

Holy Week Lessons

April 13, 2019

No Gospel readings can be so rich in lessons as those of Holy Week. Here are a few references from the Passion of Our Lord, quoted in chronological order, having a particular relevance to our own time, that of the Passion of His Church.

Lk. XIX, 40: *"If these (disciples) were silent, the very stones would cry out"* – As Jesus is about to enter Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the crowd is praising him loudly. Pharisees complain of the noise. But God's Truth will be heard. As the SSPX falls silent, somebody else must tell the truths it used to tell.

Jn. XVII, 15: *"I do not pray that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from evil."* After the Last Supper, just before leaving the Cenacle, Jesus prays to His Father in Heaven for His Apostles, but not that life be made easy for them. So why should life be made easy for Catholics today?

Mt. XXVI, 31: *"I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered."* On the Mount of Olives Jesus tells His Apostles that they will all fall away, and he quotes from the Old Testament (Zach. XIII, 7). Today with the Pope being crippled in his faith, the entire Catholic Church is more or less crippled.

Mt. XXVI, 40: *"Watch and pray."* In the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus is soon to be betrayed, He warns His Apostles to prepare by prayer for the hour of their trial. He says neither just "Pray," nor even "Pray and watch," but "Watch and pray," because if they do not keep their eyes open, if they cease to keep watch, they will also cease to pray. Today the Church's supreme hour of trial seems imminent.

Jn. XVIII, 6: *"When Jesus said to them, 'I am he,' they drew*

back and fell to the ground." As the Temple police close in on Jesus, he fearlessly identifies himself, and for one moment lets loose a single spark of His divine power – they all collapse. Another such spark could instantaneously rescue the Church today, but that would not win over men's hearts. Today's trial of the Church must be fulfilled.

Mt. XXVI, 52: *"Put your sword away, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."* Peter is virile, he loves his Master, he absolutely wants to defend Him, but he has not understood Him – Jesus will be the King of Hearts, not the Knave of Clubs. Virile men today seek any action to defend the Church, as they are not content with "only" praying, but let them pray, or they will flee, as did the Apostles (v. 56).

Lk. XXII, 53: *"This is your hour and the power of darkness."* Jesus is just about to be seized by the Temple police. He gently complains that they had not seized Him in daylight, when He was openly preaching in the Temple, but they had had to seize Him at night, when he was no longer surrounded by crowds to protect Him. Never in all history has He been so abandoned, have times been so dark, as today.

Mt. XXVII, 26: *"And all the people answered, 'His blood be upon us and upon our children' Then Pilate released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered Him to be crucified."* Clearly, the "people" here are not only the "chief priests and the elders" who "persuaded the people to ask for Barabbas and to destroy Jesus" (v.26), it was the whole crowd in front of Pilate, about to riot (v.24), which made Pilate give way by their calling down upon themselves and their descendants the responsibility for the deicide (death of God in His human nature). Now this crowd was overwhelmingly Jewish, and the crowd identified themselves as such ("Us and our children"). Therefore the blame for the deicide rests upon those descendants unless and until collectively they recognise and adore their own true Messiah, but Scripture says this will only happen at the end of the world (e.g. Rom. XI, 25–27).

Like a true Catholic, Leo XIII (1878–1903) called for the same blood to come down upon the Jews not as a curse but as a “laver of regeneration” (Act of Consecration of the World to the Sacred Heart of Jesus). Meanwhile, they serve God to scourge our apostasy.

Kyrie eleison.