

## WHERE THE SAINTS ENCOUNTERED THE LORD

*For the Novena of the saints B. Capitano and V. Gerosa we shall read each day some texts from the writings of Bartolomea after the short reading of the Vespers.*

### **Introduction to the first day**

The novelty of Christianity lies in the event of Jesus Christ, the Son of God made flesh...



The encounter that God realizes with us, therefore, is not outside of our human reality, of the problematic nature of existence, but within it. Being aware of it urges us to recognize every situation as a call to live the encounter with God's mystery.

Bartolomea expresses this faith in a simple and eloquent way in her writings. She proposes to awaken within herself, at the beginning of the day, the conviction of the prevenient and loving presence of God that invites her to face everything with him. Therefore, she practices letting herself be encountered by him in every place, in every moment of her day, both in prayer and in daily activities... Jesus, the Lord, still passes by our streets, looks at us today and calls us, here and now. In different ways... he still challenges us, knocks on the door of our heart, asks us to come out of ourselves, to let ourselves be formed by him without defences, to *remain* inside the bond of love with him, to open ourselves to the needs of our neighbour and to take care of others, like him.

In this Novena, through the intercession and the witness of our Saints, let us pray for the Grace to proclaim as daughters and followers of Redeemer his love for all *(from the letter of Mother, NSdU 2019/1)*.

1<sup>st</sup> DAY: *I will recognize God in everyone* (Scr III, 165)

I saw the whole Blessed Trinity actively concerned for my eternal salvation. He creates an immense number of creatures so that in different ways they may be of help in attaining my salvation. God has formed me with an excellent body, with such a noble soul, made in his own image. He has endowed me with memory, intellect and will, with considerable talent. As a dwelling place for me, God created the world, so beautiful, so varied and so delightful. God created all things that I may use them as steps of a ladder to climb up to Him (Scr III, 109, 111, 128).

2<sup>nd</sup> DAY: *Jesus in the Sacrament has truly 'ravished' my heart.* (Scr III, 204)

Jesus is not satisfied until he reaches the point of giving his whole self to me in the Holy Eucharist. He stays here ever ready to receive me at his banquet and into his confidence. In this mystery, I know nothing except love, and as I meditate on it, I experience nothing except love. My Jesus, your heart is nothing but charity and so by staying with us you have continual opportunities to express your charity, and these you consider to be your most cherished delights. You know how I enjoy staying at your feet, how sweet and delightful are those moments. I too want to have something to offer you in return for your boundless love (Scr III, 56, 116, 718).

3<sup>rd</sup> DAY: *Jesus speaks to the heart* (Scr III, 208)

I will fully value the interior life by reminding myself that God speaks to our heart and in solitude, and so prayer and a recollected mind will be my daily occupations. I will form a retreat in my own heart and there frequently retire to converse in a familiar manner with my God even in the midst of my daily occupations. In meditation, I will place myself like a poor beggar at the door of the Heart of my Jesus. If he graciously opens it and lets me into the furnace of his Love, in silence I will listen to what he will kindly teach me and enjoy the peace and quiet of his sweet presence. If ever I feel dry, I will try to rouse myself with some good reflection, taken from my book or kept in my mind. The place chosen for my Meditation will be either at the foot of the Cross or at the door of the Sacred Heart of Jesus or in front of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament (Scr III, 657, 645, 661).

4<sup>th</sup> DAY: *In superiors I will see Jesus* (Scr III, 657)

I will have towards my Parents the respect they deserve as persons who represent God himself; I will revere them, obey them, love them and help them as

much as I can. I will have full trust in my Confessor. I will always speak to Him as if I spoke and had to do with Jesus, my most gentle Spouse. And so, I will always accept any advice, warning, admonishment ... as given by God himself. I will have for Him and for the other Priests the respect due to their person as Ministers of the Lord (*Scr III, 646*).

**5<sup>th</sup> DAY:** *God disposes for my growth in holiness* (*Scr III, 80*)

Jesus watches over you that I may derive spiritual benefit from the things that happen to me. I meditated on the great mercies the Lord has always shown me in spite of my ingratitude. I thought of my good upbringing, so many inspirations and the wise advice of my Confessors, Teachers and companions, the Sacraments so frequently received, so many practices of piety, ... and when I offend him, he seems to close his eyes and turn a deaf ear so that he may not stop loving me and favouring me. All these are clear signs of the love he has for me. I shall look upon whatever happens to me as coming from Heaven; I have to take everything from his hands, have full trust in him and be restful in him. He assured me he would be ever mindful of me, disposing everything for his greater glory and my growth in holiness (*Scr III, 656-657, 177, 171, 112, 80*).

**6<sup>th</sup> DAY:** *Wherever I go, my dear Spouse is there following me* (*Scr III, 659*)

As a further help to remain in the presence of my divine Spouse, I will heed His voice calling me to my household duties and urging me to keep him pleasant company, assuring me, on his part, that He will never leave me alone, and telling me to do everything for Him alone. With this Divine Lover by my side, I will leave the Church and make my way back home absorbed in holy thoughts. I will do everything with a will, lovingly and with the utmost care, because Jesus is watching me all the time. When I am teaching, I will keep in mind that he is there to help me, to teach me, to give me patience, prudence, ardent love and kindness. On the road, I will have him close to me, that he may be my faithful Guardian. If work wearies me or weighs me down, I will look at my dear Jesus and feel quite refreshed. I will thank him for his constant, loving company, and on my part I will resolve by his grace never to lose sight of him (*Scr III, 662-663, 659*).

**7<sup>th</sup> DAY:** *In the poor people, I will see the person of Jesus Christ himself* (*Scr III, 647*)

In doing good to my neighbour I will keep him close to me so that I may do everything for pure love of him, with great kindness and with the greatest peace of

mind. May Jesus alone inspire, sustain and bring to completion all that I do, think or plan. Let us have a preferential love for the poor. They are the living image of Jesus Christ. Let us help them as much as we can, even if it may cost us at times. Let us remember that in so doing we are sure to please our most loving Jesus. This should be a sufficient reason to urge us to do it promptly and eagerly. That is the way in which to please our most gentle Spouse (*Scr III, 663; Scr I, 13, 237*).

**8<sup>th</sup> DAY:** *The Lord presents himself in many ways* (VG, 109 - S. Vincenza)

Several vivid images of our most beloved Redeemer have entered as guests into our house, carrying the current disease. Duty and love for them call upon me ... my adorable divine Saviour, such are the sentiments that I am eager to acquire. I wish to engrave them within my heart, or rather, to draw them from yours, and make of them the norm of my behaviour: I will have a tender compassion towards the poor in their suffering and distress. The most ill-clad and forsaken will be the special object of my care and attention. Above all, my adorable Saviour, in every person in distress and in the poverty-stricken, I shall recognize Yourself (*Scandella, VG. 68, 65*).

**9<sup>th</sup> DAY:** *Not by chance we are united* (*Scr I, 182*)

I have found in you a friend who by example as well as warnings will do much good to my soul. May this affection for each other, at least, make of us both Saints by means of mutual admonishment, encouragement and advice. To establish our spiritual union I would suggest we speak always in the plural. To be quite frank with you: from the moment I came to know you, I have always detected in you special designs of God and I understood that your heart was endowed with spiritual gifts, and so I was sure I would see in you fine fruits of virtue. I have always wanted to establish with you an intimate friendship (*Scr I, 155, 28, 257,473*).