

## September 15: Our Lady of Sorrows

### OPENING PRAYER

On September 15, the Church celebrates the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. Sacred Tradition names seven sorrows that Mary endured, such as the flight into Egypt and the brief separation from the twelve-year-old Jesus in the Temple. Undoubtedly, however, the greatest of Mary's sorrows was the Crucifixion and death of her son, Jesus Christ.

One of the most intense types of suffering we can face happens when we witness the suffering of someone we love. We may have comforted a friend whose family was dealing with divorce, or perhaps we listened patiently to a sibling who was betrayed or treated unjustly. We may have sat at the bedside of a family member who faced a final illness.

All the saints, including Mary, are members of our Christian community, and we can ask them to pray for us. They are always willing to intercede for us. When we encounter the suffering of those we love, we can turn to the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, for support, guidance, and understanding.

### *Let us pray:*

Mary, Mother of Sorrows, pray for us. The suffering of those we care about hurts us deeply. When we see the sufferings of those around us, we may want to turn away or change the subject. We may even avoid someone who is distraught because we don't know what to say. Mary, Mother of God, you never turned away as your Son suffered greatly. You met Jesus on the road as he carried his cross, and you remained with your Son until he died. Mary, pray with us so that we may open our hearts to the suffering of others and help them carry their burdens. Comfort us, Holy Mother, as we feel the pain of others, and help us to remember your example as you stood at the foot of the cross and received the body of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## CLOSING PRAYER

The feast we know as Our Lady of Sorrows was once called Our Lady of Compassion. Compassion means we feel the pain of others. In fact, the word *compassion* comes from two Latin words meaning “to sympathize” and “to suffer.” As we grow in Christian charity, our compassion reaches beyond those individuals we know personally. Our compassion extends outward to members of our community and even the whole world. Compassion is much more than just a feeling—it leads us to respond to the suffering of others. As their pain becomes our pain, we are compelled to help in whatever way we can.

### *Let us pray:*

Lord Jesus, we ask today that you help us to grow in compassion for others. Your Mother’s heart was pierced when she witnessed your suffering. Make us willing to share in the suffering of those around us. Grant us the courage and grace to spend time with the people we love when they face loss or despair.

Lord Jesus, show us how to help ease the suffering of people beyond our immediate circle, such as those in our community who struggle with the effects of discrimination, poverty, or illness. Make us aware of the needs of the world beyond our own doors. Show us how to reach out to victims of injustice, violence, or famine, no matter where they live.

Lord Jesus, fill us with compassion and let this awareness bear fruit. Inspire us to do your will, so we can help to build a world where human needs are met and where those who suffer find comfort. We ask this in your holy name. Amen.