

## SS. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Mission

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To Restore and Defend Our Ecclesiastical Traditions of the Latin Rite to the  
Diocese of Harrisburg

## SS. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Chapel

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“...this missal is hereafter to be followed absolutely, without any scruple of conscience or fear of incurring any penalty, judgment or censure, and may freely and lawfully be used... **Accordingly, no one whatsoever is permitted to infringe or rashly contravene this notice of Our permission, statute, ordinance, command, precept, grant, direction, will, decree and prohibition. Should any person venture to do so, let him understand he will incur the wrath of Almighty God and of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.**”

Pope St. Pius V, Papal Bull, *QUO PRIMUM*, Tridentine codification of the “received and approved” immemorial Roman rite of Mass

## Third Sunday of Advent-Gaudete Sunday

### Octave Day of the Immaculate Conception

**EMBER WEEK**

**December 14, 2025**

“The Lord is now at hand, come let us adore Him.” The First Coming: It is Mary who gives us Jesus: “Blessed are thou, Mary....those things shall be accomplished in thee, which were spoken to thee by the Lord” (Antiphon at the Magnificat).

It is from Bethlehem that the King, the Ruler, shall go forth who is to bring peace to all the nations (2<sup>nd</sup> response) and who will deliver his people from the power of their enemies (4<sup>th</sup> response). In a special way our souls will share in this deliverance during the Christmas celebrations which mark the anniversary of the entrance into the world of Christ, the vanquisher of Satan. “Grant, we beseech Thee,” the Church prays, “that the new birth of Thine only-begotten Son may set us free, whom the old bondage doth hold under the yoke of sin” (Third Mass, Christmas Day). “Make straight the way of the Lord,” cried the forerunner of Christ. So let us make straight the way into our hearts, that our Savior may enter and give us his graces of life and freedom.

The Second Coming. It is to our Lord’s coming at the end of the world that St. Gregory alludes in his explanation of the Gospel: “John,” he says, “the forerunner of the Redeemer, goes before our Lord in the spirit and power of Elias who will be the forerunner of Christ as Judge” (9<sup>th</sup> lesson). So also in the Introit and Epistle, taken literally, the allusion is our Lord’s coming for the Judgment. If we feel great joy at the approach of the Christmas feast, reminding us once more of the lowly Infant in the Manger, how much more should the thought of His Coming in all the splendor of His power and majesty fill us with a holy sense of triumph, since only then will our redemption be fully accomplished.

St. Paul writes to his Christians: “Rejoice in the Lord always: again, I say, rejoice..... the Lord is nigh.” As on Mid-Lent Sunday, the priest may celebrate in rose-colored vestments. Rose is a paler kind of violet; it expresses some relaxation in penance, owing to the joy of the heavenly Jerusalem into which our Lord will lead us when time shall be no more, “Rejoice, O Jerusalem, with great joy, for there shall come unto thee, a Savior” (2<sup>nd</sup> Antiphon of Vespers). Let us greatly desire this coming which the Apostle tells us is near. We should long with a holy impatience that it may quickly come to pass. “Stir up, O Lord, Thy might, and come to save us” (Alleluia). “Come, Lord, and tarry not.” “Per Adventum tuum, libera nos, Domine.”

### INTROIT:

*Philipp. 4:* Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Let your modesty be known to all men. The Lord is nigh. Be nothing solicitous, but in everything, let your petitions be made known to God.

*Ps. 84:* Lord, Thou hast blessed Thy land; Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. Glory be, etc. Rejoice in the Lord, etc.

### COLLECT:

O Lord, we beseech Thee, mercifully incline Thine ears unto our prayers, and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy heavenly visitation. Who liveth and reigneth, etc.

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin didst prepare a worthy dwelling-place for Thy Son, we ask that, as by the foreseen death of this Thy Son thou didst keep her from all stain, so too Thou wouldst permit us, purified through her intercession, to come to Thee. Through our Lord, etc.

**EPISTLE:** *Philipp. 4. 4-7*

Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice. Let your modesty be known to all men. The Lord is nigh. Be nothing solicitous; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your petitions be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**What does it mean to rejoice in the Lord?**

It means to be glad in remembering the grace by which God called us to the true faith, and gave us the hope of eternal salvation, and to rejoice even in all our tribulations and adversities for the Lord's sake, as St. Paul did (2 *Cor. 7, 4*). It also admonishes us to give a good example by modesty and an edifying life, and to fix our desires on God, Who will never fail us if we make our wants known to Him by prayer and supplication, and give Him thanks for benefits received.

**In what does the peace of God consist?**

It consists in a good conscience, such as St. Paul enjoyed. It is this peace, this tranquility of the soul, which sustained the holy martyrs in their agonies, and consoled others under persecution for Christ's sake (*Matt. 5, 11-12*).

**Aspiration:** O Lord, grant that Thy peace, which Thou hast given us, and which the world knows not, may keep our hearts and minds in Thee. O wisdom! proceeding from the mouth of the Highest, and reaching to the ends of the world, who governest with power and grace, come and direct us all, that we may walk in the path of wisdom and of the peace which surpasseth all understanding. Amen.

**THE BEST REMEDY IN THE HOUR OF SORROW**

In need, sorrow, and dejection the best means to relieve our distressed hearts is humble and confiding prayer, in which we can pour out our hearts before God, and give ourselves up to His love and mercy, as did Anna, the sorrowful mother of Samuel the prophet, Josaphat in painful uncertainty, Susanna falsely accused and condemned to death, and innumerable other servants of God. These all prayed to God and were delivered from their afflictions, received help and consolation. St. James therefore admonishes us, "Is any one of you sad? let him pray" (*James 5, 13*); and St. Paul, in the epistle for this Sunday, encourages us not to be solicitous about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to let our requests be known to God. Are you, then, sad and discouraged? Lift up your soul to God, and say with David, "Give joy to the soul of Thy servant, for to Thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul" (*Ps. 85, 4*).

**GRADUAL:**

*Ps. 79:* Thou, O Lord, that sittest above the cherubims, stir up Thy might, and come. Give ear, O Thou that rulest Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep.

Alleluia, alleluia. Stir up Thy might, O Lord, and come, that Thou mayest save us, alleluia.

**GOSPEL:** *John 1, 19-28*

At that time: The Jews sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to him, to ask him: Who art thou? And he confessed, and did not deny: and he confessed: I am not the Christ. And they asked him: What then? Art thou Elias? And he said: I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered: No. They said therefore unto him: Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself? He said: I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias. And they that were sent, were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said to him: Why then dost thou baptize, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet? John answered them, saying: I baptize with water; but there hath stood One in the midst of you, Whom you know not. The same is He that shall come after me, Who is preferred before me: the latchet of Whose shoe I am not worthy to loose. These things were done in Bethania, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

**Why did the Jews send messengers to John to ask him who he was?**

Because his baptizing and preaching, with his life of austerity and penance, made such an impression that the people took him not for an ordinary prophet, but for the Messiah Himself.

**Why did the messengers ask John whether he was Elias or the prophet?**

The Jews believed that either Elias or another of the prophets would return to earth to prepare the way for the coming of Christ; and from St. John denying that he was the Christ they concluded that he was either Elias or that prophet.

**Why did St. John say that he was not that prophet, but only the voice of one crying in the wilderness?**

He said so out of humility; but he uttered no untruth, since he was not the prophet predicted by Moses (*Deut. 18, 15*), but only "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord," as the prophet Isaias said (*Is. 60, 3*).

**How do we make straight the way of the Lord?**

By sincere penance, which consists not merely in going to confession, and making hollow resolutions, but in bringing forth fruits worthy of penance (*Matt. 3, 8; Luke 3, 8*).

**How do we bring forth fruits worthy of penance?**

If we wish to bring forth fruits worthy of penance, we must endeavor to make amends for what is past, and use all possible means to avoid in future those sins to which we have been most given; we must love and serve God as much as and more than we before loved and served the world.

**What was the baptism of John, and what was the effect of it?**

It was a baptism of penance, for the forgiveness of sins; thus it was a preparation for the Baptism of Christ, through which sins are actually forgiven, and the Holy Ghost received (*Mark 1, 4, 5*).

**What are we further taught by this gospel?**

We are taught to always speak the truth, like St. John; not to desire to appear more, or better, than we are; and, in particular, to make a good and sincere confession. We should, therefore, before confession often ask ourselves, "Who am I? How do I live? How do I stand

before God? How do I deal with my neighbor?"

We learn also from St. John to confess our sins without reserve, neither concealing nor excusing them; above all, we learn to be humble, for although he might have passed for the Messiah had he chosen to, he refused that honor, and held himself unworthy to loose the latchet of Christ's shoe

**Prayer:** O Lord, banish from my heart envy, self-love, and pride; give me grace so to know Thee and myself that, in contemplation of Thy majesty, omnipotence, love and wisdom, and other perfections, I may love Thee above all things, and in regarding my own nothingness, misery, and sins may always humble myself before Thee, and be little in my own eyes. Grant also that I may judge my neighbor with justness and tenderness, and love him as myself.

#### **OFFERTORY:**

*Ps. 84:* Lord, Thou hast blessed Thy land, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob, Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people.

#### **SECRET:**

May the offering of our devotion, O Lord, we beseech Thee, be immolated to Thee continually; that the due rites of the sacred mystery be accomplished, and Thy salvation wonderfully wrought out in us. Through our Lord, etc.

Receive, O Lord, the saving victim which we offer to Thee on the festival of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: and grant that, even as we proclaim her to have been preserved by Thy grace from all stain, so may we be delivered, by her intercession, from all our sins. Through our Lord, etc.

#### **COMMUNION:**

*Isa. 35:* Say to the faint-hearted: take courage, and fear not; behold, our God will come, and will save us.

#### **POSTCOMMUNION:**

We implore Thy clemency, O Lord, that these divine aids may be the expiation of our faults and our preparation for the festivities to come. Through our Lord, etc.

May the sacraments which we have received, O Lord, our God, heal in us the wounds of that sin from which Thou didst wonderfully preserve the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through our Lord, etc.

**...but there hath stood One in the midst of you,  
Whom you know not. The same is He that shall  
come after me, Who is preferred before me: the  
latchet of Whose shoe I am not worthy to loose.**



There hath stood One in the midst of you, whom you know not, says Saint John the Baptist to them that were sent by the Jews. So that our Lord may be near, He may even have come, and yet by some be not known! This Lamb of God is the holy Precursor's consolation: he considers it a singular privilege to be but the voice, which cries out to men to prepare the way of the Redeemer. In this, St. John is the type of the Church, and of all such as seek Jesus. St. John is full of joy because the Saviour has come: but the men around him are as indifferent as though they neither expected nor wanted a Saviour. This is the third week of Advent; and are all hearts excited by the great tidings told them by the Church, that the Messiah is near at hand? They that love Him not as their Saviour, do they fear Him as their Judge? Are the crooked ways being made straight, and the hills being brought low? Are Christians seriously engaged in removing from their hearts the love of riches and the love of sensual pleasures? There is no time to lose: the Lord is nigh! If these lines should come under the eye of any of those Christians who are in this state of sinful indifference, we would conjure them to shake off their lethargy, and render themselves worthy of the visit of the divine Infant: such a visit will bring them the greatest consolation here, and give them confidence hereafter, when our Lord will come to judge all mankind. Send Thy grace, O Jesus, still more plentifully into their hearts; 'compel them to go in,' and permit not that it be said of the children of the Church, as St. John said of the Synagogue: *There standeth in the midst of you One, whom you know not.* Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Third Sunday of Advent

"Twofold is our nature, twofold also is the adoration which we offer to God. We adore Him spiritually by the inward devotion of the mind; we adore Him corporally by the outward humiliation of our body; and as in all worship the outward act is referred to the inward, so by the signs of humility, which are manifested in the body, the soul is stirred to subject itself to God." St. Thomas

**"The measure of your holiness is proportionate to the goodness of your will." Blessed John**

## PROPER OF THE SAINTS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>:

Date	Day	Feast	Rank	Color	F/A	Mass Time and Intention
14	Sun	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – Gaudete <i>Within the Octave Immaculate Conception</i>	sd	Rose		Mass 9:00 AM; Members Ss. Peter & Paul; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM; Confession 8:00 AM
15	Mon	Octave Day of the Immaculate Conception	dm	W		Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
16	Tue	St. Eusebius, BpM	sd	R		Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
17	Wed	Ferial Day <b>EMBER DAY</b>		V	F/ PA	Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
18	Thu	Ferial Day		V		Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
19	Fri	Ferial Day <b>EMBER DAY</b>		V	F/A	Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
20	Sat	Ferial Day <i>Vigil of St. Thomas, Ap</i> <b>EMBER DAY</b>		V	F/ PA	Mass 9:00 AM; Confession 8:00; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM
21	Sun	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent	sd	V		Mass 9:00 AM; Members Ss. Peter & Paul; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM; Confession 8:00 AM

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ss. Peter & Paul Chapel is open to its members at any time of the day or night for visits to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

Let us once more devoutly reverence the mystery of Mary's Immaculate Conception: our Emmanuel loves to see His Mother honoured. After all, is it not for Him and for His sake that this bright star was prepared from all eternity, and created when the happy time fixed by the divine decree came? When we honour the Immaculate Conception of Mary, it is really to the divine mystery of the Incarnation that we are paying our just homage. Jesus and Mary cannot be separated, for Isaias tells us that she is the branch and He the Flower. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root" (Isaias 11:1).

It is not surprising that the Incarnate Word of God should have spent so much of His three short years of public life among men teaching and preaching, and confirming His doctrine by a profusion of miracles. For this is man's great privilege, his supreme sharing in the government of the universe : that by his efforts other men may have truth. Truth is crucial to men's living; so crucial, that the Lord could say of Himself : "For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth." To His disciples He promised : "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Man perishes in the darkness for he was made for truth's kingdom of light. Rev. Walter Farrell, O. P., *My Way of Life*, commentary on the Summa

### “Let your modesty be known to all men” (Phili. 4, 5)

St. Paul did not content himself with entrusting dogmatic teaching to his disciple Timothy; he said to him: ‘Be thou an example to the faithful, in word, and in living.’ He said much the same to Titus: ‘Show thyself an example of good works, in doctrine and in integrity of life.’ He repeated to all: ‘Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ.’ He sent Timothy to the Corinthians, that he might remind them, or, where it was necessary, might teach them, not only the dogmas of his Gospel, but likewise his ways in Christ Jesus, that is, his manner of life. For this manner of life of the apostle was, in a certain measure, his teaching everywhere in all the Churches; and he lauded the faithful of Corinth for being mindful to imitate him in all things, which was a keeping to the tradition of Christ... St. Paul says of the Thessalonians, they had so thoroughly entered into this teaching, taken from their apostle's life, that, as St. Paul says of them, they had become a pattern to all believers; this silent teaching of Christian revelation, which they showed forth in their conduct, made it superfluous for the messengers of the Gospel to say much.

Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*

Neither shall they say: Behold here, or behold there. For lo, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:21)

Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. 6:33)

Amen I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it. (Mark 10:15)

Jesus said to him: No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. (Luke 9:62)

And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away. (Matt. 11:12)

**A tremendous mystery certainly, and one never sufficiently meditated, that the salvation of many souls *depends* on the prayers and voluntary mortifications offered for this end, by the members of the Mystical Body of Christ, and on the collaboration of both pastors and the faithful. Pope Pius XII *Mystici Corporis***

**The submission of our will is the most pleasing sacrifice that we can make to God, and the one that honors Him most. It is the most perfect act of love, the most elevating and meritorious virtue. By it we can at every moment amass incomparable treasures of grace, and gain in a short time the richest merits for eternity. Fr. F. X. Lasance, *Peace, Not As The World Gives***

**Nothing indicates better the nature of self-love, or should make it more hateful to us, than the idea that it is the rival of the love of God. *Homines sunt voluntates*, Men are their wills, says St. Augustine. We can bestow our whole love on but one only of two objects: God or self. If we put God first and refer all things to Him, then His love will make us good and pleasing in His sight, imparting a supernatural value to all our actions, and perfecting us as we grow in purity and simplicity. If, on the other hand, we refer everything to ourselves, our self-love will upset God's order in us, rendering us most displeasing to Him, vitiating actions otherwise holy, and lowering us in proportion to the sway it exercises in our hearts.... Such is the enemy we have to fight, with the help of grace: an enemy born with us, and in some way part of our very self. Age, passions, habits, thoughts- all, even our good qualities and occasionally our virtues, contribute to strengthen its hold upon us, and drive it deeper. It is so involved with ourselves that it seems almost impossible to distinguish it, and to attempt to destroy it is to jeopardize our very existence... We may assume as a fact, without fear of contradiction, that we are blind on many points concerning our perfection, and perhaps our salvation. We should pray continuously for God to enlighten us, either directly by His Holy Ghost, or indirectly by the advice of our friends or by the reproaches of our enemies. In whatever way light may come, it is always a blessing sent by God, and we should welcome and receive it gratefully, encouraging others to offer it, and neglecting nothing that may lead us to profit by it. John Nicholas Grou, S. J., *Spiritual Maxims***

### **“Prepare ye the way of the Lord” (Lk. 3, 4)**

**This cry of St. John the Baptist is implicitly a call to the apostolate, to that apostolate practiced by St. John himself, when he tried to prepare the hearts of his brethren for the coming and for the work of the Messiah. This invitation is addressed to us too, not only by St. John, but also by Jesus, who wants to make of every Christian a collaborator in His work of Redemption.**

**“It is manifestly clear that the faithful need the help of the divine Redeemer.... Yet this, too, must be held.... Christ requires the help of His members.... This is not because He is indigent and weak, but rather because He has so willed it for the greater honor of His spotless Spouse.” Blessed Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis***

**“The apostolate should always be exercised in a saintly manner, with such purity of intention, such interior union with God, such generous love for souls the it flows from the interior spirit which informs it and at the same time nourishes and renews this same spirit.” Blessed Pope Pius XII, *Primo Feliciter***

**Examining our apostolate in the light of these words, we shall be able to detect its weak points, to discover the defects to be avoided and the remedies to be applied. There are four conditions proposed: purity of intention, union with God, self-abnegation, and love of souls. They are so important that while guaranteeing a fruitful apostolate, they constitute an efficacious means of spiritual progress. Striving to realize them, we shall simultaneously raise the level of our activity and of our interior life.**

**Rev. Gabriel, O.C.D., *Divine Intimacy***

## **Ember Day Meditations**

### **EMBER WEDNESDAY IN ADVENT**

**EPISTLE** (Is. 7:10-15). And the Lord spoke again to Achaz, saying: Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, either unto the depth of hell or unto the height above. And Achaz said: I will not ask, and I will not tempt the Lord. And he said: Hear ye, therefore, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to be grievous to men, that you are grievous to my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. He shall eat butter and honey, that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good.'

**EXPLANATION** In this Epistle is contained the important prophecy of the Savior's birth from a virgin. War was declared by the kings of Israel and Syria against Achaz, king of Juda, who at their approach was overpowered with fear, and thought of seeking aid from the Assyrians instead of looking to Almighty God for help; and for this lack of confidence in God, the prophet Isaiah was sent to announce to him the destruction of both kings, and his own preservation. The prophet, wishing Achaz to prove his assertion, requested the king to demand a sign from God; but he being given to idolatry, did not wish to ask a sign from heaven, for he had more faith in the assistance of the demons and of the Assyrians. He offended God by his refusal and the prophet rebuked him, saying: The Lord himself will give you (that is, your posterity) a sign, for the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and he shall be called Emmanuel, that is-God with us. By these words Isaias desired to impress upon the king, that as surely as he should be preserved from his enemies, so surely this Emmanuel, the Son of the Virgin, would appear to redeem the world from Satan's power. Let us learn from this lesson always to trust in God, who can deliver us from all danger, and let us also be grateful to Him, who seven hundred and forty-three years before the time, permitted, for our consolation, the announcement of the coming of His Son, our Savior.

The gospel (Lk. 1:26-28) of this day will be found in the second part of this book on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.

**ASPIRATION** O Emmanuel, powerful, holy God! Our Savior and our Redeemer! be with us always in life and death: for, if Thou art with us who can be against us?



**COLLECT** Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the approaching celebration of our redemption may bring us the necessary graces for the present life, and bestow upon us the rewards of eternal happiness. Through our Lord.

## **EMBER FRIDAY IN ADVENT**

**EPISTLE** (Is. 11:1-5). And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness, and he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. And justice shall be the girdle of his loins: and faith the girdle of his reins.

**EXPLANATION** In this epistle the Lord announced to the Jews, through the prophet, the consoling promise that when they were sufficiently punished, and had come to the consciousness of their own misery, the Savior would come and bring all things to order. The rod spoken of by the prophet, is the Blessed Virgin who would proceed from the root of Jesse, that is, from the stem of David, and give birth to the flower, viz., to the Savior upon whom the Holy Ghost, with His sevenfold gifts, would descend, that is, dwell in Him. As a reader of the heart He would judge man, not according to his outward appearance, but according to his intentions. He would not flatter the sinner, but with severe words punish his sinful life, and because just and faithful, He would reward every man without respect to person. Let us be always mindful in all our omissions and commissions, that our Lord sees into our hearts, and judges not only according to our works, but principally according to our intentions, and let us strive ever to have pure motives in all our actions.

**ASPIRATION** O Fragrant Flower of the Virgin, Jesus our Savior, come and draw us to Thee, that we may walk in the perfume of Thy ointments, and obtain a merciful judgment from Thee.

**COLLECT** Show forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power, and come, that we who confidently trust in Thy love, may be the sooner delivered from all adversities. Through our Lord.

## **EMBER SATURDAY IN ADVENT**

**EPISTLE** (II Thess 2:1-8). Brethren, we beseech you, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him: that you be not easily moved from your mind, nor be frightened, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as sent from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth, and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God. Remember you not, that when I was yet with you I told you these things? And now you know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity already worketh: only that he who now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken out of the way, and then that wicked one shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

**EXPLANATION** At the time when St. Paul wrote this epistle, the false report was circulated that the Last Day was at hand, and Christ was coming to judge all men. The Apostle warns the faithful against trusting this, telling them they should not permit themselves to be misled; for first, the greater part of mankind would fall away from God, and Antichrist, the son of perdition appear, but not until the gospel was everywhere preached. The great falling off would be gradual, caused by the heresies which would arise from time to time, and would be completed by Antichrist, whom our Lord, at last, on the Day of Judgment would kill with the breath of his mouth. Let us learn from this epistle not to be curious concerning the Last Day, and the Advent of Christ, but to prepare, rather for the coming of Jesus into our hearts, that He may be merciful to us in death, and at judgment.

**ASPIRATION** The gospel of this day will be found in the instruction on the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

**COLLECT** O God, who seest us afflicted on account of our own wickedness; mercifully grant, that by Thy coming we may be comforted. Through our Lord.

**Neither living nor lifeless faith remains in a heretic who disbelieves a single article of faith. All those who deny one article of faith, regardless of their reason, are by that very fact excommunicated. Hence, he who does not adhere to everything Jesus Christ has prescribed for our salvation does not have any more of the doctrine of Jesus Christ than the pagans, Jews, or Mohammedans.**  
**St. Thomas Aquinas**

**There is no middle way between Catholicism and Atheism; hence, Protestants have abandoned themselves to the extreme of Atheism or Materialism, denying every maxim of the faith. If you take away obedience to the Church, there is no error which will not be embraced.** **St. Alphonsus Maria Liguori**

**The priest at the altar is the representative and image of the praying and sacrificing Saviour. Now, as on the Mount of Olives and on the Cross, Jesus prayed not only in loud tones, but also in a low voice and in the silence of His heart to His Father, so also it is proper that the priest should even herein resemble His Divine Model, when representing and renewing the Sacrifice of the Cross. The altar becomes not merely the Cross, but also the Crib; for at the moment of Consecration the marvels of Bethlehem as well as those of Golgotha are renewed. Whilst deep silence pervaded all things and the night was in the midst of its course, the Almighty Word of God descended from His royal throne in heaven to the crib of Bethlehem; in like manner, does the King of Glory at the consecration come down upon the altar, amid the most profound silence.**

**Rev. Nicholas Gihl, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; Dogmatically, Liturgically and Ascetically Explained***

For what stands in strongest opposition to the growth of the grace of love in us if not that we are no sooner at the feet of our good Master than we straightway speak to Him of ourselves, of our sins, of our defects, and of our spiritual wretchedness? In other words, we tire our mind with the sight of our misery, we sadden our heart with the thought of our ingratitude and unfaithfulness. Sadness gives rise to distress, and distress to discouragement; and it is only after much humiliation, affliction, and suffering that we finally get out of this maze and recover our freedom before God. Do not therefore go about it that way any more. But since the first movement of the soul ordinarily determines what the whole action will be, direct this first movement to God and say to Him: "O my good Jesus, how happy and pleased I am to come to see Thee, to spend this hour with Thee and tell Thee my love! How kind of Thee to have invited me! How lovable Thou art to love such a poor creature as I am! Oh! yes, I really want to love Thee!" Love has then opened the door to the Heart of Jesus; go in, love, and adore. St. Peter Julian Eymard, *The Real Presence*

Sanctity properly consists only in conformity to God's will, expressed in a constant and exact fulfillment of the duties of our state in life. Pope Benedict XV

It takes uncommon virtue to fulfill with exactitude, that is, without carelessness, negligence, or indolence... but with attention, piety, and spiritual fervor, the whole combination of ordinary duties which make up our daily life Pope Pius XI

The Church finds herself in an hour of anxiety, self-criticism, even auto-destruction. It is an interior upheaval, sharp and complex, which none expected after the Council. We looked forward to a flowering, a serene expansion of conceptions which matured in the great sessions of the Council. But... one must notice above all the sorrowful aspect. It is as if the Church was destroying herself. Pope Paul VI, in a lucid moment

It suffices to keep well closed the outside doors, that is, the senses, so that the soul and the heart cannot go elsewhere than to their center, which is God; I shall fix my gaze on my heart and I shall raise my heart to God. St. Teresa Margaret of the Heart of Jesus

For nourishment of virtue, abstinence is the source of chaste thoughts, of wise resolutions, and of salutary counsel. By voluntary mortifications, the flesh dies to its concupiscences, and the spirit is renewed in virtue. But since fasting alone is not sufficient whereby to secure the soul's salvation, let us add to it works of mercy towards the poor. Let us make that which we retrench from indulgence, serve unto the exercise of virtue. Let the abstinence of him that fasts, become the meal of the poor man. St. Leo the Great

I am worried by the Blessed Virgin's messages to Lucy of Fatima. This persistence of Mary about the dangers which menace the Church is a divine warning against the suicide of altering the Faith, in her liturgy, her theology and her soul. ... I hear all around me innovators who wish to dismantle the Sacred Chapel, destroy the universal flame of the Church, reject her ornaments and make her feel remorse for her historical past. A day will come when the civilized world will deny its God, when the Church will doubt as Peter doubted. She will be tempted to believe that man has become God. In our churches, Christians will search in vain for the red lamp where God awaits them, like Mary Magdalene weeping before the empty tomb, they will ask, 'Where have they taken Him?' Pope Pius XII, *Devant L'Histoire* by Msgr. Georges Roche

These pan-Christinas who strive for the union of the churches would appear to pursue the noblest of ideals in promoting charity among all Christians. But how should charity tend to the detriment of faith? Everyone knows that John himself, Apostle of love, who seems in his Gospel to have revealed the secrets of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and who never ceased to impress upon the memory of his disciples the new commandment "to love one another," nevertheless strictly forbade any close social contact with those who professed a mutilated and corrupt form of Christ's teaching: "If any man come to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into the house, nor say to him, God speed you" (II John 10). Pope Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos*

Do not permit my senses to go astray, but do You Yourself deign to call them back to You, like the good shepherd who, who with his flute, calls his sheep dispersed in the valley. You, more than any other shepherd, have a call so sweet and so powerful that the senses, as soon as they hear it, cannot resist, and quickly come back into the sanctuary of the soul where You await them and to which You call them. O loving Shepherd of my soul, do not refuse to show me this mercy, so necessary for my weakness. St. Teresa of Jesus

The Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that by His revelation they might disclose new doctrine, but that by His help they might guard sacredly the revelation transmitted through the apostles and the deposit of faith, and might faithfully set it forth. Vatican Council I, *Pastor Aeternus*

So capital a point is humility, that we are not left to learn it from any common teacher. It is our Divine Saviour Himself who says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart." St. Dionysius the Great

**If anyone despises or rejects any written or unwritten ecclesiastical tradition, anathema sit.  
Second Council of Nicea, 787 A.D.**

**THE LORD IS NIGH      THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT      GAUDETE SUNDAY**

**PRESENCE OF GOD** - The Lord is always drawing nearer to my soul by the solicitations of His grace; I too wish to draw near to Him by a renewal of my faith and my desires.

**MEDITATION:**

1. "O Lord, we have patiently waited for Thee: Thy name and Thy remembrance are the desire of the soul. My soul hath desired Thee in the night; yea, and with my spirit within me in the morning early I will watch for Thee" (*RB*).

If you also, O consecrated soul, are preparing to commemorate the Incarnation of the Word in loving, watchful expectation, today's happy announcement will resound in your ears more joyfully than ever: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice . . . the Lord is nigh." Thus today's Mass begins and the Epistle (*Phil 4:4-7*) repeats the theme. It is one of exultant joy: "The Lord is nigh!" For the soul who waits for Jesus and seeks Him alone, sincerely and ardently, with lively desire and love, there can be only one motive for its joy, to know that Jesus is near, nearer with each day. Even St. Paul admonishes us to have no other desire, "The Lord is nigh. Be nothing solicitous .... And may the peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds. . ." (*Ep*).

The more a soul concentrates its desires and affections on God, the more it will be freed from earthly cares. It will no longer be troubled about anything, knowing that only one thing is necessary, "to seek God," and that in God it will find everything it needs. Hence to draw near to God, is to find not only true joy, but also peace. In Him it has everything, and God alone suffices.

2. "The Lord is in the midst of you." This is the second joyful message in today's liturgy. It is St. John the Baptist who speaks to us in the Gospel (*Jn 1:19-28*), "There is one in the midst of you whom you know not." John, a man of faith, was telling the Jews with full conviction that Jesus had been living among them for thirty years and that they did not know Him because He had not yet manifested Himself by miracles.

His words have value for us, too; Jesus is really present in our midst: present in our tabernacles by the Eucharist, present in our souls by grace. But who recognizes Him? Only those who believe. Revive; then, your faith; you will find Jesus, and will know Jesus according to the measure of your faith in Him. Sometimes He conceals Himself from you, and you think that you will never find Him, never feel Him again. This is the time to redouble your faith, to walk "in pure faith." "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed" (*Jn 20:29*). Such was the faith of St. John the Baptist, who had not seen Jesus' miracles, and nevertheless believed. Such was Mary's faith, to which the Vesper antiphon refers, "Blessed art thou, O Mary, that hast believed the Lord; those things will be fulfilled in thee, which were spoken to thee." Even Mary lived by faith; she had to believe in the words of the Angel, and when she agreed to become the Mother of God, she had to accept a mystery which she did not understand. But Mary did believe, and by her faith, God's words were accomplished in her. And so shall they be in you; you will see all your hopes fulfilled, you will be able to realize your ideal of intimate union with God - if one have faith in Him and in His promises.

**COLLOQUY:**

"O God, my God, to Thee do I watch at break of day. In a desert land, and where there is no water, my soul thirsts for Thee; my flesh hath thirsted for Thee. It is Thou I seek, O Lord; without Thee the world is a desert burned by the sun where nothing can quench my thirst. Thou alone art my salvation, my refuge, my Savior, and my Redeemer. Day and night I sigh for Thee; to Thee I direct all my desires and affections. As the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress, so are my eyes always on Thy face. Show me Thy face, O Lord, and illumine my path; be Thou my light and my strength.

"Come, Lord, and tarry not; reveal Thy power and come to save us. Come and be our salvation, according to Thy promise! Thou art our Savior; Thou wilt free us from all our iniquities and cast our sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt descend like rain upon the fleece and wilt bring us justice and peace.... Thou wilt be my guide and my shepherd; Thou wilt teach me Thy ways and I shall walk in Thy paths. Thy coming fills me with joy and my soul rejoices in Thee, my God and my Savior. O Lord, I rejoice in all Thy deeds and I exult in Thy works. How admirable are Thy works and how great is Thy mercy"! (*RB*)

My God and my Savior, I believe in You, I trust in You. I seek for You, yet I know that You are near me, and in me: near me, hidden under the Eucharistic veil; in me, by grace. O Lord, make me know You! Do not permit it to happen to me as to the Jews: You were living in the midst of them and they knew You not. Grant that my soul may always have a lively faith; increase my faith, for faith is the light by which I can know You on earth. You are within me, Lord, I know it, I believe it, even if I cannot feel You. But if You wish, You can illumine my soul with Your light and make me know Your divine, mysterious presence.

"You are the light surpassing all other light; You give supernatural light to the eye of the intellect with such abundance and perfection that You clarify the light of faith. My soul has life in faith, and in faith it receives You and knows You. In the light of faith, I acquire wisdom in the wisdom of the Word. In the light of faith, I am strong, constant and persevering. This light will never fail me in my way; it teaches me the path, and without it, I would walk in darkness. Therefore I beg You, O Lord, to illumine me with the light of holy faith" (St. Catherine of Siena).

**It is undisputable that the last twenty years have certainly been unfavorable for the Catholic Church. The results of the Council seem cruelly contrary to everyone's expectations, beginning with John XXIII and Paul VI (...). We expected a leap forward, and instead we were faced with a gradual decadence that had been developed mostly in the name of a supposed "Council spirit" that has actually discredited it .... The post-conciliar Church is a large building site, but a building site where the project has been lost and everyone continues to build as he pleases. Pope Benedict XVI, *The Ratzinger Report*, 1987**



## **The Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity** **– Made Manifest Through the Virtue of Religion**

To this effect St. Augustine says: "God is to be honored by faith, hope and charity". The acts of faith, hope and charity are in themselves acts, not of the moral virtue of religion, but of the three essentially different theological virtues ; yet they may be elicited with the intention of acknowledging the divine truth, fidelity and goodness, and God is thereby greatly honored and glorified. In believing, hoping and loving we give ourselves to God with all the powers of our soul, we lean upon God and rest in God as our last end; in other words, we render to the divine perfections and majesty due homage and submission. The three divine virtues also condition the development and completion of the Christian life, which is founded on faith, nourished by hope and animated by charity. Faith enlightens the understanding with celestial light, hope endows the soul with supernatural strength, and love inflames the heart with divine fire ; thus these, three virtues enable us by a new and holy life to announce to men the glorious prerogatives and perfections of God, that they may see our works and glorify our Father who is in heaven (i Peter 2, 9; Matt. 5, 16). They give rise to the virtue of religion, and excite us to glorify God through works of piety, mercy and penance.

Rev. Nicholas Gihl, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; Dogmatically, Liturgically and Ascetically Explained*

Holy self-sacrifice forms the seal of the life of Christ on earth: His life was a constant martyrdom, a blood sacrifice of mortification, an incense-offering of devotion and prayer, a burnt-offering of love for God and men. Truly, the whole earthly career of Christ from the womb of His Mother to the grave, was a sacrifice of abnegation and self-denial. A veil of mourning shrouded His entire life, bearing the character of severe penance and atonement for a world full of frivolity, sinful, sensual enjoyment and horrible godlessness. This painful way began in the crib, to end only on the Cross: crib and Cross are closely connected with each other. In the crib Jesus lay as a meek, lovely Infant-God; on the Cross He was suspended, His body torn and bleeding; but in the one situation as well as in the other, He is the Lamb sacrificed for the sins of the world. Calvary cast its shadow upon His hidden, silent life at Bethlehem and Nazareth. "Poor and sorrowful" (Ps. 68, 30) was Jesus throughout the whole course of his life. Privations, humiliations, sufferings were His inseparable companions: they surrounded Him on His entrance into the world, accompanied Him during His earthly pilgrimage and ascended with Him on the Cross. Whatever the world cherishes, seeks and values, all its joys, riches and glory, all its pomp and grandeur, He despised and disdained; in their stead He endured poverty, hardships, hostility, contradictions, vexations innumerable, such as only an unbounded love could choose and endure. As a stranger who had not whereon to lay His head, did the Lord of Heaven dwell many years upon this earth, an earth yielding thorns and thistles. At the same time, we must remember that His pure, delicate body and noble and holy soul were created peculiarly susceptible of suffering, and consequently experienced, a thousand times more than men can imagine, the severity, acuteness and bitterness of all corporal and spiritual sufferings. His infancy, boyhood and youth were passed in retirement and obscurity, in poverty and self-denial, in painful labor and austere penance; also the three years of His public life, His ministry among an "unbelieving and perverse generation" (Matt. 17, 16) were filled with bitterness arising from the inappreciation, ingratitude and persecution on the part of His own nation; and this was all the more painful to Him, since He had come but to seek and save those who were lost. He was repudiated, blasphemed and calumniated by the obdurate Jews, so that before leaving this world, He could apply to Himself these words of the Prophet: "They have hated Me without cause" (John 15, 25; cf. Ps. 68, 5), and He could say to His disciples : "If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you" (John 15, 18).

Rev. Nicholas Gihl, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; Dogmatically, Liturgically and Ascetically Explained*

### **St. Thomas Aquinas was not an "Aristotelian," and the neo-Modernists are not saints**

When, in the 13th century, Aristotelian thought entered into contact with Medieval Christianity, formed by the Platonic tradition, and when faith and reason were at risk of entering into an irreconcilable opposition, it was Saint Thomas Aquinas who played the role of mediator in the new encounter between faith and philosophy, thus placing faith in a positive relation with the form of reason dominant in his epoch. [...] With Vatican Council II the moment when a new reflection of this type was necessary arrived. [...] Let us read it and welcome it, guided by a just hermeneutic. Benedict XVI, speech of December 22, 2005

The simple fact is that those who have dubbed Thomas with the epithet "Aristotelian" have not hit the mark. This is the reason why the first modern efforts to open up the world of St. Thomas, which date from about 1890, failed. Yet they established an image of Thomas which prevailed for a long time, an image which has in fact prevailed to the present day..... From a purely historical point of view, it is a misinterpretation of what really happened to imagine that young Thomas turned to Aristotelianism because it had become modish and that he thus became an "Aristotelian." This notion literally obstructed any real understanding of Thomas for decades until in recent years it was energetically pointed out that Plato too, Augustine too, the Neo-Platonists Dionysius Areopagita too, are very much very much present and effective in the work of St. Thomas, and that Thomas himself was not unaware of their presence. Thomas frequently defends Plato against Aristotle; he points out that Aristotle, in his polemics, often did not consider the substance of what Plato said, the *veritas occulta*, but only the superficial phrasing, the *sonus verborum*. The doctrine of Ideas, the conception of the Creation as following prototypes living within the divine Logos, this central Platonic concept was something that Thomas never abandoned. And a tally of the works of St. Thomas has turned up almost seventeen hundred quotations from Dionysius Areopagita. This will astonish only those who regard intellectual history as a succession of "isms" that replace one another.... For St. Thomas was anything but a participant in the "excessive cult of Aristotle" which had become a fad in his time. Josef Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*

**"Be strong! You must not give in where it is not necessary to give in... You must fight, not half-way, but with courage instead; not in hiding but in public; not behind closed doors, but out in the open." St. Pius X**

Virtue cannot grow in the company of vice. If the one is to flourish, the other must perish. Clear away, then, what is superfluous and vicious, and that which is wholesome and virtuous will at once spring up. Whatever you withhold from your lusts will turn to the profit and advantage of your spiritual life. Therefore let us take heed to cut down by a diligent self-examination the noxious growth of faults, vices, and defects, if we wish to see the flowers of every virtue bloom forth in the garden of our souls. St. Bernard

The assistance of the Holy Spirit presupposes that on the part of the Pope, there would be unreserved correspondence with the Holy Spirit; without it, the assistance of the Holy Spirit is purely negative i.e.: it only prevents the Vicar of Christ from imposing an error as an infallible dogma. Msgr. Francesco Spadafora

This time... is a stormy time! The Council has not given us, in many ways, the desired serenity, but rather caused turbulence... Pope Paul VI, July 15, 1970

There would be today neither Socialism nor Communism if the rulers of the nations had not scorned the teachings and maternal warnings of the Church. On the basis of liberalism and secularism they wished to build other social edifices which, powerful and imposing as they seemed at first, all too soon revealed the weakness of their foundations, and today are crumbling one after another before our eyes, as everything must crumble which is not grounded on the one cornerstone of Jesus Christ. Pope Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*

St Paul says, "If we judge ourselves we shall not be judged." If we examine and search into our conscience, submitting it to a rigorous trial, and if when we discover any sins, we wash them away with tears of Contrition, we shall not be judged by God; in other words, we shall escape punishment at His awful judgment. Rev. Cornelius a Lapide

## Ecumenism of Recent Popes

We profess that there is no salvation outside the Church. ... For the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. With reference to those words Augustine says: "If any man be outside the Church he will be excluded from the number of sons, and will not have God for Father since he has not the Church for mother." Pope Leo XII, *Ubi Primum*

It is not possible to worship God truly except in Her; all who are outside Her will not be saved. Pope Gregory XVI, *Summo Jugiter*

But, as is Our Apostolic Duty, we wish your episcopal solicitude and vigilance to be aroused, so that you will strive as much as you can to drive from the mind of men that impious and equally fatal opinion, namely, that the way of eternal salvation can be found in any religion whatsoever. ...

For, it must be held by faith that outside the Apostolic Roman Church, no one can be saved; that this is the only ark of salvation; that he who shall not have entered therein will perish in the flood; ... let us hold most firmly that, in accordance with Catholic teaching, there is "one God, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4.5); it is unlawful to proceed further in inquiry. Pope Blessed Pius IX, *Singulari Quadem*

This is our last lesson to you; receive it, engrave it in your minds, all of you: by God's commandment salvation is to be found nowhere but in the Church. Pope Leo XIII, *Annum Ingressi Sumus*

He scatters and gathers not who gathers not with the Church and with Jesus Christ, and all who fight not jointly with Him and with the Church are in very truth contending against God. Pope Leo XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*

It is our duty to recall to everyone great and small, as the Holy Pontiff Gregory did in ages past, the absolute necessity which is ours, to have recourse to this Church to effect our eternal salvation. Pope Saint Pius X, *Jucunda Sane*

Such is the nature of the Catholic faith that it does not admit of more or less, but must be held as a whole, or as a whole rejected: This is the Catholic faith, which unless a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.

Pope Benedict XV, *Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum*

The Catholic Church alone is keeping the true worship. This is the font of truth, this is the house of faith, this is the temple of God; if any man enter not here, or if any man go forth from it, he is a stranger to the hope of life and salvation.... Furthermore, in this one Church of Christ, no man can be or remain who does not accept, recognize and obey the authority and supremacy of Peter and his legitimate successors. Pope Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos*

By divine mandate the interpreter and guardian of the Scriptures, and the depository of Sacred Tradition living within her, the Church alone is the entrance to salvation: She alone, by herself, and under the protection and guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the source of truth.

Pope Pius XII, Allocution to the Gregorian, October 17, 1953

**"Hell strives with all its might to break the unity of those who recite the same *Credo*." Ernest Hello**

It is indeed the most powerful means to arouse a man, to make this serious reflection: I am going to perform the holy Consecration, to hold God in my hands, to converse with Him and to receive Him into my heart. Who will not be inflamed with love by making the reflection to himself: I am on the point of receiving the Infinite Goodness? Who does not tremble and shudder out of a loving awe toward Him, before whom the heavenly Powers themselves shudder and tremble? Who does not tremble with the fear of offending Him, and does not tremble with the desire to praise and serve Him? Who does not experience sorrow, confusion and remorse for having offended the Divine Master, whom he beholds before him? Who is not filled with confidence by such a pledge? Who does not endeavor - having such a Viaticum with him in the desert of this world - to do penance? In short, such a meditation, dictated by the spirit of God, entirely transforms man, and carries him away and beside himself, - at one time by a sense of reverence, now by love, again by other powerful emotions. How cautions should we not be to keep ourselves wholly and unreservedly for Christ, who so greatly honors us, as to descend unto us and place Himself in our hands, when the words of Consecration are pronounced. St. John of the Cross, Reflection for priests about to offer the Holy Mass

## WITH ALL HER HEART THE DEVOUT SOUL SHOULD DESIRE UNION WITH CHRIST IN THE SACRAMENT

THE DISCIPLE:

LET it be granted me to find You alone, O Christ, to open to You my whole heart, to enjoy You as my soul desires, to be disturbed by no one, to be moved and troubled by no creature, that You may speak to me and I to You alone, as a lover speaks to his loved one, and friend converses with friend.

I pray for this, I desire this, that I may be completely united to You and may withdraw my heart from all created things, learning to relish the celestial and the eternal through Holy Communion and the frequent celebration of Mass.

Ah Lord God, when shall I be completely united to You and absorbed by You, with self utterly forgotten? You in me and I in You? Grant that we may remain so together. You in truth are my Beloved, chosen from thousands, in Whom my soul is happy to dwell all the days of her life. You are in truth my pledge of peace, in Whom is the greatest peace and true rest, without Whom there is toil and sorrow and infinite misery.

You truly are the hidden God. Your counsel is not with the wicked, and Your conversation is rather with the humble and the simple.

O how kind is Your spirit, Lord, Who in order to show Your sweetness toward Your children, deign to feed them with the sweetest of bread, bread come down from heaven! Surely there is no other people so fortunate as to have their god near them, as You, our God, are present everywhere to the faithful, to whom You give Yourself to be eaten and enjoyed for their daily solace and the raising of their hearts to heaven.

Indeed, what other nation is so renowned as the Christian peoples? What creature under heaven is so favored as the devout soul to whom God comes, to feed her with His glorious Flesh? O unspeakable grace! O wonderful condescension! O love beyond measure, singularly bestowed upon man!

What return shall I make to the Lord for this love, this grace so boundless? There is nothing I can give more pleasing than to offer my heart completely to my God, uniting it closely with His. Then shall all my inner self be glad when my soul is perfectly united with God. Then will He say to me: "If you will be with Me, I will be with you." And I will answer Him: "Deign, O Lord, to remain with me. I will gladly be with You. This is my one desire, that my heart may be united with You."

Thomas a Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Thanksgiving after Holy Communion

## Salvation a Difficult Work - Man's Unwillingness

IT is manifest that there is in man's nature a deep and settled unwillingness, which is the first and greatest barrier to his salvation an unwillingness not simply to be saved, that is, to be made everlastingly blessed—this, as a mere end of their desires, all men long after—but an unwillingness to be saved in the way of salvation which God has ordained. They would fain enter into the strait gate, if they could do it without repenting, or denying self, or crossing their own will, or changing their way of life. If they might live on the very threshold of His kingdom with an unchastened heart, and then, without struggle, shed off the unmortified body of sin and death, and enter new-born into His joy; if, after a life of self-indulgence, they could inherit eternal bliss, and so draw out the indolent, self-pleasing luxury of earth into the perfect blessedness of heaven,—then, indeed, there would be no unwillingness; then the way of life should be broad enough, and many should go in thereat; and the way of destruction narrow, and few should there be that find it. But because the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is the severe holiness of salvation from which they shrink. They know that salvation is, the being saved from sin, from its guilt and from its soil, from the power with which it rules over us, from the love with which we cling to it;—in a word, it is the healing of the soul; the cleansing of its deadly sickness; the making of the sinful creature a holy being. From this men shrink by the recoil of their natural will. They too clearly see that it is from themselves that they must be saved; from what they love and pamper with perpetual license; that they must renounce what they are, and become what they are not; that they must absolutely submit their will to be changed and subdued to His will;—and they are not prepared to put so great a yoke upon themselves. And, besides this, the thought of God's awful and searching presence, all pure, all holy, is insufferable. They feel the awful contrast of their own sullied spirits with His spotless sanctity; and they can neither endure to forsake the sins they doat on, nor dare to draw nigh Him without repentance. Cardinal Henry Manning, sermon

Lord God our Master, Who established in heaven the ranks and armies of angels and archangels for the service of Your glory, grant that as we make our entrance, the holy angels may enter too, serving with us and joining in the praise of Your goodness. For all glory, honor and worship befit You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever Amen. Byzantine Liturgy, Entrance prayer

"Behold, my brethren, how many have lived and died in infidelity! Go to Hell and count them there! Count, if you can, the pagans who have lived from the beginning of the world until now, and who are all damned. Count all the heretics who have died in their heresy and who are all damned. Count all the bad Catholics who have died in mortal sin and who are all damned. How many have gone to Heaven? Two, three, five, or ten out of ten thousand?"

St. Leonard of Port Maurice, *The Little Number of Those Who Are Saved*

"Truth is One, and religion, being true, can neither contradict nor embarrass Truth... God is never in danger. Error is charged with its own destruction... As Truth does not belong to us, we cannot concede on fraction of it." Ernest Hello, French Catholic apologist and journalist

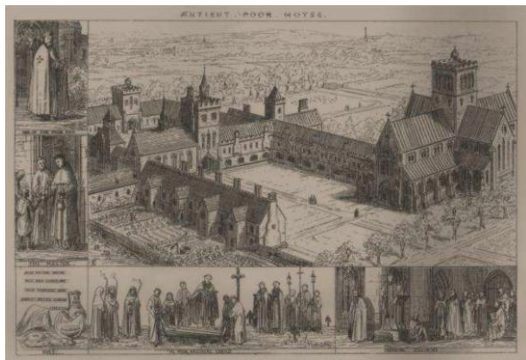
## Our refuge in temptation

LET us take two very simple practical rules.

One is: when we are tempted by any approach of evil, to fix our eyes inwardly upon Him hanging upon the Cross. Let us then call to mind His five wounds, and His crown of thorns. This will abate our pride, break our will, and cast out our evil thoughts. If the temptation be strong and abiding, keep your eyes upon him until you are delivered. Look upon Him, as upon the true Serpent of brass, till the fever and the poison of your sin be healed. Go, if you can, into some secret place, and kneel down in His sight; and, there, stay upon your knees till the sting of sin is allayed, and the temptation passed away.

The other rule is: to pray, day by day, that our will may be crucified with Him. This prayer, if we persevere, will, by His grace, slay the enmity that is in us, and make us, not enemies, but lovers of His Cross. St. Paul says, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;" (Gal. v. 24.) and again, he says still more, "I am crucified with Christ;" (Gal. ii. 20.) This shall be even our state at last. Happy and blessed are they who are dead to themselves, alive to Him alone. Let us, therefore, pray Him so to unite us to the spirit of His crucifixion, that we may die to sin, to the world, to our own will; to all that flatters, fosters, strengthens the love of ourselves. As in Baptism we were signed with His life-giving sign, and charged to fight manfully under His banner, so let us pray, that in life and in death we may be under the shadow of His Cross. Howsoever He may fulfil this prayer, be not afraid. It may be He will send you sickness, or sorrow, or contradiction of sinners, or suffering of some kind. For your prayer is an appeal to His Passion. He may suffer you to receive the stigmas which the world printed on Him. Be it so. Let come what may, if only we have upon us the mark of our crucified Master at that day when the sign of the Son of Man shall appear, and the angels "shall gather His elect from the four winds of heaven."

Cardinal Henry Manning, sermon



## "Hospital of Saint Cross and Alms House of Noble Poverty" -

A sketch of the institution before the Reformation. It was a diocesan institution that served for care of the poor and as a hospital. These were commonly seen in England before the Reformation but were nearly all destroyed with their assets distributed to the criminal abettors within the nobility. The destruction of charitable institutions would eventually give England debtors prisons like the infamous Marshalsea, Fleet, and many others. On this alms house and hospital, Bishop John Milner (1752-1826), Winchester, England, said, "The present establishment is but the wreck of the two ancient institutions, having been severely fleeced, though not quite destroyed, like so many other hospitals, at the Reformation."

Nothing indicates better the nature of self-love, or should make it more hateful to us, than the idea that it is the rival of the love of God. *Homines sunt voluntates*, Men are their wills, says St. Augustine. We can bestow our whole love on but one only of two objects: God or self. If we put God first and refer all things to Him, then His love will make us good and pleasing in His sight, imparting a supernatural value to all our actions, and perfecting us as we grow in purity and simplicity. If, on the other hand, we refer everything to ourselves, our self-love will upset God's order in us, rendering us most displeasing to Him, vitiating actions otherwise holy, and lowering us in proportion to the sway it exercises in our hearts.... Such is the enemy we have to fight, with the help of grace: an enemy born with us, and in some way part of our very self. Age, passions, habits, thoughts- all, even our good qualities and occasionally our virtues, contribute to strengthen its hold upon us, and drive it deeper. It is so involved with ourselves that it seems almost impossible to distinguish it, and to attempt to destroy it is to jeopardize our very existence... We may assume as a fact, without fear of contradiction, that we are blind on many points concerning our perfection, and perhaps our salvation. We should pray continuously for God to enlighten us, either directly by His Holy Ghost, or indirectly by the advice of our friends or by the reproaches of our enemies. In whatever way light may come, it is always a blessing sent by God, and we should welcome and receive it gratefully, encouraging others to offer it, and neglecting nothing that may lead us to profit by it.

John Nicohlas Grou, S. J., *Spiritual Maxims*

"If Jesus Christ does not reign through the blessings inseparable from his presence, he will reigh through the calamities unavoidably caused by his absence." Cardinal Pie



**It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters. Edmund Burke**

**The Barbarian hopes — and that is the mark of him, that he can have his cake and eat it too. He will consume what civilization has slowly produced after generations of selection and effort, but he will not be at pains to replace such goods, nor indeed has he a comprehension of the virtue that has brought them into being. Discipline seems to him irrational, on which account he is ever marvelling that civilization, should have offended him with priests and soldiers.... In a word, the Barbarian is discoverable everywhere in this, that he cannot make: that he can befog and destroy but that he cannot sustain; and of every Barbarian in the decline or peril of every civilization exactly that has been true. We sit by and watch the barbarian. We tolerate him in the long stretches of peace, we are not afraid. We are tickled by his irreverence; his comic inversion of our old certitudes and our fixed creed refreshes us; we laugh. But as we laugh we are watched by large and awful faces from beyond, and on these faces there are no smiles. Hilaire Belloc**

**The Sacrifices our Fathers in the Faith endured to whom we are much indebted for keeping the Faith.**

Sunday, 23 - About eleven o'clock, the Peace Officers going their rounds to the public-houses, to prevent disorderly smoking and tippling in time of Divine Service, discovered a private Mass-house at a little alehouse at the back of Shoreditch, where nearly a hundred people had got together in a garret, most of them miserably poor and ragged, and upon examination appeared to be Irish. Some few were well dressed and several Mass-books were found with them. The priest made his escape out of a back door, leaving the rest to shift for themselves, whereupon some got out of a trap-door, and others, after giving an account of their names and places of abode, were let quietly depart. Notwithstanding, a great many met in the evening at the same place, declaring that Mass should be said there. Gentleman's Magazine, London, England, February 23, 1735

Inspired by the grace of God, we join the saints in honoring the holy virgin Frances Xavier Cabrini. She was a humble woman who became outstanding not because she was famous or rich or powerful, but because she lived a virtuous life. From the tender years of her youth, she kept her innocence as white as a lily and preserved it carefully with the thorns of penitence; as the years progressed, she was moved by a certain instinct and supernatural zeal to dedicate her whole life to the service and greater glory of God.

She welcomed delinquent youths into safe homes, and taught them to live upright and holy lives. She consoled those who were in prison, and recalled to them the hope of eternal life. She encouraged prisoners to reform themselves, and to live honest lives.

She comforted the sick and the infirm in the hospitals, and diligently cared for them. She extended a friendly and helping hand especially to immigrants, and offered them necessary shelter and relief, for having left their homeland behind, they were wandering about in a foreign land with no place to turn for help. Because of their condition, she saw that they were in danger of deserting the practice of Christian virtues and their Catholic faith.

Undoubtedly she accomplished all this through the faith which was always so vibrant and alive in her heart; through the divine love which burned within her; and finally, through constant prayer by which she was so closely united with God from whom she humbly asked and obtained whatever her human weakness could not obtain. Although her constitution was very frail, her spirit was endowed with such singular strength that, knowing the will of God in her regard, she permitted nothing to impede her from accomplishing what seemed beyond her strength. Pope Pius XII, Canonization of Saint Frances Cabrini

St. Thomas was once guilty of doubting, when he ought to have believed, and learnt the necessity of faith only by the sad experience of incredulity: he comes then most appropriately to defend us, by the power of his example and prayers, against the temptations which proud human reason might excite within us. Let us pray to him with confidence. In that heaven of light and vision, where his repentance and love have placed him, he will intercede for us, and gain for us that docility of mind and heart, which will enable us to see and recognize Him, who is the Expected of nations, and who, though the king of the world, will give no other signs of His majesty, than the swaddling-clothe and tears of a Babe. Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, St. Thomas

## **Quotations of St. Ignatius Loyola on the Virtue of Faith**

- ❖ **There is only one Catholic Church. As the Bridegroom is One, the bride is one also.** There was only one Noah's ark, outside which no one was saved at the Deluge; there was only one tabernacle constructed by Moses, only one Temple at Jerusalem built by Solomon for sacrifice and for worship; only one Synagogue the sentences of which were legal.
- ❖ **Outside the Church there is nothing good.** Whoever is not united with this mystical body will not receive from its Head, Jesus Christ, Divine grace which vivifies the soul and prepares it for everlasting life.
- ❖ **Laying aside all private judgment, we ought to keep our minds prepared and ready to obey in all things the true Spouse of Christ our Lord, which is our holy mother, the Hierarchical Church.**
- ❖ **All Jesus Christ's faithful people should cling to the opinions of the Church, and consult her when they meet with anything ambiguous or obscure.**
- ❖ **Far from disapproving of what is the custom among Catholics, we should always have reasons ready to defend it.**



- ❖ **In order to be free from all error, we should conform our private way of looking at things to that of the Church**, so as to hold what seems to us white to be black, if the Hierarchical Church pronounces it so. For this end we must be convinced that between Christ our Lord, the Bridegroom, and the Church, His bride, there is one and the same spirit, which governs and directs us to the salvation of our souls; and that our holy mother the Church is guided and ruled by the same Spirit and Lord that gave the Ten Commandments.
- ❖ **Positive and scholastic theology cannot be too highly praised.** As it is the special work of the positive Doctors to excite the affections and to lead men to love and serve God with all their might; so it is rather the object of the scholastic Doctors, to define and explain more exactly, in conformity with the wants of our times, what is necessary for salvation, the better to attack and to expose the errors and fallacies of the enemies of the Church. The saying of Luther is well known: **“Get rid of Thomas, and I will rid you of the Church.”**
- ❖ **However enlightened we may be, we should never judge of Divine things from a human point of view;** but we ought always to submit our judgment to the principles of faith, and to the authority of the Church, since it is not right that things which are certain should be regulated by those which are doubtful, and on the contrary, it is reasonable that things which are doubtful should be decided by such as are certain.
- ❖ **With regard to religion, the most pleasing novelties are often the most dangerous.** The reasons which support a doctrine do not render it Catholic; and until the Church has decided what is to be believed concerning such opinions, we should be careful neither to condemn them, nor to speak favourably of them. This is the advice sent by St. Ignatius to Fathers Lainez, Salmeron, and Le Jay, during their stay at Trent at the time of the Council.
- ❖ **All that proceeds from heretics should be suspected,** especially books, however good they may be. When one reads a good book by a bad man, one is insensibly drawn towards the author, sometimes even so far as to think all that he has written to be reasonable and orthodox.

**OBEDIENCE is only a virtue when it is properly regulated by the virtue of RELIGION which is the FIRST DUTY of everyone of the FAITHFUL under the virtue of JUSTICE!**

**“When a law is enacted contrary to reason, or to the eternal law, or to some ordinance of God, obedience is unlawful, lest while obeying man, we become disobedient to God.” Leo XIII**

**“There is a time when those who obey, obey to their own condemnation.” St. Catherine of Siena**

**“The devil has the Bible but he is in Hell. It is Tradition what will bring you to Heaven.”  
St. Maximilian Kolbe to Fr. Victor Mrosz, who was “excommunicated” for being faithful to Tradition**

## **Revolutionary France: Civil Constitution of the Clergy, Title II, Article XXI**

Things began to change quickly in 1789. On August 4, the newly assembled National Assembly drafted the ‘Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen,’ and over the next year completely dismantled French society and rebuilt it from the ground up. Part of this included nationalizing all Church lands and transferring ownership to the state. By June 1790 the Assembly had officially abolished the nobility, and on July 12 passed the Civil Constitution of the Clergy.[.....]

The most contentious aspects of the constitution, however, involved how new bishops would be appointed to office and the duties required of them. The Church was now essentially completely incorporated as a branch of government, and bishops were to be elected by popular vote. This was received with outrage by many clergy, as it not only completely up-ended the top-down appointment system of the Church, but would then allow Protestants, Jews, and atheists to directly influence Church matters. What would cause the greatest problems though, was Article XXI of Title II. This required bishops to take an oath before municipal officials asserting their loyalty to the nation of France before all other things, or their office would be declared vacant.[.....]

The oath of loyalty created a massive schism within the clergy. Many lower clergy had supported revolutionary calls for reform, even reform within the Church, but this was beyond the pale. Thousands of priests, monks, and nuns now had to choose between refusing the oath and risking arrest and punishment, or taking the oath and risking their salvation. In March 1791, the Pope forced the issue by issuing a papal bull officially condemning the Revolution's actions towards the Church and leveling excommunication upon any clergy who took the oath.

The clergy was then split into juring priests (those who took the oath) and non-juring or refractory priests (those who refused). ....

Wikipedia

**COMMENT:** The situation in revolutionary France is analogous to the revolutionary Church that is known as the "Church of the New Advent." Article XXI of Title II required of every Catholic priest as a necessary condition to function as a priest that he take an oath placing the authority of man above the authority of God. Today, the Church of the New Advent imposes the 1989 Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity upon every priest in the Church as a necessary condition to exercise any authority. This Profession includes an unconditional oath of submission of the mind and will, or as Lumen Gentium say, submission of the soul, to the authentic magisterium of the pope. The "authentic magisterium" is a term that only identifies the person who occupies the office of the papacy. The Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity demand an unconditional submission of the mind and will to a man as man. Unconditional submission of the mind and will can only be given to God and to God alone. It is time that those priests in the Church of the New Advent be referred known as "juring" priests as it will become more and more evident with the passage of time when they will be required to go along with Pope Francis' overturning all Catholic morality.

**"Two loves have built two cities: the love of self even to the contempt of God, the city of the earth; the love of God even to the contempt of self, the city of God." St. Augustine of Hippo**