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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why did our Blessed Lady not go with the holy Women to the Sepulchre on Easter morning?

The silence of the Evangelists on this point seems to be an eloquent testimony to the delicate sympathy existing between Our Lady and the holy Women.

The latter whilst preparing the ointments on Friday evening and late on Saturday would leave the Mother of God to herself knowing like the friends of Job (ii, 13) that her grief was very great, too great for words of consolation. They also felt, as do the friends of bereaved families, that their efforts to do honour to the sacred body would be a real alleviation to her.

On Easter morning they would not suggest to the mourning Mother to join them in their errand, fearing that the fresh sight of the mangled body of her Son would but renew and aggravate her grief.

On her part our Blessed Lady, being probably the only firm believer in the Resurrection, would know that the errand would be useless, and therefore she would not offer to go with her friends. On the other hand she saw it was a consolation to them, and, as it turned out later, also pleasing to the risen Saviour. Out of humility she would not disclose her knowledge, but (as she had done in the case of Saint Joseph, Matt, i, 20), leave the revelation of God's secret to His Divine Providence.

LAMBERT NOLLE, O.S.B.

Is the anointing of Christ related in Luke vii, 36 ff, the same as that related in Matthew xxvi, 6 ff, Mark xiv, 3 ff and John xii, 1 ff?

Since Matt., Mark and John all relate an anointing of Christ by a woman before his Passion one may well be tempted to ask why Luke should be silent on the point. In the second place, we note that the host in both cases (Matt., Mark and John on the one hand, and Luke vii on the other) is named Simon. Again, in both there is mention of an alabaster jar of perfume, an anointing and a wiping with hair. The question asked above might therefore appear to demand an affirmative answer.

Nevertheless, the evidence against this view is overwhelming. The anointing in Luke vii occurs in the account of our Lord's Galilean ministry, long before his Passion. It would be most unlike St. Luke to insert here for no apparent reason the record of an incident which in fact occurred (on the supposition of identity), much later in a different part of the country. The motive of the anointing does not appear to be the same, nor do the circumstances coincide. In Luke vii the sinner comes in almost unobserved and scarcely tolerated. Her tears fall fast on to the Lord's feet thus doing duty for the water which the host should