

Guards are placed around the Tomb of Jesus

Late on Friday night, I saw Caiphas and some of the chief men among the Jews holding a consultation concerning the best course to pursue with regard to the prodigies which had taken place, and the effect they had had upon the people. They continued their deliberations quite into the morning, and then hurried to Pilate's house, to tell him that, as that seducer

said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again,' it would be right to command the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day, as otherwise his disciples might come and steal him away, and say to the people, 'He is risen from the dead,' and the last error would be worse than the first. Pilate was determined to have nothing more to do with the business, and he only answered: 'You have a guard; go, guard it as you know.' However, he appointed Cassius to keep a watch over all that took place, and give him an exact account of every circumstance.

I saw these men, twelve in number, leave the town before sunrise, accompanied by some soldiers who did not wear the Roman uniform, being attached to the Temple. They carried lanterns fastened to the end of long poles, in order that they might be able to see every surrounding object, in spite of the darkness of the night, and also that they might have some light in the dark cave of the sepulchre.

No sooner had they reached the sepulchre than, having first seen with their own eyes that the body of Jesus was really there, they fastened one rope across the door of the tomb, and a second across the great stone which was placed in front, sealing the whole with a seal of half-circular shape. They then returned to the city, and the guards stationed themselves opposite the outer door. They were five or six in number, and watched three and three alternately. Cassius never left his post, and usually remained sitting or standing in front of the entrance to the cave, so as to see that side of the tomb where the feet of our Lord rested.

He had received many interior graces, and been given to understand many



mysteries. Being wholly unaccustomed to this state of spiritual enlightenment, he was perfectly transported out of himself, and remained nearly all the time unconscious of the presence of exterior things. He was entirely changed, had become a new man, and spent the whole day in penance, in making fervent acts of gratitude, and in humbly adoring God.