



## The Third Sorrow: The Loss of the Child Jesus in the Temple

2009.1.1

*Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; and when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." And he said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying which he spoke to them.*

Luke 2:41-50

The Gospel in today's Mass has called to our minds a moving scene in Jesus' life, when he stayed behind in Jerusalem teaching in the temple. Mary and Joseph "had gone a whole day's journey before they made enquiry for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances. When they could not find him, they made their way back to Jerusalem in search of him." The Mother of God, who looked for her Son so anxiously when he was lost through no fault of her own, and experienced such great joy in finding him, will help us retrace our steps and put right whatever may be necessary when, because of our carelessness or our sins, we have been unable to recognise Christ. With her help we will know the happiness of holding him in our arms once more, and telling him we will never lose him again.

*Friends of God, 278*

Where is Jesus? –The Child, my Lady!... where is He?

Mary is crying. –In vain you and I have run from group to group, from caravan to caravan: no one has seen Him. –Joseph, after useless attempts to keep from crying, cries too... And you... And I.

Being a common little servant, I cry my eyes out and wail to heaven and earth... to make up for those times when I lost Him through my own fault and did not cry.

Jesus: may I never lose You again... Then you and I are united in misfortune and grief, as we were united in sin. And from the depth of our being come moans of heartfelt sorrow and burning phrases that the pen cannot and should not record.

And, as we are consoled by the joy of finding Jesus – three days He was gone! – debating with the doctors of Israel (Luke 2:46), your soul and mine will be left deeply impressed by the duty to leave our home and family to serve our heavenly Father.

*Holy Rosary, fifth joyful mystery*

[The Second Sorrow: the Flight into Egypt](#)