



St. Philomena makes the devils tremble with rage and she pours inexhaustible treasures upon every type of misery.

Gold and silver will not give sight to the blind, speech to the mute or life to the dead, nor will it dry the tears of a spouse insulted by her husband, console a mother at the sight of her dead child or comfort a child mistreated by a parent, restore a missing limb, or convert a wayward child. Let us imitate her generosity. What is greater than the prize destined for generosity? St. Paul said: ***I know Him in whom I confide, and I have the certitude that He can return to me, one day, the deposits of the sacrifices and good works which I put in His Hands.***

With this confidence, the great apostle threw himself with giant steps into his labors. He braved persecutions, tempests, the sword and a thousand deaths. Does not the Faith enlighten us also? We know what he knew. His certainty is also ours. Let us stop at St. Philomena: On the day and the moment of her sacrifice she saw, only by faith, the reality of the Divine promises. Separated from that which she held most dear here below, ignominy attached to her torments, the bitter and long sufferings to which her body was prey, the horrible death which she saw: All sought to destroy her faith, to take away her God and to have flesh, blood and vice triumph. But, our heroine is victorious. Her heart is fixed on invisible things. In vain do the lead-tipped whips make grooves

in her flesh, break her bones and make of her body one vast wound. In vain do the pointed darts penetrate to the sources of life; in vain do they want to frighten her by showing beneath her feet, a sea destined to engulf her. The sight of eternal happiness, the crown of glory, eternal union with her Spouse, animates her to brave all, suffer all and devour (so to speak) with an insatiable eagerness all the bitterness and the sufferings.

Almighty God's indignation will descend on all nations. His sword of justice will be dripping with the blood of His enemies. Oh, what a cup of sorrows He is preparing from on high to fall upon corrupt flesh and impious hearts! St. John tells us that in the end times (and it will be one of the principal trials of Heaven's fury toward the earth), even the good themselves will have to carry heavy crosses, wage terrible struggles and sustain great and difficult warfare. Only the victorious, those who have on them the sign and the patience of Jesus, will come to sit with Him on the throne. He tells us that, at the time of the great tribulation, the blood of the faithful will run, the Church, the Spouse of Jesus Christ, Who died and Who lives, will be pursued, as well as Its children, by the infernal dragon: that he will seek to break in their hands the Table of the Law, to extinguish in their hearts the light of evangelical precepts and erase from their brow the glorious testimony of the Savior. He tells us that a beast will come out of the sea (the anti-Christ) and he will be powerfully helped by another beast who will rise up from the earth (these are false prophets), and together they will seduce the inhabitants of the earth proposing to them to adore his image or perish in misery, shame and destitution. He speaks to us at the same time of the frightful apostasy which the Lord's anger prepared in order to avenge the horror.