

The Eve of the Resurrection

Towards the close of the Sabbath-day, John came to see the holy women. He endeavoured to give some consolation, but could not restrain his own tears, and only remained a short time with them. They had likewise a short visit from Peter and James the Greater, after which they retired to their cells, and gave free vent to grief, sitting upon ashes, and veiling themselves even more closely.

The prayer of the Blessed Virgin was unceasing. She ever kept her eyes fixed interiorly on Jesus, and was perfectly consumed by her ardent desire of once more beholding him whom she loved with such inexpressible love. Suddenly an angel stood by her side, and bade her arise and go to the door of the dwelling of Nicodemus, for that the Lord was very near. The heart of the Blessed Virgin leaped for joy. She hastily wrapped her cloak about her, and left the holy women, without informing them where she was going. I saw her walk quickly to a small entrance which was cut in the town wall, the identical one through which she had entered when returning with her companions from the sepulchre.

It was about nine o'clock at night, and the Blessed Virgin had almost reached the entrance, when I saw her stop suddenly in a very solitary spot, and look upwards in an ecstasy of delight, for on the top of the town wall she beheld the soul of our Lord, resplendent with light, without the appearance of a wound, and surrounded by patriarchs.

He descended towards her, turned to his companions, and presenting her to them, said, 'Behold Mary, behold my Mother.' He appeared to me to salute her with a kiss, and he then disappeared. The Blessed Virgin knelt down, and most reverently kissed the ground on which he had stood, and the impression of her hands and knees remained imprinted upon the stones. The sight filled her with inexpressible joy, and she immediately rejoined the holy women, who were busily employed in preparing the perfumes and spices. She did not tell them what she had seen, but her firmness and strength of mind was restored. She was perfectly renovated, and therefore comforted all the rest, and endeavoured to strengthen their faith. All the holy women were sitting by a long table, the cover of which hung down to the floor, when Mary returned; bundles of herbs were heaped around them, and these they mixed together and arranged; small flasks, containing sweet unctions and water of spikenard, were standing near, as also bunches of



natural flowers, among which I remarked one in particular, which was like a streaked iris or a lily. Magdalen, Mary the daughter of Cleophas, Salome, Johanna, and Mary Salome, had bought all these things in the town during the absence of Mary. Their intention was to go to the sepulchre before sunrise on the following day, in order to strew these flowers and perfumes over the body of their beloved Master.