

POST #3 - LEARNING TO WEEP

A HEART PIERCED BY THORNS
MEDITATIONS BY A DAUGHTER OF THE MOTHER OF SORROWS**3. Learning to Weep****A. Scripture reading:**

Matthew 11:21-24 –

²¹“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes. ²²But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. ²³And as for you, Capernaum: ‘Will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the netherworld.’ For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”

(Read again also, from the primary passage, *Luke* 19:41-42.)

B. Meditation:

Once again, stand with Jesus at the edge of the city. Once again look at His face and see His tears. Turn to follow His gaze—but this time it is not first-century Jerusalem that you see: it is a city you know. It might be New York . . . Atlanta . . . Seattle. . . . Let yourself be there in the same way that you were at Jerusalem. Let yourself see the buildings, the shop windows, the rushing of the people. Listen to the sound of traffic, the many voices, the variety of languages. Smell the exhaust, the steam, the whiff of perfume, the odors and aromas of food.

Go with Jesus as He begins to walk through the city. Look at His face: the tears are still flowing. Follow His gaze as He looks at each person individually, seeing and knowing each heart. And now Christ is weeping with an overwhelming and immeasurable grief. And He cries out His lament “Woe . . . woe . . . woe!”

Unfortunately, there is a tendency to read our Lord’s words of “woe” to the various cities as a malediction. It would be better to read them as a lamentation, a cry of heart-rending grief as He sees ahead to the suffering that will come upon them. Yes, He does upbraid them, reproach them, rebuke them for their unbelief and hardness of heart. But He is also warning them and crying out for them even yet to open their hearts.

The Lord says to Jerusalem, “. . . you did not recognize the time of your visitation.” What would He say to our cities today? *We* have been given even more! We have the knowledge of Christ’s passion, death, and resurrection. We have the apostolic witness, handed down through the centuries. We have the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in power. Why, then, is there still so much unbelief . . . so much complacency . . . so much suffering . . . so much sin?

Go again to the city you know and walk the streets with Jesus. Follow His gaze as He reads the headlines at the newsstand, as He sees the movie posters outside the theaters. See His tears flow afresh as He looks with infinite love and compassion at the eleven year-old girl soliciting on a corner or at the young man

whose outward form has been altered by hormones. Watch Him continue to weep as in front of you several men enter an elegant restaurant and another man shuffles past, his eyes searching the sidewalk for pennies and dimes.

Find yourself standing with Jesus in your own hometown. Go with Him to the local shopping mall. See it anew as you may have never seen it before—see it through His eyes. Do you see the emptiness in the hearts of so many as they pick up one trinket after another? Do you see the hidden hunger for something *real* as they spend senselessly what could feed a family of four for a week? Do you see the hopelessness in the hearts of so many? Our Lord sees everything— every buried hope, every hidden sin, every grace accepted or refused. He sees . . . He knows . . . and He continues to weep.

C. *Reflection:*

The question for us to consider is, “Do we really care? Do we *really* care that Jesus weeps?” In prayer with our Lord, in the solitude of your heart, ask Him to help you answer this question. Ask Him, “How much do I care about other people . . . *really* care? How much compassion do I *really* have for them in their suffering . . . in their physical suffering . . . in their mental suffering . . . in their spiritual suffering? To what extent do I really think about their very possible future suffering, in this world and in the life to come?” Ask Jesus to help you find the honest answers to these questions.

Call to mind the most debauched person you know or may have known. Bring before the eyes of your mind the image of a radical pro-abortion politician. Ask yourself, “Do I love them? or do I *only* judge them?” Think of the person you have the most difficulty truly loving. Mentally walk through the places you normally visit—the stores, the gym, the cafeteria—and look at the people. See them as individuals. Look at *each* one and tell yourself, “This is someone whom Jesus loves. This is someone for whom He suffered and died. This is someone for whom, even now, He weeps.”

Then ask our Lord again for the gift of compassion. Of all the sins that grieve and offend the Sacred Heart, I have to wonder if any grieve Him more than the nonchalant apathy and pragmatic indifference of those who profess to follow Him. We *need* to have compassion: active, authentic compassion! Ask for this gift repeatedly. It is *not* a grace you can have too much of! Spend time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to teach your heart, to touch your heart, so that you can weep with Jesus . . . and can weep for Him . . . because so many are oblivious to His tears.