

(Sept. 9th - 10th)

Our Lady of Sorrows

Our Lady of Sorrows, the title given to our Blessed Mother, focuses on her intense suffering and grief during the Passion and Death of our Lord. Traditionally, this suffering also comprised the seven dolors or seven sorrows of Mary which were foretold by Simeon who proclaimed to Mary, "*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.*" (Lk 2:34-35) These seven sorrows included the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt; the loss and finding of Jesus in the Temple; Mary's meeting of Jesus on the way to Calvary; Mary at the cross of Jesus; her holding of Jesus when he was taken from the cross; Jesus' burial.

The Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows grew in popularity in the 12th century, but under several different titles. By the 14th and 15th centuries, the feast and devotion had spread throughout the Church. In 1482, the feast was officially placed in the Roman Missal under the title of Our Lady of Compassion. In 1727, Pope Benedict XIII placed the Feast of Our Lady of Compassion on the Friday before Palm Sunday. However, the Feast was suppressed with the revision of the calendar published in the Roman Missal in 1969.

In 1668, the feast in honor of the Seven Dolours was set for the Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Cross (September 14). Inserted into the Roman calendar in 1814, it was fixed as the permanent date by Pope Pius X. It was given the official title of the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary (now simply called the Feast of our Lady of Sorrows).

In 1980, Pope St. John Paul II reminded the people that Mary Most Holy continues as the loving consoler of those touched by the many physical and moral sorrows which afflict and torment humanity. As our Spiritual Mother, Mary, like mothers do, always understands her children and consoles them in their troubles.

Looking to the example of Mary, may we, too, unite our sufferings to Jesus and face them with courage, love and trust.

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