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Meditations: Saturday of the Fifth Week of Easter

Some reflections that can guide our prayer during this season of Easter.

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- Christ's patience, an example for us
- All things work together for good, for those who love God
- Prayer strengthens us

WE HAVE BEEN contemplating our Lord closely, especially during the days of his passion and death. And we have been struck by Christ's patience: in his silence before his accusers, in his serene replies to the Roman judge, when receiving the blows of the lashes, when nailed to the wood of the Cross. *If the world hates you*, Christ tells us in today's Gospel, *know that it has hated me before it hated you (Jn 15:18)*. We know that He is referring here to sin, to what opposes the Kingdom of God in this world. And we see how much we need the strength with which our Lord confronted adversity, and which is closely tied to patience.

“Those who know how to be strong,” Saint Josemaría said, “will not be in a hurry to receive the reward of their virtue. They are patient. Indeed it is fortitude that teaches us to appreciate the human and divine virtue of patience. ‘By your patience

you will gain possession of your souls' (*Lk* 21:19) . . . We secure possession of our souls through patience, for, by learning to have dominion over ourselves, we begin to possess that which we are."^[1] By fostering the human virtue of patience, we grow in serenity and moderation, and in supernatural outlook, because God is patient.

Moreover, whoever possesses this virtue is able to give peace to others and guide them; they are masters of themselves, and have control over their time and can dedicate it to those who need it. And when others seem to disdain them they don't reply in kind, or become upset when others fail to show them consideration. Their patience enables him to rise above any apparent disrespect, with a dignity imbued with affection for each person, like Christ on the Cross: always keeping in mind the big picture, with their

eyes set on the history of redemption down through the centuries.

WE HAVE OFTEN heard those words of Saint Paul that Saint Josemaria liked so much: *for those who love God all things work together for good* (Rom 8:28). This is not simply a nice phrase to repeat in trying moments, silencing the objections of our intellect and turning our back on reality. Rather it is just the opposite. God is infinitely good. We have learned this in the catechism and we have experienced it right from the first moments of our encounter with Christ. Therefore, for those who want to love Him, for those who are and know themselves to be children of a God who can do everything, how can anything not work out for their good?

Although some circumstances in the world today can seem threatening, these obstacles can never quell our Lord's inexhaustible love. Therefore we should have great "trust in God's grace, . . . each day with an attitude of hope-filled abandonment, grounded on divine filiation."^[2] — This patient abandonment in God's hand is the best way to carry out our daily struggle. If we are convinced that everything can cooperate for our good, we will know how to begin and begin again, finding all our strength in God himself.

Hence "the patient person is not the one who flees from evil, but the one who, in the face of evil, does not allow himself to give in to a disordered sadness."^[3] — Then nothing will be able to rob us of our hope or ruin our joy. Saint Josemaria advised: "A remedy against those worries of yours: be patient, have a right

intention, and look at things from a supernatural perspective.”^[4]

WE PRAY, in today's Collect prayer, “that those you render capable of immortality by justifying them, may by your guidance attain the fullness of glory.” How important it is to go to God, trusting in his help, knowing that He will never leave us. And asking especially for the most important thing: to enlarge our heart with his charity and fill it with love for Him and our fellow men and women, because we want to reach heaven for all eternity.

Prayer is a great moment to ask for the patience we need to always keep advancing, with ever great trust, and ever greater love each day for the God who dwells in us. “There is no day more wonderful than the one we

are living today. Those who live always thinking about the future but do not take each day as it comes are people who live in a fantasy world; they don't know how to deal with concrete reality. Today is real, today is concrete. And prayer takes place today. Jesus comes to meet us today. It is prayer that transforms this day into grace, or better, that transforms us: it quells anger, sustains love, multiplies joy, instils the strength to forgive.”^[5]

God's assistance will never be lacking. Our heavenly Father will always give us good things if we ask Him (cf. *Mt* 7:9-11), especially the help we need to not become discouraged or lose our patience in the face of difficulties. Although setbacks will always be part of life, Saint Josemaría assured us that “if we are faithful, we will have the strength of those who are humble, because they live identified with

Christ. My children, we are what is permanent; everything else is passing away. Don't worry!"^[6] We can ask Mary, who is a patient mother, with the strength to suffer alongside Christ, knowing that his time of triumph would come, to give us this same trust in her Son.

^[1] Saint Josemaría, *Friends of God*, no. 78.

^[2] Fernando Ocáriz, *Letter 14 February 2017*, no. 8.

^[3] Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 136, a. 4, ad 2.

^[4] Saint Josemaría, *Furrow*, no. 853.

^[5] Francis, General Audience, 10 February 2021.

^[6] Saint Josemaría, *In Dialogue with the Lord*, "Living for the Glory of God," no. 5e.

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