



Boston Catholic Journal

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Part II



Picture by a Poor Clare Colettine Nun

Song of the Servant

"You asked me, Lord, if ever I had seen you ... your broken body, draped, as it were, over the Altar; the hands that healed open and still, the strong arms that lifted up, limply hanging down. Oh, yes, Lord ... I have seen you thus! Did not Mary gently, tenderly, sorrowfully, lay you there ... even as she placed you in the arms of Simeon, who dimly saw this Altar first? *Was she not the first Altar upon which you were placed as she sat*

weeping in the torrent of your Father's tears, holding you, lifeless, to the breasts that once nursed you ... to the heart that never ceased loving you, and never abandoned you? Oh, yes, Lord, my Beloved ... I have seen you so, and how often my anguish has been salted with my tears! Must not ever the chants of men, the songs of women, the lisping of children, anoint your broken Body with myrr ... that bitter balm of sorrow, impassioned with love? Must it not be endless, perpetual, until it bursts the chrysalis of pain in Paradise? Can it be less?

... but, behold, my Lord ... *the Vestibule is empty!* How can this be?

Who am I but dust and ashes, sin and sorrow ... and yet I ... *even I* ... see Thee here. Marred with sin and disfigured through dissolution, threadbare and poor ... yet I see. If I, conceived in sin from my mother's womb, can see ... what of those anointed with grace, who ever walk the way of the just and do not stumble as I do? How is it that they do not, cannot see? Could they see, would they not be here, the many? Even the few? Their raiment, not like mine, is unsoiled, and their way, surely is pleasing to You. But if they saw, if they truly understood, if they grasped ... if they but *verged* on conceiving – would they not be here, too? Tell me, Lord ... have they not held thy hand as I have held thy hand lifeless to my face, laving it in my tears? My tears are sorrow and born of love. Theirs, born also of love are surely of joy and endless gratitude? But where are they? Look about, Lord ... the Vestibule ... the Vestibule to Paradise ... it is empty. There are none."

"Did I not heal ten? Where are the other nine? Does only this foreigner return?"

"Surely, Lord, the seal you have put upon our lips, the seal of this holy profession, that You are *really and truly* present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar ... surely we are Centurions, one and all? We need not *see*. We *believe*. But if we believe, Lord ... *if truly we hold that You are here* ..."

"Remembrance, for many, has long since passed.

There are many who come, but few who see. As with my words, so with my body. Hearing, they hear, but do not understand. Seeing, they see, but do not discern. For this reason I had told your fathers long ago, even as I tell you now, that *I am come into this world; that they who see not, may see; and they who see, may become blind.* "

Bear with your servant, Lord, and tell me: who are the blind that have come to see, and who the seeing, who have become blind? You know that I am a stupid man; tell me clearly, so that if I am blind I may come to see, or if I see, the perils I must avoid so that I may not become blind. I know that to behold you is the happiness of man, and that to be deprived of seeing you is man's greatest evil, and in the end, his greatest torment. Who, Lord, are the seeing, and who the blind?



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