



3. April 2025

## MEDITATIONS FOR LENT “Conclusion of the Lenten Meditations”

With today's meditation I conclude this series which I began after the systematic reflections on the Gospel of St John in preparation for the great solemnity of Easter.

A brief recapitulation is in order to highlight the essentials. After this meditation, we will return to the accounts of the Lord's death and burial in the Gospel of John.

The concept of ‘discretion’, which we have learned from the desert fathers and which means ‘discernment of spirits’ in ecclesiastical usage, has led us to look carefully at the situation in the Church and in the world and to apply it also to our spiritual life. In analysing the spiritual armour proposed in the Letter to the Ephesians, we have come to the conclusion that we must prepare ourselves for the spiritual combat, which goes beyond the personal sphere, especially when we consider the anti-Christian threats to the world and to the Church.

Indeed, it is a *"war against the Lord and his anointed"* (Ps 2:2) that is being waged on a spiritual level throughout the world. Antichristian forces have conquered and taken control of almost every area of human life. Unfortunately, as I have pointed out time and again, these powers, led by Lucifer, have infiltrated deep into the Church and have succeeded in weakening, corrupting and deceiving this bastion destined to resist them. Consequently, we find ourselves in a grave emergency situation.

To counter it with spiritual weapons is the task of those who are able to identify it as a real emergency. This is all the more important when we consider that many of the faithful are not even aware that we are going through an unprecedented crisis. That is why I have addressed these issues to a wider audience.

The term 'discretion' can also be applied to the way in which spiritual combat must be fought. Because it is a spiritual battle, we must train ourselves not to be dominated by our passions. Therefore, it is clear that the inner training we receive through the guidance of the Holy Spirit is the best training to fulfil our mission in the battle.

In other words, there is nothing more important than to walk in faith along the path of sanctification, which consists above all in growing in love... the devil is incapable of love, and therefore the more God's love grows in us, the more difficult it is for him to defeat us.

Just as the love of God manifested on the cross of the Lord defeated the darkness, so it will always be. God's love will always be victorious, even if it is crucified again and again. In this context it is important to emphasise the role of the Virgin Mary. She will crush the head of the serpent, as foretold in the Book of Genesis (3:15). We often hear the Catholic faithful say that in the end the Immaculate Heart of Mary will triumph. What is this triumph? It is the victory of love!

Since there is no falsehood in Our Lady's Heart, since it is pure and completely given over to God's will, there is no loophole through which the devil can slip in. As Mother of the Church, Mary is the model for those who have consecrated themselves to her and she takes them under her special protection. In this way, through her children, she will be able to achieve the triumph of love, on whom the devil will not be able to exert his influence. On the contrary, he will have to yield, as he is forced to do in the face of all those who have allowed God's love to enter and grow in their hearts.

As I have already mentioned, we will return from tomorrow to chapter 19 of John's Gospel. Pilate, who would have wanted to release Jesus, could not resist the pressure of the Jews. When they exclaimed the criminal words: "*We have no king but Caesar*" (Jn 19:15), Pilate "*handed him over to them to be crucified*" (v.16).