

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

WE SHOULD MEDITATE ON THE MYSTERIES OF SALVATION

October is known popularly throughout the Church as the month of the Holy Rosary (after the celebration of the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary on October 7). St. Bernard of Clairvaux was a 12th century Cistercian monk whose devotion and eloquence for Our Lady was greatly admired. A Doctor of the Church, he was known for writings which made contemplative mysticism not just the preserve of the religious. He was fictionalized as one of Dante's guides in the Divine Comedy.

FROM A SERMON OF ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX:

"The child to be born of you will be called holy, the Son of God," the fountain of wisdom, the Word of the Father on high. Through you, blessed Virgin, this Word will become flesh, so that even though, as he says: "I am in the Father and the Father is in me," it is still true for him to say: "I came forth from God and am here."

"In the beginning was the Word." The spring was gushing forth, yet still within himself. Indeed, "the Word was with God," truly dwelling in inaccessible light. And the Lord said from the beginning: "I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction." Yet your thought was locked within you, and whatever you thought, we did not know; for who knew the mind of the Lord, or who was his counsellor?

And so the idea of peace came down to do the work of peace: "The Word was made flesh and even now dwells among us." It is by faith that he dwells in our hearts, in our memory, our intellect and penetrates even into our imagination. What concept could man have of God if he did not first fashion an image of him in his heart? By nature incomprehensible and inaccessible, he was invisible and unthinkable, but now he wished to be understood, to be seen and thought of.

But how, you ask, was this done? He lay in a manger and rested on a virgin's breast, preached on a mountain, and spent the night in prayer. He hung on a cross, grew pale in death, and roamed free among the dead and ruled over those in hell. He rose again on the third day, and showed the apostles the wounds of the nails, the signs of victory; and finally in their presence he ascended to the sanctuary of heaven.

How can we not contemplate this story in truth, piety and holiness? Whatever of all this I consider, it is God I am considering; in all this he is my God. I have said it is wise to meditate on these truths, and I have thought it right to recall the abundant sweetness, given by the fruits of this priestly root; and Mary, drawing abundantly from heaven, has caused this sweetness to overflow for us.

