariot, but when Our Lord chose him for an Apostle he was not a bad man. He carried the money belonging to Our Lord and the Apostles and bought whatever was needed, and in time he grew to love money more than his Master. Judas saw all Our Lord's miracles and heard all He said to the people, but he no longer understood what he saw or heard, because he was all the time thinking of money. He became more selfish every day, and at last he betrayed his Master. He knew that Our Lord's enemies wanted to put Him to death. They were afraid to arrest Him in the day time, because He had so many friends among the people who would defend Him.

One night Judas went to Our Lord's enemies and agreed to deliver Jesus to them under the cover of darkness. After Our Lord had eaten the Paschal lamb with His Apostles He tried to keep Judas from committing the wicked sin that was in his heart. He let him see He knew about the bargain he had made and warned him against the wicked act he was about to commit. But Judas loved money more than he loved his Master, and so, instead of repenting of his sin, he left the supper room and went to the high priest and asked for soldiers to accompany him and arrest Jesus.

The soldiers did not know Jesus from the Apostles, and Judas told them to arrest the man whom he should kiss, for that would be Jesus. Love of money turned one of Our Lord's Apostles into a traitor. From this we should learn to keep our hearts free from love of money or anything else in this world that might tempt us to do wrong.

GETHSEMANE

*From the Roman Breviary*

Lo, from the Father's flaming throne,

The ever-living Word, the Son,

Urged by sweet love and saving grace,

Comes down to raise our fallen race.

He looks upon our miseries

In mercy; all our need He sees;

He wills our ruin to repair;

And sues the Sire in prostrate prayer.

Bowed 'neath the load of sin, He saith,

"My soul is sorrowful to death;

Though fain the cup would I decline,

Father, Thy will be done, not mine."

The woe of all the world He feels,

While faint upon the ground He kneels;

His great heart trembles with the pain,

Till blood-drops ooze from every vein.

Swift passes from His soul the storm,

An angel lifts the prostrate form;

With strength renewed He goeth forth

The King and Saviour of the earth.

*~ Tr. D. J. Donahoe*

*See Worksheet Three*

Lesson 4

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

"Lest the whole people die, let one man bleed," So spoke the Jewish priest of God's own Son. Through sin of one man all men were undone, Through death of one, all men from death are freed.

 *~ Bishop Spalding*

With His hands tied behind his back, the soldiers led Jesus before Caiphas, the high priest, who was sitting on the judgment seat. Caiphas questioned Jesus about His disciples and asked Him what He taught them. And Jesus answered:

I have spoken openly before the whole world; I have done nothing in secret; I have taught in the synagogue and in the temple in the hearing of all the people. Why, therefore, do you ask me what I taught? Ask those who heard me.

At this, the servant of the high priest, who was standing beside Jesus, struck Him across the face with his hand, saying: Answerest thou thus the high priest? After this Jesus remained silent and did not answer any more of the questions put to Him.

Then Caiphas called in men whom he knew would tell lies about Jesus. He wanted them to say things about Jesus that would make the Jews angry with Him, so that they would ask the governor for His death. But these false witnesses contradicted one another and proved nothing against Jesus.

Then Caiphas stood up, and lifting his hand towards Heaven, said: Jesus of Nazareth, I command you in the name of God to tell us plainly if you be the Christ, the Son of God. And Jesus answered: I am. And hereafter you shall see me sitting on the right hand of God and coming in the clouds of heaven.

On hearing this, Caiphas turned to the others who were assembled in the hall and said: What need have we for witnesses? All of you have heard Him say He is the Son of God. What think you of it? And they answered: It is blasphemy! He is guilty of death!

Thus Jesus was condemned by the Jews, not because He had said or done anything wrong, but because He told them the truth when they asked Him to do so in the name of God, His Father. He was condemned for saying He was the Son of God.

Then the soldiers led Jesus away to the guard house, where they mocked Him and treated Him cruelly until morning.

At daylight, Caiphas and those who were with him went to the guard house and commanded the soldiers to take Jesus to the court of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. They wanted Pilate to condemn Him to death, so they told him that Jesus called Himself a king. They said He went through the whole country trying to make the people disobey the laws and refuse to pay taxes. When Pilate heard them, he knew they were telling lies, for he could see by looking at Jesus

that He was innocent. He knew that spite and hatred made the high priest accuse Him of these wicked things. He did not want to condemn Jesus, whom he believed to be a good man, but he was afraid to displease the crowd, who were asking for His death. He asked Jesus a few questions, and when he learned that He came from Galilee, he sent Him to Herod, the king of Galilee, who was in Jerusalem that day.

When Jesus was brought before Herod, Herod wanted Him to work miracles for him, but Jesus would not do it. Then Herod examined Him, but could find no fault in Him, so he sent Him back to Pilate to do with Him what he pleased.

When Jesus was brought back, Pilate called together the chief priests and the judges, and said to them: You have brought this man to me and have accused Him of making trouble among the people. Now, I have examined Him before you and I find that what you have said against Him is not true. I sent Him to Herod, and he also found Him innocent. What, therefore, do you wish I should do with Him? But the people in their hatred of Jesus cried out: Crucify Him! Crucify Him! While the multitude were crying out for the death of Jesus, Pilate received a message from his wife saying: Have nothing to do with this just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.

Then Pilate went out on the platform before the people and said: It is my custom to release to you one prisoner every year at the time of the Pasch.

Now there is a wicked murderer in prison named Barabbas; which shall I release to you, Barabbas or Jesus'? But the crowd shouted: Give us Barabbas! Away with Jesus! Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Then Pilate pleaded with the people, saying: What evil hath this man done? But the crowd, who had been excited by the enemies of Jesus, cried out all the more: Crucify Him! Crucify Him! If you release Him, you are no friend of Caesar's. This frightened Pilate, for he was a coward. He was afraid his master, Caesar, would take away his position. So he ordered a servant to bring him a basin of water, and, standing where all the people could see him, he washed his hands, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man. All the crowd who saw him washing his hands understood what he meant, and cried out: His blood be upon us and upon our children. Then Pilate released Barabbas and delivered up Jesus to the soldiers to be scourged.

They took Him into the courtyard and stripped Him of His garments, and tying Him to a pillar, they beat Him with cruel lashes until all His skin was torn and

bleeding. When they were tired of scourging Jesus, they put a purple garment on Him and pressed a crown of thorns upon His head. Then they made Him sit on a stool and put a reed in His hand for a scepter, and each one of them in turn bowed before Him, saying: "Hail! king of the Jews!" They struck Him in the face and spat upon Him, and one of them took the reed out of His hand and struck the crown of thorns with it, so as to drive the cruel thorns into His head.

When Pilate sent for Jesus, the soldiers took off the purple rag and put His own garment on Him and led Him back to the judgment hall. When Pilate saw Jesus torn and bleeding, with His hands bound and a crown of thorns on His head, he was moved with pity. He thought the crowd would have compassion on Jesus now, and so he led Him out before them and said: Behold the man! He is innocent, and yet see how you have made Him suffer. But the angry crowd shouted louder than ever: Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Even Pilate was disgusted, and turning to the priests he said: Take Him, you, and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him, This made the chief priests very angry, and they said: We have a law according to which all blasphemers should die; and this man blasphemed, for He said He was the Son of God. When Pilate heard this he was frightened, and leading Jesus back into the judgment hall, he asked Him if it was true that He was the Son of God, but Jesus was silent. And Pilate said to Him: Will you not answer me? Do you not know that I have the power to crucify you or to release you? Jesus answered: Thou shouldst not have any power against me unless it were given to thee from above. Therefore, he that hath delivered me to thee hath the greater sin.

Pilate went out before the people once more and told them he would release Jesus, but the crowd cried out: If you release this man you are no friend of Caesar's. Pilate feared they would accuse him to his master, and so he said: Shall I crucify your king? But the high priest answered: We have no king but Caesar. Then Pilate delivered up Jesus to them to be crucified.

THE PASSION

*From the Roman Breviary*

What cruel storms of grief and pain

The gentle Jesus must sustain!

He bears His cross to Calvary,

And there they place Him on the tree.

With nails they nail Him to the wood,

Our thorn-crowned King; His holy blood

O'erflows from every wound, forlorn

He hangs the sport of spite and scorn.

He weeps, He prays, aloud He cries,

And yielding up the ghost, He dies;

The mother feels the cruel blow,

Her stainless heart is pierced with woe.

 The rocks are rent, and quakes the earth,

From out the tombs the dead walk forth;

Dread darkness covers land and main;

The temple's veil is torn in twain.

Sun, moon, and stars in gloom are hurled,

The heavens moan, and groans the world;

O sinful man, in shame arise;

Behold, for thee the Saviour dies.

Here with His mother, stand and weep,

In tears his wounded members steep,

See, hand and foot and bleeding side,

And think, for love of man He died!

Victim of love! lo, Thou art slain,

From sin and shame our souls to gain;

To wash us in the sacred flood

Of Thy regenerating blood.

Our peace, our joy, be Thou, O Lord,

Our life, our hope, our sweet reward,

Our guide, our light upon the way,

To lead us unto endless day.

 *~ Tr. D. J. Donahoe*

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

In the shadow of the rood

Love and Shame together stood;

Love, that bade Him bear the blame

Of her fallen sister, Shame;

Shame, that by the pangs thereof,

Bade Him break His heart for Love.

~ *Father Tabb*

The soldiers led Jesus forth from Pilate's house and placed a heavy wooden cross upon His shoulders. He was so weak from the scourging and from the loss of blood that He could scarcely carry His cross, and He fell under it twice. When He reached the city gate He was unable to carry it farther, and the soldiers made Simon of Cyrene help Him to carry the cross to Mount Calvary.

When Jesus reached the place where he was to be crucified, the soldiers gave Him wine mixed with gall to drink, but when He tasted it He would not drink it. Then the soldiers rudely tore off His garments, stretched Him on the cross, and drove big nails through His hands and feet. Over His head they put this sign: Jesus, King of the Jews. After this the soldiers erected the cross on which Jesus was nailed. They also crucified two thieves, putting one at His right hand and the other at His left. The crowd began to mock Jesus, saying: If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross! He saved others, but He cannot save Himself! If He is king of Israel, let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe Him! Jesus lifted up His eyes to Heaven and said:

*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

One of the thieves joined the crowd in mocking and blaspheming Jesus, but the other thief said to him: Shame on you! We are getting what we deserve for our sins, but this man has done nothing wrong. Now, because of these kindly words spoken of Jesus in His suffering, God gave-this thief grace to be sorry for his sins. He is known to all the world as the penitent thief. After rebuking the blasphemer, the penitent thief turned to Jesus and said: Lord, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom, remember me. And Jesus answered: *This day thou* *shalt be with me in Paradise.* After this, Jesus saw His mother and John, the beloved disciple, standing near the foot of the cross, and He said: *Woman, behold thy son. Son, behold thy mother.* And from this time forth, aslong as the Blessed Virgin remained on earth, Johntook care of her as if she were his own mother.

Suddenly the sun was covered and it became as dark as night. After a time Jesus cried out: *My* *God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* And again He said: *I thirst.* A man who was standing by dipped a sponge into vinegar, and putting it on the end of a reed, held it up to Our Lord's lips.

After having hung on the cross for three whole hours in agony, Our Saviour said:

*It is finished.* *Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.*

Thus Our Saviour finished the work of redemption which God promised Adam and Eve when He said that a descendant of Eve would crush the serpent's head. Our Saviour, having atoned for our sins and given us the last great proof of His love, gave a loud cry and yielded up His spirit into His Father's hands.

At the moment of Jesus' death there was a dreadful earthquake and the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom. The rocks were split and graves were opened, and many holy people who had long been buried arose from their tombs. Then the sun suddenly shone out brightly.

The multitude was filled with fear and fled back to the city. The captain of the Roman soldiers cried out: Truly, this was a just man; this was indeed the Son of God. And all the soldiers cried out: Truly, this was the Son of God!

The priests in Jerusalem, who did not know that Jesus was dead, went to Pilate and asked him to have all those who were crucified killed before sundown, because it was the Sabbath of the Lord, on which it was forbidden to punish criminals. In obedience to Pilate's orders, soldiers with big clubs came to Mount Calvary to kill the men who were hanging on the crosses. They broke the legs of the two thieves, but when they came to Jesus they found Him dead. One of the soldiers, to make sure He was dead, drove his lance into the side of Jesus, and when he drew it out blood mixed with water ran from the wound.

After this Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea, and Nicodemus, having obtained permission from Pilate, came to Mount Calvary and took Our Lord's body down from the cross. They wrapped the body in fine linen and carried it to a garden nearby, in which there was a new tomb, which Joseph had hewn out of the solid rock. The Blessed Virgin, and the Apostles followed the body of Jesus and saw it laid away in the tomb. Mary arranged the body of her Son in its resting place, and having wept over Him, they all withdrew and a great stone was rolled against the mouth of the tomb.

The enemies of Jesus went to Pontius Pilate and told him that before Jesus died He had said that after three days He would rise from the dead. They asked Pilate to have the tomb guarded lest the disciples should steal away the body and say that Jesus had risen from the dead, as He had promised. Pilate ordered them to take soldiers and to guard the tomb so nobody should enter it.

THOUGHTS FOR US

When Adam and Eve sinned they deserved death for themselves and for their children forever. Their disobedience closed the gates of Heaven against every human soul. We all inherit this sin from our First Parents; it is called original sin. The sins we commit ourselves are actual sins; they also make it impossible for us to go to Heaven. No one but the Son of God could take upon himself the punishment which we deserve for our sins and obtain forgiveness from God for us. No one but the Son of God could open the gates of Heaven to us after they had been closed against us by the sin of our First Parents.

When God cast our First Parents out of Paradise He promised them a Redeemer, but it was thousands of years before the world was ready to receive Our Saviour. During all that time only those who believed God's promise and hoped in the Redeemer to come were saved.

Before Our Lord came on earth God ordered sacrifices of sheep and of oxen to be made, but the blood of oxen could not take away our sins. Sacrificing the lives of animals, however, helped to make the people understand that sin deserved to be punished by death and that the Redeemer would die for us to take away our sins. All the holy men and women who lived on earth before Our Lord came were saved through their belief in Him. When they died their souls went down into limbo; there they waited until Our Lord, through His death on the cross, obtained forgiveness for their sins and through His ascension opened the gates of Heaven to them.

The sacrifices of animals were pleasing in the sight of God, because they referred to the sacrifice of the cross, but after Our Saviour offered up His own life on the cross, God forbade any more sacrifices of animals to be made. . The sacrifice of the cross is the only perfectsacrifice that was ever offered to God. In this sacrifice the cross is the altar and Jesus is both priest and victim. Jesus offered the sacrifice of His own life to God for the four great ends for which all sacrifices were offered; that is, to worship God, to thank Him for His gifts, to beg for new favors, and to atone for sins.

Jesus willingly died for us. All His enemies were made to bear witness to His innocence. Herod declared Him innocent.. Pilate washed his hands before all the people to show them he believed Jesus was innocent and that he did not want to have anything to do with His punishment. The high priests had no accusation against Him but that He called Himself the Son of God. Even the Roman soldiers were made to say He was innocent and that He was the Son of God.

All the dreadful suffering of Jesus was caused by our sins. And from the story of His passion and death we should learn how wicked sin is and resolve never to be guilty of it.

SACRIFICE

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

*St. Bonaventure*

Lord, Thy death upon the tree

Brings uplifting thoughts to me,

Calm of mind and holy fire,

Love of God and pure desire.

O to bear in memory

All thy grief and obloquy,

Holy Christ, Thy thorny wreath,

Spear and nails and crucial death!

All these blessed wounds of Thine,

Witness of Thy love divine,

Cruel scourging and distress,

Of the mortal bitterness.

Lord, the thought is of such dole,

So intoxicates the soul,

That we bow in tearful prayers;

But what glorious fruit it bears!

Lo, before Thee, crucified,

Sink all selfishness and pride;

Loud to Thee, dear Christ we cry;

Join us with Thy saints on high.

Honor, praise and glory bring

Unto Jesus, Heavenly King,

Who, all pure and faultless, gave

His sweet life our lives to save.

*~ Tr. D. J. Donahoe*

JESUS RISES FROM THE DEAD

EARTH'S TRIBUTE

First the grain, and then the blade—

The one destroyed, the other made;

Then stalk and blossom, and again

The gold of newly minted grain.

So Life, by Death the reaper cast

To earth, again shall rise at last;

For 'tis the service of the sod

To render God the things of God.

 *~ Father Tabb*

*See Worksheet Four*

Lesson Five

JESUS RISES FROM THE DEAD

Early on Easter Sunday morning, which was the third day after that on which Our Saviour died on the cross, the earth shook and an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven and rolled back the stone from the mouth of the tomb and sat upon it. The soldiers who were keeping guard over the tomb were frightened and fled. And behold, the tomb was empty, for Jesus had risen and left it while it was still closed. The angel's face glowed like lightning and his garments were as white as snow.

The three holy women were on their way to the tomb with sweet spices to anoint the body of Jesus. They asked each other who would help them roll back the stone from the mouth of the tomb. But when they reached the garden they saw the stone rolled back. Mary Magdalen thought someone had stolen the body of Jesus and she ran back to tell the Apostles. On her way she met St. Peter and St. John and told them that the tomb was empty. Mary Cleophas and Salome went to the tomb, and as they entered into it they saw an angel sitting

at one side, and he said to them: Fear not, you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen; He is not here. Come and see the place where they laid Him. Go quickly and tell Peter and the other Apostles that He is risen from the dead and that He will go before them into Galilee, where they shall see Him, as He foretold them.

The holy women ran back quickly to tell the Apostles the glorious news, that Jesus had risen from the dead. In the meanwhile, St. Peter and St. John reached the tomb; they saw the place where Jesus was laid and the linen wherein He had been wrapped, and they went back to tell the other disciples that the body was not in the tomb. After Mary Magdalen gave her message to St. Peter and St. John, she returned to turn back the stone from the mouth of the tomb. When she looked into it she saw two angels all in white where the body had been laid. They said to her: Woman, why weepest thou? And Mary answered because they have taken away the body of my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. Just then a man standing beside her said:

“Why weepest thou?Whom dost thou seek?” And without looking up, Mary answered: Sir, if you have taken Him away, tell me where you have laid Him and I will go and carry Him away. The man said to her: Mary. And Mary recognized the voice of Jesus, and threw herself at his feet, crying, Master! And Jesus said to her: Touch me not, for I am not yet gone up to my Father, but go

and find my brethren and say to them: I go up unto my Father and your Father, to my Lord and your Lord. And Mary went back to the Apostles and told what she had seen and heard.

When the holy women told the Apostles that Jesus was risen from the dead, they did not believe them. Two of the disciples set out that same day for a town called Emmaus, and while they walked together and talked about the things that had happened, Jesus joined them, and they did not know Him, He asked them what were the things of which they spoke among themselves. And they told Him all about Jesus and how they had hoped He was the Messiah, but that the high priest had delivered Him up to Pontius Pilate to be crucified. They also said that some of the women told stories about His having risen from the dead and having spoken with Him, but that they did not believe them. Then Jesus said to them: 0 foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into His glory? And, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He explained to them all the things that were written concerning the Christ.

When evening came, He went into the house with them, and as He sat at table He took bread and blessed and broke and gave it to them. And then their eyes were opened and they knew Him, and He vanished from their sight. And they said one to another, was not our heart burning within us whilst He spoke and explained to us the Scriptures?

RESURRECTION

The seed that faileth in the ground

Must die, become as naught,

Before the virtue in it found

Yield up the harvest sought.

E'en Christ who is of life the Lord

Gave up the body's breath,

With God's great law in meet accord,

To quicken by His death.

And so, my heart, thy flame must die,

Thyself must broken be—

Alone when love doth shattered lie

Cometh love's victory.

 *~Charles L . OWonnell, G. S. C.*

THOUGHTS FOR US

When Our Saviour was on earth He preached to the people and told them what they must believe in order to go to Heaven. After His crucifixion, while His body rested in the tomb, He went down into Limbo to preach to the holy souls who were waiting there for Him. This is what we mean in the Apostles' Creed when we say, He descended into hell.

Before Our Saviour's death He told all those who wanted a proof from Him that He was the Son of God that He would die and after three days come back to life. But the people did not understand what He meant. They thought He referred to some mystery. When Christ rose from the dead even His Apostles could hardly believe it until they saw Him with their own eyes.

*See Worksheet Five*