

longer sweet odor before Thee. Then, behold Me, the universal Victim, ready to accomplish Thy holy will in all things !” And so He prays. It is His Introit to the grand Sacrifice of the Cross.

The Cross is sunk deep in the ground, the hammer and the nails are lying near, the ladders are ready, the cords are stretched, the executioners hasten to begin their work.

The Evangelists have given us no details of the Crucifixion itself, but, thanks to archeology, we are so fortunate as to be able to supply this break and picture to ourselves the distressing scene of the Saviour’s Passion. The soldiers brutally seize Jesus, knock off His chains, and violently tear off His garments, leaving almost nude “Him who clothes the heavens with stars and the earth with flowers.” A single strip of linen is left around His loins. They attach Him to the cords that have been thrown over the arms of the Cross, and hoist Him to its summit. They extend His arms and bind them to the transverse horizontal. Then, taking nails and hammer, they fasten His hands and feet to the wood of the Cross. Without a sign of resistance, the sweet Lamb yields to the execution of the unjust sentence. They wish to bind His arms, and He extends them ; to pierce His hands, and He opens them ; to nail His feet, and He presents them. They wish to replace the crown of thorns, and He offers His wounded head. He is ready from the height of His Cross to endure everything for our salvation. He has abandoned Himself to the mercy of the wicked that they may do to Him whatever they will. Not a murmur, not a cry of indignation ! If the divine seal is anywhere in the Gospel, it is most truly here !

The prophecy of over a thousand years ago is to-day accomplished : “ They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have numbered all my bones.” “ On that day there shall be great weeping in Jerusalem . . . And they shall say to Him : ‘What are these wounds in the midst of Thy hands? And He shall say : ‘With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved Me,”

More than once Jesus Himself had announced His cruel death : “ As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be *lifted up*, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting.” Again, He said to the Pharisees : “When ye shall have