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THE LITURGICAL YEAR

LENT

Catholic Church Liturgy and Ritual

THE
LITURGICAL YEAR

BY

ABBOT GUÉRANGER, O.S.B.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

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LENT

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TO VICTORIAN
ARTISTS
WAS

PREFACE

WE begin, with this volume, the holy season of Lent ; but such is the richness of its liturgy, that we have found it impossible to take our readers beyond the Saturday of the fourth week. Passion-week and Holy Week, which complete the forty days of yearly penance, require to be treated at such length, that we could not have introduced them into this volume without making it inconveniently large.

The present volume is a very full one, although it only comprises the first four weeks of the season of Lent. We have called it 'Lent'; and yet the two weeks of the next volume are also comprised in Lent ; nay, they are its most important and sacred part. But, in giving the name of Lent to this first section, we have followed the liturgy itself, which applies this word to the first four weeks only ; giving to the two that remain the names of Passion-week and Holy Week. Our next volume will, therefore, be called 'Passiontide and Holy Week.'

We fervently hope that our readers, who have entered into the spirit of the Church during Septuagesima, will do the same in the season which now

begins ; for this end they should attentively study the Lessons from the Scripture, selected by the Church for each day. To these Epistles and Gospels we have added our humble comments. Such is the richness of the teaching contained in these venerable lenten instructions, that we might have written a volume for each week ; and yet we have been obliged to content ourselves with a few short words of explanation. There are so few persons, nowadays, who have a knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, that frequently what was most familiar with our Catholic forefathers is entirely ignored by the present generation. May God deign to bless our feeble efforts, and give to our people that spirit of understanding of holy things which supports faith, and makes practice fervent !

TO VISITORS
AND
WALKERS

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LENT

CHAPTER THE FIRST

THE HISTORY OF LENT

THE forty days' fast, which we call Lent,¹ is the Church's preparation for Easter, and was instituted at the very commencement of Christianity. Our blessed Lord Himself sanctioned it by fasting forty days and forty nights in the desert; and though He would not impose it on the world by an express commandment (which, in that case, could not have been open to the power of dispensation), yet He showed plainly enough, by His own example, that fasting, which God had so frequently ordered in the old Law, was to be also practised by the children of the new.

The disciples of St. John the Baptist came, one day, to Jesus, and said to Him: 'Why do we and the pharisees fast often, but Thy disciples do not fast?' And Jesus said to them: 'Can the children of the Bridegroom mourn, as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast.'²

Hence we find it mentioned, in the Acts of the

¹ In most languages, the name given to this fast expresses the number of the days *forty*. But our word *Lent* signifies the *Spring-fast*; for *Lenten-tide*, in the ancient English-Saxon language, was the season of Spring. [Tr.]

² St. Matt. ix. 14, 15.

Apostles, how the disciples of our Lord, after the foundation of the Church, applied themselves to fasting. In their Epistles, also, they recommended it to the faithful. Nor could it be otherwise. Though the divine mysteries whereby our Saviour wrought our redemption have been consummated, yet are we still sinners : and where there is sin, there must be expiation.

The apostles, therefore, legislated for our weakness, by instituting, at the very commencement of the Christian Church, that the solemnity of Easter should be preceded by a universal fast ; and it was only natural that they should have made this period of penance to consist of forty days, seeing that our divine Master had consecrated that number by His own fast. St. Jerome,¹ St. Leo the Great,² St. Cyril of Alexandria,³ St. Isidore of Seville,⁴ and others of the holy fathers, assure us that Lent was instituted by the apostles, although, at the commencement, there was not any uniform way of observing it.

We have already seen, in our 'Septuagesima,' that the orientals begin their Lent much earlier than the Latins, owing to their custom of never fasting on Saturdays (or, in some places, even on Thursdays). They are, consequently, obliged, in order to make up the forty days, to begin the lenten fast on the Monday preceding our Sexagesima Sunday. Exceptions of this kind do but prove the rule. We have also shown how the Latin Church—which, even so late as the sixth century, kept only thirty-six fasting days during the six weeks of Lent (for the Church has never allowed Sundays to be kept as days of fast)—thought proper to add, later on, the last four days of Quinquagesima, in order that her Lent might contain exactly forty days of fast.

¹ *Epist. xxvii. ad Marcellam.*

² *Serm. ii, v, ix. de Quadragesima.*

³ *Homil. Paschal.*

⁴ *De Ecclesiast. Officiis, lib. vi. cap. xix.*

The whole subject of Lent has been so often and so fully treated that we shall abridge, as much as possible, the history we are now giving. The nature of our work forbids us to do more than insert what is essential for entering into the spirit of each season. God grant that we may succeed in showing to the faithful the importance of the holy institution of Lent! Its influence on the spiritual life, and on the very salvation, of each one among us, can never be over-rated.

Lent, then, is a time consecrated in an especial manner to penance; and this penance is mainly practised by fasting. Fasting is an abstinence, which man voluntarily imposes upon himself as an expiation for sin, and which, during Lent, is practised in obedience to the general law of the Church. According to the actual discipline of the western Church, the fast of Lent is not more rigorous than that prescribed for the vigils of certain feasts, and for the Ember Days; but it is kept up for forty successive days, with the single interruption of the intervening Sundays.

We deem it unnecessary to show the importance and advantages of fasting. The sacred Scriptures, both of the old and new Testament, are filled with the praises of this holy practice. The traditions of every nation of the world testify the universal veneration in which it has ever been held; for there is not a people or a religion, how much soever it may have lost the purity of primitive traditions, which is not impressed with this conviction—that man may appease his God by subjecting his body to penance.

St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, and St. Gregory the Great, make the remark, that the commandment put upon our first parents in the earthly paradise was one of abstinence; and that it was by their not exercising this virtue, that they brought every kind of evil upon themselves and upon

us their children. The life of privation, which the king of creation had thenceforward to lead on the earth (for the earth was to yield him nothing of its own natural growth, save thorns and thistles), was the clearest possible exemplification of the law of penance imposed by the anger of God on rebellious man.

During the two thousand and more years, which preceded the deluge, men had no other food than the fruits of the earth, and these were obtained only by the toil of hard labour. But when God, as we have already observed, mercifully shortened man's life that so he might have less time and power for sin, He permitted him to eat the flesh of animals, as an additional nourishment in that state of deteriorated strength. It was then, also, that Noah, guided by a divine inspiration, extracted the juice of the grape, which thus formed a second stay for human debility.

Fasting, then, is abstinence from such nourishments as these, which were permitted for the support of bodily strength. And firstly, it consists in abstinence from flesh-meat, because this food was given to man by God out of condescension to his weakness, and not as one absolutely essential for the maintenance of life. Its privation, greater or less according to the regulations of the Church, is essential to the very notion of fasting. Thus, whilst in many countries the use of eggs, milk-meats, and even dripping and lard, is tolerated, the abstinence from flesh-meat is everywhere maintained, as being essential to fasting. For many centuries eggs and milk-meats were not allowed, because they come under the class of animal food; even to this day they are forbidden in the eastern Churches, and are allowed in the Latin Church only by virtue of an annual dispensation. The precept of abstaining from flesh-meat is so essential to Lent, that even on Sundays, when the fasting is interrupted, abstinence is an

obligation, binding even on those who are dispensed from the fasts of the week, unless there be a special dispensation granted for eating meat on the Sundays.

In the early ages of Christianity, fasting included also abstinence from wine, as we learn from St. Cyril of Jerusalem,¹ St. Basil,² St. John Chrysostom,³ Theophilus of Alexandria,⁴ and others. In the west, this custom soon fell into disuse. The eastern Christians kept it up much longer, but even with them it has ceased to be considered as obligatory.

Lastly, fasting includes the depriving ourselves of some portion of our ordinary food, inasmuch as it allows only one meal during the day. Though the modifications introduced from age to age in the discipline of Lent are very numerous, yet the points we have here mentioned belong to the very essence of fasting, as is evident from the universal practice of the Church.

It was the custom with the Jews, in the old Law, not to take the one meal, allowed on fasting days, till sunset. The Christian Church adopted the same custom. It was scrupulously practised, for many centuries, even in our western countries. But about the ninth century some relaxation began to be introduced in the Latin Church. Thus we have a capitularium of Theodulph, bishop of Orleans, who lived at that period, protesting against the practice, which some had, of taking their repast at the hour of None, that is to say, about three o'clock in the afternoon.⁵ The relaxation, however, gradually spread; for, in the tenth century, we find the celebrated Ratherius, bishop of Verona, acknowledging that the faithful had permission to break their fast at the hour of None.⁶ We meet with a sort of re-

¹ *Catech.* iv.

² Homily i. *De Jejunio.*

³ Homily iv. *Ad populum Antioch.*

⁴ *Litt. Pasch.* iii.

⁵ *Capitul.* xxxix. *Labb. Conc.* tom. viii.

⁶ Sermon 1, *De Quadrages.* D' Achery. *Spicilegium*, tom. ii.

clamation made as late as the eleventh century, by a Council held at Rouen, which forbids the faithful to take their repast before Vespers shall have been begun in the church, at the end of None;¹ but this shows us that the custom had already begun of anticipating the hour of Vespers, in order that the faithful might take their meal earlier in the day.

Up to within a short period before this time, it had been the custom not to celebrate Mass, on days of fasting, until the Office of None had been sung, which was about three o'clock in the afternoon; and, also, not to sing Vespers till sunset. When the discipline regarding fasting began to relax, the Church still retained the order of her Offices, which had been handed down from the earliest times. The only change she made was to anticipate the hour for Vespers; and this entailed the celebration of Mass and None much earlier in the day; so early, indeed, that, when custom had so prevailed as to authorize the faithful taking their repast at midday, all the Offices, even the Vespers, were over before that hour.

In the twelfth century, the custom of breaking one's fast at the hour of None everywhere prevailed, as we learn from Hugh of Saint-Victor;² and in the thirteenth century, it was sanctioned by the teaching of the Schoolmen. Alexander Hales declares most expressly that such a custom was lawful;³ and St. Thomas of Aquin is equally decided in the same opinion.⁴

But even the fast till None—*i.e.*, three o'clock—was found too severe; and a still further relaxation was considered to be necessary. At the close of the thirteenth century, we have the celebrated Franciscan, Richard of Middleton, teaching that those who break their fast at the hour of Sext—*i.e.*, midday—are not

¹ Orderic Vital. *Histor.* lib. iv.

² *In regul. S. Augustini*, cap. iii.

³ *Summa*, Part. iv. Quæst. 28, art. 2. ⁴ 2a 2æ Q. 147, a. 7.

to be considered as transgressing the precept of the Church ; and the reason he gives is this : that the custom of doing so had already prevailed in many places, and that fasting does not consist so much in the lateness of the hour at which the faithful take their refreshment, as in their taking but one meal during the twenty-four hours.¹

The fourteenth century gave weight, both by universal custom and theological authority, to the opinion held by Richard of Middleton. It will, perhaps, suffice if we quote the learned Dominican, Durandus, bishop of Meaux, who says that there can be no doubt as to the lawfulness of taking one's repast at midday ; and he adds that such was then the custom observed by the Pope, and Cardinals, and even the religious Orders.² We cannot, therefore, be surprised at finding this opinion maintained, in the fifteenth century, by such grave authors as St. Antoninus, Cardinal Cajetan, and others. Alexander Hales and St. Thomas sought to prevent the relaxation going beyond the hour of None ; but their zeal was disappointed, and the present discipline was established, we might almost say, during their lifetime.

But whilst this relaxation of taking the repast so early in the day as twelve o'clock rendered fasting less difficult in one way, it made it more severe in another. The body grew exhausted by the labours of the long second half of the twenty-four hours ; and the meal, that formerly closed the day, and satisfied the cravings of fatigue, had been already taken. It was found necessary to grant some refreshment for the evening, and it was called a *collation*. The word was taken from the Benedictine rule, which, for long centuries before this change in the lenten observance, had allowed a monastic collation. St. Benedict's rule prescribed a great many fasts, over and above

¹ *In iv. Dist. xv., art. 3., Quæst. 8.*

² *In iv. Dist. xv., Quæst. 9., art. 7.*

the ecclesiastical fast of Lent ; but it made this great distinction between the two : that whilst Lent obliged the monks, as well as the rest of the faithful, to abstain from food till sunset, these monastic fasts allowed the repast to be taken at the hour of None. But, as the monks had heavy manual labour during the summer and autumn months (which was the very time when these fasts till None occurred several days of each week, and, indeed, every day from September 14), the abbot was allowed by the rule to grant his religious permission to take a small measure of wine before Compline, as a refreshment after the fatigues of the afternoon. It was taken by all at the same time, during the evening reading, which was called conference (in Latin, *collatio*) because it was mostly taken from the celebrated 'Conferences' (*Collationes*) of Cassian. Hence this evening monastic refreshment took the name of collation.

We find the Assembly, or Chapter of Aix-la-Chapelle, held in 817, extending this indulgence even to the lenten fast, on account of the great fatigue entailed by the offices, which the monks had to celebrate during this holy season. But experience showed that, unless something solid were allowed to be taken together with the wine, the evening collation would be an injury to the health of many of the religious ; accordingly, towards the close of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century, the usage was introduced of taking a morsel of bread with the collation-beverage.

As a matter of course, these mitigations of the ancient severity of fasting soon found their way from the cloister into the world. The custom of taking something to drink on fasting days, out of the time of the repast, was gradually established ; and even so early as the thirteenth century, we have St. Thomas of Aquin discussing the question, whether or not drink

is to be considered as a breaking of the precept of fasting.¹ He answers in the negative ; and yet he does not allow that anything solid may be taken with the drink. But when it had become the universal practice (as it did in the latter part of the thirteenth century, and still more fixedly during the whole of the fourteenth) that the one meal on fasting days was taken at midday, a mere beverage was found insufficient to give support, and bread, herbs, fruits, etc., were added. Such was the practice, both in the world and in the cloister. It was, however, clearly understood by all, that these eatables were not to be taken in such quantity as to turn the collation into a second meal.

Thus did the decay of piety, and the general deterioration of bodily strength among the people of the western nations, infringe on the primitive observance of fasting. To make our history of these humiliating changes anything like complete, we must mention one more relaxation. For several centuries, abstinence from flesh-meat included likewise the prohibition of all animal food, with the single exception of fish, which, on account of its cold nature, as also for several mystical reasons, founded on the sacred Scriptures, was always permitted to be taken by those who fasted. Every sort of milk-meat was forbidden ; and in Rome, even to this day, butter and cheese are not permitted during Lent, except on those days whereon permission to eat meat is granted.

Dating from the ninth century, the custom of eating milk-meats during Lent began to be prevalent in western Europe, more especially in Germany and the northern countries. The Council of Kedlimberg, held in the eleventh century, made an effort to put a stop to the practice as an abuse ; but without effect.² These Churches maintained that they were in the right, and defended their custom by the dispensations (though,

¹ *In* iv. Quæst. cxlvii. art. 6.

² Labbe, *Concil.* tom. x.

in reality, only temporary ones) granted them by several sovereign Pontiffs: the dispute ended by their being left peaceably to enjoy what they claimed. The Churches of France resisted this innovation up to the sixteenth century; but in the seventeenth they too yielded, and milk-meats were taken during Lent, throughout the whole kingdom. As some reparation for this breach of ancient discipline, the city of Paris instituted a solemn rite, whereby she wished to signify her regret at being obliged to such a relaxation. On Quinquagesima Sunday, all the different parishes went in procession to the church of Notre Dame. The Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, and Augustinians, took part in the procession. The metropolitan Chapter, and the four parishes that were subject to it, held, on the same day, a Station in the courtyard of the palace, and sang an anthem before the relic of the true cross, which was exposed in the *Sainte Chapelle*. These pious usages, which were intended to remind the people of the difference between the past and the present observance of Lent, continued to be practised till the revolution.

But this grant for the eating of milk-meats during Lent did not include eggs. Here the ancient discipline was maintained, at least this far, that eggs were not allowed, save by a dispensation, which had to be renewed each year. In Rome they are allowed only on days when flesh-meat may be taken. In other places they are allowed on some days, and on others, especially during Holy Week, are forbidden. Invariably do we find the Church seeking, out of anxiety for the spiritual advantage of her children, to maintain all she can of those penitential observances, whereby they may satisfy divine justice. It was with this intention that Pope Benedict XIV., alarmed at the excessive facility wherewith dispensations were then obtained, renewed, by a solemn *Constitution* dated June 10, 1745, the prohibition of

eating fish and meat, at the same meal, on fasting days.

The same Pope, whose spirit of moderation has never been called in question, had no sooner ascended the papal throne, than he addressed an encyclical letter to the bishops of the Catholic world, expressing his heartfelt grief at seeing the great relaxation that was introduced among the faithful by indiscreet and unnecessary dispensations. The letter is dated May 30, 1741. We extract from it the following passage : ' The observance of Lent is the very badge of the Christian warfare. By it we prove ourselves not to be enemies of the cross of Christ. By it we avert the scourges of divine justice. By it we gain strength against the princes of darkness, for it shields us with heavenly help. Should mankind grow remiss in their observance of Lent, it would be a detriment to God's glory, a disgrace to the Catholic religion, and a danger to Christian souls. Neither can it be doubted that such negligence would become the source of misery to the world, of public calamity, and of private woe.'¹

More than a hundred years have elapsed since this solemn warning of the Vicar of Christ was given to the world ; and during that time, the relaxation he inveighed against has gone on gradually increasing. How few Christians do we meet who are strict observers of Lent, even in its present mild form ! The long list of general dispensations granted, each year, by the bishops to their flocks, would lead us to suppose that the immense majority of the faithful would be scrupulously exact in the fulfilment of the fasting and abstinence still remaining ; but is such the case ? And must there not result from this ever-growing spirit of immortification, a general effeminacy of character, which will lead, at last, to frightful social disorders ? The sad predictions of Pope Benedict XIV.

¹ Constitution : *Non ambigimus*.

are but too truly verified. Those nations, among whose people the spirit and practice of penance are extinct, are heaping against themselves the wrath of God, and provoking His justice to destroy them by one or other of these scourges—civil discord, or conquest. In our own country there is an inconsistency, which must strike every thinking mind : the observance of the Lord's day, on the one side ; the national inobservance of days of penance and fasting, on the other. The first is admirable, and, if we except puritanical extravagances, bespeaks a deep-rooted sense of religion ; but the second is one of the worst presages for the future. The word of God is unmistakable : unless we do penance, we shall perish.¹ But if our ease-loving and sensual generation were to return, like the Ninivites, to the long-neglected way of penance and expiation, who knows but that the arm of God, which is already raised to strike us, may give us blessing and not chastisement ?

Let us resume our history, and seek our edification in studying the fervour wherewith the Christians of former times used to observe Lent. We will first offer to our readers a few instances of the manner in which dispensations were given.

In the thirteenth century, the archbishop of Braga applied to the reigning Pontiff, Innocent III., asking him what compensation he ought to require of his people, who, in consequence of a dearth of the ordinary articles of food, had been necessitated to eat meat during the Lent. He at the same time consulted the Pontiff as to how he was to act in the case of the sick, who asked for a dispensation from abstinence. The answer given by Innocent, which is inserted in the Canon Law,² is, as we might expect, full of considerateness and charity ; but we learn from this

¹ St. Luke xiii. 3.

² Decretal., lib. iii., cap. *Concilium ; de Jejunio*. Tit. xlvi.

fact that such was then the respect for the law of Lent, that it was considered necessary to apply to the sovereign Pontiff when dispensations were sought for. We find many such instances in the history of the Church.

Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia, being seized with a malady which rendered it dangerous to his health to take Lenten diet, applied, in the year 1297, to Pope Boniface VIII., for leave to eat meat. The Pontiff commissioned two Cistercian abbots to inquire into the real state of the prince's health ; they were to grant the dispensation sought for, if they found it necessary, but on the following conditions : that the king had not bound himself by a vow, for life, to fast during Lent ; that the Fridays, the Saturdays, and the vigil of St. Mathias, were to be excluded from the dispensation ; and, lastly, that the king was not to take his meal in presence of others, and was to observe moderation in what he took.¹

In the fourteenth century we meet with two briefs of dispensation, granted by Clement VI., in 1351, to John, king of France, and to his queen consort. In the first, the Pope, taking into consideration that during the wars in which the king is engaged he frequently finds himself in places where fish can with difficulty be procured, grants to the confessor of the king the power of allowing, both to his Majesty and to his suite, the use of meat on days of abstinence, excepting, however, the whole of Lent, all Fridays of the year, and certain vigils ; provided, moreover, that neither he, nor those who accompany him, are under a vow of perpetual abstinence.² In the second brief the same Pope, replying to the petition made him by the king for a dispensation from fasting, again commissions his Majesty's present and future con-

¹ Raynaldi, *Ad. ann.* 1297.

² D' Achery. *Spicilegium*, tom. iv.

fessors, to dispense both the king and his queen, after having consulted with their physicians.¹

A few years later—that is, in 1376—Pope Gregory XI. sent a brief in favour of Charles V., king of France, and of Jane, his queen. In this brief, he delegates to their confessor the power of allowing them the use of eggs and milk-meats during Lent, should their physician think they stand in need of such dispensation; but he tells both physicians and confessor that he puts it upon their consciences, and that they will have to answer before God for their decision. The same permission is granted also to their servants and cooks, but only as far as it is needed for tasting the food to be served to their Majesties.

The fifteenth century, also, furnishes us with instances of applications to the holy See for lenten dispensations. We will cite the brief addressed by Xystus IV., in 1483, to James III., king of Scotland, in which he grants him permission to eat meat on days of abstinence, provided his confessor considers the dispensation needed.² In the following century, we have Julius II. granting a like dispensation to John, king of Denmark, and to his queen Christina;³ and, a few years later, Clement VII. giving one to the emperor Charles V.,⁴ and again, to Henry II. of Navarre, and to his queen Margaret.⁵

Thus were princes themselves treated, three centuries ago, when they sought for a dispensation from the sacred law of Lent. What are we to think of the present indifference wherewith it is kept? What comparison can be made between the Christians of former times, who, deeply impressed with the fear of God's judgments and with the spirit of penance, cheerfully went through these forty days of mortification, and those of our own days, when love of

¹ D' Achery. *Spicilegium*, tom. iv.

² Raynaldi, *Ad. ann.* 1484.

⁴ *Ibid.* *Ad. ann.* 1524.

³ *Ibid.* *Ad. ann.* 1505.

⁵ *Ibid.* *Ad. ann.* 1533.

pleasure and self-indulgence are for ever lessening man's horror for sin? Where there is little or no fear of having to penance ourselves for sin, there is so much the less restraint to keep us from committing it.

Where now that simple and innocent joy at Easter, which our forefathers used to show, when, after their severe fast of Lent, they partook of substantial and savoury food? The peace, which long and sharp mortification ever brings to the conscience, gave them the capability, not to say the right, of being light-hearted as they returned to the comforts of life, which they had denied themselves in order to spend forty days in penance, recollection, and retirement from the world. This leads us to mention some further details, which will assist the Catholic reader to understand what Lent was in the ages of faith.

It was a season during which, not only all amusements and theatrical entertainments were forbidden by the civil authority,¹ but even the law courts were closed; and this in order to secure that peace and calm of heart, which is so indispensable for the soul's self-examination, and reconciliation with her offended Maker. As early as the year 380, Gratian and Theodosius enacted that judges should suspend all law-suits and proceedings, during the forty days preceding Easter.² The Theodosian Code contains several regulations of this nature; and we find Councils, held in the ninth century, urging the kings of that period to enforce the one we have mentioned, seeing that it had been sanctioned by the canons, and approved of by the fathers of the Church.³ These admirable Christian traditions have long since fallen

¹ It was the Emperor Justinian who passed this law, as we learn from Photius; *Nomocanon*. tit. vii. cap. i. It is still in force in Rome.

² *Cod. Theodos.* lib. ix. tit. xxxv. leg. 4.

³ Labbe, *Concil.*, tom. vii. and ix.

into disuse in the countries of Europe ; but they are still kept among the Turks, who, during the forty days of their *Ramadan*, forbid all law proceedings. What a humiliation for us Christians !

Hunting, too, was for many ages considered as forbidden during Lent : the spirit of the holy season was too sacred to admit such exciting and noisy sport. Pope St. Nicholas I., in the ninth century, forbade it the Bulgarians,¹ who had been recently converted to the Christian faith. Even so late as the thirteenth century, we find St. Raymund of Pegnafort teaching that those who, during Lent, take part in the chase, if it be accompanied by certain circumstances which he specifies, cannot be excused from sin.² This prohibition has long since been a dead letter ; but St. Charles Borromeo, in one of his Synods, re-established it in his province of Milan.

But we cannot be surprised that hunting should be forbidden during Lent, when we remember that, in those Christian times, war itself, which is sometimes so necessary for the welfare of a nation, was suspended during this holy season. In the fourth century, we have the emperor Constantine the Great enacting that no military exercises should be allowed on Sundays and Fridays, out of respect to our Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered and rose again on these two days, as also in order not to disturb the peace and repose needed for the due celebration of such sublime mysteries.³ The discipline of the Latin Church, in the ninth century, enforced everywhere the suspension of war during the whole of Lent, except in cases of necessity.⁴ The instructions of Pope St. Nicholas I. to the Bulgarians recommend the same observance ;⁵ and we learn, from a letter of St.

¹ *Ad consultat. Bulgarorum*. Labbe, *Concil.* tom. viii.

² *Summ. cas. Pœnit.*, lib. iii. tit. xxix. *De laps. et disp.* § 1.

³ Euseb. *Constant. vita*, lib. iv., cap. xviii. et xix.

⁴ Labbe, *Concil.* tom. vii.

⁵ *Ibid.* tom. viii.

Gregory VII. to Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino, that it was kept up in the eleventh century.¹ We have an instance of its being practised in our own country, in the twelfth century, when, as William of Malmesbury relates, the empress Matilda, Countess of Anjou, and daughter of king Henry, was contesting the right of succession to the throne against Stephen, count of Boulogne. The two armies were in sight of each other; but an armistice was demanded and observed, for it was the Lent of 1143.²

Our readers have heard, no doubt, of the admirable institution called 'God's truce,' whereby the Church in the eleventh century succeeded in preventing much bloodshed. This law, which forbade the carrying of arms from Wednesday evening till Monday morning throughout the year, was sanctioned by the authority of Popes and Councils, and enforced by all Christian princes. It was an extension of the lenten discipline of the suspension of war. Our saintly king Edward the Confessor carried its influence still further by passing a law (which was confirmed by his successor, William the Conqueror), that God's truce should be observed without cessation from the beginning of Advent to the octave of Easter; from the Ascension to the Whitsuntide octave; on all the Ember days; on the vigils of all feasts; and lastly, every week, from None on Wednesday till Monday morning, which had already been prescribed.³

In the Council of Clermont, held in 1095, Pope Urban II., after drawing up the regulations for the Crusades, used his authority in extending the God's truce, as it was then observed during Lent. His decree, which was renewed in the Council held the following year at Rouen, was to this effect: that all war proceedings should be suspended from Ash

¹ Labbe, *Concil.* tom. x.

² Wilhelm. Malmesbur. *Hist. nov.* no. 30.

³ Labbe, *Concil.* tom. ix.

Wednesday to the Monday after the octave of Pentecost, and on all vigils and feasts of the blessed Virgin and of the apostles, over and above what was already regulated for each week, that is, from Wednesday evening to Monday morning.¹

Thus did the world testify its respect for the holy observances of Lent, and borrow some of its wisest institutions from the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year. The influence of this forty days' penance was great, too, on each individual. It renewed man's energies, gave him fresh vigour in battling with his animal instincts, and, by the restraint it put upon sensuality, ennobled the soul. There was restraint everywhere; and the present discipline of the Church, which forbids the solemnization of marriage during Lent, reminds Christians of that holy continency, which, for many ages, was observed during the whole forty days as a precept, and of which the most sacred of the liturgical books, the missal, still retains the recommendation.²

It is with reluctance that we close our history of Lent, and leave untouched so many other interesting details. For instance, what treasures we could have laid open to our readers from the lenten usages of the eastern Churches, which have retained so much of the primitive discipline! We cannot, however, resist devoting our last page to the following particulars.

We mentioned, in the preceding volume, that the Sunday we call *Septuagesima*, is called, by the Greeks, *Prophoné*, because the opening of Lent is proclaimed on that day. The Monday following it is counted as the first day of the next week, which is *Apocreos*, the name they give to the Sunday which closes that week, and which is our Sexagesima Sunday. The Greek Church begins abstinence from flesh-meat with

¹ Orderic Vital. *Hist. Eccles.* lib. ix.

² Missale Romanum. *Missa pro sponso et sponsa.*

this week. Then on the morrow, Monday, commences the week called *Tyrophagos*, which ends with the Sunday of that name, corresponding to our Quinquagesima. White-meats are allowed during that week. Finally, the morrow is the first day of the first week of Lent, and the fast begins with all its severity on that Monday, whilst, in the Latin Church, it is deferred to the Wednesday.

During the whole of the Lent preceding Easter, milk-meats, eggs, and even fish, are forbidden. The only food permitted to be eaten with bread, is vegetables, honey, and, for those who live near the sea, shell-fish. For many centuries wine might not be taken, but it is now permitted; and on the Annunciation and Palm Sunday a dispensation is granted for eating fish.

Besides the Lent preparatory to the feast of Easter, the Greeks keep three others in the year: that which is called 'of the apostles,' which lasts from the octave of Pentecost to the feast of Saints Peter and Paul; that 'of the Virgin Mary,' which begins on the first of August, and ends with the vigil of the Assumption; and lastly, the Lent of preparation for Christmas, which consists of forty days. The fasting and abstinence of these three Lents are not quite so severe as those observed during the great Lent. The other Christian nations of the east also observe several Lents, and more rigidly than the Greeks; but all these details would lead us too far. We therefore pass on to the mysteries which are included in this holy season.

CHAPTER THE SECOND

THE MYSTERY OF LENT

WE may be sure that a season so sacred as this of Lent is rich in mysteries. The Church has made it a time of recollection and penance, in preparation for the greatest of all her feasts ; she would, therefore, bring into it everything that could excite the faith of her children, and encourage them to go through the arduous work of atonement for their sins. During Septuagesima, we had the number *seventy*, which reminds us of those seventy years of captivity in Babylon, after which God's chosen people, being purified from idolatry, was to return to Jerusalem and celebrate the Pasch. It is the number *forty* that the Church now brings before us : a number, as St. Jerome observes, which denotes punishment and affliction.¹

Let us remember the forty days and forty nights of the deluge² sent by God in His anger, when He repented that He had made man, and destroyed the whole human race with the exception of one family. Let us consider how the Hebrew people, in punishment for their ingratitude, wandered forty years in the desert, before they were permitted to enter the promised land.³ Let us listen to our God commanding the Prophet Ezechiel to lie forty days on his right side, as a figure of the siege which was to bring destruction on Jerusalem.⁴

There are two persons in the old Testament who represent the two manifestations of God : Moses, who typifies the Law ; and Elias, who is the figure of the Prophets. Both of these are permitted to

¹ In *Ezechiel*, cap. xxix.

³ Num. xiv. 33.

² Gen. vii. 12.

⁴ *Ezechiel* iv. 6.

approach God: the first on Sinai,¹ the second on Horeb;² but both of them have to prepare for the great favour by an expiatory fast of forty days.

With these mysterious facts before us, we can understand why it is that the Son of God, having become Man for our salvation and wishing to subject Himself to the pain of fasting, chose the number of forty days. The institution of Lent is thus brought before us with everything that can impress the mind with its solemn character, and with its power of appeasing God and purifying our souls. Let us, therefore, look beyond the little world which surrounds us, and see how the whole Christian universe is, at this very time, offering this forty days' penance as a sacrifice of propitiation to the offended Majesty of God; and let us hope that, as in the case of the Ninivites, He will mercifully accept this year's offering of our atonement, and pardon us our sins.

The number of our days of Lent is, then, a holy mystery: let us now learn, from the liturgy, in what light the Church views her children during these forty days. She considers them as an immense army, fighting day and night against their spiritual enemies. We remember how, on Ash Wednesday, she calls Lent a Christian warfare. In order that we may have that newness of life, which will make us worthy to sing once more our *Alleluia*, we must conquer our three enemies: the devil, the flesh, and the world. We are fellow combatants with our Jesus, for He, too, submits to the triple temptation, suggested to Him by Satan in person. Therefore, we must have on our armour, and watch unceasingly. And whereas it is of the utmost importance that our hearts be spirited and brave, the Church gives us a war-song of heaven's own making, which can fire even cowards with hope of victory and confidence in God's help: it is the ninetieth

¹ Exod. xxiv. 18.

² 3 Kings xix. 8.

Psalm.¹ She inserts the whole of it in the Mass of the first Sunday of Lent, and every day introduces several of its verses into the ferial Office.

She there tells us to rely on the protection, wherewith our heavenly Father covers us, as with a shield;² to hope under the shelter of His wings;³ to have confidence in Him; for that He will deliver us from the snare of the hunter,⁴ who had robbed us of the holy liberty of the children of God; to rely upon the succour of the holy angels, who are our brothers, to whom our Lord hath given charge that they keep us in all our ways,⁵ and who, when Jesus permitted satan to tempt Him, were the adoring witnesses of His combat, and approached Him, after His victory, proffering to Him their service and homage. Let us get well into us these sentiments wherewith the Church would have us to be inspired; and, during our six weeks' campaign, let us often repeat this admirable canticle, which so fully describes what the soldiers of Christ should be and feel in this season of the great spiritual warfare.

But the Church is not satisfied with thus animating us to the contest with our enemies: she would also have our minds engrossed with thoughts of deepest import; and for this end she puts before us three great subjects, which she will gradually unfold to us between this and the great Easter solemnity. Let us be all attention to these soul-stirring and instructive lessons.

And firstly, there is the conspiracy of the Jews against our Redeemer. It will be brought before us in its whole history, from its first formation to its final consummation on the great Friday, when we

¹ Ps. *Qui habitat in adjutorio*, in the Office of Compline.

² *Scuto circumdabit te veritas ejus*. Office of None.

³ *Et sub pennis ejus sperabis*. Sext.

⁴ *Ipsse liberavit me de laqueo venantium*. Tierce.

⁵ *Angelis suis mandavit de te, ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis*. Lauds and Vespers.

shall behold the Son of God hanging on the wood of the cross. The infamous workings of the Synagogue will be brought before us so regularly, that we shall be able to follow the plot in all its details. We shall be inflamed with love for the august Victim, whose meekness, wisdom, and dignity bespeak a God. The divine drama, which began in the cave of Bethlehem, is to close on Calvary ; we may assist at it, by meditating on the passages of the Gospel read to us by the Church during these days of Lent.

The second of the subjects offered to us, for our instruction, requires that we should remember how the feast of Easter is to be the day of new birth for our catechumens ; and how, in the early ages of the Church, Lent was the immediate and solemn preparation given to the candidates for Baptism. The holy liturgy of the present season retains much of the instruction she used to give to the catechumens ; and as we listen to her magnificent lessons from both the old and the new Testament, whereby she completed their *initiation*, we ought to think with gratitude on how we were not required to wait years before being made children of God, but were mercifully admitted to Baptism even in our infancy. We shall be led to pray for those new catechumens, who this very year, in far distant countries, are receiving instructions from their zealous missionaries, and are looking forward, as did the postulants of the primitive Church, to that grand feast of our Saviour's victory over death, when they are to be cleansed in the waters of Baptism and receive from the contact a new being—regeneration.

Thirdly, we must remember how, formerly, the public penitents, who had been separated on Ash Wednesday from the assembly of the faithful, were the object of the Church's maternal solicitude during the whole forty days of Lent, and were to be admitted to reconciliation on Maundy Thursday, if

their repentance were such as to merit this public forgiveness. We shall have the admirable course of instructions, which were originally designed for these penitents, and which the liturgy, faithful as it ever is to such traditions, still retains for our sake. As we read these sublime passages of the Scripture, we shall naturally think upon our own sins, and on what easy terms they were pardoned us ; whereas, had we lived in other times, we should have probably been put through the ordeal of a public and severe penance. This will excite us to fervour, for we shall remember that, whatever changes the indulgence of the Church may lead her to make in her discipline, the justice of our God is ever the same. We shall find in all this an additional motive for offering to His divine Majesty the sacrifice of a contrite heart, and we shall go through our penances with that cheerful eagerness, which the conviction of our deserving much severer ones always brings with it.

In order to keep up the character of mournfulness and austerity which is so well suited to Lent, the Church, for many centuries, admitted very few feasts into this portion of her year, inasmuch as there is always joy where there is even a spiritual feast. In the fourth century, we have the Council of Laodicea forbidding, in its fifty-first canon, the keeping of a feast or commemoration of any saint during Lent, excepting on the Saturdays or Sundays.¹ The Greek Church rigidly maintained this point of lenten discipline ; nor was it till many centuries after the Council of Laodicea that she made an exception for March 25, on which day she now keeps the feast of our Lady's Annunciation.

The Church of Rome maintained this same discipline, at least in principle ; but she admitted the feast of the Annunciation at a very early period, and somewhat later, the feast of the apostle

¹ Labbe, *Concil.* tom. i.

St. Mathias, on February 24. During the last few centuries, she has admitted several other feasts into that portion of her general calendar which coincides with Lent ; still, she observes a certain restriction, out of respect for the ancient practice.

The reason why the Church of Rome is less severe on this point of excluding the saints' feasts during Lent, is that the Christians of the west have never looked upon the celebration of a feast as incompatible with fasting ; the Greeks, on the contrary, believe that the two are irreconcilable, and as a consequence of this principle, never observe Saturday as a fasting-day, because they always keep it as a solemnity, though they make Holy Saturday an exception, and fast upon it. For the same reason, they do not fast upon the Annunciation.

This strange idea gave rise, in or about the seventh century, to a custom which is peculiar to the Greek Church. It is called the *Mass of the Presanctified*, that is to say, consecrated in a previous Sacrifice. On each Sunday of Lent, the priest consecrates six Hosts, one of which he receives in that Mass ; but the remaining five are reserved for a simple Communion, which is made on each of the five following days, without the holy Sacrifice being offered. The Latin Church practises this rite only once in the year, that is, on Good Friday, and this in commemoration of a sublime mystery, which we will explain in its proper place.

This custom of the Greek Church was evidently suggested by the forty-ninth canon of the Council of Laodicea, which forbids the offering of bread for the Sacrifice during Lent, excepting on the Saturdays and Sundays.¹ The Greeks, some centuries later on, concluded from this canon that the celebration of the holy Sacrifice was incompatible with fasting ; and we learn from the controversy they had, in the

¹ Labbe, *Concil.* tom. i.

ninth century, with the legate Humbert,¹ that the *Mass of the Presanctified* (which has no other authority to rest on save a canon of the famous Council in *Trullo*,² held in 692) was justified by the Greeks on this absurd plea, that the Communion of the Body and Blood of our Lord broke the lenten fast.

The Greeks celebrate this rite in the evening, after Vespers, and the priest alone communicates, as is done now in the Roman liturgy on Good Friday. But for many centuries they have made an exception for the Annunciation; they interrupt the lenten fast on this feast, they celebrate Mass, and the faithful are allowed to receive holy Communion.

The canon of the Council of Laodicea was probably never received in the western Church. If the suspension of the holy Sacrifice during Lent was ever practised in Rome, it was only on the Thursdays; and even that custom was abandoned in the eighth century, as we learn from Anastasius the Librarian, who tells us that Pope St. Gregory II., desiring to complete the Roman sacramentary, added Masses for the Thursdays of the first five weeks of Lent.³ It is difficult to assign the reason of this interruption of the Mass on Thursdays in the Roman Church, or of the like custom observed by the Church of Milan on the Fridays of Lent. The explanations we have found in different authors are not satisfactory. As far as Milan is concerned, we are inclined to think that, not satisfied with the mere adoption of the Roman usage of not celebrating Mass on Good Friday, the Ambrosian Church extended the rite to all the Fridays of Lent.

After thus briefly alluding to these details, we must close our present chapter by a few words on

¹ *Contra Nicetam*. tom. iv.

² Can. 52. Labbe, *Concil.* tom. vi.

³ Anastas. *In Gregorio II.*

the holy rites which are now observed, during Lent, in our western Churches. We have explained several of these in our 'Septuagesima.'¹ The suspension of the *Alleluia*; the purple vestments; the laying aside of the deacon's dalmatic, and the subdeacon's tunic; the omission of the two joyful canticles *Gloria in excelsis* and *Te Deum*; the substitution of the mournful *Tract* for the *Alleluia*-verse in the Mass; the *Benedicamus Domino* instead of the *Ite Missa est*; the additional prayer said over the people after the Postcommunions on ferial days; the celebration of the Vesper Office before midday, excepting on the Sundays: all these are familiar to our readers. We have now only to mention, in addition, the genuflections prescribed for the conclusion of all the Hours of the Divine Office on ferias, and the rubric which bids the choir to kneel, on those same days, during the Canon of the Mass.

There were other ceremonies peculiar to the season of Lent, which were observed in the Churches of the west, but which have now, for many centuries, fallen into general disuse; we say general, because they are still partially kept up in some places. Of these rites, the most imposing was that of putting up a large veil between the choir and the altar, so that neither clergy nor people could look upon the holy mysteries celebrated within the sanctuary. This veil — which was called *the Curtain*, and, generally speaking, was of a purple colour — was a symbol of the penance to which the sinner ought to subject himself, in order to merit the sight of that divine Majesty, before whose face he had committed so many outrages. It signified, moreover, the humiliations endured by our Redeemer, who was a stumbling-block to the proud Synagogue. But as a veil that is suddenly drawn aside, these humiliations were to give way, and be changed into the glories of

¹ See their explanation in the volume for Septuagesima.

the Resurrection.¹ Among other places where this rite is still observed, we may mention the metropolitan church of Paris, *Notre Dame*.

It was the custom also, in many churches, to veil the crucifix and the statues of the saints as soon as Lent began; in order to excite the faithful to a livelier sense of penance, they were deprived of the consolation which the sight of these holy images always brings to the soul. But this custom, which is still retained in some places, was less general than the more expressive one used in the Roman Church, which we will explain in our next volume—the veiling of the crucifix and statues only in Passion-tide.

We learn from the ceremonials of the middle ages that, during Lent, and particularly on the Wednesdays and Fridays, processions used frequently to be made from one church to another. In monasteries, these processions were made in the cloister, and barefooted.² This custom was suggested by the practice of Rome, where there is a *Station* for every day of Lent which, for many centuries, began by a procession to the stational church.

Lastly, the Church has always been in the habit of adding to her prayers during the season of Lent. Her present discipline is that, on ferias, in cathedral and collegiate churches which are not exempted by a custom to the contrary, the following additions are to be made to the canonical Hours: on Monday, the Office of the Dead; on Wednesday, the Gradual Psalms; and on Friday, the Penitential Psalms. In some churches, during the middle ages, the whole Psalter was added each week of Lent to the usual Office.³

¹ Honorius of Autun. *Gemma animæ*, lib. iii. cap. lxvi.

² Martène. *De antiquis Eccles. ritibus*, tom. iii. cap. xviii.
Ibid.

CHAPTER THE THIRD

PRACTICE DURING LENT

HAVING spent the three weeks of Septuagesima in meditating upon our spiritual infirmities and upon the wounds caused in us by sin, we should be ready to enter upon the penitential season which the Church has now begun. We have now a clearer knowledge of the justice and holiness of God, and of the dangers that await an impenitent soul ; and, that our repentance might be earnest and lasting, we have bade farewell to the vain joys and baubles of the world. Our pride has been humbled by the prophecy, that these bodies would soon be like the ashes that wrote the memento of death upon our foreheads.

During these forty days of penance, which seem so long to our poor nature, we shall not be deprived of the company of our Jesus. He seemed to have withdrawn from us during those weeks of Septuagesima, when everything spoke to us of His maledictions upon sinful man ; but this absence has done us good. It has taught us how to tremble at the voice of God's anger. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom';¹ we have found it to be so : the spirit of penance is now active within us, because we have feared.

And now, let us look at the divine object that is before us. It is our Emmanuel ; the same Jesus, but not under the form of the sweet Babe whom we adored in His crib. He has grown to the fulness of the age of man, and wears the semblance of a sinner, trembling and humbling Himself before the sovereign Majesty of His Father whom we have offended, and

¹ Ps. cx. 10.

to whom He now offers Himself as the Victim of propitiation. He loves us with a brother's love ; and seeing that the season for doing penance has begun, He comes to cheer us on by His presence and His own example. We are going to spend forty days in fasting and abstinence : Jesus, who is innocence itself, goes through the same penance. We have separated ourselves, for a time, from the pleasures and vanities of the world : Jesus withdraws from the company and sight of men. We intend to assist at the divine services more assiduously, and pray more fervently, than at other times : Jesus spends forty days and forty nights in praying, like the humblest suppliant ; and all this for us. We are going to think over our past sins, and bewail them in bitter grief : Jesus suffers for them and weeps over them in the silence of the desert, as though He Himself had committed them.

No sooner had He received baptism from the hands of St. John, than the Holy Ghost led Him to the desert. The time had come for showing Himself to the world ; He would begin by teaching us a lesson of immense importance. He leaves the saintly Precursor and the admiring multitude, that had seen the divine Spirit descend upon Him, and heard the Father's voice proclaiming Him to be His beloved Son ; He leaves them and goes into the desert. Not far from the Jordan there rises a rugged mountain, which has received, in after ages, the name of Quarantana. It commands a view of the fertile plain of Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea. It is within a cave of this wild rock that the Son of God now enters, His only companions being the dumb animals who have chosen this same for their own shelter. He has no food wherewith to satisfy the pangs of hunger ; the barren rock can yield Him no drink ; His only bed must be of stone. Here He is to spend forty days ; after which, He will

permit the angels to visit Him and bring Him food.

Thus does our Saviour go before us on the holy path of Lent. He has borne all its fatigues and hardships, that so we, when called upon to tread the narrow way of our lenten penance, might have His example wherewith to silence the excuses, and sophisms, and repugnances, of self-love and pride. The lesson is here too plainly given not to be understood ; the law of doing penance for sin is here too clearly shown, and we cannot plead ignorance : let us honestly accept the teaching and practise it. Jesus leaves the desert where He has spent the forty days, and begins His preaching with these words, which He addresses to all men : ‘ Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’¹ Let us not harden our hearts to this invitation, lest there be fulfilled in us the terrible threat contained in those other words of our Redeemer : ‘ Unless you shall do penance, you shall perish.’²

Now, penance consists in contrition of the soul, and mortification of the body ; these two parts are essential to it. The soul has willed the sin ; the body has frequently co-operated in its commission. Moreover, man is composed of both soul and body ; both, then, should pay homage to their Creator. The body is to share with the soul either the delights of heaven or the torments of hell ; there cannot, therefore, be any thorough Christian life, or any earnest penance, where the body does not take part, in both, with the soul.

But it is the soul which gives reality to penance. The Gospel teaches this by the examples it holds out to us of the prodigal son, of Magdalene, of Zaccheus, and of St. Peter. The soul, then, must be resolved to give up every sin ; she must heartily grieve over those she has committed ; she must hate sin ; she

¹ St. Matt. iv. 17.

² St. Luke xiii. 3.

must shun the occasions of sin. The sacred Scriptures have a word for this inward disposition, which has been adopted by the Christian world, and which admirably expresses the state of the soul that has turned away from her sins : this word is conversion. The Christian should, therefore, during Lent, study to excite himself to this repentance of heart, and look upon it as the essential foundation of all his lenten exercises. Nevertheless, he must remember that this spiritual penance would be a mere delusion, were he not to practise mortification of the body. Let him study the example given him by his Saviour, who grieves, indeed, and weeps over our sins ; but He also expiates them by His bodily sufferings. Hence it is that the Church, the infallible interpreter of her divine Master's will, tells us that the repentance of our heart will not be accepted by God, unless it be accompanied by fasting and abstinence.

How great, then, is the illusion of those Christians, who forget their past sins, or compare themselves with others whose lives they take to have been worse than their own ; and thus satisfied with themselves, can see no harm or danger in the easy life they intend to pass for the rest of their days ! They will tell you that there can be no need of their thinking of their past sins, for they have made a good confession ! Is not the life they have led since that time a sufficient proof of their solid piety ? And why should anyone speak to them about the justice of God and mortification ? Accordingly, as soon as Lent approaches, they must get all manner of dispensations. Abstinence is an inconvenience ; fasting has an effect upon their health, it would interfere with their occupations, it is such a change from their ordinary way of living ; besides, there are so many people who are better than themselves, and yet who never fast or abstain. And, as the idea never enters their minds of supplying for the penances prescribed by the

Church by other penitential exercises, such persons as these gradually and unsuspectingly lose the Christian spirit.

The Church sees this frightful decay of supernatural energy ; but she cherishes what is still left, by making her lenten observances easier, year after year. With the hope of maintaining that little, and of seeing it strengthen for some better future, she leaves to the justice of God her children who hearken not to her when she teaches them how they might, even now, propitiate His anger. Alas ! these her children, of whom we are speaking, are quite satisfied that things should be as they are, and never think of judging their own conduct by the examples of Jesus and His saints, or by the undeviating rules of Christian penance.

It is true, there are exceptions ; but how rare they are, especially in our large towns ! Groundless prejudices, idle excuses, bad example, all tend to lead men from the observance of Lent. Is it not sad to hear people giving such a reason as this for their not fasting or abstaining—because they *feel* them ? Surely, they forget that the very aim of fasting and abstinence is to make these bodies of sin¹ suffer and feel. And what will they answer on the day of judgment, when our Saviour shall show them how the very Turks, who were the disciples of a gross and sensual religion, had the courage to practise, every year, the forty days' austerities of their Ramadan ?

But their own conduct will be their loudest accuser. These very persons, who persuade themselves that they have not strength enough to bear the abstinence and fasting of Lent even in their present mitigated form, think nothing of going through incomparably greater fatigues for the sake of temporal gains or worldly enjoyments. Constitutions which have broken down in the pursuit of pleasures which, to

¹ Rom. vi. 6.

say the least, are frivolous, and always dangerous, would have kept up all their vigour, had the laws of God and His Church, and not the desire to please the world, been the guide of their conduct. But such is the indifference wherewith this non-observance of Lent is treated, that it never excites the slightest trouble or remorse of conscience ; and those who are guilty of it will argue with you, that people who lived in the middle ages may perhaps have been able to keep Lent, but that now-a-days it is out of the question : and they can coolly say this in the face of all that the Church has done to adapt her lenten discipline to the physical and moral weakness of the present generation ! How comes it that, whilst these men have been trained in, or converted to, the faith of their fathers, they can forget that the observance of Lent is an essential mark of Catholicity ; and that when the Protestants undertook to *reform* her, in the sixteenth century, one of their chief grievances was that she insisted on her children mortifying themselves by fasting and abstinence ?

But it will be asked : ' Are there, then, no lawful dispensations ? ' We answer that there are ; and that they are more needed now than in former ages, owing to the general weakness of our constitutions. Still, there is great danger of our deceiving ourselves. If we have strength to go through great fatigues when our own self-love is gratified by them, how is it we are too weak to observe abstinence ? If a slight inconvenience deter us from doing this penance, how shall we ever make expiation for our sins ? for expiation is essentially painful to nature. The opinion of our physician that fasting will weaken us, may be false, or it may be correct ; but is not this mortification of the flesh the very object that the Church aims at, knowing that our soul will profit by the body being brought into subjection ? But let us suppose the dispensation to be necessary : that

our health would be impaired, and the duties of our state of life neglected, if we were to observe the law of Lent to the letter : do we, in such a case, endeavour, by other works of penance, to supply for those which our health does not allow us to observe ? Are we grieved and humbled to find ourselves thus unable to join with the rest of the faithful children of the Church, in bearing the yoke of lenten discipline ? Do we ask of our Lord to grant us the grace, next year, of sharing in the merits of our fellow-Christians, and of observing those holy practices which give the soul an assurance of mercy and pardon ? If we do, the dispensation will not be detrimental to our spiritual interests ; and when the feast of Easter comes, inviting the faithful to partake in its grand joys, we may confidently take our place side by side with those who have fasted ; for though our bodily weakness has not permitted us to keep pace with them exteriorly, our heart has been faithful to the spirit of Lent.

How long a list of proofs we could still give of the negligence, into which the modern spirit of self-indulgence leads so many among us, in regard of fasting and abstinence ! Thus, there are Catholics to be found in every part of the world who make their Easter Communion, and profess themselves to be children of the Catholic Church, who yet have no idea of the obligations of Lent. Their very notion of fasting and abstinence is so vague, that they are not aware that these two practices are quite distinct one from the other ; and that the dispensation from one does not, in any way, include a dispensation from the other. If they have, lawfully or unlawfully, obtained exemption from abstinence, it never so much as enters into their minds that the obligation of fasting is still binding upon them during the whole forty days ; or if they have had granted to them a dispensation from fasting, they conclude that

they may eat any kind of food they wish. Such ignorance as this is the natural result of the indifference wherewith the commandments and traditions of the Church are treated.

So far, we have been speaking of the non-observance of Lent in its relation to individuals and Catholics ; let us now say a few words upon the influence which that same non-observance has upon a whole people or nation. There are but few social questions which have not been ably and spiritedly treated of by the public writers of the age, who have devoted their talents to the study of political economy ; and it has often been a matter of surprise to us that they should have overlooked a subject of such deep interest as this : the results produced on society by the abolition of Lent ; that is to say, of an institution which, more than any other, keeps up in the public mind a keen sentiment of moral right and wrong, inasmuch as it imposes on a nation an annual expiation for sin. No shrewd penetration is needed to see the difference between two nations, one of which observes, each year, a forty-days' penance in reparation of the violations committed against the law of God, and another, whose very principles reject all such solemn reparation. And looking at the subject from another point of view—is it not to be feared that the excessive use of animal food tends to weaken, rather than to strengthen, the constitution ? We are convinced of it : the time will come when a greater proportion of vegetable, and less of animal, diet will be considered as an essential means for maintaining the strength of the human frame.

Let, then, the children of the Church courageously observe the lenten practices of penance. Peace of conscience is essential to Christian life ; and yet it is promised to none but truly penitent souls. Lost innocence is to be regained by the humble confession of the sin, when it is accompanied by the absolution of

the priest ; but let the faithful be on their guard against the dangerous error, which would persuade them that they have nothing to do when once pardoned. Let them remember the solemn warning given them by the Holy Ghost in the sacred Scriptures : ‘ Be not without fear about sin forgiven ’¹ Our confidence of our having been forgiven should be in proportion to the change or conversion of our heart ; the greater our present detestation of our past sins and the more earnest our desire to do penance for them for the rest of our lives, the better founded is our confidence that they have been pardoned. ‘ Man knoweth not,’ as the same holy Volume assures us, ‘ whether he be worthy of love or hatred ’;² but he that keeps up within him the spirit of penance, has every reason to hope that God loves him.

But the courageous observance of the Church’s precept of fasting and abstaining during Lent must be accompanied by those two other eminently good works, to which God so frequently urges us in the Scripture : prayer and almsdeeds. Just as under the term ‘ fasting ’ the Church comprises all kinds of mortification ; so under the word ‘ prayer ’ she includes all those exercises of piety whereby the soul holds intercourse with her God. More frequent attendance at the services of the Church, assisting daily at Mass, spiritual reading, meditation upon eternal truths and the Passion, hearing sermons, and, above all, approaching the Sacraments of Penance and the holy Eucharist—these are the chief means whereby the faithful should offer to God the homage of prayer, during this holy season.

Almsdeeds comprise all the works of mercy to our neighbour, and are unanimously recommended by the holy doctors of the Church, as being the necessary complement of fasting and prayer during Lent. God has made it a law, to which He has graciously

¹ Eccclus. v. 5.

² Eccles. ix. 1.

bound Himself, that charity shown towards our fellow-creatures, with the intention of pleasing our Creator, shall be rewarded as though it were done to Himself. How vividly this brings before us the reality and sacredness of the tie which He would have to exist between all men ! Such, indeed, is its necessity, that our heavenly Father will not accept the love of any heart that refuses to show mercy : but, on the other hand, He accepts as genuine and as done to Himself the charity of every Christian, who, by a work of mercy shown to a fellow-man, is really acknowledging and honouring that sublime union which makes all men to be one family with God as its Father. Hence it is that almsdeeds, done with this intention, are not merely acts of human kindness, but are raised to the dignity of acts of religion, which have God for their direct object, and have the power of appeasing His divine justice.

Let us remember the counsel given by the Archangel Raphael to Tobias. He was on the point of taking leave of this holy family, and returning to heaven ; and these were his words : ‘ Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold : for alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting.’¹ Equally strong is the recommendation given to this virtue by the Book of Ecclesiasticus : ‘ Water queneth a flaming fire, and alms resisteth sins.’² And again : ‘ Shut up alms in the heart of the poor, and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil.’³ The Christian should keep these consoling promises ever before his mind, but more especially during the season of Lent. The rich man should show the poor, whose whole year is a fast, that there is a time when even he has his self-imposed privations. The faithful observance of Lent naturally produces a saving ; let that saving

¹ Tob. xii. 8, 9.

² Ecclus. iii. 33.

³ *Ibid.* xxix. 15.

be given to Lazarus. Nothing, surely, could be more opposed to the spirit of this holy season, than keeping up a table as richly and delicately provided as at other periods of the year, when God permits us to use all the comforts compatible with the means He has given us. But how thoroughly Christian is it that, during these days of penance and charity, the life of the poor man should be made more comfortable, in proportion as that of the rich shares in the hardships and privations of his suffering brethren throughout the world ! Poor and rich would then present themselves, with all the beauty of fraternal love upon them, at the divine Banquet of the Paschal feast, to which our risen Jesus will invite us after these forty days are over.

There is one means more whereby we are to secure to ourselves the great graces of Lent ; it is the spirit of retirement and separation from the world. Our ordinary life, such as it is during the rest of the year, should all be made to pay tribute to the holy season of penance ; otherwise, the salutary impression produced on us by the holy ceremony of Ash Wednesday will soon be effaced. The Christian ought, therefore, to forbid himself, during Lent, all the vain amusements, entertainments, and parties, of the world he lives in. As regards theatres and balls, which are the *world* in the very height of its power to do harm, no one that calls himself a disciple of Christ should ever be present at them, unless necessity, or the position he holds in society, oblige him to it : but if, from his own free choice, he throws himself amidst such dangers during the present holy season of penance and recollection, he offers an insult to his character, and must needs cease to believe that he has sins to atone for, and a God to propitiate. The world (we mean that part of it which is Christian) has thrown off all those external indications of mourning and penance, which we read of as being so

religiously observed in the ages of faith ; let that pass ; but there is one thing which can never change : God's justice, and man's obligation to appease that justice. The world may rebel as much as it will against the sentence, but the sentence is irrevocable : ' Unless you do penance, you shall all perish.'¹ It is God's own word. Say, if you will, that few now-a-days give ear to it ; but for that very reason many are lost. Those, too, who hear this word, must not forget the warnings given them by our divine Saviour Himself, in the Gospel read to us on Sexagesima Sunday. He told us how some of the seed is trodden down by the passers-by, or eaten by the fowls of the air ; how some falls on rocky soil, and gets parched ; and how, again, some is choked by thorns. Let us be wise, and spare no pains to become that good ground, which not only receives the divine seed, but brings forth a hundredfold for the Easter harvest which is at hand.

An unavoidable feeling will arise in the minds of some of our readers, as they peruse these pages, in which we have endeavoured to embody the spirit of the Church, such as it is expressed, not only in the liturgy, but also in the decrees of Councils and in the writings of the holy fathers. The feeling we allude to is one of regret at not finding, during this period of the liturgical year, the touching and exquisite poetry, which gave such a charm to the forty days of our Christmas solemnity. First came Septuagesima, throwing its gloomy shade over those enchanting visions of the mystery of Bethlehem ; and now we have come into a desert land, with thorns at every step, and no springs of water to refresh us. Let us not complain, however ; holy Church knows our true wants, and is intent on supplying them. Neither must we be surprised at her insisting on a severer preparation for Easter, than for Christmas,

¹ St. Luke xiii. 3.

At Christmas, we were to approach our Jesus as an Infant ; all she put us through then were the Advent exercises, for the mysteries of our Redemption were but beginning.

And of those who went to Jesus' crib, there were many who, like the poor shepherds of Bethlehem, might be called simple, at least in this sense, that they did not sufficiently realize either the holiness of their Incarnate God or the misery and guilt of their own conscience. But now that this Son of the eternal God has entered the path of penance ; now that we are about to see Him a victim to every humiliation, and suffering even a death upon a cross, the Church does not spare us ; she rouses us from our ignorance and our self-satisfaction. She bids us strike our breasts, have compunction in our souls, mortify our bodies, because we are sinners. Our whole life ought to be one of penance ; fervent souls are ever doing penance : could anything be more just or necessary, than that we should do some penance during these days, when our Jesus is fasting in the desert, and is to die on Calvary ? There is a sentence of this our Redeemer, which He spoke to the daughters of Jerusalem on the day of His Passion ; let us apply it to ourselves : ' If in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry ?'¹ Oh, what a revelation is here ! And yet, by the mercy of Jesus who speaks it, the dry wood may become the green, and so not be burned.

The Church hopes, nay, her whole energy is labouring, that this may be ; therefore, she bids us bear the yoke ; she gives us a Lent. Let us only courageously tread the way of penance, and the light will gradually beam upon us. If we are now far off from our God by the sins that are upon us, this holy season will be to us what the saints call the purgative life, and will give us that purity which

¹ St. Luke xxiii. 31.

will enable us to see our Lord in the glory of His victory over death. If, on the contrary, we are already living the illuminative life ; if, during the three weeks of Septuagesima, we have bravely sounded the depth of our miseries, our Lent will give us a clearer view of Him who is our light ; and if we acknowledged Him as our God when we saw Him as the Babe of Bethlehem, our soul's eye will not fail to recognize Him in the divine Penitent of the desert, or in the bleeding Victim of Calvary.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH

MORNING AND NIGHT PRAYERS DURING LENT

DURING the season of Lent, the Christian, on waking in the morning, should unite himself with the Church, who, at the first dawn of day, begins her psalms of Lauds with these words of the royal prophet :

Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy.

He should, after this, profoundly adore that great God, before whom the sinner should tremble, yet whom he fears not to offend, as though deserving neither reverence nor love. It is with this deep sentiment of holy fear that he must perform the first acts of religion, both interior and exterior, wherewith he begins each day of this present season. The time for morning prayer having come, he may use the following method, which is formed upon the very prayers of the Church :—

MORNING PRAYERS

First, praise and adoration of the most holy Trinity :

V. Benedicamus Patrem et Filium, cum sancto Spiritu :

V. Let us bless the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

R. Laudemus et super-exaltemus eum in sæcula.

R. Let us praise him and extol him above all for ever.

V. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui sancto.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

R. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Then, praise to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ :

V. Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus tibi.

V. We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

R. Quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum.

R. Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.

Thirdly, invocation of the Holy Ghost :

Veni, sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium, et tui amoris in eis ignem accende.

Come, O holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful, and enkindle within them the fire of thy love.

After these fundamental acts of religion, recite the Lord's Prayer, begging your heavenly Father to be mindful of His infinite mercy and goodness, to forgive you your trespasses, to come to your assistance in the temptations and dangers which so thickly beset the path of this life, and finally, to deliver you from evil, by removing from you every remnant of sin, which is the great evil, the evil that offends God, and entails the sovereign evil of man himself.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

<p>Pater noster, qui es in caelis, sanctificetur nomen tuum: adveniat regnum tuum: fiat voluntas tua sicut in caelo, et in terra. Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie: et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris: et ne nos inducas in tentationem: sed libera nos a malo. Amen.</p>	<p>Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and <i>forgive us our trespasses</i>, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation: but deliver us from evil. Amen.</p>
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Then, address our blessed Lady, using the words of the angelical salutation. Pray to her with confidence and love, for she is the refuge of sinners.

THE ANGELICAL SALUTATION

<p>Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum; benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.</p> <p>Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostræ. Amen.</p>	<p>Hail Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.</p> <p>Holy Mary, Mother of God, <i>pray for us sinners</i>, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.</p>
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After this you should recite the Creed, that is, the symbol of faith. It contains the dogmas we are to believe; and during this season you should dwell with loving attention on that article, which is so full of hope, *the forgiveness of sins*. Let us do our utmost to merit, by our sincere conversion and amendment of our lives, that our Saviour, after these penitential forty days are over, may say to each of us those words which are so sweet to a penitent sinner: 'Go, thy sins are forgiven!'

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, creatorem cœli et terræ. Et in Jesum Christum Filium ejus unicum, Dominum nostrum: qui conceptus est de Spiritu sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine, passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus, et sepultus: descendit ad inferos, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis: ascendit ad cœlos, sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris omnipotentis: inde venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos.

Credo in Spiritum sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam, sanctorum communionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem, vitam æternam. Amen.

I believe in God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell, the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints, the *forgiveness of sins*, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

After having thus made the profession of your faith, endeavour to excite yourself to sorrow for the sins you have committed. Ask our Lord to give you the graces appropriate to this holy season; and, for this end, recite the following hymn, which the Church uses in her Lauds for Lent:

HYMN

O sol salutis, intimis,
Jesu, refulge mentibus,
Dum nocte pulsa gratior
Orbi dies renascitur.

Dans tempus acceptabile,
Da lacrymarum rivulis
Lavare cordis victimam,
Quam læta adurat charitas.

O Jesus, thou Sun of the world's salvation! shine in the depths of our souls; for now is the hour of night's departure, and sweeter day-break dawns upon the earth.

O thou that givest us this *acceptable time*! give us to wash, with our tears, the victim we offer thee, which is our heart; and grant that it may burn with joyous love.

Quo fonte manavit nefas,
Fluent perennes lacrymæ,
Si virga pœnitentiæ
Cordis rigorem conterat.

Dies venit, dies tua,
In qua reflorent omnia :
Lætetur et nos, in viam
Tua reducti dextera.

Te prona mundi machina,
Clemens, adoret, Trinitas,
Et nos novi per gratiam
Novum canamus canticum.
Amen.

Then make a humble confession of your sins, reciting the general formula made use of by the Church.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS

Confiteor Deo omnipotenti, beatæ Mariæ semper Virgini, beato Michaeli Archangelo, beato Joanni Baptistæ, sanctis apostolis Petro et Paulo, et omnibus sanctis, quia peccavi nimis cogitatione, verbo, et opere : mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa. Ideo precor beatam Mariam semper Virginem, beatum Michaellem Archangelum, beatum Joannem Baptistam, sanctos apostolos Petrum et Paulum, et omnes sanctos, orare pro me ad Dominum Deum nostrum.

Misereatur nostri omnipotens Deus, et dimissis peccatis nostris, perducatur nos ad vitam æternam. Amen.

Indulgentiam, absolutio-

If the rod of penance but strike these hearts of stone, a flood of ceaseless tears will flow from that same fount, whence came our many sins.

The day, thine own day, is at hand, when all things bloom afresh ; oh ! grant, that we, too, may rejoice, being brought once more to the path by thy right hand.

O merciful Trinity ! may the world prostrate itself before thee, and adore ; and we, made new by grace, sing a new canticle of praise. Amen.

I confess to almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed ; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

May almighty God have mercy on us, and, our sins being forgiven, bring us to life everlasting. Amen.

May the almighty and

nem, et remissionem peccatorum nostrorum tribuat nobis omnipotens et misericors Dominus. Amen. merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins. Amen.

This is the proper time for making your meditation, as no doubt you practise this holy exercise. During Lent, the following should be the leading subjects of our meditations: the justice of God which we have provoked by our sins, and His infinite holiness which sin offends; conversion of heart, the necessity of breaking with dangerous occasions, and of doing penance for our sins; our Saviour's forty days' fast in the desert, and, above all, His sacred Passion.

The next part of your morning prayer must be to ask of God, by the following prayers, grace to avoid every kind of sin during the day you are just beginning. Say, then, with the Church, whose prayers must always be preferred to all others:

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

OREMUS

LET US PRAY

Domine, Deus omnipotens, qui ad principium hujus diei nos pervenire fecisti, tua nos hodie salva virtute, ut in hac die ad nullum declinemus peccatum, sed semper ad tuam justitiam faciendam nostra procedant eloquia, dirigantur cogitationes et opera. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Almighty Lord and God, who hast brought us to the beginning of this day, let thy powerful grace so conduct us through it, that we may not fall into any sin, but that all our thoughts, words, and actions may be regulated according to the rules of thy heavenly justice, and tend to the observance of thy holy law. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then beg the divine assistance for the actions of the day, that you may do them well, and say thrice :

V. Deus, in adjutorium meum intende.

R. Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.

V. Deus, in adjutorium meum intende.

R. Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.

V. Deus, in adjutorium meum intende.

R. Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

OREMUS

Dirigere et sanctificare, regere et gubernare dignare, Domine Deus, rex cœli et terræ, hodie corda et corpora nostra, sensus, sermones, et actus nostros in lege tua, et in operibus mandatorum tuorum, ut hic et in æternum, te auxiliante, salvi et liberi esse mereamur, Salvator mundi. Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

LET US PRAY

Lord God, and King of heaven and earth, vouchsafe this day to rule and sanctify, to direct and govern our souls and bodies, our senses, words, and actions in conformity to thy law, and strict obedience to thy commands; that by the help of thy grace, O Saviour of the world, we may be fenced and freed from all evils. Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

During the day, you will do well to use the instructions and prayers which you will find in this volume, for each day of the season, both for the Proper of the Time, and the Proper of the Saints. In the evening, you may use the following prayers :—

NIGHT PRAYERS

After having made the sign of the cross, let us adore that sovereign Lord, who has so mercifully preserved us during this day, and blessed us, every hour, with His grace and protection. For this end,

let us recite the following hymn, which the Church sings in her Vespers of Lent :

HYMN

Audi, benigne Conditor,
Nostras preces cum fletibus
In hoc sacro jejunio
Fusas quadragenario.

Scrutator alme cordium,
Infirma tu scis virium :
Ad te reversis exhibe
Remissionis gratiam.

Multum quidem peccavi-
mus,

Sed parce confitentibus:
Ad nominis laudem tui
Confer medelam languidis.

Concede nostrum conteri
Corpus per abstinenciam :
Culpæ ut relinquunt pabu-
lum

Jejuna corda criminum.

Presta, beata Trinitas,
Concede, simplex Unitas,
Ut fructuosa sint tuis
Jejuniorum munera.

Amen.

Hear, O merciful Creator,
the tearful prayers we present
to thee, during these forty
days of fast.

O loving searcher of the
heart, thou knowest that our
strength is weak ; grant us
the grace of thy pardon, for
we are converted unto thee.

Grievously have we sinned ;
yet spare us, for we confess
our sins to thee : and, for the
glory of thy name, heal our
languid hearts.

Grant that we may subdue
our flesh by abstinence ; that
thus our hearts may leave
what nourishes sin, and fast
from every crime.

O blessed Trinity ! O un-
divided Unity ! grant to us,
thy servants, that our fasts
may produce abundant fruits.
Amen.

After this hymn, say the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Apostles' Creed as in the morning.

Then make the examination of conscience, going over in your mind all the faults you have committed during the day. Think how great is the obstacle put by sin to the merciful designs your God would work in you ; and make a firm resolution to avoid it for the time to come, to do penance for it, and to shun the occasions which might again lead you into it.

The examination of conscience concluded, recite the *Confiteor* (or ' I confess ') with heartfelt contrition, and then give expression to your sorrow by the following act, which we have taken from the Venerable Cardinal Bellarmine's catechism :

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am exceedingly grieved for having offended thee, and with my whole heart I repent of the sins I have committed: I hate and abhor them above every other evil, not only because, by so sinning, I have lost heaven and deserve hell, but still more because I have offended thee, O infinite Goodness, who art worthy to be loved above all things. I most firmly resolve, by the assistance of thy grace, never more to offend thee for the time to come, and to avoid those occasions which might lead me into sin.

You may then add the acts of faith, hope, and charity, to the recitation of which Pope Benedict XIV. has granted an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines for each time.

ACT OF FAITH

O my God, I firmly believe whatsoever the holy Catholic apostolic Roman Church requires me to believe: I believe it, because thou hast revealed it to her, thou who art the very Truth.

ACT OF HOPE

O my God, knowing thy almighty power, and thy infinite goodness and mercy, I hope in thee that, by the merits of the Passion and death of our Saviour Jesus Christ, thou wilt grant me eternal life, which thou hast promised to all such as shall do the works of a good Christian; and these I resolve to do by the help of thy grace.

ACT OF CHARITY

O my God, I love thee with my whole heart and above all things, because thou art the sovereign Good: I would rather lose all things than offend thee. For thy love also, I love and desire to love my neighbour as myself.

Then say to our blessed Lady the following anthem, which the Church uses from the feast of the Purification to Easter:

ANTHEM TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Ave Regina cœlorum,
 Ave Domina angelorum :
 Salve radix, salve porta,
 Ex qua mundo lux est orta ;
 Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
 Super omnes speciosa :
 Vale, O valde decora,
 Et pro nobis Christum exora.

V. Dignare me laudare te,
 Virgo sacrata.

R. Da mihi virtutem contra
 hostes tuos.

Hail, Queen of heaven !
 Hail, Lady of the angels !
 Hail, blessed root and gate,
 from which came light upon
 the world ! Rejoice, O glorious
 Virgin, that surpasses
 all in beauty ! Hail, most
 lovely Queen ! and pray to
 Christ for us.

V. Vouchsafe, O holy Virgin,
 that I may praise thee.

R. Give me power against
 thine enemies.

OREMUS

Concede, misericors Deus,
 fragilitati nostræ præsi-
 dium : ut, qui sanctæ Dei
 Genitricis memoriam agimus,
 intercessionis ejus auxilio, a
 nostris iniquitatibus resur-
 gamus. Per eundem Christum
 Dominum nostrum.
 Amen.

LET US PRAY

Grant, O merciful God, thy
 protection to us in our weak-
 ness ; that we who celebrate
 the memory of the holy
 Mother of God, may, through
 the aid of her intercession,
 rise again from our sins.
 Through the same Christ our
 Lord. Amen.

You would do well to add the litany of our Lady.
 An indulgence of three hundred days, for each time
 it is recited, has been granted by the Church.

THE LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Kyrie, eleison.
 Christe, eleison.
 Kyrie, eleison.
 Christe, audi nos.
 Christe, exaudi nos.
 Pater de cœlis, Deus, miserere
 nobis.
 Fili, Redemptor mundi, Deus,
 miserere nobis.
 Spiritus sancte, Deus, mise-
 rere nobis.

Lord, have mercy on us.
 Christ, have mercy on us.
 Lord, have mercy on us.
 Christ, hear us.
 Christ, graciously hear us.
 God the Father of heaven,
 have mercy on us.
 God the Son, Redeemer of the
 world, have mercy on us.
 God the Holy Ghost, have
 mercy on us.

Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis.	Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.
Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.	Holy Mary, pray for us.
Sancta Dei Genitrix,	Holy Mother of God,
Sancta Virgo virginum,	Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mater Christi,	Mother of Christ,
Mater divinæ gratiæ,	Mother of divine grace,
Mater purissima,	Mother most pure,
Mater castissima,	Mother most chaste,
Mater inviolata,	Mother inviolate,
Mater intemerata,	Mother undefiled,
Mater amabilis,	Mother most amiable,
Mater admirabilis,	Mother most admirable,
Mater boni consilii,	Mother of good counsel,
Mater Creatoris,	Mother of our Creator,
Mater Salvatoris,	Mother of our Redeemer,
Virgo prudentissima,	Virgin most prudent,
Virgo veneranda,	Virgin most venerable,
Virgo prædicanda,	Virgin most renowned,
Virgo potens,	Virgin most powerful,
Virgo clemens,	Virgin most merciful,
Virgo fidelis,	Virgin most faithful,
Speculum justitiæ,	Mirror of justice,
Sedes sapientiæ,	Seat of wisdom,
Causa nostræ lætitiæ,	Cause of our joy,
Vas spirituale,	Spiritual vessel,
Vas honorabile,	Vessel of honour,
Vas insigne devotionis,	Singular vessel of devotion,
Rosa mystica,	Mystical rose,
Turris Davidica,	Tower of David,
Turris eburnea,	Tower of ivory,
Domus aurea,	House of gold,
Fœderis arca,	Ark of the covenant,
Janua cœli,	Gate of heaven,
Stella matutina,	Morning star,
Salus infirmorum,	Health of the weak,
Refugium peccatorum,	Refuge of sinners,
Consolatrix afflictorum,	Comforter of the afflicted,
Auxilium Christianorum,	Help of Christians,
Regina Angelorum,	Queen of Angels,
Regina Patriarcharum,	Queen of Patriarchs,
Regina Prophetarum,	Queen of Prophets,
Regina Apostolorum,	Queen of Apostles,
Regina Martyrum,	Queen of Martyrs,
Regina Confessorum,	Queen of Confessors,
Regina Virginum,	Queen of Virgins,
Regina Sanctorum omnium,	Queen of all Saints,

Regina sine labe originali
concepta,

Regina sacratissimi rosarii,
Agnus Dei, qui tollis pec-
cata mundi, parce nobis,
Domine.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis pec-
cata mundi, exaudi nos,
Domine.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis pec-
cata mundi, miserere no-
bis.

Christe, audi nos.

Christe, exaudi nos.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta
Dei Genitrix.

R. Ut digni efficiamur
promissionibus Christi.

Queen conceived without ori-
ginal sin,

Queen of the most holy rosary,
Lamb of God, who takest
away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest
away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest
away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

V. Pray for us, O holy
Mother of God.

R. That we may be made
worthy of the promises of
Christ.

OREMUS

Concede nos famulos tuos,
quæsumus, Domine Deus,
perpetua mentis et corporis
sanitate gaudere: et gloriosa
beatæ Mariæ, semper Vir-
ginis, intercessione, a præ-
senti liberari tristitia, et
æterna perfrui lætitia. Per
Christum Dominum nostrum.
Amen.

Here invoke the holy angels, whose protection is, indeed, always so much needed by us, but never so much as during the hours of night. Say with the Church:

Sancti angeli, custodes
nostri, defendite nos in præ-
lio, ut non pereamus in tre-
mendo iudicio.

V. Angelis suis Deus man-
davit de te.

R. Ut custodiant te in om-
nibus viis tuis.

LET US PRAY

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that we thy servants may enjoy constant health of body and mind, and by the glorious intercession of blessed Mary, ever a Virgin, be delivered from all present affliction, and come to that joy which is eternal. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Holy angels, our loving guardians, defend us in the hour of battle, that we may not be lost at the dreadful judgment.

V. God hath given his angels charge of thee.

R. That they may guard thee in all thy ways.

OREMUS

Deus, qui ineffabili providentia sanctos angelos tuos ad nostram custodiam mittere dignaris : largire supplicibus tuis, et eorum semper protectione defendi, et æterna societate gaudere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

LET US PRAY

O God, who in thy wonderful providence hast been pleased to appoint thy holy angels for our guardians : mercifully hear our prayers, and grant we may rest secure under their protection, and enjoy their fellowship in heaven for ever. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then beg the assistance of the saints by the following antiphon and prayer of the Church :

ANT. Sancti Dei omnes, intercedere dignemini pro nostra omniumque salute.

ANT. All ye saints of God, vouchsafe to intercede for us and for all men, that we may be saved.

And here you may add a special mention of the saints to whom you bear a particular devotion, either as your patrons or otherwise ; as also of those whose feast is kept in the Church that day, or who have been at least commemorated in the Divine Office.

This done, remember the necessities of the Church suffering, and beg of God that He will give to the souls in purgatory a place of refreshment, light, and peace. For this intention recite the usual prayers.

PSALM 129

De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine : Domine, exaudi vocem meam.

Fiant aures tuæ intendentes : in vocem deprecationis meæ.

Si iniquitates observaveris, Domine : Domine, quis sustinebit ?

Quia apud te propitiatio est : et propter legem tuam sustinui te, Domine.

From the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord ; Lord, hear my voice.

Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If thou wilt observe iniquities, O Lord, Lord, who shall endure it ?

For with thee there is merciful forgiveness ; and by reason of thy law I have waited for thee, O Lord.

Sustinuit anima mea in verbo ejus : speravit anima mea in Domino.

A custodia matutina usque ad noctem : speret Israel in Domino.

Quia apud Dominum misericordia : et copiosa apud eum redemptio.

Et ipse redimet Israel ; ex omnibus iniquitatibus ejus.

Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine.

Et lux perpetua luceat eis.

V. A porta inferi.

R. Erue, Domine, animas eorum.

V. Requiescant in pace.

R. Amen.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

My soul hath relied on his word ; my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy, and with him plentiful redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Eternal rest give to them, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. From the gate of hell.

R. Deliver their souls, O Lord.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

OREMUS

Fidelium Deus omnium Conditor et Redemptor, animabus famulorum famularumque tuarum remissionem cunctorum tribue peccatorum ; ut indulgentiam, quam semper optaverunt, piis supplicationibus consequantur. Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

LET US PRAY

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, give to the souls of thy servants departed the remission of all their sins : that through the help of pious supplications, they may obtain the pardon they have always desired. Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

Here make a special memento of such of the faithful departed as have a particular claim upon your charity ; after which, ask of God to give you His assistance, whereby you may pass the night free from danger. Say, then, still keeping to the words of the Church :

ANT. Salva nos, Domine, vigilantes, custodi nos dor-

ANT. Save us, O Lord, while awake, and watch us

mientes; ut vigilemus cum Christo, et requiescamus in pace.

V. Dignare, Domine, nocte ista.

R. Sine peccato nos custodire.

V. Miserere nostri, Domine.

R. Miserere nostri.

V. Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos.

R. Quemadmodum speravimus in te.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

as we sleep; that we may watch with Christ, and rest in peace.

V. Vouchsafe, O Lord, this night.

R. To keep us without sin.

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

V. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

R. As we have hoped in thee.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

OREMUS

Visita, quæsumus, Domine, habitationem istam, et omnes insidias inimici ab ea longe repelle: angeli tui sancti habitent in ea, qui nos in pace custodiant, et benedictio tua sit super nos semper. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum, Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

LET US PRAY

Visit, we beseech thee, O Lord, this house and family, and drive from it all snares of the enemy: let thy holy angels dwell herein, who may keep us in peace, and may thy blessing be always upon us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

And that you may end the day in the same sentiments wherewith you began it, say once more to your God these words of the royal prophet:

Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH

ON HEARING MASS, DURING THE SEASON OF
LENT

THE Christian who enters into the spirit of the Church during this season of Lent, will find an increase in his soul of that holy fear of God, which the psalmist tells us is the beginning of wisdom.¹ The remembrance of his sins, the practice of the holy penances of Lent, the example of a God expiating our sins by fasting in the desert, the Church's ceaseless prayer for her guilty children: all combine to arouse him from the indifference which so easily fastens on the soul. He has need, therefore, of some refuge, some powerful and saving help, which may re-ignite within his heart that Christian hope, without which he cannot be in the grace of God. Nay, more: he has need of a victim of propitiation, which may appease the divine anger; he has need of a sacrifice, whereby to stay the arm of God, which he knows is raised to punish his sins.

This Victim is ready; this infinitely efficacious sacrifice is prepared for us. We shall soon have to celebrate the sad anniversary of His being offered upon the Cross: meanwhile, He is daily offered to the divine Majesty, and it is by assisting at this holy sacrifice that we shall be taking the most efficacious means for obtaining the regeneration of our souls. When, therefore, we would offer to our God the sacrifice of a contrite and humble heart, let us ensure its acceptance by going to the altar, and supplicating the Victim, who there offers Himself for our sake, that He join His infinite merits with our feeble works.

¹ Ps. cx. 10.

When we leave the house of God, the weight of our sins will be lessened, our confidence in divine mercy will be increased, and our love, renewed by compunction, will be firmer and truer.

We will now endeavour to embody these sentiments in our explanation of the mysteries of the holy Mass, and initiate the faithful into these divine secrets ; not, indeed, by indiscreetly presuming to translate the sacred formulæ, but by suggesting such acts as will enable those who hear Mass to enter into the ceremonies and the spirit of the Church and of the priest.

The purple vestments, and the penitential rites already explained, give to the holy sacrifice during Lent an air of sadness, which harmonizes with the mysteries of this season. But if, on the week-days, there occur a saint's feast, the Church keeps it, and laying aside her purple vestments, she celebrates the holy sacrifice in memory of the saint.

On the Sundays, if the Mass at which the faithful assist be the parochial, or, as it is often called, the public Mass, two solemn rites precede it, and they are full of instruction and blessing : the *Asperges*, or sprinkling of the holy water, and the procession.

During the *Asperges*, let us ask with David, whose words are used by the Church in this ceremony, that our souls may be purified by the *hyssop* of humility and become *whiter than snow*.

ANTIPHON OF THE ASPERGES

Asperges me, Domine,
hyssopo, et mundabor ; la-
vabis me, et super nivem
dealabor.

Ps. Miserere mei, Deus,
secundum magnam miseri-
cordiam tuam.

V. Gloria Patri, etc.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with
hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be
cleansed ; thou shalt wash me
and I shall be made whiter
than snow.

Ps. Have mercy on me, O
God, according to thy great
mercy.

V. Glory, etc.

ANT. Asperges me, etc.

V. Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam.

R. Et salutare tuum da nobis.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

ANT. Thou shalt sprinkle me, etc.

V. Show us, O Lord, thy mercy.

R. And grant us thy salvation.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

OREMUS

Exaudi nos, Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus: et mittere digneris sanctum angelum tuum de cælis, qui custodiat, foveat, protegat, visitet atque defendat omnes habitantes in hoc habitaculo. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

LET US PRAY

Graciously hear us, O holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God: and vouchsafe to send thy holy angel from heaven, who may keep, cherish, protect, visit, and defend all who are assembled in this place. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

The procession, which immediately precedes the Mass, shows us the ardour wherewith the Church advances towards her God. Let us imitate her fervour, for it is written: 'The Lord is good to them that hope in Him, to the soul that seeketh Him.'¹

But see, Christians, the sacrifice begins! The priest is at the foot of the altar; God is attentive, the angels are in adoration, the whole Church is united with the priest, whose priesthood and action are those of the great High Priest, Jesus Christ. Let us make the sign of the cross with him.

THE ORDINARY OF THE MASS

In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

V. Introibo ad altare Dei.

I unite myself, O my God,

¹ Lam. iii. 25.

R. Ad Deum qui lætificat
juventutem meam.

Judica me, Deus, et dis-
cerne causam meam de gente
non sancta: ab homine in-
quo et doloso erue me.

Quia tu es, Deus, forti-
tudo mea: quare me repu-
listi? et quare tristis incedo,
dum affligit me inimicus?

Emitte lucem tuam et ve-
ritatem tuam: ipsa me de-
duxerunt et adduxerunt in
montem sanctum tuum, et
in tabernacula tua.

Et introibo ad altare Dei:
ad Deum qui lætificat juven-
tutem meam.

Confitebor tibi in cithara
Deus, Deus meus: quare
tristis es anima mea? et
quare conturbas me?

Spera in Deo, quoniam
adhuc confitebor illi: salu-
tare vultus mei, et Deus
meus.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et
Spiritui sancto.

Sicut erat in principio,
et nunc, et semper, et in sæ-
cula sæculorum. Amen.

V. Introibo ad altare Dei.

R. Ad Deum qui lætificat
juventutem meam.

V. Adjutorium nostrum in
nomine Domini.

R. Qui fecit cælum et
terram.

with thy Church, whose heart
is filled with the hope of soon
seeing, and in all the splen-
dour of his Resurrection,
Jesus Christ thy Son, who is
the true altar.

Like her, I beseech thee to
defend me against the malice
of the enemies of my salva-
tion.

It is in thee that I have put
my hope; yet do I feel sad
and troubled at being in the
midst of the snares which are
set for me.

Send me, then, him who is
light and truth: it is he that
will open to us the way to thy
holy mount, to thy heavenly
tabernacle.

He is the Mediator, and the
living altar; I will draw nigh
to him, and be filled with joy.

When he shall have come,
I will sing in my gladness:
Be not sad, O my soul! Why
wouldst thou be troubled?

Hope in thy Jesus, who will
soon show himself to thee as
the conqueror of that death
which he will have suffered
in thy stead; and thou wilt
rise again together with him.

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the
Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

I am to go to the altar of
God, and feel the presence of
him who desires to give me
a new life!

This my hope comes not
from any merits of my own,
but from the all-powerful
help of my Creator.

The thought of being about to appear before his God, excites in the soul of the priest a lively sentiment of compunction. He cannot go further in the holy sacrifice without confessing, and publicly, that he is a sinner, and deserves not the grace he is about to receive. Listen, with respect, to this confession of God's minister, and earnestly ask our Lord to show mercy to him ; for the priest is your father ; he is answerable for your salvation, for which he every day risks his own. When he has finished, unite with the servers, or the sacred ministers, in this prayer :

Misereatur tui omnipotens Deus, et dimissis peccatis tuis, perducat te ad vitam æternam.

May almighty God have mercy on thee, and, forgiving thy sins, bring thee to everlasting life.

The priest having answered *Amen*, make your confession, saying with a contrite spirit :

Confiteor Deo omnipotenti, beatæ Mariæ semper Virgini, beato Michaeli Archangelo, beato Joanni Baptistæ, sanctis apostolis Petro et Paulo, omnibus sanctis, et tibi, pater, quia peccavi nimis cogitatione, verbo, et opere : mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa. Ideo precor beatam Mariam semper Virginem, beatum Michaelem Archangelum, beatum Joannem Baptistam, sanctos apostolos Petrum et Paulum, omnes sanctos, et te, pater, orare pro me ad Dominum Deum nostrum.

I confess to almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, to all the saints, and to thee, father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed ; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, and thee, father, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

Receive with gratitude the paternal wish of the priest, who says to you :

Misereatur vestri omnipotens Deus, et dimissis

May almighty God be merciful to you, and, forgiving

peccatis vestris, perducat
vos ad vitam æternam.

R. Amen.

Indulgentiam, absolutio-
nem, et remissionem pecca-
torum nostrorum tribuat
nobis omnipotens et miseri-
cors Dominus.

R. Amen.

Invoke the divine assistance, that you may approach
to Jesus Christ.

*V. Deus, tu conversus vi-
ficabis nos.*

*R. Et plebs tua lætabitur
in te.*

*V. Ostende nobis, Domi-
ne, misericordiam tuam.*

*R. Et salutare tuum da
nobis.*

*V. Domine, exaudi ora-
tionem meam.*

*R. Et clamor meus ad te
veniat.*

The priest here leaves you to ascend to the altar ;
but first he salutes you :

V. Dominus vobiscum.

V. The Lord be with you.

Answer him with reverence :

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

R. And with thy spirit.

OREMUS

LET US PRAY

He ascends the steps, and comes to the Holy of
holies. Ask, both for him and yourself, deliverance
from sin :

Aufer a nobis, quæsumus
Domine, iniquitates no-
stras ; ut ad Sancta sanctorum
puris mereamur mentibus
introire. Per Christum Do-
minum nostrum. Amen.

Take from our hearts, O
Lord, all those sins, which
make us unworthy to appear
in thy presence ; we ask this
of thee by thy divine Son, our
Lord.

When the priest kisses the altar, out of reverence for the relics of the martyrs which are there, say :

<p>Oramus te, Domine, per merita sanctorum tuorum, quorum reliquiæ hic sunt, et omnium sanctorum : ut in- dulgere digneris omnia pec- cata mea. Amen.</p>	<p>Generous soldiers of Jesus Christ, who have mingled your own blood with his, in- tercede for us that our sins may be forgiven : that so we may, like you, approach unto God.</p>
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If it be a High Mass at which you are assisting, the priest here blesses the incense, saying :

<p>Ab illo benedicaris, in cujus honore cremaberis. Amen.</p>	<p>Mayst thou be blessed by him in whose honour thou art to be burned. Amen.</p>
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He then censes the altar in a most solemn manner. This white cloud, which you see ascending from every part of the altar, signifies the prayer of the Church who addresses herself to Jesus Christ ; while the divine mediator causes that prayer to ascend, united with His own, to the throne of the majesty of His Father.

The priest then says the Introit. It is a solemn opening-anthem, in which the Church, at the very commencement of the holy sacrifice, gives expression to the sentiments which fill her heart.

It is followed by nine exclamations, which are even more earnest, for they ask for mercy. In addressing them to God, the Church unites herself with the nine choirs of angels, who are standing round the altar of heaven, one and the same as this before which you are kneeling.

To the Father :

Kyrie eleison.
Kyrie eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy on us !
Lord, have mercy on us !
Lord, have mercy on us !

To the Son :

Christe eleison.	Christ, have mercy on us !
Christe eleison.	Christ, have mercy on us !
Christe eleison.	Christ, have mercy on us !

To the Holy Ghost :

Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy on us !
Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy on us !
Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy on us !

As we have already mentioned, the Church abstains, during the season of Lent, from the heavenly hymn which the angels sang over the crib of the divine Babe. But, if she be keeping the feast of a saint, she recites this beautiful canticle on that day. The beginning of the *Angelic Hymn* seems more suitable for heavenly than for earthly voices ; but the second part is in no way out of keeping with the sinner's wants and fears, for we there remind the Son of the eternal Father that He is the *Lamb* who came down from heaven that He might *take away the sins of the world*. We beseech Him to *have mercy on us*, and *receive our humble prayer*. Let us foster these sentiments within us, for they are so appropriate to the present season.

THE ANGELIC HYMN

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et
in terra pax hominibus bonæ
voluntatis.

Laudamus te : benedicimus te : adoramus te : glorificamus te : gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine, Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.

Glory be to God on high,
and on earth peace to men of
good will.

We praise thee : we bless thee : we adore thee : we glorify thee : we give thee thanks for thy great glory.

O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son.

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,
Filius Patris.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem no-
stram.

Qui sedes ad dexteram
Patris, miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus, tu solus
altissimus, Jesu Christe,
cum sancto Spiritu, in glo-
ria Dei Patris. Amen.

O Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father.

Who takest away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.

Who takest away the sins
of the world, receive our
humble prayer.

Who sittest at the right
hand of the Father, have
mercy on us.

For thou alone art holy,
thou alone art Lord, thou
alone, O Jesus Christ, together
with the Holy Ghost, art most
high, in the glory of God the
Father. Amen.

The priest then turns towards the people, and again salutes them, as it were to make sure of their pious attention to the sublime act, for which all this is but the preparation.

Then follows the Collect or Prayer, in which the Church formally expresses to the divine Majesty the special intentions she has in the Mass which is being celebrated. You may unite in this prayer, by reciting with the priest the Collects which you will find in their proper places: but on no account omit to join with the server of the Mass in answering *Amen*.

After this comes the Epistle, which is generally a portion of one or other of the Epistles of the apostles, or a passage from some Book of the old Testament. While it is being read, ask of God that you may profit by the instruction it conveys.

The Gradual is an intermediate formula of prayer between the Epistle and Gospel. It again brings to us the sentiments already expressed in the Introit. Read it with devotion, that so you may enter more and more into the spirit of the mystery proposed to you by the Church.

During every other portion of her year, the Church here repeats her joyous *Alleluia*; but now she denies

herself this demonstration of gladness, until such time as her divine Spouse has passed through that sea of bitterness, into which our sins have plunged Him. Instead of the *Alleluia*, then, she sings in a plaintive tone some verses from the Psalms, appropriate to the rest of that day's Office. This is the Tract, of which we have already spoken.

If it be a High Mass, the deacon, meanwhile, prepares to fulfil his noble office—that of announcing the good tidings of salvation. He prays God to cleanse his heart and lips. Then kneeling before the priest, he asks a blessing; and, having received it, goes to the place where he is to sing the Gospel.

As a preparation for hearing it worthily, you may thus pray, together with both priest and deacon :

Munda cor meum, ac labia mea, omnipotens Deus, qui labia Isaïæ prophetæ calculo mundasti ignito; ita me tua grata miseratione dignare mundare, ut sanctum Evangelium tuum digne valeam nuntiare. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Dominus sit in corde meo, et in labiis meis: ut digne et competenter annuntiem Evangelium suum; In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

Alas! these ears of mine are but too often defiled with the world's vain words: cleanse them, O Lord, that so I may hear the words of eternal life, and treasure them in my heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Grant to thy ministers thy grace, that they may faithfully explain thy law; that so all, both pastors and flock, may be united to thee for ever. Amen.

You will stand during the Gospel, as though you were awaiting the orders of your Lord; and at the commencement make the sign of the cross on your forehead, lips, and breast; and then listen to every word of the priest or deacon. Let your heart be ready and obedient. 'While my Beloved was speaking,' says the bride in the Canticle, 'my soul melted within me.'¹ If you have not such love as this, have

¹ Cant. v. 6.

at least the humble submission of Samuel, and say :
 ‘ Speak, Lord ! Thy servant heareth.’¹

After the Gospel, if the priest says the Symbol of faith, the *Credo*, you will say it with him. Faith is that gift of God, without which we cannot please Him. It is faith that makes us see ‘ the light which shineth in darkness,’ and which the darkness of unbelief did not comprehend. It is faith alone that teaches us what we are, whence we come, and the end for which we are made. It alone can point out to us the path whereby we may return to our God, when once we have separated ourselves from Him. Let us love this admirable faith, which, if we but make it fruitful by good works, will save us. Let us, then, say with the Catholic Church, our mother :

THE NICENE CREED

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cœli et terræ, visibilibus omnium et invisibilium.

Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula, Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem, descendit de cœlis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu sancto, ex Maria Virgine; ET HOMO FACTUS EST. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus, et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas. Et

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God. And born of the Father before all ages ; God of God, light of light ; true God of true God. Begotten, not made ; consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven. And became incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary ; AND WAS MADE MAN. He was crucified also for us, under Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried. And the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures.

¹ 1 Kings iii. 10.

ascendit in cœlum; sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos; cujus regni non erit finis.

Et in Spiritum sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit. Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur, et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam sanctam Catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum Baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.

And ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father. And he is to come again with glory, to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son. Who together with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And one holy Catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The priest and the people should, by this time, have their hearts ready: it is time to prepare the offering itself. And here we come to the second part of the holy Mass; it is called the *Oblation*, and immediately follows that which was named the *Mass of Catechumens*, on account of its being formerly the only part, at which the candidates for Baptism had a right to be present.

See, then, dear Christians, bread and wine are about to be offered to God, as being the noblest of inanimate creatures, since they are made for the nourishment of man; and even that is only a poor material image of what they are destined to become in our Christian sacrifice. Their substance will soon give place to God Himself, and of themselves nothing will remain but the appearances. Happy creatures, thus to yield up their own being, that God may take its place! We, too, are to undergo a like transformation, when, as the apostle expresses it, 'that which is mortal, will be swallowed up by life.'¹ Until that

¹ 2 Cor. v. 4.

happy change shall be realized, let us offer ourselves to God, as often as we see the bread and wine presented to Him in the holy sacrifice ; and let us glorify Him, who, by assuming our human nature, has made us ' partakers of the divine nature.'¹

The priest again turns to the people with the usual salutation, as though he would warn them to redouble their attention. Let us read the Offertory with him, and when he offers the Host to God, let us unite with him in saying :

Suscipe, sancte Pater, omnipotens aeternae Deus, hanc immaculatam hostiam, quam ego indignus famulus tuus offero tibi Deo meo vivo et vero, pro innumerabilibus peccatis et offensionibus et negligentis meis, et pro omnibus circumstantibus, sed et pro omnibus fidelibus christianis vivis atque defunctis ; ut mihi et illis proficiat ad salutem in vitam aeternam. Amen.

All that we have, O Lord, comes from thee, and belongs to thee ; it is just, therefore, that we return it unto thee. But how wonderful art thou in the inventions of thy immense love ! This bread, which we are offering to thee, is to give place, in a few moments, to the sacred Body of Jesus. We beseech thee, receive, together with this oblation, our hearts which long to live by thee, and to cease to live their own life of self.

When the priest puts the wine into the chalice, and then mingles with it a drop of water, let your thoughts turn to the divine mystery of the Incarnation, which is the source of our hope and our salvation ; and say :

Deus qui humanae substantiae dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti, et mirabiliter reformasti : da nobis per hujus aquae et vini mysterium, ejus divinitatis esse consortes, qui humanitatis nostrae fieri dignatus est

O Lord Jesus, who art the true Vine, and whose blood, like a generous wine, has been poured forth under the pressure of the cross ! thou hast deigned to unite thy divine nature to our weak humanity, which is signified

¹ 2 St. Peter i. 4

particeps, Jesus Christus by this drop of water. Oh,
 Filius tuus Dominus noster: come and make us partakers
 qui tecum vivit et regnat of thy divinity, by showing
 in unitate Spiritus sancti thyself to us in thy sweet and
 Deus, per omnia sæcula wondrous visit.
 sæculorum. Amen.

The priest then offers the mixture of wine and water, beseeching God graciously to accept this oblation, which is so soon to be changed into the reality, of which it is now but the figure. Meanwhile, say, in union with the priest :

<p>Offerimus tibi, Domine, calicem salutaris, tuam deprecantes clementiam : ut in conspectu divinæ Majestatis tuæ, pro nostra et totius mundi salute, cum odore suavitatis ascendat. Amen.</p>	<p>Graciously accept these gifts, O sovereign Creator of all things. Let them be fitted for the divine transformation, which will make them, from being mere offerings of created things, the instrument of the world's salvation.</p>
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After having thus held up the sacred gifts towards heaven, the priest bows down ; let us, also, humble ourselves, and say :

<p>In spiritu humilitatis, et in animo contrito suscipiamur a te, Domine : et sic fiat sacrificium nostrum in conspectu tuo hodie, ut placeat tibi, Domine Deus.</p>	<p>Though daring, as we do, to approach thy altar, O Lord, we cannot forget that we are sinners. Have mercy on us, and delay not to send us thy Son, who is our saving Host.</p>
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Let us next invoke the Holy Ghost, whose operation is about to produce on the altar the presence of the Son of God, as it did in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, in the divine mystery of the Incarnation :

<p>Veni, Sanctificator, omnipotens æterne Deus, et benedic hoc sacrificium tuo sancto nomini præparatum.</p>	<p>Come, O divine Spirit, make fruitful the offering which is upon the altar, and produce in our hearts him whom they desire.</p>
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If it be a High Mass, the priest, before proceeding further with the sacrifice, takes the thurible a second time, after blessing the incense in these words :

Per intercessionem beati Michaelis archangeli, stantis a dextris altaris incensi, et omnium electorum suorum, incensum istud dignetur Dominus benedicere, et in odorem suavitatis accipere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Through the intercession of blessed Michael the archangel, standing at the right hand of the altar of incense, and of all his elect, may our Lord deign to bless this incense, and to receive it for an odour of sweetness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

He then censes first the bread and wine, which have just been offered, and then the altar itself ; hereby inviting the faithful to make their prayer, which is signified by the fragrant incense, more and more fervent, the nearer the solemn moment approaches. St. John tells us that the incense he beheld burning on the altar in heaven is made up of the ' prayers of the saints ' ; let us take a share in those prayers, and with all the ardour of holy desires, let us say with the priest :

Incensum istud, a te benedictum, ascendat ad te, Domine, et descendat super nos misericordia tua.

May this incense, blessed by thee, ascend to thee, O Lord, and may thy mercy descend upon us.

Dirigatur, Domine, oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo : elevatio manuum mearum sacrificium vespertinum. Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo, et ostium circumstantiæ labiis meis ; ut non declinet cor meum in verba malitiæ, ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis.

Let my prayer, O Lord, be directed like incense in thy sight : the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door round about my lips ; that my heart may not incline to evil words, to make excuses in sins.

Giving back the thurible to the deacon, the priest says :

Accendat in nobis Dominus ignem sui amoris, et flammam æternæ charitatis. Amen.

May the Lord enkindle in us the fire of his love and the flame of eternal charity. Amen.

But the thought of his own unworthiness becomes more intense than ever in the heart of the priest. The public confession, which he made at the foot of the altar, is not enough ; he would now at the altar itself express to the people, in the language of a solemn rite, how far he knows himself to be from that spotless sanctity wherewith he should approach to God. He washes his hands. Our hands signify our works ; and the priest, though by his priesthood he bear the office of Jesus Christ, is, by his works, but man. Seeing your father thus humble himself, do you also make an act of humility, and say with him these verses of the Psalm.

PSALM 25

Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas : et circumdabo altare tuum, Domine.

Ut audiam vocem laudis ; et enarrem universa mirabilia tua.

Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuæ, et locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ.

Ne perdas cum impiis, Deus, animam meam, et cum viris sanguinum vitam meam.

In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt : dextera eorum repleta est muneribus.

Ego autem in innocentia mea ingressus sum : redime me, et miserere mei.

Pes meus stetit in directo : in ecclesiis benedicam te Domine.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui sancto.

Sicut erat in principio et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

I, too, would wash my hands, O Lord, and become like unto those who are innocent, that so I may be worthy to come near thy altar, and hear thy sacred canticles, and then go and proclaim to the world the wonders of thy goodness. I love the beauty of thy house, which thou art about to make the dwelling-place of thy glory. Leave me not, O God, in the midst of them that are enemies both to thee and me. Thy mercy having separated me from them, I entered on the path of innocence and was restored to thy grace ; but have pity on my weakness still ; redeem me yet more, thou who hast so mercifully brought me back to the right path. In the midst of these thy faithful people, I give thee thanks. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost ; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

The priest, taking encouragement from the act of humility he has just made, returns to the middle of the altar, and bows down full of respectful awe, begging of God to receive graciously the sacrifice which is about to be offered to Him, and expresses the intentions for which it is offered. Let us do the same.

Suscipe, sancta Trinitas, hanc oblationem, quam tibi offerimus ob memoriam Passionis, Resurrectionis, et Ascensionis Jesu Christi Domini nostri: et in honorem beatæ Mariæ semper Virginis, et beati Joannis Baptistæ, et sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et istorum, et omnium sanctorum: ut illis proficiat ad honorem, nobis autem ad salutem: et illi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in cœlis, quorum memoriam agimus in terris. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

O holy Trinity, graciously accept the sacrifice we have begun. We offer it in remembrance of the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. Permit thy Church to join with this intention that of honouring the ever glorious Virgin Mary, the blessed Baptist John, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, the martyrs whose relics lie here under our altar awaiting their resurrection, and the saints whose memory we this day celebrate. Increase the glory they are enjoying, and receive the prayers they address to thee for us.

The priest again turns to the people; it is for the last time before the sacred mysteries are accomplished. He feels anxious to excite the fervour of the people. Neither does the thought of his own unworthiness leave him; and before entering the cloud with the Lord, he seeks support in the prayers of his brethren who are present. He says to them:

Orate, fratres: ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Deum Patrem omnipotentem.

Brethren, pray that my sacrifice, which is yours also, may be acceptable to God, our almighty Father.

This request made, he turns again to the altar, and you will see his face no more, until our Lord Himself

shall have come down from heaven upon that same altar. Assure the priest that he has your prayers, and say to him :

<p>Suscipiat Dominus sacrificium de manibus tuis, ad laudem et gloriam nominis sui, ad utilitatem quoque nostram totiusque Ecclesiæ suæ sanctæ.</p>	<p>May our Lord accept this sacrifice at thy hands, to the praise and glory of his name, and for our benefit and that of his holy Church throughout the world.</p>
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Here the priest recites the prayers called the *Secrets*, in which he presents the petition of the whole Church for God's acceptance of the sacrifice, and then immediately begins to fulfil that great duty of religion—thanksgiving. So far he has adored God, and has sued for mercy ; he has still to give thanks for the blessings bestowed on us by the bounty of our heavenly Father, the chief of which, during this season, is the enabling us to satisfy His justice by our lenten mortifications. The priest, in the name of the Church, is about to give expression to the gratitude of all mankind. In order to excite the faithful to that intensity of gratitude which is due to God for all His gifts, he interrupts his own and their silent prayer by terminating it aloud saying :

Per omnia sæcula sæculorum. For ever and ever.

In the same feeling, answer your *Amen*. Then he continues :

<p>V. Dominus vobiscum. R. Et cum spiritu tuo. V. Sursum corda !</p>	<p>V. The Lord be with you. R. And with thy spirit. V. Lift up your hearts !</p>
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Let your response be sincere :

<p>R. Habemus ad Dominum.</p>	<p>R. We have them fixed on God.</p>
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And when he adds :

<p>V. Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.</p>	<p>V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.</p>
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Answer him with all the earnestness of your soul :

R. Dignum et justum est.

R. It is meet and just.

Then the priest :

THE PREFACE

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper et ubique gratias agere : Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus. Qui corporali jejunio vitia comprimis, mentem elevas, virtutem largiris et præmia, per Christum Dominum nostrum. Per quem majestatem tuam laudant Angeli, adorant Dominationes, tremunt Potestates ; Cœli cœlorumque Virtutes, ac beata Seraphim, socia exultatione concelebrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces, ut admitti jubeas deprecamur, supplicii confessione dicentes :

It is truly meet and just, right and available to salvation, that we should always, and in all places, give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God, who by this bodily fast extinguishest our vices, elevatest our understanding, bestowest on us virtue and its rewards, through Christ our Lord. By whom the Angels praise thy majesty, the Dominations adore it, the Powers tremble before it ; the Heavens and the heavenly Virtues, and the blessed Seraphim, with common jubilee, glorify it. Together with whom, we beseech thee that we may be admitted to join our humble voices, saying :

Here unite with the priest, who, on his part, unites himself with the blessed spirits, in giving thanks to God for the unspeakable gift ; bow down and say :

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,
Dominus Deus sabaoth !

Pleni sunt cœli et terra
gloria tua.

Hosanna in excelsis !

Benedictus qui venit in
nomine Domini.

Hosanna in excelsis !

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God
of hosts !

Heaven and earth are full
of thy glory.

Hosanna in the highest !

Blessed be the Saviour who
is coming to us in the name of
the Lord who sends him.

Hosanna be to him in the
highest !

After these words commences the *Canon*, that mysterious prayer, in the midst of which heaven bows down to earth, and God descends unto us. The voice of the priest is no longer heard; yea, even at the altar all is silent. Let a profound respect stay all distractions, and keep our senses in submission to the soul. Let us respectfully fix our eyes on what the priest does in the holy place.

THE CANON OF THE MASS

In this mysterious colloquy with the great God of heaven and earth, the first prayer of the sacrificing priest is for the Catholic Church, his and our mother.

Te igitur, clementissime Pater, per Jesum Christum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum, supplices rogamus ac petimus, uti accepta habeas, et benedicas hæc dona, hæc munera, hæc sancta sacrificia illibata; in primis quæ tibi offerimus pro Ecclesia tua sancta Catholica; quam pacificare, custodire, adunare, et regere digneris toto orbe terrarum, una cum famulo tuo Papa nostro N. et Antistite nostro N., et omnibus orthodoxis, atque catholicæ et apostolicæ fidei cultoribus.

O God, who manifestest thyself unto us by means of the mysteries which thou hast entrusted to thy holy Church, our mother; we beseech thee, by the merits of this sacrifice, that thou wouldst remove all those hindrances which oppose her during her pilgrimage in this world. Give her peace and unity. Do thou thyself guide our holy Father the Pope, thy Vicar on earth. Direct thou our Bishop, who is our sacred link of unity; and watch over all the orthodox children of the Catholic, apostolic, Roman Church.

Here pray, together with the priest, for those whose interests should be dearest to you.

Memento, Domine, famulorum, famularumque tuarum N. et N., et omnium circumstantium, quorum tibi fides cognita est, et nota devotio: pro quibus tibi offerimus, vel qui tibi offerunt

Permit me, O God, to intercede with thee for special blessings upon those for whom thou knowest that I have a special obligation to pray: * * * Apply to them the fruits of this divine sacri-

hoc sacrificium laudis pro se
suisque omnibus, pro re-
demptione animarum sua-
rum, pro spe salutis et in-
columitatis suæ; tibi que
reddunt vota sua æterno
Deo vivo et vero.

fi ce, which is offered unto
thee in the name of all man-
kind. Visit them by thy
grace, pardon them their sins,
grant them the blessings of
this present life and of that
which is eternal.

Here let us commemorate the saints: they are that portion of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is called the Church triumphant.

Communicantes, et me-
moriam venerantes, in pri-
mis gloriosæ semper Virginis
Mariæ, Genitricis Dei et
Domini nostri Jesu Christi:
sed et beatorum apostolo-
rum ac martyrum tuorum,
Petri et Pauli, Andreae, Ja-
cobi, Joannis, Thomæ, Ja-
cobi, Philippi, Bartholomæi,
Matthæi, Simonis et Thad-
dæi: Lini, Cleti, Clemen-
tis, Xysti, Corneli, Cypria-
ni, Laurentii, Chrysogoni,
Joannis et Pauli, Cosmæ et
Damiani, et omnium san-
ctorum tuorum: quorum me-
ritis precibusque concedas,
ut in omnibus protectionis
tuæ muniamur auxilio. Per
eumdem Christum Dominum
nostrum. Amen.

But the offering of this
sacrifice, O my God, does not
unite us with those only of
our brethren who are still in
this transient life of trial: it
brings us closer to those also,
who are already in possession
of heaven. Therefore it is,
that we wish to honour, by it,
the memory of the glorious
and ever Virgin Mary, of
whom Jesus was born to us;
of the apostles, confessors,
virgins, and of all the saints;
that they may assist us, by
their powerful intercession,
to be worthy of this thy visit,
and of contemplating thee, as
they themselves now do, in
the mansion of thy glory.

The priest, who up to this time has been praying with his hands extended, now joins them, and holds them over the bread and wine, as the high priest of the old Law was wont to do over the figurative victim; he thus expresses his intention of bringing these gifts more closely under the notice of the divine Majesty, and of marking them as the material offering whereby we express our dependence, and which, in a few instants, is to yield its place to the living Host, upon whom are laid all our iniquities.

Hanc igitur oblationem servitutis nostræ, sed et cunctæ familiæ tuæ, quæsumus, Domine, ut placatus accipias: diesque nostros in tua pace disponas, atque ab æterna damnatione nos eripi, et in electorum tuorum jubeas grege numerari. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Quam oblationem tu, Deus, in omnibus, quæsumus, benedictam, adscriptam, ratam, rationabilem, acceptabilemque facere digneris: ut nobis Corpus et Sanguis fiat dilectissimi Filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

Vouchsafe, O God, to accept the offering, which this thine assembled family presents to thee as the homage of its most happy servitude. In return, give us peace, save us from thy wrath, and number us among thine elect, through him who is coming to us—thy Son, our Saviour!

Yea, Lord, this is the moment when this bread is to become his sacred Body, which is our food; and this wine is to be changed into his Blood, which is our drink. Ah! delay no longer, but bring us into the presence of this divine Son, our Saviour!

And here the priest ceases to act as man; he now becomes more than a mere minister of the Church. His word becomes that of Jesus Christ, with its power and efficacy. Prostrate yourself in profound adoration; for God Himself is about to descend upon our altar, coming down from heaven.

Qui pridie quam pateretur, accepit panem, in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas: et elevatis oculis in cælum, ad te Deum Patrem suum omnipotentem, tibi gratias agens, benedixit, fregit, deditque discipulis suis, dicens: Accipite, et manducate ex hoc omnes. HOC EST ENIM CORPUS MEUM.

What, O God of heaven and earth, my Jesus, the long expected Messiah! what else can I do, at this solemn moment, but adore thee in silence, as my sovereign Master, and open to thee my whole heart, as to its dearest King? Come then, O Lord Jesus, come!

The divine Lamb is now lying on our altar! Glory and love be to Him for ever! But He has come that He may be immolated. Hence the priest, who is the minister of the designs of the Most High, immediately pronounces, over the chalice, those

sacred words which will produce the great mystical immolation, by the separation of the Victim's Body and Blood. After these words, the substances of both bread and wine have ceased to exist ; the species alone are left, veiling, as it were, the Body and Blood of our Redeemer, lest fear should keep us from a mystery, which God gives us for the very purpose of infusing confidence into our hearts. While the priest is pronouncing those words, let us associate ourselves to the angels, who tremblingly gaze upon this deepest wonder.

Simili modo postquam cœnatum est, accipiens et hunc præclarum calicem in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas: item tibi gratias agens, benedixit, deditque discipulis suis dicens: Accipite et bibite ex eo omnes. HIC EST ENIM CALIX SANGUINIS MEI, NOVI ET ÆTERNI TESTAMENTI: MYSTERIUM FIDEI: QUI PRO VOBIS ET PRO MULTIS EFFUNDETUR IN REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM. Hæc quotiescumque feceritis, in mei memoriam facietis.

O precious Blood, thou price of my salvation, I adore thee! Wash away my sins, and make me whiter than snow. O Lamb ever slain, yet ever living, thou comest to take away the sins of the world! Come, also, and reign in me by thy power, and by thy love.

The priest is now face to face with God. He again raises his hands towards heaven, and tells our heavenly Father that the oblation now on the altar is no longer an earthly material offering, but the Body and Blood, the whole Person, of His divine Son.

Unde et memores, Domine, nos servi tui, sed et plebs tua sancta, ejusdem Christi filii tui Domini nostri tam beatæ Passionis, nec non et ab inferis Resurrectionis, sed et in cœlos gloriosæ Ascensionis: offeri-

Father of infinite holiness, the Host so long expected is here before thee. Behold this thine eternal Son, who suffered a bitter Passion, rose again with glory from the grave, and ascended triumphantly into heaven. He is

mus præclaræ Majestati tuæ de tuis donis ac datis, Hostiam puram, Hostiam sanctam, Hostiam immaculatam: Panem sanctum vitæ æternæ, et Calicem salutis perpetuæ.

Supra quæ propitio ac sereno vultu respicere digneris: et accepta habere, sicuti accepta habere dignatus es munera pueri tui justî Abel, et sacrificium patriarchæ nostri Abrahæ, et quod tibi obtulit summus sacerdos tuus Melchisedech, sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam.

thy Son; but he is also our Host, Host pure and spotless, our meat and drink of everlasting life.

Heretofore, thou acceptest the sacrifice of the innocent lambs offered unto thee by Abel; and the sacrifice which Abraham made thee of his son Isaac, who, though immolated, yet lived; and, lastly, the sacrifice which Melchisedech presented to thee, of bread and wine. Receive our sacrifice which surpasses all those others: it is the Lamb, of whom all others could be but figures; it is the undying Victim; it is the Body of thy Son, who is the Bread of life, and his Blood, which, whilst a drink of immortality for us, is a tribute adequate to thy glory.

The priest bows down to the altar, and kisses it as the throne of love, on which is seated the Saviour of men.

Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus, jube hæc perferri per manus sancti angeli tui in sublime altare tuum, in conspectu divinæ Majestatis tuæ: ut quotquot ex hac altaris participatione, sacrosanctum Filii tui Corpus et Sanguinem sumpserimus, omni benedictione cœlesti et gratia repleamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

But, O God of infinite power, these sacred gifts are not only on this altar here below: they are, also, on that sublime altar in heaven, which is before the throne of thy divine Majesty. These two altars are one and the same, on which is accomplished the great mystery of thy glory and our salvation. Vouchsafe to make us partakers of the Body and Blood of the august Victim, from whom flow every grace and blessing.

Nor is the moment less favourable for making supplication for the Church suffering. Let us, therefore, ask the divine Liberator, who has come down among us, that He mercifully visit, by a ray of His consoling light, the dark abode of purgatory; and permit His Blood to flow, as a stream of mercy's dew, from this our altar, and refresh the panting captives there. Let us pray expressly for those among them, who have a claim upon our suffrages.

Memento, etiam, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum N. et N., qui nos præcesserunt cum signo fidei, et dormiunt in somno pacis. Ipsi, Domine, et omnibus in Christo quiescentibus, locum refrigerii, lucis et pacis, ut indulgeas, deprecamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Dear Jesus! let the happiness of this thy visit extend to every portion of thy Church. Thy face gladdens the elect, in the holy city; even our mortal eyes can see thee beneath the veil of our delighted faith; ah! hide not thyself from those brethren of ours, who are imprisoned in the abode of expiation. Be thou refreshment to them in their flames, light in their darkness, and peace in their agonies of torment.

This duty of charity fulfilled, let us pray for ourselves, sinners, alas! who profit so little by the visit which our Saviour pays us. Let us, together with the priest, strike our breast, saying:

Nobis quoque peccatoribus famulis tuis, de multitudine miserationum tuarum sperantibus, partem aliquam et societatem donare digneris cum tuis sanctis apostolis et martyribus; cum Joanne, Stephano, Mathia, Barnaba, Ignatio, Alexandro, Marcellino, Petro, Felicitate, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucia, Agnete, Cæcilia, Anastasia, et omnibus

Alas! we are poor sinners, O God of all sanctity, yet do we hope that thine infinite mercy will grant us to share thy kingdom; not indeed, by reason of our works, which deserve little else than punishment, but because of the merits of this sacrifice, which we are offering unto thee. Remember, too, the merits of thy holy apostles, of thy holy martyrs, of thy holy virgins,

sanctis tuis ; intra quorum and of all thy saints. Grant
 nos consortium, non æsti- us, by their intercession,
 mator meriti, sed veniæ, grace in this world, and glory
 quæsumus, largitor admitte : eternal in the next : which
 per Christum Dominum we ask of thee, in the name of
 nostrum. Per quem hæc our Lord Jesus Christ, thy
 omnia, Domine, semper Son. It is by him thou be-
 bona creas, sanctificas, vi- stowest upon us thy blessings
 vificas, benedicis, et præstas of life and sanctification ;
 nobis ; per ipsum, et cum and, by him also, with him,
 ipso, et in ipso, est tibi Deo and in him, in the unity of the
 Patri omnipotenti, in uni- Holy Ghost, may honour and
 tate Spiritus sancti, omnis glory be to thee !
 honor et gloria.

While saying the last of these words, the priest has taken up the sacred Host, which was upon the altar ; he has held it over the chalice : thus reuniting the Body and Blood of the divine Victim, in order to show that He is now immortal. Then raising up both chalice and Host, he offers to God the noblest and most perfect homage which the divine Majesty could receive.

This sublime and mysterious rite ends the Canon. The silence of the mysteries is interrupted. The priest concludes his long prayers, by saying aloud, and so giving the faithful the opportunity of expressing their desire that his supplications be granted :

Per omnia sæcula sæcu- For ever and ever.
 lorum.

Answer him with faith, and in a sentiment of union with your holy mother, the Church :

Amen.

Amen ! I believe the mys-
 tery which has just been ac-
 complished. I unite myself
 to the offering which has
 been made, and to the peti-
 tions of the Church.

It is now time to recite the prayer, taught us by our Saviour Himself. Let it ascend to heaven

together with the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. How could it be otherwise than heard, when He Himself who made it for us, is in our very hands now while we say it? As this prayer belongs in common to all God's children, the priest recites it aloud, and begins by inviting us all to join in it :

OREMUS

Præceptis salutaribus moniti, et divina institutione formati, audemus dicere :

LET US PRAY

Having been taught by a saving precept, and following the form given us by divine instruction, we thus presume to speak :

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pater noster, qui es in cœlis, sanctificetur nomen tuum : adveniat regnum tuum : fiat voluntas tua sicut in cœlo, et in terra. Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie : et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris : et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name : thy kingdom come : thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread : and *forgive us our trespasses*, as we forgive them that trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation.

Let us answer with a deep feeling of our misery :

Sed libera nos a malo.

But deliver us from evil.

The priest falls once more into the silence of the holy mysteries. His first word is an affectionate *Amen* to your last petition—*deliver us from evil*—on which he forms his own next prayer : and could he pray for anything more needed ? Evil surrounds us everywhere ; and the Lamb on our altar has been sent to expiate it, and to deliver us from it.

Libera nos, quæsumus, Domine, ab omnibus malis, præteritis, præsentibus et futuris : et intercedente bea-

How many, O Lord, are the evils which beset us ! Evils past, which are the wounds left on the soul by her sins,

ta et gloriosa semper Virgine Dei Genitrice Maria, cum beatis apostolis tuis Petro et Paulo, atque Andrea, et omnibus sanctis, da propitius pacem in diebus nostris : ut ope misericordiæ tuæ adjuvi, et a peccato simus semper liberi, et ab omni perturbatione securi. Per eundem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus.

and which strengthen her wicked propensities. Evils present, that is, the sins now, at this very time, upon our soul; the weakness of this poor soul; and the temptations which molest her. There are, also, future evils, that is, the chastisement which our sins deserve from the hand of thy justice. In presence of this Host of our salvation, we beseech thee, O Lord, to deliver us from all these evils, and to accept in our favour, the intercession of Mary the Mother of Jesus, of the holy apostles, Peter and Paul and Andrew: liberate us, break our chains, give us peace: through Jesus Christ, thy Son, who, with thee, liveth and reigneth God.

The priest is anxious to announce the peace, which he has asked and obtained; he therefore finishes his prayer aloud, saying :

Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

World without end.

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

Then he says :

Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum.

May the peace of our Lord be ever with you.

To this paternal wish reply :

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

R. And with thy spirit.

The mystery is drawing to a close; God is about to be united with man, and man with God, by means of Communion. But first, an imposing and sublime rite takes place at the altar. So far the priest has announced the death of Jesus; it is time to proclaim His Resurrection. To this end, he reverently breaks

the sacred Host ; and having divided it into three parts, he puts one into the chalice, thus reuniting the Body and Blood of the immortal Victim. Do you adore, and say :

Hæc commixtio et consecratio Corporis et Sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi, fiat accipientibus nobis in vitam æternam. Amen.

Glory be to thee, O Saviour of the world, who didst, in thy Passion, permit thy precious Blood to be separated from thy sacred Body, afterwards uniting them again together by thy divine power.

Offer now your prayer to the ever living Lamb, whom St. John saw, on the altar of heaven, standing though slain :¹ say to this your Lord and King, who has taken upon Himself all our iniquities in order to wash them away by His Blood :

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world have mercy on us !

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us !

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world give us peace !

Peace is the grand object of our Saviour's coming into the world : He is the Prince of peace.² The divine Sacrament of the Eucharist ought therefore to be the mystery of peace, and the bond of Catholic unity ; for, as the apostle says, 'all we who partake of one Bread, are all one bread and one body.'³ It is on this account that the priest, now that he is on the point of receiving, in Communion, the sacred Host, prays that fraternal peace may be preserved in the Church, and more especially in this portion of it which is assembled around the altar. Pray with him, and for the same blessing.

¹ Apoc. v. 6.

² Is. ix. 6.

³ 1 Cor. x. 17.

Domine Jesu Christe, qui dixisti apostolis tuis: Pacem relinquo vobis: pacem meam do vobis: ne respicias peccata mea, sed fidem Ecclesiae tuæ: eamque secundum voluntatem tuam pacificare et coadunare digneris. Qui vivis et regnas Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, who saidst to thine apostles, 'my peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:' regard not my sins, but the faith of thy Church, and grant her that peace and unity which is according to thy will. Who livest and reignest God, for ever and ever. Amen.

If it be a High Mass, the priest here gives the kiss of peace to the deacon, who gives it to the subdeacon, and he to the choir. During this ceremony, you should excite within yourself feelings of Christian charity, and pardon your enemies, if you have any. Then continue to pray with the priest:

Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, qui ex voluntate Patris, cooperante Spiritu sancto, per mortem tuam mundum vivificasti: libera me per hoc sacrosanctum Corpus, et Sanguinem tuum, ab omnibus iniquitatibus meis, et universis malis, et fac me tuis semper inhærere mandatis, et a te nunquam separari permittas. Qui cum eodem Deo Patre et Spiritu sancto vivis et regnas, Deus, in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who according to the will of the Father, through the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, hast, by thy death, given life to the world; deliver me, by this thy most sacred Body and Blood, from all mine iniquities, and from all evils; and make me always adhere to thy commandments, and never suffer me to be separated from thee, who with the same God the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest God for ever and ever. Amen.

If you are going to Communion at this Mass, say the following prayer; otherwise prepare yourself for a spiritual Communion:

Perceptio Corporis tui, Domine Jesu Christe, quod ego indignus sumere præsumo, non mihi proveniat in judicium et condemna-

Let not the participation of thy Body, O Lord Jesus Christ, which I, though unworthy, presume to receive, turn to my judgment and

tionem : sed pro tua pietate prosit mihi ad tutamentum mentis et corporis, et ad medelam percipiendam. Qui vivis et regnas cum Deo Patre, in unitate Spiritus sancti, Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

condemnation ; but through thy mercy, may it be a safeguard and remedy, both to my soul and body. Who with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest God, for ever and ever. Amen.

When the priest takes the Host into his hands, in order to receive it in Communion, say :

Panem cœlestem accipiam, Come, my dear Jesus, ut nomen Domini invocabo. come !

When he strikes his breast, confessing his unworthiness, say thrice with him these words, and in the same disposition as the centurion of the Gospel, who first used them :

Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum : sed tantum dic verbo, et sanabitur anima mea. Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof ; say it only with one word of thine, and my soul shall be healed.

Whilst the priest is receiving the sacred Host, if you also are to communicate, profoundly adore your God, who is ready to take up His abode within you ; and again say to Him with the bride : ‘ Come, Lord Jesus, come !’

But should you not intend to receive sacramentally, make here a spiritual Communion. Adore Jesus Christ, who thus visits your soul by His grace, and say to Him :

Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam meam in vitam æternam. Amen. I give thee, O Jesus, this heart of mine, that thou mayst dwell in it, and do with me what thou wilt.

Then the priest takes the chalice, in thanksgiving, and says :

Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit What return shall I make to the Lord for all he hath

mihi ? Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo. Laudans invocabo Dominum, et ab inimicis meis salvus ero.

given to me ? I will take the chalice of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord. Praising, I will call upon the Lord, and I shall be saved from mine enemies.

But if you are to make a sacramental Communion, you should, at this moment of the priest's receiving the precious Blood, again adore the God who is coming to you, and keep to your prayer : 'Come, Lord Jesus, come !'

If, on the contrary, you are going to communicate only spiritually, again adore your divine Master, and say to Him :

Sanguis Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam meam in vitam æternam. Amen.

I unite myself to thee, my beloved Jesus ! do thou unite thyself to me and never let us be separated.

It is here that you must approach to the altar, if you are going to Communion. The dispositions suitable for holy Communion, during this season of Lent, are given in the next chapter.

The Communion being finished, while the priest is purifying the chalice the first time, say :

Quod ore sumpsimus, Domine, pura mente capiamus ; et de munere temporali fiat nobis remedium sempiternum.

Thou hast visited me, O God, in these days of my pilgrimage : give me grace to treasure up the fruits of this visit, and to make it tell upon my eternity.

While the priest is purifying the chalice the second time, say :

Corpus tuum Domine, quod sumpsi, et Sanguis quem potavi, adhæreat visceribus meis : et præsta ut in me non remaneat scelerum macula quem pura et sancta refererunt Sacramenta. Qui vi-

Be thou for ever blessed, O my Saviour, for having admitted me to the sacred mystery of thy Body and Blood. May my heart and senses preserve, by thy grace, the purity which thou hast imparted to

vis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

them; and may I be thus rendered less unworthy of thy divine visit.

The priest, having read the antiphon called the Communion, which is the first part of his thanksgiving for the favour just received from God, whereby He has renewed His divine presence among us, turns to the people with the usual salutation; after which he recites the prayers, called the Postcommunion, which are the completion of the thanksgiving. You will join him here also, thanking God for the unspeakable gift He has just lavished on you, and asking Him, with most earnest entreaty, that He will bestow upon you a lasting spirit of compunction.

These prayers having been recited, the priest again turns to the people, and full of joy for the immense favour he and they have been receiving, he says :

Dominus vobiscum.

The Lord be with you.

Answer him :

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

R. And with thy spirit.

The deacon, or (if it be not a High Mass) the priest himself, then says :

V. Benedicamus Domino.

V. Let us bless the Lord.

If it be neither a Sunday, nor a feria of Lent, he says as usual :

V. Ite, Missa est.

V. Go, the Mass is finished.

R. Deo gratias.

R. Thanks be to God.

The priest makes a last prayer before giving you his blessing; pray with him :

Placeat tibi, sancta Trinitas, obsequium servitutis meæ, et præsta ut sacrificium, quod oculis tuæ majestatis indignus obtuli, tibi

Eternal thanks be to thee, O adorable Trinity, for the mercy thou hast shown to me, in permitting me to assist at this divine sacrifice. Pardon

sit acceptabile, mihi que, et omnibus, pro quibus illud obtuli, sit, te miserante, propitiabile. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

me the negligence and coldness wherewith I have received so great a favour, and deign to confirm the blessing, which thy minister is about to give me in thy name.

The priest raises his hand, and thus blesses you :

Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus, Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus sanctus.

R. Amen.

May the almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you !

R. Amen.

He then concludes the Mass, by reading the first fourteen verses of the Gospel according to St. John, which tell us of the eternity of the Word, and of the mercy which led Him to take upon Himself our *flesh* and to *dwell among us*. Pray that you may be of the number of those, who, now that He has come *unto His own, receive Him*, and are made *the sons of God*.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

THE LAST GOSPEL

Initium sancti Evangelii secundum Joannem.

Cap. i.

In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Hoc erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia per ipsum facta sunt ; et sine ipso factum est nihil. Quod factum est, in ipso vita erat, et vita erat lux hominum : et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebræ eam non comprehenderunt. Fuit homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Joannes. Hic venit in testimonium, ut testimonium per-

The beginning of the holy Gospel according to John.

Ch. i.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men ; and the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

hiberet de lumine, ut omnes crederent per illum. Non erat ille lux, sed ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine. Erat lux vera, quæ illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum. In mundo erat, et mundus per ipsum factus est, et mundus eum non cognovit. In propria venit, et sui eum non receperunt. Quotquot autem receperunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his qui credunt in nomine ejus; qui non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate carnis, neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo nati sunt. **ET VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST,** et habitavit in nobis: et vidimus gloriam ejus, gloriam quasi Unigeniti a Patre, plenum gratiæ et veritatis.

R. Deo gratias.

This man came for a witness, to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to be made the sons of God; to them that believe in his name, who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. **AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH,** and dwelt among us; and we saw his glory, as it were the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

R. Thanks be to God.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH

ON HOLY COMMUNION DURING LENT

OF all the works whereby a Christian can sanctify the time of Lent, there is none so pleasing to God as to assist at the holy sacrifice of the Mass, in which is offered the Victim of man's salvation. But now that his own unworthiness is more than ever evident to him, ought he to abstain from partaking, by holy Communion, of this life-giving and purifying Host? Such is not our Saviour's will. He came down from heaven, not to judge, but to save us.¹ He knows how long and rugged is the road we have to traverse, before we reach that happy day, on which we shall rest with Him, in the joy of His Resurrection. He has compassion on us; He fears lest we faint in the way;² and He, therefore, offers us the divine food, which gives light and strength to our souls, and refreshes them in their toil. We feel that our hearts are not yet pure enough; let us then, with a humble and contrite heart, go to Him, who has come that He may restore to our souls their original beauty. Let us, at all times, remember the solemn injunction which this Saviour so graciously deigned to give us: 'Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, ye shall not have life in you.'³

If, therefore, sin has no longer dominion over us; if we have destroyed it by true sorrow and sincere confession, made efficacious by the absolution of God's priest: let us not deprive ourselves of the Bread of life,⁴ no matter how great soever our infirmities may seem; for it is for us that our Jesus has prepared the feast. If we feel that the chains of sin are still upon

¹ St. John iii. 17.

² St. Matt. xv. 32.

³ St. John vi. 54.

⁴ St. John vi. 35.

us ; if by self-examination made with the light of the truth that is now granted to us, we discover in our souls certain stains, which the false principles of the world and too easy a conscience have hitherto made us overlook ; let us lose no time, let us make a good confession : and when we have made our peace with the God of mercy, let us approach the holy Table, and receive the pledge of our reconciliation.

Yes, let us go to holy Communion, during this season of Lent, with a most heart-felt conviction of our unworthiness. It may be that hitherto we have sometimes gone with too much familiarity, on account of our not sufficiently understanding our nothingness, our misery, and the infinite holiness of the God who thus unites Himself with His sinful creatures. Henceforth, our heart shall be more truthful ; blending together the two sentiments of humility and confidence, we will say, with an honest conviction, those words of the centurion of the Gospel, which the Church puts upon our lips, when she is distributing to us the Bread of life : ‘ Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof ; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed.’¹

We will here give, as usual, acts which may serve as a preparation for holy Communion during these weeks of Lent. There are souls that feel the want of some such assistance as this ; and, for the same reason, we will add a form of thanksgiving for after Communion.

BEFORE COMMUNION

ACT OF FAITH

The signal grace which thou, O my God, hast granted to me, that I should know the wounds of my soul, has revealed to me the greatness of my misery. I have been taught how deep was the darkness that covered me, and how much I

¹ St. Matt. viii. 8.

needed thy divine light. But whilst the torch of faith has thus shown me the abyss of my own poor nature, it has also taught me how wonderful are the works, which thy love of thy ungrateful creature has made thee undertake, in order that thou mightest raise him up and save him. It is for me thou didst assume my human nature, and wast born at Bethlehem; it is for me that thou fastest forty days in the desert; it is for me that thou art soon to shed thy Blood on the cross. Thou commandest me to believe these miracles of thy love. I do believe them, O my God, humbly and gratefully. I also believe, and with an equally lively faith, that in a few moments thou art to give thyself to me in this ineffable mystery of holy Communion. Thou sayest to me: 'This is my Body, this is my Blood':—thy word is enough; in spite of my unworthiness seeming to forbid the possibility of such Communion, I believe, I consent, I bow me down before thine infinite truth. Oh! can there be Communion between the God of all holiness and a sinner such as I? And yet thou assurest me that thou art verily coming to me! I tremble, O eternal Truth, but I believe. I confess that thy love of me is infinite, and that having resolved to give thyself to thy poor and sinful creature, thou wilt suffer no obstacle to stand in thy way!

ACT OF HUMILITY

During the season just past, I have often contemplated, O my Jesus, thy coming from thy high throne into the bosom of Mary, thy uniting thy divine Person to our weak mortal nature, and thy being born in the crib of a poor stable: and when I thought on these humiliations of my God, they taught me not only to love thee tenderly, but to know also my own nothingness, for I saw more clearly what an infinite distance there is between the creature and his Creator; and seeing these prodigies of thy immense love, I gladly confessed my own vileness. But now, dearest Saviour, I am led to consider something far more humiliating than the lowliness of my nature. That nothingness should be but nothingness, is not a sin. No; it is my sins that appal me. Sin has so long tyrannized over me; its consequences are still upon me; it has given me such dangerous tendencies; and I am so weak in resisting its bidding. When my first parent sinned, he hid himself, lest he should meet thee; and thou biddest me come unto thee, not to sentence me to the punishment I deserve, but to give me, oh! such a mark of love—union with thyself! Can this be? Art thou not the infinitely holy God? I must needs yield, and come, for thou

art my sovereign Master, and who is there that dares resist thy will ? I come, then, humbling myself, even to my very nothingness, before thee, and beseeching thee to pardon my coming, for I come because thou wilt have it so.

ACT OF CONTRITION

And shall I, O my Jesus, confess thus the grievousness and multitude of my sins, without promising thee to sin no more ? Thou wishest this sinner to be reconciled with thee, thou desirest to press him to thy sacred Heart : and could he, whilst thanking thee for this thy wonderful condescension, still love the accursed cause which made him thine enemy ? No, my infinitely merciful God, no ! I will not, like my first parent, seek to escape thy justice, but, like the prodigal son, I will arise and go to my Father ; like Magdalene, I will take courage and enter the banquet-hall ; and, though trembling at the sight of my sins, I will comply with thy loving invitation. My heart has no further attachment to sin, which I hate and detest as the enemy of thy honour and of my own happiness. I am resolved to shun it from this time forward, and to spare no pains to free myself from its tyranny. There shall be no more of that easy life which chilled my love, nor of that studied indifference which dulled my conscience, nor of those dangerous habits which led me to stray from my loyalty to thee. Despise not, O God, this my humble and contrite heart.

ACT OF LOVE

Such is thy love for us in this world, O my Jesus, that, as thou thyself sayest, thou hast come not to judge, but to save. I should not satisfy thee, in this happy Communion hour, were I to offer thee but this salutary fear which has led me to thy sacred feet, and this shame-stricken conscience which makes me tremble in thy holy presence. The visit thou art about to pay me is a visit of love. The Sacrament, which is going to unite me to thee, is the Sacrament of thy love. Thou, my good Shepherd, hast said that he loves most, who has been forgiven most. My heart then must dare to love thee ; it must love thee with all its warmth ; the very recollection of its past disloyalty must make its loving thee doubly needful and doubly fervent. Ah ! sweet Lord ! See this poor heart of mine ; strengthen it, console it, drive away its fears, make it feel that thou art its Jesus ! It has come back to thee, because it feared thee ; if it love thee, it will never again leave thee.

And thou, O Mary, refuge of sinners, help me to love him, who is thy Son, and our Brother. Holy angels! ye who live eternally on that love which has never ceased to glow in your mighty spirits, remember, I reverently pray you, that this God created me, as he did you, that I might love him. All ye holy saints of God! I beseech you, by the love wherewith ye are inebriated in heaven, graciously give me a thought, and prepare now my heart to be united with him. Amen.

AFTER COMMUNION

ACT OF ADORATION

Thou art here within me, great God of heaven! Thou art, at this moment, residing in a sinner's heart! I, yea, I, am thy temple, thy throne, thy resting-place! How shall I worthily adore thee, who hast deigned to come down into this abyss of my lowliness and misery? The angels veil their faces in thy presence; thy saints lay their crowns at thy feet; and I, that am but a sinful mortal, how shall I sufficiently honour thee, O infinite Power, infinite Wisdom, infinite Goodness? This soul, wherein thou art now dwelling, has presumed so many times to set thee at defiance, and boldly disobey and break thy commands. And thou canst come to me after all this, and bring all thy beauty and greatness with thee! What else can I do, but give thee the homage of a heart, that knows not how to bear the immensity of the honour thou art now lavishing on me? Yes, my own wonderful and loving God, I adore thee; I acknowledge thee to be the sovereign Being, the Creator and preserver of all creatures, and the undisputed Master of everything that belongs to me. I delightedly confess my dependence on thee, and offer thee, with all my heart, my humble service.

ACT OF THANKSGIVING

Thy greatness, O my God, is infinite; but thy goodness to me is incomprehensible. Thy being now present within this breast of mine is, I know, a proof of that immense power which shows itself where and when it wills; but it is also a mark of thy love for me. Thou hast come to my soul, that thou mayst be closely united with her, comfort her, give her a new life, and bring her all good things. Oh! who will teach me how to value this grace, and thank thee for it in a becoming way? But how shall I hope to

value it as I ought, when I am not able to understand either the love that brings thee thus within me, or my own need of having thee? And when I think of my inability to make thee a suitable return of thanks, I feel as though I can give thee nothing but my speechless gratitude. Yet thou wilt that this my heart, poor as it is, should give thee its thanks; thou takest delight in receiving its worthless homage. Take it, then, my loving Jesus! I give it thee with all possible joy, and beseech thee to reveal unto me the immensity of thy gift, and to enrich me more that I may give thee more.

ACT OF LOVE

But nothing will satisfy thee, O my infinite Treasure, unless I give thee my love. Thou hast ever loved me, and thou art still loving me; I must love thee in return! Thou hast borne with me, thou hast forgiven me, thou art, at this moment, overpowering me with honour and riches; and all this out of love for me! The return thou askest of me, is my love. Gratitude will not content thee, thou wilt have my love! But Jesus, my dear Jesus!—my past life—the long years I have spent in offending thee—rise up before me, and tell me to hide myself from thee! And yet, whither could I go without carrying thee within me, for thou hast taken up thine abode in my inmost soul? No, I will not run from thee! I will summon all the energies of my heart, to tell thee that I love thee; that thy love for me has emboldened me; that I belong to thee; that I love thee above all else that I love; and that, henceforth, all my joy and happiness shall be in pleasing thee, and doing whatsoever thou askest of me.

ACT OF OBLATION

I know, dear Jesus, that what thou askest of me is not the passing sentiment of a heart excited by the thought of thy goodness towards it. Thou hast loved me from eternity; thou lovedst me, even when I was doing nothing for thee; thou hast given me light to know my miseries; thou hast shielded me against thine own angry justice; thou hast mercifully pardoned me a countless number of times; thou art even now embracing me with tenderest love: and all these works of thy almighty hand have been but for one end—to make me give myself to thee, and live, at last, for thee. It is this thou wouldst obtain of me, by granting me this precious earnest of thy love, which I have just received. Thou hast said, speaking of this ineffable gift: 'As I live

by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me.¹ Henceforth, O Bread which came down from heaven!² thou art the source of my life. Now, more than ever, my life belongs to thee. I give it unto thee. I dedicate unto thee my soul, my body, my faculties, my whole being. Do thou direct and govern me. I resign myself entirely into thy hands. I am blind, but thy light will guide me; I am weak, but thy power will uphold me; I am inconstant, but thy unchangeableness will give me stability. I trust unreservedly in thy mercy, which never abandons them that hope in thee.

O Mary! pray for me, that I lose not the fruit of this visit. Holy angels! watch over this dwelling-place of your Lord, which he has so mercifully chosen: let nothing defile it. O all ye saints of God! pray for the sinner, unto whom he has given this pledge of his divine pardon.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH

ON THE OFFICE OF VESPERS FOR SUNDAYS AND FEASTS DURING LENT

THE Office of Vespers, or Evensong, consists firstly of the five following psalms and antiphons. According to our custom, we preface each psalm with a short explanation, in order to draw attention to what is most in harmony with the spirit of Lent.

After the *Pater* and *Ave* have been said in secret, the Church commences this Hour with her favourite supplication:

V. Deus, in adiutorium
meum intende.

R. Domine, ad adjuvan-
dum me festina.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et
Spiritui sancto.

V. Incline unto my aid, O
God.

R. O Lord, make haste to
help me.

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the
Holy Ghost.

¹ St. John vi. 58.

² *Ibid.* 51.

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Laus tibi, Domine, Rex æternæ gloriæ.

ANT. Dixit Dominus.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Praise be to thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory.

ANT. The Lord said.

The first psalm is a prophecy of the future glory of the Messias. It shows us His triumph; after His humiliations and His cross, the Man-God shall sit on the *right hand* of His Father. Moreover, He is to come again into this world, to *judge* it, and to *crush* the proud *heads* of sinners. While thus celebrating His glory, let us not forget His justice.

PSALM 109

Dixit Dominus Domino meo : * Sede a dextris meis.

Donec ponam inimicos tuos : * scabellum pedum tuorum.

Virgam virtutis tuæ emitet Dominus ex Sion : * dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.

Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ in splendoribus sanctorum : * ex utero ante luciferum genui te.

Juravit Dominus et non penitebit eum : * Tu es Sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.

Dominus a dextris tuis : * confregit in die iræ suæ reges.

The Lord said to my Lord, *his Son* : Sit thou at my right hand, and reign with me.

Until, *on the day of thy last coming*, I make thy enemies thy footstool.

O Christ! the Lord, *thy Father*, will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion : *from thence* rule thou in the midst of thy enemies.

With thee is the principality in the day of thy strength, in the brightness of the saints : *For the Father hath said to thee* : From the womb before the day-star I begot thee.

The Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent : *he hath said, speaking of thee, the God-Man* : Thou art a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech.

Therefore, O Father, the Lord, *thy Son*, is at thy right hand : he hath broken kings in the day of his wrath.

Judicabit in nationibus,
implebit ruinas: * conquas-
sabit capita in terra multo-
rum.

De torrente in via bibet: *
propterea exaltabit caput.

ANT. Dixit Dominus Do-
mino meo, sede a dextris
meis.

ANT. Fidelia.

He shall *also* judge among
nations: *in that terrible com-
ing*, he shall fill the ruins of
the world: he shall crush the
heads in the land of many.

He cometh now in humility:
he shall drink in the way, of
the torrent of *sufferings*:
therefore, shall he lift up the
head.

ANT. The Lord said to my
Lord, sit thou at my right
hand.

ANT. Faithful.

The following psalm commemorates the mercies
of God to His *people*, the promised *Covenant*, the
Redemption, His *fidelity* to His word. But it also
tells us that the *name* of the Lord is *terrible* because
it is *holy*; and concludes by telling us that *the fear
of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*.

PSALM 110

Confitebor tibi, Domine,
in toto corde meo: * in con-
silio justorum et congrega-
tione.

Magna opera Domini: *
exquisita in omnes volunta-
tes ejus.

Confessio et magnificentia
opus ejus: * et justitia ejus
manet in sæculum sæculi.

Memoriam fecit mirabilium
suorum, misericors et mise-
rator Dominus: * escam dedit
timentibus se.

Memor erit in sæculum
testamenti sui: * virtutem
operum suorum annuntiabit
populo suo.

I will praise thee, O Lord,
with my whole heart: in the
council of the just, and in the
congregation.

Great are the works of the
Lord: sought out according
to all his wills.

His work is praise and mag-
nificence: and his justice con-
tinueth for ever and ever.

He hath made a remem-
brance of his wonderful works,
being a merciful and gracious
Lord: he hath given food to
them that fear him.

He will be mindful for ever
of his covenant *with men*: he
will show forth to his people
the power of his works.

Ut det illis hæreditatem
Gentium : * opera manuum
ejus veritas et judicium.

Fidelia omnia mandata
ejus, confirmata in sæculum
sæculi : * facta in veritate
et æquitate.

Redemptionem misit po-
pulo suo : * mandavit in
æternum testamentum suum.

Sanctum et terribile no-
men ejus : * initium sapien-
tiæ timor Domini.

Intellectus bonus omnibus
facientibus eum : * laudatio
ejus manet in sæculum sæculi.

ANT. Fidelia omnia man-
data ejus ; confirmata in
sæculum sæculi.

ANT. In mandatis.

That he may give them, *his Church*, the inheritance of the
Gentiles : the works of his
hands are truth and judg-
ment.

All his commandments are
faithful, confirmed for ever
and ever : made in truth and
equity.

He hath sent redemption
to his people : he hath *thereby*
commanded his covenant for
ever.

*Holy and terrible is his
name : the fear of the Lord is
the beginning of wisdom.*

A good understanding to all
that do it : his praise con-
tinueth for ever and ever.

ANT. Faithful are all his
commandments ; confirmed
for ever and ever.

ANT. In his command-
ments.

The next psalm sings the happiness of the *just man*, and his hopes on the day of his Lord's coming. It tells us, likewise, of the confusion and despair which will torment the *sinner*, who, during life, was insensible to his own interests, and deaf to the invitations made him by the Church.

PSALM 111

Beatus vir, qui timet Do-
minum : * in mandatis ejus
volet nimis.

Potens in terra erit semen
ejus : * generatio rectorum
benedicetur.

Gloria et divitiæ in domo
ejus : * et justitia ejus ma-
net in sæculum sæculi.

Blessed is the man that
feareth the Lord ; he shall
delight exceedingly in his
commandments.

His seed shall be mighty
upon earth ; the generation
of the righteous shall be
blessed.

Glory and wealth shall be
in his house : and his justice
remaineth for ever and ever.

Exortum est in tenebris
lumen rectis: * misericors,
et miserator, et justus.

Jucundus homo, qui mise-
retur et commodat, disponet
sermone suos in iudicio: *
quia in æternum non com-
movebitur.

In memoria æterna erit
justus * ab auditione mala
non timebit.

Paratum cor ejus sperare
in Domino, confirmatum est
cor ejus: * non commovebi-
tur donec despiciat inimicos
suos.

Dispensit, dedit pauperi-
bus, justitia ejus manet in
sæculum sæculi: * cornu ejus
exaltabitur in gloria.

Peccator videbit, et irasce-
tur, dentibus suis fremet et
tabescet; * desiderium pec-
catorum peribit.

ANT. In mandatis ejus cupit
nimis.

ANT. Sit nomen Domini.

To the righteous a light is
risen up in darkness: he is
merciful, and compassionate,
and just.

Acceptable is the man that
showeth mercy and lendeth;
he shall order his words with
judgment: because he shall
not be moved for ever.

The just shall be in ever-
lasting remembrance: he shall
not fear the evil hearing.

His heart is ready to hope
in the Lord; his heart is
strengthened; he shall not
be moved until he look over
his enemies.

He hath distributed, he
hath given to the poor; his
justice remaineth for ever
and ever: his horn shall be
exalted in glory.

The wicked shall see, and
shall be angry; he shall gnash
with his teeth, and pine away:
the desire of the wicked shall
perish.

ANT. In his commandments
he delighteth exceedingly.

ANT. May the name of the
Lord.

The psalm *Laudate pueri* is a canticle of praise
to the Lord, who, from His high heaven, has taken
pity on the fallen human race, and facilitated its
return to its Maker.

PSALM 112

Laudate, pueri, Dominum:
* laudate nomen Domini.

Sit nomen Domini benedi-
dictum: * ex hoc nunc et
usque in sæculum.

A solis ortu usque ad occa-

Praise the Lord, ye chil-
dren: praise ye the name of
the Lord.

Blessed be the name of the
Lord: from henceforth now
and for ever.

From the rising of the sun

sum : * laudabile nomen Domini.

Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus : * et super caelos gloria ejus.

Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster qui in altis habitat : * et humilia respicit in caelo et in terra ?

Suscitans a terra inopem : * et de stercore erigens pauperem.

Ut collocet eum cum principibus : * cum principibus populi sui.

Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo : * matrem filiorum lætantem.

ANT. Sit nomen Domini benedictum in sæcula.

ANT. Nos qui vivimus.

unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise.

The Lord is high above all nations : and his glory above the heavens.

Who is as the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high : and looketh down on the low things in heaven and in earth ?

Raising up the needy from the earth : and lifting up the poor out of the dunghill.

That he may place him with princes : with the princes of his people.

Who maketh a barren woman to dwell in a house, the joyful mother of children.

ANT. May the name of the Lord be for ever blessed.

ANT. We that live.

The fifth psalm, *In exitu*, recounts the prodigies witnessed under the ancient Covenant : they were figures, whose realities are to be accomplished in us, if we will but return to the Lord our God. He will deliver *Israel* from Egypt, emancipate the *Gentiles* from their idolatry, and pour out a *blessing* on every man who will consent to fear and love the Lord.

PSALM 113

In exitu Israel de Ægypto : * domus Jacob de populo barbaro.

Facta est Judæa sanctificatio ejus : * Israel potestas jus.

Mare vidit, et fugit : * Jordanis conversus est retrorsum.

Montes exsultaverunt ut arietes : * et colles sicut agnovium,

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people.

Judea was made his sanctuary, Israel his dominion.

The sea saw and fled ; Jordan was turned back.

The mountains skipped like rams : and the hills like the lambs of the flock,

Quid est tibi, mare, quod fugisti: * et tu, Jordanis, quia conversus es retrorsum?

Montes exsultastis sicut arietes: * et colles sicut agni ovium?

A facie Domini mota est terra: * a facie Dei Jacob.

Qui convertit petram in stagna aquarum: * et rupem in fontes aquarum.

Non nobis, Domine, non nobis: * sed nomini tuo da gloriam.

Super misericordia tua, et veritate tua: * nequando dicant gentes: Ubi est Deus eorum?

Deus autem noster in cœlo: * omnia quæcumque voluit fecit.

Simulacra gentium argentum et aurum: * opera manuum hominum.

Os habent, et non loquentur: * oculos habent, et non videbunt.

Aures habent et non audiunt: * nares habent et non odorabunt.

Manus habent et non palpabunt, pedes habent et non ambulabunt: * non clamabunt in gutture suo.

Similes illis fiant qui faciunt ea: * et omnes qui confidunt in eis.

Domus Israel speravit in Domino: * adjutor eorum, et protector eorum est.

What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou didst flee: and thou, O Jordan, that thou wast turned back?

Ye mountains that ye skip-ped like rams: and ye hills like lambs of the flock?

At the presence of the Lord the earth was moved, at the presence of the God of Jacob.

Who turned the rock into pools of water, and the stony hills into fountains of waters.

Not to us, O Lord, not to us: but to thy name give glory.

For thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake: lest the Gentiles should say: Where is their God?

But our God is in heaven: he hath done all things whatsoever he would.

The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold: the works of the hands of men.

They have mouths, and speak not: they have eyes, and see not.

They have ears, and hear not: they have noses, and smell not.

They have hands, and feel not: they have feet, and walk not: neither shall they cry out through their throat.

Let them that make them become like unto them: and all such as trust in them.

The house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord: he is their helper and their protector.

Domus Aaron speravit in Domino: * adjutor eorum, et protector eorum est.

The house of Aaron hath hoped in the Lord: he is their helper and their protector.

Qui timent Dominum, speraverunt in Domino: * adjutor eorum, et protector eorum est.

They that feared the Lord have hoped in the Lord: he is their helper and their protector.

Dominus memor fuit nostri: * et benedixit nobis.

The Lord hath been mindful of us, and hath blessed us.

Benedixit domui Israel: * benedixit domui Aaron.

He hath blessed the house of Israel: he hath blessed the house of Aaron.

Benedixit omnibus qui timent Dominum: * pusillis cum majoribus.

He hath blessed all that fear the Lord, both little and great.

Adjiciat Dominus super vos: * super vos, et super filios vestros.

May the Lord add blessings upon you: upon you, and upon your children.

Benedicti vos a Domino: * qui fecit cælum et terram.

Blessed be you of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Cælum cæli Domino: * terram autem dedit filiis hominum.

The heaven of heaven is the Lord's: but the earth he has given to the children of men.

Non mortui laudabunt te, Domine: neque omnes qui descendunt in infernum.

The dead shall not praise thee, O Lord: nor any of them that go down to hell.

Sed nos qui vivimus, benedicimus Domino: * ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum.

But we that live bless the Lord: from this time now and for ever.

ANT. Nos qui vivimus, benedicimus Domino.

ANT. We that live bless the Lord.

After these five psalms, a short lesson from the holy Scriptures is read. It is called *Capitulum*, because it is always very short. Those for the Sundays of Lent are given in the *Proper*.

After the capitulum, follows the hymn, *Audi, benigne*, which was written by St. Gregory the Great.

HYMN¹

Audi, benigne Conditor,
Nostras preces cum fletibus
In hoc sacro jejunio
Fusas quadragenario.

Scrutator alme cordium,
Infirma tu scis virium :
Ad te reversis exhibe
Remissionis gratiam.

Multum quidem peccavi-
mus,
Sed parce confitentibus ;
Ad nominis laudem tui
Confer medelam languidis.
Concede nostrum conteri
Corpus per abstinentiam ;
Culpæ ut relinquant pabulum
Jejuna corda criminum.

Præsta, beata Trinitas,
Concede, simplex Unitas,
Ut fructuosa sint tuis
Jejuniorum munera.

Amen.

V. Angelis suis Deus man-
davit de te.

R. Ut custodiant te in
omnibus viis tuis.

Hear, O merciful Creator,
the tearful prayers we present
to thee, during these forty
days of fast.

O loving searcher of the
heart, thou knowest that our
strength is weak : grant us
the grace of thy pardon, for
we are converted unto thee.

Grievously have we sinned ;
yet, spare us, for we confess
our sins to thee : and, for the
glory of thy name, heal our
languid hearts.

Grant that we may subdue
our flesh by abstinence ; that
thus our hearts may leave
what nourishes sin, and fast
from every crime.

O blessed Trinity, O un-
divided Unity, grant to us
thy servants, that our fasts
may produce abundant fruits.
Amen.

V. God hath given his an-
gels charge over thee.

R. To keep thee in all thy
ways.

¹ According to the monastic rite, it is as follows :—

R. *breve*. Scapulis suis, * Ob-
umbrabit tibi. Scapulis.

V. Et sub pennis ejus spera-
bis. * Obumbrabit. Gloria
Patri, &c. Scapulis.

HYMN

Audi, benigne Conditor,
Nostras preces cum fletibus,
In hoc sacro jejunio,
Fusas quadragenario.

Scrutator alme cordium,
Infirma tu scis virium :
Ad te reversis exhibe
Remissionis gratiam.

Multum quidem peccavimus,
Sed parce confitentibus :

Ad laudem tui nominis
Confer medelam languidis.

Sic corpus extra conteri
Dona per abstinentiam ;
Jejunet ut mens sobria
A labe prorsus criminum.

Præsta, beata Trinitas,
Concede, simplex Unitas :
Ut fructuosa sint tuis
Jejuniorum munera.

Amen.

Then is said the *Magnificat* antiphon, which is to be found in the proper. After this, the Church sings the canticle of Mary, the *Magnificat*, in which are celebrated the divine maternity and all its consequent blessings. This exquisite canticle is an essential part of the Vespers throughout the year. Let us unite with *all generations*, and call her 'blessed;' but let us, also, enter into those sentiments of humility, which she recommends to us both by her words and her example. Her inspired lips speak to us this promise: If the great God, whose triumph is to gladden us on the glorious day of Easter, finds us humble and submissive, He will *exalt* us, yea, raise us up even to Himself; if we confess our misery and *poverty* to Him, He will *enrich* us, even to the *full*, with every blessing.

OUR LADY'S CANTICLE

(*St. Luke i.*)

Magnificat: * anima mea
Dominum:

Et exsultavit spiritus meus: * in Deo salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ: * ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: * et sanctum nomen ejus.

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies: * timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: * dispersit superbos mentis cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede: * et exaltavit humiles.

My soul doth magnify the Lord.

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid: for, behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Because he that is mighty hath done great things to me: and holy is his name.

And his mercy is from generation unto generation, to them that fear him.

He hath showed might in his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH

ON THE OFFICE OF COMPLINE DURING LENT

THIS Office, which concludes the day, commences by a warning of the dangers of the night : then immediately follows the public confession of our sins, as a powerful means of propitiating the divine justice, and obtaining God's help, now that we are going to spend so many hours in the unconscious and therefore dangerous state of sleep, which is also such an image of death.

The lector, addressing the priest, says to him :

Jube, domine, benedicere. Pray, father, give thy blessing.

The priest answers :

Noctem quietam, et finem perfectum concedat nobis Dominus omnipotens.	May the almighty Lord grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.
R. Amen.	R. Amen.

The lector then reads these words, from the first Epistle of St. Peter :

Fratres : Sobrii estote, et vigilate : quia adversarius vester diabolus, tamquam leo rugiens circuit quærens quem devoret : cui resistite fortes in fide. Tu autem, Domine, miserere nobis.	Brethren, be sober and watch ; for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour : whom re- sist ye, strong in faith. But thou, O Lord, have mercy on us.
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The choir answers :

R. Deo gratias. R. Thanks be to God.

Then the priest :

V. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini.	V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.
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The choir :

R. Qui fecit cœlum et
terram.

R. Who hath made heaven
and earth.

Then the Lord's Prayer is recited in secret ; after which the priest says the *Confiteor* ; and, when he has finished, the choir says :

Misereatur tui omnipotens
Deus, et dimissis peccatis
tuis perducatur te ad vitam
œternam.

May almighty God have
mercy on thee, and, forgiving
thy sins, bring thee to ever-
lasting life.

The priest having answered *Amen*, the choir repeats the *Confiteor*, thus :

Confiteor Deo omnipotenti,
beatæ Mariæ semper Virgini,
beato Michaeli Archangelo,
beato Joanni Baptistæ, sanctis
apostolis Petro et Paulo,
omnibus sanctis, et tibi, pater,
quia peccavi nimis cogitatione,
verbo, et opere : mea culpa,
mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.
Ideo precor beatam Mariam
semper Virginem, beatum
Michaellem Archangelum,
beatum Joannem Baptistam,
sanctos apostolos Petrum
et Paulum, omnes sanctos,
et te, pater, orare pro me
ad Dominum Deum nostrum.

I confess to almighty God,
to blessed Mary ever Virgin,
to blessed Michael the Archangel,
to blessed John the Baptist,
to the holy apostles Peter and Paul,
to all the saints, and to thee, father,
that I have sinned exceedingly
in thought, word, and deed ;
through my fault, through my
fault, through my most grievous
fault. Therefore I beseech
blessed Mary ever Virgin,
blessed Michael the Archangel,
blessed John the Baptist,
the holy apostles Peter and Paul,
and all the saints, and thee,
father, to pray to the Lord
our God for me.

The priest then says :

Misereatur vestri omnipotens
Deus, et dimissis peccatis
vestris, perducatur vos ad
vitam æternam.

May almighty God have
mercy on you, and, forgiving
your sins, bring you to ever-
lasting life.

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

Indulgentiam, absolutio-
nem, et remissionem pecca-

May the almighty and
merciful Lord grant us par-

torum nostrorum tribuat nobis omnipotens et misericors Dominus.

R. Amen.

V. Converte nos, Deus, salutaris noster.

R. Et averte iram tuam a nobis.

V. Deus, in adjutorium meum intende.

R. Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.

Gloria Patri, &c.

Laus tibi, Domine, Rex æternæ gloriæ.

ANT. Miserere.

don, absolution, and remission of our sins.

R. Amen.

V. Convert us, O God, our Saviour.

R. And turn away thy anger from us.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Gloria, &c.

Praise be to thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory.

ANT. Have mercy.

The first psalm expresses the confidence with which the just man *sleeps in peace*; but it also rebukes those tepid Christians, whose *dull hearts* are but too often enslaved to *vanity* and *lies*, and exhorts them to examine, at the close of the day, the thoughts of their *hearts*, and be *sorry for them* at that time of stillness and repose.

PSALM 4

Cum invocarem exaudivit me Deus justitiæ meæ: * in tribulatione dilatasti mihi.

Miserere mei: * et exaudi orationem meam.

Filii hominum, usquequo gravi corde: * ut quid diligitis vanitatem, et queritis mendacium?

Et scitote quoniam mirificavit Dominus sanctum suum: * Dominus exaudiet me, cum clamavero ad eum.

Irascimini, et nolite peccare: * quæ dicitis in cordibus vestris, in cubilibus vestris compungimini.

When I called upon him, the God of my justice heard me: when I was in distress, thou hast enlarged me.

Have mercy on me: and hear my prayer.

O ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart? why do you love vanity, and seek after lying?

Know ye also that the Lord hath made his holy One wonderful: the Lord will hear me, when I shall cry unto him.

Be ye angry, and sin not: the things you say in your hearts, be sorry for them upon your beds.

Sacrificate sacrificium justitiæ, et sperate in Domino :
* multi dicunt : Quis ostendit nobis bona ?

Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui Domine :
* dedisti lætitiã in corde meo.

A fructu frumenti, vini et olei sui : * multiplicati sunt.

In pace in idipsum : * dormiam et requiescam.

Quoniam tu, Domine, singulariter in spe : * constitui me.

Offer up the sacrifice of justice, and trust in the Lord : many say, who showeth us good things ?

The light of thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us : thou hast given gladness in my heart.

By the fruit of their corn, their wine, and oil, they are multiplied.

In peace, in the self same, I will sleep, and I will rest.

For thou, O Lord, singularly hast settled me in hope.

The Church has introduced here the first six verses of Psalm XXX., because they contain the prayer which our Saviour made when dying : *Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit!*—words so beautifully appropriate in this Office of the close of the day.

PSALM 30

In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum :
* in justitia tua libera me.

Inclina ad me aurem tuam : * accelera ut eruas me.

Esto mihi in Deum protectorem, et in domum refugii : * ut salvum me facias.

Quoniam fortitudo mea, et refugium meum es tu : * et propter nomen tuum deduces me, et enutries me.

Educes me de laqueo hoc, quem absconderunt mihi : * quoniam tu es protector meus.

In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum : * redemisti me, Domine, Deus veritatis.

In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded : deliver me in thy justice.

Bow down thine ear to me : make haste to deliver me.

Be thou unto me a God, a protector, and a house of refuge, to save me.

For thou art my strength, and my refuge : and for thy name's sake thou wilt lead me, and nourish me.

Thou wilt bring me out of this snare, which they have hidden for me : for thou art my protector.

Into thy hands I commend my spirit : thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, the God of truth.

The third psalm gives the motives of the just man's confidence, even during the dangers of the night. The description here given of peace of mind should make the sinner long for a reconciliation with his God, that so he, too, may enjoy that divine protection, without which there can be no security or happiness in this life of peril and misery.

PSALM 90

Qui habitat in adjutorio
Altissimi: * in protectione
Dei cœli commorabitur.

Dicit Domino: Susceptor
meus es tu, et refugium
meum: * Deus meus, spe-
rabo in eum.

Quoniam ipse liberavit me
de laqueo venantium: * et a
verbo aspero.

Scapulis suis obumbrabit
tibi: * et sub pennis ejus
sperabis.

Scuto circumdabit te ve-
ritas ejus: * non timebis a
timore nocturno.

A sagitta volante in die, a
negotio perambulante in te-
nebris: * ab incursu et dæ-
monio meridiano.

Cadent a latere tuo mille,
et decem millia a dextris
tuis: * ad te autem non ap-
propinquabit.

Verumtamen oculis tuis
considerabis: * et retribu-
tionem peccatorum videbis.

Quoniam tu es, Domine,
spes mea: * Altissimum
posuisti refugium tuum.

Non accedet ad te malum:

He that dwelleth in the aid
of the Most High, shall abide
under the protection of the
God of heaven.

He shall say to the Lord:
Thou art my protector, and
my refuge: my God, in him
will I trust.

For he hath delivered me
from the snare of the hunters:
and from the sharp word.

He will overshadow thee
with his shoulders: and under
his wings thou shalt trust.

His truth shall compass
thee with a shield: thou shalt
not be afraid of the terror of
the night.

Of the arrow that flieth in
the day: of the business that
walketh about in the dark:
of invasion, or of the noon-
day devil.

A thousand shall fall at thy
side, and ten thousand at thy
right hand: but it shall not
come nigh thee.

But thou shalt consider
with thy eyes: and shalt see
the reward of the wicked.

Because *thou hast said*:
Thou, O Lord, art my hope:
thou hast made the Most High
thy refuge.

There shall no evil come to

* et flagellum non appropinquabit tabernaculo tuo.

Quoniam angelis suis mandavit de te : * ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.

In manibus portabunt te : * ne forte offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum.

Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis : * et conculcabis leonem et draconem.

Quoniam in me speravit, liberabo eum : * protegam eum, quoniam cognovit nomen meum.

Clamabit ad me, et ego exaudiam eum : * cum ipso eum in tribulatione, eripiam eum, et glorificabo eum.

Longitudine dierum replebo eum : * et ostendam illi salutare meum.

The fourth psalm invites the *servants* of God to persevere, with fervour, in the prayers they offer during the *night*. The faithful should say this psalm in a spirit of gratitude to God, for raising up in the Church adorers of His holy name, whose grand vocation is to *lift up their hands*, day and night, for the safety of Israel. On such prayers depend the happiness and the destinies of the world.

PSALM 133

Ecce nunc benedicite Dominum : * omnes servi Domini.

Qui statis in domo Domini : * in atriis domus Dei nostri.

In noctibus extollite manus vestras in sancta : * et benedicite Dominum.

thee, nor shall the scourge come near thy dwelling.

For he hath given his angels charge over thee : to keep thee in all thy ways.

In their hands they shall bear thee up : lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk : and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon.

God will say of thee : Because he hoped in me, I will deliver him : I will protect him, because he hath known my name.

He will cry to me, and I will hear him : I am with him in tribulation, I will deliver him, and I will glorify him.

I will fill him with length of days : and I will show him my salvation.

Behold now bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord.

Who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.

In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places, and bless ye the Lord.

Benedicat te Dominus ex
Sion : * qui fecit cœlum et
terram.

ANT. Miserere mei, Do-
mine, et exaudi orationem
meam.

Say to Israel : May the Lord
out of Sion bless thee, he that
made heaven and earth.

ANT. Have mercy on me, O
Lord, and hear my prayer.

HYMN¹

Te lucis ante terminum,
Rerum Creator, poscimus,
Ut pro tua clementia
Sis præsul et custodia.

Procul recedant somnia,
Et noctium phantasmata ;
Hostemque nostrum com-
prime,
Ne polluantur corpora.

Præsta, Pater piissime,
Patrique compar Unice,
Cum Spiritu Paraclito
Regnans per omne sæculum.
Amen.

Before the closing of the
light, we beseech thee, Crea-
tor of all things, that in thy
clemency, thou be our pro-
tector and our guard.

May the dreams and phan-
toms of night depart far from
us ; and do thou repress our
enemy, lest our bodies be
profaned.

Most merciful Father, and
thou, his only-begotten Son,
coequal with him, reigning
for ever with the holy Para-
clete, grant this our prayer !
Amen.

CAPITULUM

(*Jeremias* xiv.)

Tu autem in nobis es,
Domine, et nomen sanctum
tuum invocatum est super
nos ; ne derelinquas nos,
Domine Deus noster.

R. In manus tuas, Domi-
ne : * Commendo spiritum
meum. In manus tuas.

V. Redemisti nos, Domi-
ne Deus veritatis. * Com-
mendo.

But thou art in us, O Lord,
and thy holy name has been
invoked upon us : forsake us
not, O Lord our God.

R. Into thy hands, O Lord :
* I commend my spirit. Into
thy hands.

V. Thou hast redeemed us,
O Lord God of truth. * I
commend.

¹ In the monastic rite, as follows :

Te lucis ante terminum,
Rerum Creator, poscimus,
Ut solita clementia
Sis præsul ad custodiam.

Procul recedant somnia,
Et noctium phantasmata :

Hostemque nostrum comprime,
Ne polluantur corpora.

Præsta Pater omnipotens,
Per Jesum Christum Dominum,
Qui tecum in perpetuum
Ragnat cum sancto Spiritu.

Gloria. In manus tuas.
V. Custodi nos, Domine, ut
 pupillam oculi.

R. Sub umbra alarum
 tuarum protege nos.

ANT. Salva nos.

Glory. Into thy hands.
V. Preserve us, O Lord, as
 the apple of thine eye.

R. Protect us under the
 shadow of thy wings.

ANT. Save us.

The canticle of the venerable Simeon—who, whilst holding the divine Infant in his arms, proclaimed Him to be the *light of the Gentiles*, and then slept the sleep of the just—admirably expresses the repose of heart which the soul that is in the grace of God will experience in her Jesus; for, as the apostle says, we may live together with Jesus, whether we are awake or asleep.¹

CANTICLE OF SIMEON

(*St. Luke ii.*)

Nunc dimittis servum tuum Domine: * secundum verbum tuum in pace.

Quia viderunt oculi mei: * salutare tuum.

Quod parasti: * ante faciem omnium populorum.

Lumen ad revelationem Gentium: * et gloriam plebis tuæ Israël.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, &c.

ANT. Salva nos, Domine, vigilantes, custodi nos dormientes; ut vigilemus cum Christo, et requiescamus in pace.

Now dost thou dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace.

Because my eyes have seen thy salvation.

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples.

A light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory, &c.

ANT. Save us, O Lord, while awake, and watch us as we sleep; that we may watch with Christ, and rest in peace.

PRAYERS

Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Pater noster.

V. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

Lord have mercy on us.

Christ have mercy on us.

Lord have mercy on us.

Our Father.

V. And lead us not into temptation.

¹ *Thess. v. 10.*

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

Credo in Deum, &c.

V. Carnis resurrectionem.

R. Vitam æternam. Amen.

V. Benedictus es, Domine
Deus patrum nostrorum.

R. Et laudabilis et gloriosus
in sæcula.

V. Benedicamus Patrem
et Filium cum sancto Spiritu.

R. Laudemus, et superexaltemus
eum in sæcula.

V. Benedictus es, Domine,
in firmamento caeli.

R. Et laudabilis, et gloriosus
et superexaltatus in sæcula.

V. Benedicat et custodiat
nos omnipotens et misericors
Dominus.

R. Amen.

V. Dignare, Domine, nocte
ista.

R. Sine peccato nos custodire.

V. Miserere nostri, Domine.

R. Miserere nostri.

V. Fiat misericordia tua,
Domine, super nos.

R. Quemadmodum speravimus
in te.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem
meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te
veniat.

R. But deliver us from evil,
I believè in God, &c.

V. The resurrection of the
body.

R. And life everlasting.
Amen.

V. Blessed art thou, O Lord
God of our fathers.

R. And praiseworthy and
glorious for ever.

V. Let us bless the Father
and the Son, with the Holy
Ghost.

R. Let us praise, and magnify
him for ever.

V. Thou art blessed, O
Lord, in the firmament of
heaven.

R. And praiseworthy, and
glorious, and magnified for
ever.

V. May the almighty and
merciful Lord bless us and
keep us.

R. Amen.

V. Vouchsafe, O Lord,
this night.

R. To keep us without sin.

V. Have mercy on us, O
Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

V. Let thy mercy, O
Lord, be upon us.

R. As we have hoped in
thee.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come
unto thee.

After these *prayers* (which are omitted if the Office be of a double rite), the priest says :

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

OREMUS

Visita, quæsumus, Domine, habitationem istam, et omnes insidias inimici ab ea longe repelle: angeli tui sancti habitent in ea, qui nos in pace custodiant, et benedictio tua sit super nos semper. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum, Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

Amen.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

V. Benedicamus Domino.

R. Deo gratias.

Benedicat et custodiat nos omnipotens et misericors Dominus, Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus sanctus.

R. Amen.

LET US PRAY

Visit, we beseech thee, O Lord, this house and family, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy: let thy holy angels dwell herein, who may keep us in peace, and may thy blessing be always upon us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

V. Let us bless the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

May the almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless and preserve us.

R. Amen.

ANTHEM TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Ave Regina cœlorum,
Ave Domina angelorum:
Salve radix, salve porta,
Ex qua mundo lux est orta;
Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa:
Vale, O valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.

V. Dignare me laudare te,
Virgo sacrata.

R. Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos.

Hail, Queen of heaven!
Hail, Lady of the angels!
Hail blessed root and gate,
from which came light upon
the world! Rejoice, O glorious
Virgin, that surpassest all
in beauty! Hail, most lovely
Queen! and pray to Christ for
us.

V. Vouchsafe, O holy Virgin,
that I may praise thee.

R. Give me power against
thine enemies.

OREMUS

Concede, misericors Deus, fragilitati nostræ præsidium: ut, qui sanctæ Dei Genitricis memoriam agimus,

LET US PRAY

Grant, O merciful God, thy protection to us in our weakness; that we who celebrate the memory of the holy

intercessionis ejus auxilio, a nostris iniquitatibus resurgamus. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

V. Divinum auxilium maneat semper nobiscum.

R. Amen.*

Mother of God, may, through the aid of her intercession, rise again from our sins. Through the same Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

V. May the divine assistance remain always with us.

R. Amen.*

Then, in secret, *Pater, Ave, and Credo*; page 44.

* In the monastic rite, this response is as follows :

R. Et cum fratribus nostris absentibus. Amen.

R. And with our absent brethren. Amen.

PROPER OF THE TIME

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

THIS Sunday, the first of the six which come during Lent, is one of the most solemn throughout the year. It has the same privilege as Passion and Palm Sundays ; that is, it never gives place to any feast, even that of the patron, titular saint, or dedication of the Church. In the ancient calendars, it is called *Invocabit*, from the first word of the [ntroit of the Mass. In the middle ages,¹ it was called *Brand Sunday*, because the young people, who had mis-conducted themselves during the carnival, were obliged to show themselves to-day at the church with a torch in their hands, as a kind of public satisfaction for their riot and excess.

Lent solemnly opens to-day. We have already noticed that the four preceding days were added since the time of St. Gregory the Great, in order to make up forty days of fasting. Neither can we look upon Ash Wednesday as the solemn opening of the season ; for the faithful are not bound to hear Mass on that day. The holy Church, seeing her children now assembled together, speaks to them, in her Office of Matins, these eloquent and noble words of St. Leo the Great : ‘ Having to announce to you, dearly beloved, the most sacred and chief fast, how can I more appropriately begin, than with the words of the apostle, in whom Christ Himself spoke, and by saying to you what has just

¹ More especially in France. [Tr.]

been read : *Behold ! now is the acceptable time ; behold ! now is the day of salvation.* For although there be no time which is not replete with divine gifts, and we may always, by God's grace, have access to His mercy, yet ought we all to redouble our efforts to make spiritual progress and be animated with unusual confidence, now that the anniversary of the day of our redemption is approaching, inviting us to devote ourselves to every good work, that so we may celebrate, with purity of body and mind, the incomparable mystery of our Lord's Passion.

'It is true that our devotion and reverence towards so great a mystery should be kept up during the whole year, and we ourselves should be at all times, in the eyes of God, the same as we are bound to be at the Easter solemnity. But this is an effort which only few among us have the courage to sustain. The weakness of the flesh induces us to relent our austerities ; the various occupations of every-day life take up our thoughts ; and thus even the virtuous find their hearts clogged by this world's dust. Hence it is that our Lord has most providentially given us these forty days, whose holy exercises should be to us a remedy, whereby to regain our purity of soul. The good works and the holy fastings of this season were instituted as an atonement for, and an obliteration of, the sins we commit during the rest of the year.

'Now, therefore, that we are about to enter upon these days, which are so full of mystery, and which were instituted for the holy purpose of purifying both soul and body, let us, dearly beloved, be careful to do as the apostle bids us, and cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit : that thus the combat between the two substances being made less fierce, the soul, which, when she herself is subject to God, ought to be the ruler of the body, will recover her own dignity and position. Let us

also avoid giving offence to any man, so that there be none to blame or speak evil things of us. For we deserve the harsh remarks of infidels, and we provoke the tongues of the wicked to blaspheme religion, when we who fast lead unholy lives. For our fast does not consist in the mere abstinence from food ; nor is it of much use to deny food to our body, unless we restrain the soul from sin.¹

Each Sunday of Lent offers to our consideration a passage from the Gospel, which is in keeping with the sentiments wherewith the Church would have us be filled. To-day she brings before us the temptation of our Lord in the desert. What light and encouragement there is for us in this instruction !

We acknowledge ourselves to be sinners ; we are engaged, at this very time, in doing penance for the sins we have committed—but how was it that we fell into sin ? The devil tempted us ; we did not reject the temptation ; then we yielded to the suggestion, and the sin was committed. This is the history of our past ; and such it would, also, be for the future, were we not to profit by the lesson given us to-day by our Redeemer.

When the apostle speaks of the wonderful mercy shown us by our divine Saviour, who vouchsafed to make Himself like to us in all things save sin, he justly lays stress on His temptations.² He, who is very God, humbled Himself even so low as this, to prove how tenderly He compassionated us. Here, then, we have the Saint of saints allowing the wicked spirit to approach Him, in order that we might learn, from His example, how we are to gain victory under temptation.

Satan has had his eye upon Jesus ; he is troubled at beholding such matchless virtue. The wonderful circumstances of His birth ; the shepherds called by angels to His crib, and the Magi guided by the

¹ Fourth Sermon for Lent.

² Heb. iv. 15.

star ; the Infant's escape from Herod's plot ; the testimony rendered to this new Prophet by John the Baptist : all these things, which seem so out of keeping with the thirty years spent in obscurity at Nazareth, are a mystery to the infernal serpent, and fill him with apprehension. The ineffable mystery of the Incarnation has been accomplished unknown to him ; he never once suspects that the humble Virgin, Mary, is she who was foretold by the prophet Isaias, as having to bring forth the Emmanuel ;¹ but he is aware that the time has come, that the last week spoken of to Daniel has begun its course, and that the very pagans are looking towards Judea for a deliverer. He is afraid of this Jesus ; he resolves to speak with Him, and elicit from Him some expression which will show him whether He be or not the Son of God ; he will tempt Him to some imperfection, or sin, which, should he commit it, will prove that the object of so much fear is, after all, but a mortal Man.

The enemy of God and men is, of course, disappointed. He approaches Jesus ; but all his efforts turn only to his own confusion. Our Redeemer, with all the self-possession and easy majesty of a God-Man, repels the attacks of satan ; but He reveals not His heavenly origin. The wicked spirit retires without having made any discovery beyond this—that Jesus is a prophet, faithful to God. Later on, when he sees the Son of God treated with contempt, calumniated and persecuted ; when he finds that his own attempts to have Him put to death are so successful : his pride and his blindness will be at their height ; and not till Jesus expires on the cross, will he learn that his victim was not merely Man, but Man and God. Then will he discover how all his plots against Jesus have but served to manifest, in all their beauty, the mercy and justice of God :

¹ Is. vii. 14.

His mercy, because He saved mankind ; and His justice, because He broke the power of hell for ever.

These were the designs of divine Providence in permitting the wicked spirit to defile, by his presence, the retreat of Jesus, to speak to Him, and to lay his hands upon Him. But let us attentively consider the triple temptation in all its circumstances ; for our Redeemer suffered it only in order that He might instruct and encourage us.

We have three enemies to fight against ; our soul has three dangers ; for, as the beloved disciple says, all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life !¹ By the concupiscence of the flesh, is meant the love of sensual things, which covets whatever is agreeable to the flesh, and, when not curbed, draws the soul into unlawful pleasures. Concupiscence of the eyes expresses the love of the goods of this world, such as riches, and possessions ; these dazzle the eye, and then seduce the heart. Pride of life is that confidence in ourselves, which leads us to be vain and presumptuous, and makes us forget that all we have, our life and every good gift, we have from God.

Every one of our sins comes from one of these three sources ; every one of our temptations aims at making us accept the concupiscence of the flesh, or the concupiscence of the eyes, or the pride of life. Our Saviour, then, who would be our model in all things, deigned to subject Himself to these three temptations.

First of all satan tempts Him in what regards the flesh : he suggests to Him to satisfy the cravings of hunger, by working a miracle, and changing the stones into bread. If Jesus consent, and show an eagerness in giving this indulgence to His body, the tempter will conclude that He is but a frail mortal,

¹ 1 St. John ii. 16.

subject to concupiscence like other men. When he tempts us, who have inherited evil concupiscence from Adam, his suggestions go further than this : he endeavours to defile the soul by the body. But the sovereign holiness of the Incarnate Word could never permit satan to use upon Him the power which he has received of tempting man in his outward senses. The lesson, therefore, which the Son of God here gives us, is one of temperance : but we know that, for us, temperance is the mother of purity, and that intemperance excites our senses to rebel.

The second temptation is to pride ; ‘ Cast Thyself down ; the angels shall bear Thee up in their hands.’ The enemy is anxious to see if the favours of heaven have produced in Jesus’ soul that haughtiness, that ungrateful self-confidence, which makes the creature arrogate God’s gifts to itself, and forget its benefactor. Here, also, he is foiled ; our Redeemer’s humility confounds the pride of the rebel angel.

He then makes a last effort : he hopes to gain over by ambition Him who has given such proofs of temperance and humility. He shows Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them ; and says to Him : ‘ All these will I give Thee, if falling down, Thou wilt adore me.’ Jesus rejects the wretched offer, and drives from Him the seducer, the prince of this world ;¹ hereby teaching us that we must despise the riches of this world, as often as our keeping or getting them is to be on the condition of our violating the law of God and paying homage to satan.

But let us observe how it is that our divine Model, our Redeemer, overcomes the tempter. Does He hearken to His words ? Does He allow the temptation time, and give it strength by delay ? We did so, when we were tempted ; and we fell. But our Lord immediately meets each temptation with the shield of God’s word. He says : ‘ It is written :

¹ St. John xiv. 30.

Not on bread alone doth man live. It is written : Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. It is written : The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve.' This, then, must be our practice for the time to come. Eve brought perdition on herself, and on the whole human race, because she listened to the serpent. He that dallies with temptation is sure to fall. We are now in a season of extraordinary grace ; our hearts are on the watch, dangerous occasions are removed, everything that savours of worldliness is laid aside ; our souls, purified by prayer, fasting, and almsdeeds, are to rise with Christ, to a new life ; but, shall we persevere ? All depends upon how we behave under temptation. Here, at the very opening of Lent, the Church gives us this passage of the holy Gospel, that we may have not only precept but example. If we be attentive and faithful, the lesson she gives us will produce its fruit ; and when we come to the Easter solemnity, we shall have those sure pledges of perseverance : vigilance, self-diffidence, prayer, and the never-failing help of divine grace.

The Greek Church, in spite of her principle of never admitting a feast during Lent, celebrates to-day one of her greatest solemnities. It is called *Orthodoxia*, and was instituted in memory of the restoration of sacred images in Constantinople and the eastern empire, in the year 842, when the empress Theodora, aided by the holy patriarch Methodius, put a stop to the Iconoclast persecution, and restored to the churches the holy images which the fury of the heretics had taken away.

MASS

The Station, at Rome, is in the patriarchal basilica of Saint John Lateran. It was but right, that a Sunday of such solemnity as this should be celebrated

in the church which is the mother and mistress of all churches, not only of the holy city itself, but of the whole world. It is here that the public penitents were reconciled on Maundy Thursday; it is here, also, in the baptistery of Constantine, that the catechumens received Baptism on the night preceding Easter Sunday. No other basilica could have had such a claim for the Station of a day like this; for it is there that the Lenten Fast had been so often proclaimed by Leo and Gregory.

The Introit, as likewise the Gradual, Tract, Offertory, and Communion, are all taken from Psalm XC. We have elsewhere spoken of the appropriateness of this beautiful psalm to the spirit of the Church during the season of Lent. It bids the Christian soul confide in the divine aid. She is now devoting her whole energies to prayer; she is engaged in battle with her own and God's enemies. She has need of support. Let her not be afraid: God tells her, in these words of the Introit, that her confidence in Him shall not be in vain.

INTROIT

Invocabit me, et ego exaudiam eum: eripiam eum et glorificabo eum: longitudine dierum adimplebo eum.

Ps. Qui habitat in adiutorio Altissimi: in protectione Dei cœli commorabitur. *V.* Gloria Patri. Invocabit me.

He shall cry to me, and I will hear him: I will deliver him, and I will glorify him: I will fill him with length of days.

Ps. He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High, shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven. *V.* Glory, &c. He shall cry.

In the Collect, the Church prays for her children, that their fast may not only *purify* them, but also obtain for them that divine assistance, which will secure their salvation by enabling them to abound in *good works*.

COLLECT

Deus, qui Ecclesiam tuam annua quadragesimali observatione purificas: præsta familiæ tuæ, ut quod a te obtinere abstinendo nititur, hoc bonis operibus exsequatur. Per Dominum.

O God, who purifiest thy Church by the yearly observance of Lent: grant that what thy children endeavour to obtain of thee by abstinence, they may put in execution by good works. Through, &c.

The two following Collects, for the general wants of the Church, are then added.

SECOND COLLECT

A cunctis nos, quæsumus Domine, mentis et corporis defende periculis: et intercedente beata et gloriosa semper Virgine Dei Genitrice Maria, cum beato Joseph, beatis apostolis tuis Petro et Paulo, atque beato N. et omnibus sanctis, salutem nobis tribue benignus et pacem: ut, destructis adversitatibus et erroribus universis, Ecclesia tua secunda tibi serviat libertate.

Preserve us, O Lord, we beseech thee, from all dangers of soul and body: and by the intercession of the glorious and blessed Mary, the ever Virgin-Mother of God, of blessed Joseph, of thy blessed apostles Peter and Paul, of blessed N. (*here is mentioned the titular saint of the church*), and of all the saints, grant us, in thy mercy, health and peace; that all adversities and errors being removed, thy Church may serve thee with undisturbed liberty.

THIRD COLLECT

Omnipotens sempiternæ Deus, qui vivorum dominaris simul et mortuorum, omniumque misereris quos tuos fide et opere futuros esse prænoscis: te supplices exoramus, ut pro quibus effundere preces decrevimus, quosque vel præsens sæculum adhuc in carne retinet, vel futurum jam exutos corpore suscepit, inter-

O almighty and eternal God, who hast dominion over the living and the dead, and art merciful to all who thou knowest will be thine by faith and good works: we humbly beseech thee, that those for whom we have proposed to offer our prayers, whether this world still retains them in the flesh, or the next world hath already received them divested

cedentibus omnibus sanctis tuis, pietatis tuæ clementia, omnium delictorum suorum veniam consequantur. Per Dominum.

of their bodies, may, by the clemency of thine own goodness, and the intercession of thy saints, obtain pardon and full remission of their sins. Through, &c.

EPISTLE

Lectio Epistolæ beati Pauli Apostoli ad Corinthios.

Lesson of the Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians.

2 *Cap.* vi.

Fratres, exhortamur vos, ne in vacuum gratiam Dei recipiatis. Ait enim: Tempore accepto exaudivi te, et in die salutis adjuvi te. Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies salutis. Nemini dantes ullam offensio-nem, ut non vituperetur ministerium nostrum: sed in omnibus exhibeamus nos-metipsos sicut Dei mini-stros, in multa patientia, in tribulationibus, in necessi-tatibus, in angustiis, in plagis, in carceribus, in se-ditionibus, in laboribus, in vigiliis, in jejuniis, in casti-tate, in scientia, in longa-nimitate, in suavitate, in Spiritu sancto, in charitate non ficta, in verbo veritatis, in virtute Dei, per arma justitiæ a dextris et a sini-stris, per gloriam et igno-bilitatem, per infamiam et bonam famam; ut seducto-res, et veraces; sicut qui ignoti, et cogniti; quasi mor-ientes, et ecce vivimus: ut castigati, et non mortificati: quasi tristes, semper autem gaudentes: sicut egentes,

2 *Ch.* vi.

Brethren, we exhort you that you receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee. Behold, now is the acceptable time: behold, now is the day of salvation. Giving no of-fence to any man, that our ministry be not blamed: but in all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in pris-ons, in seditions, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armour of justice on the right hand, and on the left: by honour and dishonour: by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true: as unknown, and yet known: as dying, and behold we live: as chastised, and not killed: as sorrowful, yet always rejoic-ing: as needy, yet enriching

multos autem locupletantes : many : as having nothing, and tamquam nihil habentes, et possessing all things. omnia possidentes.

These words of the apostle give us a very different idea of the Christian life from that which our own tepidity suggests. We dare not say that he is wrong, and we are right ; but we put a strange interpretation upon his words, and we tell both ourselves and those around us that the advice he here gives is not to be taken literally nowadays, and that it was written for those special difficulties of the first age of the Church, when the faithful stood in need of unusual detachment and almost heroism, because they were always in danger of persecution and death. The interpretation is full of that discretion which meets with the applause of our cowardice, and it easily persuades us to be at rest, just as though we had no dangers to fear, and no battle to fight ; whereas, we have both : for there is the devil, the world, flesh and blood. The Church never forgets it ; and hence, at the opening of this great season, she sends us into the desert, that there we may learn from our Jesus how we are to fight. Let us go ; let us learn, from the temptations of our divine Master, that the life of man upon earth is a warfare,¹ and that, unless our fighting be truceless and brave, our life, which we would fain pass in peace, will witness our defeat. That such a misfortune may not befall us, the Church cries out to us, in the words of St. Paul : *Behold ! now is the acceptable time. Behold ! now is the day of salvation.* Let us, in all things, comport ourselves as the servants of God, and keep our ground unflinchingly to the end of our holy campaign. God is watching over us, as He did over His beloved Son in the desert.

The Gradual tells us that we are under the protection of the angels, and that these blessed spirits

¹ Job. vii. 1.

leave us not, either day or night. During Lent they redouble their efforts against our enemies, and rejoice at seeing us sinners accept the penance which is to bring us to salvation.

The Tract, too, inspires us with confidence: it speaks to us of the goodness of God, and of His fatherly watchfulness over us His ungrateful children, whom He wishes to make His faithful friends and coheirs of His kingdom.

GRADUAL

Angelis suis Deus mandavit de te, ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.

V. In manibus portabunt te, ne unquam offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum.

God hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

V. In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

TRACT

V. Qui habitat in adjutorio altissimi: in protectione Dei cœli commorabitur.

V. Dicet Domino: Susceptor meus es tu, et refugium meum: Deus meus, sperabo in eum.

V. Quoniam ipse liberavit me de laqueo venantium: et a verbo aspero.

V. Scapulis suis obumbrabit tibi: et sub pennis ejus sperabis.

V. Scuto circumdabit te veritas ejus: non timebis a timore nocturno.

V. A sagitta volante per diem, a negotio perambulante in tenebris: a ruina et dæmonia meridiano.

V. Cadent a latere tuo mille, et decem millia a

V. He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High, shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven.

V. He shall say to the Lord: Thou art my protector, and my refuge: my God, in him will I trust.

V. For he hath delivered me from the snare of the hunters: and from the sharp word.

V. He will overshadow thee with his shoulders: and under his wings thou shalt trust.

V. His truth shall compass thee with a shield: thou shalt not be afraid of the terror of the night.

V. Of the arrow that fieth in the day: of the business that walketh in the dark: of ruin, or of the noonday devil.

V. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at

dextris tuis : tibi autem non appropinquabit.

V. Quoniam angelis suis mandavit de te : ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.

V. In manibus portabunt te : ne unquam offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum.

V. Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis : et conculcabis leonem et draconem.

V. Quoniam in me speravit, liberabo eum : protegam eum, quoniam cognovit nomen meum.

V. Invocabit me, et ego exaudiam eum : cum ipso sum in tribulatione.

V. Eripiam eum et glorificabo eum : longitudine dierum adimplebo eum, et ostendam illi salutare meum.

thy right hand : but it shall not come nigh thee.

V. For he hath given his angels charge over thee : to keep thee in all thy ways.

V. In their hands they shall bear thee up : lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

V. Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk : and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon.

V. Because he hoped in me, I will deliver him : I will protect him, because he hath known my name.

V. He will cry to me, and I will hear him : I am with him in trouble.

V. I will deliver him and I will glorify him : I will fill him with length of days, and I will show him my salvation.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii secundum Matthæum.

Cap. iv.

In illo tempore, Ductus est Jesus in desertum a Spiritu, ut tentaretur a diabolo. Et, cum jejunasset quadraginta diebus et quadraginta noctibus, postea esuriit. Et accedens tentator, dixit ei : Si Filius Dei es, dic ut lapides isti panes fiant. Qui respondens, dixit : Scriptum est : Non in solo pane vivit homo, sed in omni verbo quod procedit de ore Dei. Tunc assumpsit eum diabolus in sanctam civitatem, et statuit eum

Sequel of the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Ch. iv.

At that time, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards he was hungry. And the tempter coming, said to him : If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Who answered and said : It is written : Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. Then the devil took him up into the holy city, and

super pinnaculum templi, et dixit ei: Si Filius Dei es, mitte te deorsum. Scriptum est enim: Quia angelis suis mandavit de te, et in manibus tollent te, ne forte offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum. Ait illi Jesus: Rursum scriptum est: Non tentabis Dominum Deum tuum. Iterum assumpsit eum diabolus in montem excelsum valde: et ostendit ei omnia regna mundi, et gloriam eorum, et dixit ei: Hæc omnia tibi dabo, si cadens adoraveris me. Tunc dicit ei Jesus: Vade satana: scriptum est enim: Dominum Deum tuum adorabis, et illi soli servies. Tunc reliquit eum diabolus: et ecce angeli accesserunt, et ministrabant ei.

set him upon the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, that he hath given his angels charge over thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said to him: It is written again: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again the devil took him up into a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and said to him: All these will I give thee, if falling down thou wilt adore me. Then Jesus saith to him: Begone, satan, for it is written: The Lord thy God shalt thou adore and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil left him; and behold angels came and ministered to him.

Let us admire the exceeding goodness of the Son of God, who, not satisfied with atoning for all our sins by dying on the cross, deigns to suffer a fast of forty days and forty nights, in order to encourage us to do penance. He would not that the justice of His heavenly Father should exact any punishment from us, unless He Himself first suffered it, and that, too, a thousand times more severely than we could. What are all our penances, even were they done thoroughly, when we compare them with the severity of this fast of Jesus in the desert? Can we have the face to be ever seeking for dispensations from the little which our Lord asks of us in atonement for our sins—sins, alas! which deserve such rigorous penance? Instead of complaining at our feeling a slight inconvenience of a few days' duration, let

us compassionate our innocent Jesus, who subjects Himself to forty days of most rigorous privation of food and drink.

What was it that supported Him ? Prayer, devotedness to us, and the knowledge of the exigencies of His Father's justice. And when the forty days were over, and His human Nature was faint from exhaustion, He is assailed by temptation ; but here again He thinks upon us, and sets us an example : He triumphs over the temptation, calmly and resolutely, and thereby teaches us how to conquer. How blasphemous the boldness of satan, who dares to tempt the Just by excellence ! But, how divine is the patience of Jesus, who permits the hellish monster to lay his hand upon Him, and carry Him from place to place ! The Christian soul is oftentimes exposed to the vilest insults from this same enemy ; nay, at times, she is on the point of complaining to her God, for permitting her to have such humiliations. Let her, on these occasions, think upon Jesus, the Saint of saints, who was given over, so to speak, to the wicked spirit ; and yet, He is not the less the Son of God, the Conqueror of hell ; and all that satan gains by his attack is utter defeat. In the same way, if the soul, when under the violence of temptation, resist with all her energy, she is not one jot less dear to God, and satan retires with one more eternal shame and chastisement upon him. Let us take part with the holy angels, who, as soon as the tempter is gone, come to our Redeemer, and respectfully administer food to Him. How affectionately do they compassionate His hunger and thirst ! How zealously they make amends, by their adorations, for the frightful outrage offered to their King ! How fervently they extol the charity of their God, who, out of His love for man, seems to have been forgetting His own dignity, in order to provide for the wants of the children of Adam.

At the Offertory, the Church borrows, once more, the words of David, and shows us our Lord *overshadowing* His faithful people with the wings of His tenderest care, and *shielding* us, with the *truth* of holy faith, from every attack.¹

OFFERTORY

<p>Scapulis suis obumbrabit tibi Dominus, et sub penis ejus sperabis: scuto circumdabit te veritas ejus.</p>	<p>The Lord will overshadow thee with his shoulders: and under his wings thou shalt trust: his truth shall compass thee with a shield.</p>
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Lent consists in something more than mere fasting. Fasting will not produce our conversion, unless we join with it the avoiding of dangerous occasions; for these would lead us into sin, and rob us at once of God's grace. Hence it is that the Church, in her Secret, beseeches our Lord to bless us with the special grace of keeping from *noxious pleasures*.

SECRET

<p>Sacrificium quadragesimalis initii solemniter immolamus, te, Domine, deprecantes: ut cum epularum restrictione carnalium, a noxiis quoque voluptatibus temperemus. Per Dominum.</p>	<p>We offer thee, O Lord, in the most solemn manner, this sacrifice at the beginning of Lent, humbly beseeching thee, that as we retrain from the food of our bodies, we may also refrain from all noxious pleasures. Through, &c.</p>
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SECOND SECRET

<p>Exaudi nos, Deus salutaris noster: ut per hujus Sacramenti virtutem, a cunctis nos mentis et corporis hostibus tuearis, gratiam tribuens in presenti, et gloriam in futuro.</p>	<p>Graciously grant us, O God our Saviour, that by virtue of this Sacrament, thou mayst defend us from all enemies, both of soul and body, giving us grace in this life, and glory in the next.</p>
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¹ Eph. vi. 16.

THIRD SECRET

Deus, cui soli cognitus est numerus electorum in superna felicitate locandus: tribue quæsumus, ut intercedentibus omnibus sanctis tuis, universorum quos in oratione commendatos suscepimus, et omnium fidelium nomina, beatæ prædestinationis liber adscripta retineat. Per Dominum.

O God, to whom alone is known the number of thine elect to be placed in eternal bliss: grant, we beseech thee, by the intercession of all thy saints, that the book of predestination may contain the names of all those whom we have undertaken to pray for, as well as those of all the faithful. Through, &c.

In order to impress our minds with more and more confidence, the Church repeats, in her Communion-antiphon, the encouraging words already spoken to us in the Offertory. The sacrifice which has just been offered for us is a fresh earnest of how much God loves us.

COMMUNION

Scapulis suis obumbrabit tibi Dominus, et sub pennis ejus sperabis: scuto circumdabit te veritas ejus.

The Lord will overshadow thee with his shoulders: and under his wings thou shalt trust: his truth shall compass thee with a shield.

In the Postcommunion, the Church reminds us that the holy Eucharist is our richest source of strength, because it purifies us. Let the sinner, therefore, lose no time in making his peace with his God; let him not wait for Easter, but receive, as soon as may be, that heavenly food, which saves us from the anger of God, because it makes us one with the very author of salvation.

POSTCOMMUNION

Tui nos, Domine, Sacramenti libatio sancta restauret: et a vetustate purgatos, in mysterii salutaris faciat transire consortium. Per Dominum.

May the holy oblation, O Lord, of thy Sacrament, give us a new life, that, by laying aside the old man, it may bring us to the participation of this saving mystery. Through, &c.

SECOND POSTCOMMUNION

Mundet et muniat nos, quæsumus, Domine, divini sacramenti munus oblatum: et intercedente beata Virgine Dei Genitrice Maria, cum beato Joseph, beatis apostolis Petro et Paulo, atque beato N., et omnibus sanctis, a cunctis nos reddat et perversitatibus expiatus, et adversitatibus expeditos.

May the oblation of this divine Sacrament, we beseech thee, O Lord, both cleanse and defend us, and by the intercession of blessed Mary, the Virgin-Mother of God, of blessed Joseph, of thy blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, of blessed N., and of all the saints, free us from all sin, and deliver us from all adversity.

THIRD POSTCOMMUNION

Purificent nos, quæsumus omnipotens et misericors Deus, Sacramenta quæ sumpsimus: et intercedentibus omnibus sanctis tuis, præsta ut hoc tuum Sacramentum non sit nobis reatus ad pœnam, sed intercessio salutaris ad veniam: sit ablutio scelerum, sit fortitudo fragilium, sit contra omnia mundi pericula firmamentum: sit vivorum atque mortuorum fidelium remissio omnium delictorum. Per Dominum.

May the mysteries we have received purify us, we beseech thee, O almighty and merciful God: and grant by the intercession of all thy saints, that this thy Sacrament may not increase our guilt to punishment, but be a means of obtaining pardon in order to salvation: may it wash away sin, strengthen our frailty, secure us against the dangers of the world: and procure forgiveness for all the faithful, both living and dead. Through, &c.

VESPERS

The psalms and antiphons are given on page 99.

CAPITULUM

2 Cor. vi.

Fratres, hortamur vos ne in vacuum gratiam Dei recipiatis. Ait enim: Tempore accepto exaudivi te, et in die salutis adjuvi te.

Brethren, we exhort you, that you receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee.

For the hymn and versicle, see page 106.

ANTIPHON OF THE MAGNIFICAT

Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies salutis : in his ergo diebus exhibeamus nosmetipsos sicut Dei ministros, in multa patientia, in jejuniis, in vigiliis, et in charitate non ficta.

Behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation : in these days, therefore, let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in fastings, in watchings, and in charity unfeigned.

OREMUS

Deus, qui Ecclesiam tuam annua quadragesimali observatione purificas : præsta familiæ tuæ, ut quod a te obtinere abstinendo nititur, hoc bonis operibus exsequatur. Per Dominum.

LET US PRAY

O God, who purifiest thy Church by the yearly observance of Lent : grant, that what thy children endeavour to obtain of thee by abstinence, they may put in execution by good works. Through, &c.

It sometimes happens, during Lent, that a feast of double class is kept on the Monday ; in which case the Sunday Vespers are of the following feast, and only a commemoration is made of the Sunday.

We will finish our Sunday with the following two fine Prefaces ; the first is from the Mozarabic, the second from the Ambrosian, missal. The truths proposed to-day by the Church for our instruction are here expressed with much unction and eloquence.

PRAYER FROM THE MOZARABIC MISSAL

(*Illatio. Feria VI. Hebdom. IV. Quadragesimæ.*)

Dignum et justum est : nos tibi gratias agere, æterne omnipotens Deus, per Jesum Christum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum. Qui gloriosum de diabolo triumphum jejunos obtinuit : et certandi formulam militibus propriis suo exemplo

It is meet and just, that we give thanks to thee, O eternal and almighty God, through Jesus Christ thy Son, our Lord : who, by fasting, obtained a glorious victory over the devil, and by his own example, taught his soldiers how to fight. For forty days and

monstravit. Quadraginta igitur diebus et quadraginta noctibus Deus et Dominus omnium jejunavit: ut et verum Deum et hominem suscepisse monstraret: et quod Adam per escam perdididerat, suo jejunio repararet. Aggreditur itaque diabolus Virginis Filium: Dei quoque nesciens unigenitum. Et licet veterosissima calliditate eisdem machinis quibus Adam primum dejecerat, etiam secundum seducere obtineret: tamen hoc non valuit, nec fortissimum bellatorem in ulla potuit omnino fraude subripere. Ille etenim quadraginta diebus vel noctibus jejunavit: et postea esuriit: qui quadraginta dudum annorum temporibus, innumeras pane cœlesti multitudines saginavit. Hic est qui virtute propria fretus, cum diabolo tenebrarum principe dimicavit: et eo prostrato victoriæ trophæum ad cœlos magnifice portavit.

forty nights did the God and Lord of all fast, that he might both show that he, the true God, had assumed human nature, and make good, by his fast, that which Adam had forfeited by intemperance. The devil attacked the Virgin's Son, not knowing that he was, moreover, the only-begotten Son of God. And although, with his ancient craft, he used the same artifice to seduce the second Adam, wherewith he had vanquished the first; yet did all his cunning fail with the most brave combatant. He who fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards was hungry, is the same that, of old, for the space of forty years, fed countless multitudes with bread from heaven. This is he that, by his own power, entered into battle with the devil, the prince of darkness; and having cast him down, gloriously bore up to heaven the trophy of his victory.

PRAYER FROM THE AMBROSIAN MISSAL

(Præfatio. Dom. I. in Quadrag.)

Vere quia dignum et iustum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper et ubique gratias agere, Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus, per Christum Dominum nostrum, in quo jejunantium fides alitur, spes provehitur, charitas roboratur. Ipse enim est panis verus et vivus, qui est sub-

It is truly meet and just, right and available to salvation, that we should always, and in all places, give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, almighty Father, eternal God, through Christ our Lord, in whom they that fast find the nourishment of their faith, the advancement of their hope, the strengthening of their

stantia æternitatis, et esca virtutis. Verbum enim tuum, per quod facta sunt omnia, non solum humanarum mentium, sed ipsorum quoque panis est angelorum. Hujus panis alimento Moyses famulus tuus quadraginta diebus, et noctibus, legem suscipiens, jejunavit: et a carnalibus cibis, ut tuæ suavitatis capax esset, abstinuit. Unde nec famem corporis sensit, et terrenarum est oblitus escarum: quia illum et gloriæ tuæ clarificabat aspectus, et, influente Spiritu, Dei sermo pascerebat. Hunc panem etiam nobis ministrare non desinas, quem ut indesinenter esuriamus hortaris.

charity. For he is the true and living Bread, who is the nourishment of eternity, and the food of virtue. For thy Word, whereby all things were made, is the Bread, not only of the souls of men, but likewise of the very angels. With this bread was thy servant Moses fed, when receiving thy Law, he fasted forty days and forty nights, and abstained from bodily food, that he might be the better able to partake of thy sweetness. Hence, he felt not corporal hunger; and forgot all earthly food; for the sight of thy glory shone upon him, and, through the infusion of thy Spirit, his meat was the word of God. To us likewise cease not to administer this Bread, since thou biddest us unceasingly hunger after it.

MONDAY

OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

EACH feria of Lent has a proper Mass ; whereas, in Advent, the Mass of the preceding Sunday is repeated during the week. This richness of the lenten liturgy is a powerful means for our entering into the Church's spirit, since she hereby brings before us, under so many forms, the sentiments suited to this holy time. From these ferial Masses we intend giving, for the respective days, the Collect, which is always the principal prayer, the Epistle, the Gospel, and the Prayer which is said 'over the people' at the end of the Mass. All this will provide us with most solid instruction ; and as the selections from the Bible, which are each day brought before us, are not only some of the finest of the sacred volume, but are, moreover, singularly appropriate to Lent, their attentive perusal will be productive of a twofold advantage.

At Rome, to-day's Station is in the church of St. Peter-*ad-Vincula*. It was built in the fifth century, by the empress Eudoxia, wife of Valentinian III., and possesses the venerable relic of St. Peter's chains. We shall speak more fully of this basilica when we keep the feast of the apostle's deliverance from prison, on August 1.

COLLECT

<p>Converte nos, Deus, salutaris noster: et ut nobis jejunium quadragesimale proficiat, mentes nostras cœlestibus instrue disciplinis. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum. Amen.</p>	<p>Convert us, O God our Saviour: and instruct our minds with thy heavenly doctrine, that this fast of Lent may be beneficial to us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>
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EPISTLE

Lectio Ezechielis Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet
Ezechiel.*Cap. xxxiv.**Ch. xxxiv.*

Hæc dicit Dominus Deus :
Ecce ego ipse requiram oves
meas, et visitabo eas. Sicut
visitat pastor gregem suum
in die quando fuerit in me-
dio ovium suarum dissipata-
rum : sic visitabo oves
meas, et liberabo eas de
omnibus locis, in quibus
dispersæ fuerant in die
nubis et caliginis. Et edu-
cam eas de populis, et con-
gregabo eas de terris, et in-
ducam eas in terram suam,
et pascam eas in montibus
Israël, in rivis, et in cunctis
sedibus terræ. In pascuis
uberrimis pascam eas, et in
montibus excelsis Israël
erunt pascua earum : ibi
requiescent in herbis viren-
tibus, et in pascuis pingui-
bus pascentur super montes
Israël. Ego pascam oves
meas : et ego eas accubare
faciam, dicit Dominus Deus.
Quod perierat requiram,
et quod abjectum erat redu-
cam, et quod confractum
fuerat alligabo, et quod in-
firmum fuerat consolidabo,
et quod pingue et forte cu-
stodiam : et pascam illas in
iudicio, dicit Dominus om-
nipotens.

Thus saith the Lord God :
Behold I myself will seek my
sheep, and will visit them. As
the shepherd visiteth his flock
in the day when he shall be in
the midst of his sheep that
were scattered ; so will I visit
my sheep, and will deliver
them out of all the places
where they have been scat-
tered in the cloudy and dark
day. And I will bring them
out from the peoples, and will
gather them out of the coun-
tries, and will bring them to
their own land ; and I will
feed them in the mountains
of Israel, by the rivers and in
all the habitations of the land.
I will feed them in the most
fruitful pastures, and their
pastures shall be in the high
mountains of Israel : there shall
they rest on the green grass
and be fed in fat pastures upon
the mountains of Israel. I will
feed my sheep ; and I will
cause them to lie down, saith
the Lord God. I will seek
that which was lost, and that
which was driven away I will
bring again ; and I will bind
up that which was broken, and
I will strengthen that which
was weak, and that which was
fat and strong I will preserve ;
and I will feed them in judg-
ment, saith the Lord almighty.

Our Lord here shows Himself to us as a *Shepherd*
full of love for His *sheep*. Such, indeed, He truly is

to men, during this season of mercy. A portion of His flock had gone astray, and was wandering to and fro amidst the *darkness* of this world ; but Jesus did not forget them. He went in search of them, that He might *gather them* together. He sought them through lonely deserts, and rocky places, and brambles. He now speaks to them through His Church, and invites them to return. He sweetly encourages them, for perhaps they might fear and be ashamed to appear before Him, after so many sins. He promises them that, if they will but return to Him, they shall be fed on the richest *pastures*, near the *river* bank, and on the *mountains of Israel*. They are covered with wounds, but He will *bind them up* ; they are *weak*, but He will *strengthen* them. He will once more give them fellowship with the faithful ones who never left Him, and He Himself will dwell with them for ever. Let the sinner, then, yield to this tender love ; let him not refuse to make the efforts required for his conversion. If these efforts of penance seem painful to nature, let him recall to mind those happy days, when he was in grace, and in the fold of his good Shepherd. He may be so again. The gate of the fold is open ; and thousands who like himself had gone astray are going in with joy and confidence. Let him follow them, and remember how Jesus has said : ‘ There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine who need not penance.’¹

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii Sequel of the holy Gospel
secundum Matthæum. according to Matthew.

Cap. xxv.

Ch. xxv.

In illo tempore : dixit Jesus At that time, Jesus said to
discipulis suis : Cum venerit his disciples : When the Son

¹ St. Luke xv. 7.

Filius hominis in majestate sua, et omnes angeli cum eo, tunc sedebit super sedem majestatis suæ: et congregabuntur ante eum omnes gentes, et separabit eos ab invicem, sicut pastor segregat oves ab hædis: et statuet oves quidem a dextris suis, hædos autem a sinistris. Tunc dicet Rex his qui a dextris ejus erunt: Venite, benedicti Patris mei, possidete paratum vobis regnum a constitutione mundi. Esurivi enim, et dedistis mihi manducare: sitivi, et dedistis mihi bibere: hospes eram, et collegistis me: nudus, et cooperuistis me: infirmus, et visitastis me: in carcere eram, et venistis ad me. Tunc respondebunt ei justis, dicentes: Domine, quando te vidimus esurientem, et pavimus te? sitientem, et dedimus tibi potum? Quando autem te vidimus hospitem, et collegimus te? aut nudum, et cooperuimus te? aut quando te vidimus infirmum, aut in carcere, et venimus ad te? Et respondens Rex, dicet illis: Amen dico vobis, quamdiu fecistis uni ex his fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecistis. Tunc dicet et his, qui a sinistris erunt: Discedite a me, maledicti, in ignem æternum, qui paratus est diabolo et angelis ejus. Esurivi enim, et non dedistis mihi manducare: sitivi, et non dedistis mihi potum: hospes eram, et non collegistis me: nudus, et non coope-

of man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the King say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me. Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee? thirsty, and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and covered thee? Or when did we see thee sick or in prison, and came to thee? And the King answering, shall say to them: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me. Then shall he say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.

ruistis me: infirmus, et in carcere, et non visitastis me. Tunc respondebunt ei et ipsi, dicentes: Domine, quando te vidimus esurientem, aut sitientem, aut hospitem, aut nudum, aut infirmum, aut in carcere, et non ministravimus tibi? Tunc respondebit illis, dicens: Amen dico vobis, quamdiu non fecistis uni de minoribus his, nec mihi fecistis. Et ibunt hi in supplicium æternum: justi autem in vitam æternam.

For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me not in; naked, and you covered me not; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me. Then they also shall answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee? Then he shall answer them, saying: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting.

We have just been listening to a prophet of the old Testament, inviting us to return to the good Shepherd; our Lord there put forth every argument which love could devise, to persuade His lost sheep to return to Him: and here, on the very same day that the Church speaks to us of our God as being a gentle and compassionate Shepherd, she describes Him as an inflexible Judge. This loving Jesus, this charitable Physician of our souls, is seated on His dread tribunal, and cries out in His anger: *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!* And where has the Church found this awful description? In the Gospel, that is, in the very Law of love. But if we read our passage attentively, we shall find that He who pronounces this terrible anathema is the same God, whom the prophet has been just portraying as a Shepherd full of mercy, patience, and zeal for His sheep. Observe how He is still a Shepherd, even on His judgment seat: He separates the sheep from the

goats ; He sets the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left ; the comparison of a flock is still kept up. The Son of God will exercise His office of Shepherd even to the last day : only then, time will be at an end, and eternity will have begun ; the reign of justice, too, will have succeeded the reign of mercy, for it is justice that will reward the good with the promised recompense, and that will punish impenitent sinners with eternal torments. How can the Christian, who believes that we are all to stand before this tribunal, refuse the invitation of the Church, who now presses him to make satisfaction for his sins ? How can he hesitate to go through those easy penances, with which the divine mercy now deigns to be satisfied ? Truly, man is his own worst enemy, if he can disregard these words of Jesus, who now is his Saviour, and then will be his Judge : ‘ Unless ye do penance, ye shall all perish.’¹

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Absolve, quæsumus, Domine,
nostrorum vincula peccatorum :
et quidquid pro eis meremur,
propitiatus averte. Per Christum
Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Loosen, O Lord, we beseech
thee, the bonds of our sins ;
and mercifully turn away
from us whatever we deserve
for them. Through Christ
our Lord. Amen.

Let us close the day by reciting the following hymn, which was composed by St. Gregory the Great, and is used by the Church in her Matins during Lent.

HYMN

Ex more docti mystico,
Servemus hoc jejunium,
Deno dierum circulo
Ducto quater notissimo.

Lex et prophetæ primitus
Hoc prætulerunt, postmo-
dum

Let us observe this most
solemn fast of forty days,
which has been handed down
to us by sacred tradition.

The Law and the Prophets
first introduced it ; and after-
wards, Christ, the Master and

¹ St. Luke xiii. 3.

Christus sacravit, omnium
Rex atque factor temporum.

Utamur ergo parcius
Verbis, cibis et potibus,
Somno, jocis, et arctius
Perstemus in custodia.

Vitemus autem noxia,
Quæ subruunt mentes va-
gas :
Nullumque demus callidi
Hostis locum tyrannidi.

Flectamus iram vindicem ;
Ploremus ante judicem ;
Clamemus ore supplici,
Dicamus omnes cernui :

Nostris malis offendimus
Tuam, Deus, clementiam ;
Effunde nobis desuper
Remissor indulgentiam.

Memento quod sumus tui,
Licet caduci, plasmatis :
Ne des honorem nominis
Tui, precamur, alteri.

Laxa malum quod feci-
mus ;
Auge bonum quod posci-
mus :

Placere quo tandem tibi
Possimus hic et perpetim.

Præsta, beata Trinitas,
Concede simplex Unitas,
Ut fructuosa sint tuis
Jejuniorum munera.
Amen.

Maker of all seasons, conse-
crated it by himself observing
it.

Let us, therefore, be more
sparing in our words ; let us
retrench somewhat of our food,
and drink, and sleep, and
merriment, and redouble our
watchfulness.

Let us shun those noxious
things, which play such havoc
with unguarded souls : and let
us avoid whatsoever could
strengthen the tyranny of our
crafty enemy.

Let us appease the anger of
our Judge, and pour out our
tears before him ; let us pros-
trate ourselves, and thus cry
to him in suppliant prayer :

We have offended thy
goodness, O God, by our sins :
forgive us, and pour out thy
mercy upon us.

Remember that we are the
work of thy hands, frail though
we be : we beseech thee, suffer
not another to usurp the
honour of thy name.

Pardon us the evil we have
done, and grant us good
things, even beyond our
prayer : that thus we may
be well pleasing to thee, now
and for ever.

O blessed Trinity, O un-
divided Unity, grant us, thy
servants, to reap fruit from
the fast thou hast given us.

Amen.

TUESDAY

OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

AT Rome, the Station is in the church of St. Anastasia, where, formerly, the Mass of the Aurora on Christmas Day was celebrated. It is under the protection of this holy martyr, who suffered death for Christ on the day of His birth, that we offer our prayers to-day to the Father of mercy.

COLLECT

Respice, Domine, familiam tuam, et præsta, ut apud te mens nostra tuo desiderio fulgeat, quæ se carnis maceratione castigat. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum. Amen.

Look down, O Lord, on thy children, and grant that while we chastise ourselves by mortifying the flesh, our minds may be inflamed with the love and desire of thee. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio Isaïæ Prophetæ.

Cap. lv.

In diebus illis, locutus est Isaïas propheta dicens: Quærite Dominum, dum inveniri potest: invocate eum dum prope est. Derelinquat impius viam suam et vir iniquus cogitationes suas: et revertatur ad Dominum, et miserebitur ejus, et ad Deum nostrum, quoniam multus est ad ignoscendum. Non enim cogitationes meæ, cogitationes vestræ; neque viæ vestræ viæ meæ, dicit Dominus. Quia sicut exal-

Lesson from the Prophet
Isaïas.

Ch. lv.

In those days, Isaïas the prophet spake, saying: Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unjust man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he is bountiful to forgive. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted

tantur cœli a terra, sic exaltatæ sunt viæ meæ a viis vestris, et cogitationes meæ a cogitationibus vestris. Et quomodo descendit imber, et nix de cœlo, et illuc ultra non revertitur, sed inebriat terram, et infundit eam, et germinare eam facit, et dat semen serenti, et panem comedenti: sic erit verbum meum quod egredietur de ore meo: non revertetur ad me vacuum; sed faciet quæcumque volui, et prosperabitur in his ad quæ misi illud, ait Dominus omnipotens.

above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts. And as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return no more thither, but soak the earth, and water it, and make it to spring, and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be which shall go forth from my mouth. It shall not return to me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it, saith the Lord almighty.

The prophet, speaking to us in God's name, assures us that, if we sincerely desire our conversion, we shall find mercy. The infinite distance which lies between the sovereign holiness of God and the soul that is defiled by sin is no obstacle to the reconciliation between the creature and the Creator. The goodness of God is omnipotent; it can create a clean heart¹ in him that repents, and where sin abounded it can make grace abound more than ever sin abounded.² The *word* of pardon will *come down from heaven*, like plentiful *rain* upon parched land, and that land will yield a rich harvest. But let the sinner give ear to the rest of the prophecy. Is man at liberty to accept or refuse this *word* that comes from heaven? May he, for the present, neglect it, in the hope that he will give it a welcome later on, when his life is at its close? No; God says to us by the prophet: *Seek ye the Lord, while He may be found; call ye upon Him, while He is near.* We cannot, therefore, *find* the Lord just when it suits our fickle humour; His nearness to us is not always the same.

¹ Ps. l. 12.

² Rom. v. 20.

Let us take heed ; God has His times ; the time for mercy may be followed by the time for justice. Jonas went through the streets of the proud city, and cried out : ‘ Yet forty days, and Ninive shall be destroyed.’¹ Ninive did not allow the forty days to pass without returning to the Lord : she put on sackcloth and ashes, she fasted, and she was spared. Let us imitate the earnest repentance of this guilty city ; let us not set divine justice at defiance by refusing to do penance, or by doing it negligently. This Lent is, perhaps, the last God’s mercy will grant us. If we put off our conversion, God may refuse us another such opportunity. Let us meditate upon these words of the apostle, which repeat the truth told us in to-day’s Epistle : ‘ The earth that drinketh in the rain which cometh often upon it, and bringeth forth herbs, meet for them by whom it is tilled, receiveth blessing from God ; but that which bringeth forth thorns and briars is reprobate, and very near unto a curse, whose end is to be burnt.’²

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xxi.

In illo tempore : Cum intrasset Jesus Jerosolymam, commota est universa civitas, dicens : Quis est hic ? Populi autem dicebant : Hic est Jesus Propheta a Nazareth Galilææ. Et intravit Jesus in templum Dei, et eiciebat omnes vendentes et ementes in templo, et mensas nummulariorum, et cathedras vendentium columbas evertit : et dicit eis : Scriptum est : Domus mea

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Ch. xxi.

At that time : When he was come into Jerusalem, the whole city was moved, saying : Who is this ? And the people said : This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the chairs of them that sold doves. And he saith to them :

¹ Jonas iii. 4.

² Heb. vi. 7, 8.

domus orationis vocabitur : It is written : My house shall
 vos autem fecistis illam spe- be called the house of prayer :
 luncam latronum. Et ac- but you have made it a den
 cesserunt ad eum cæci et of thieves. And there came
 claudi in templo : et sanavit to him the blind and the
 eos. Videntes autem prin- lame in the temple : and he
 cipes sacerdotum et scribæ healed them. And the chief
 mirabilia quæ fecit, et pueros priests and scribes seeing the
 clamantes in templo et di- wonderful things that he
 centes : Hosanna filio David ; did, and the children crying
 indignati sunt et dixerunt in the temple, and saying :
 ei : Audis quid isti dicunt ? Hosanna to the son of David ;
 Jesus autem dixit eis : Uti- were moved with indignation,
 que ; nunquam legistis : and said to him : Hearst
 Quia ex ore infantium et thou what these say ? And
 lactentium perfecisti lau- Jesus said to them : Yea, have
 dem ? Et relictis illis, abiit you never read : Out of
 foras extra civitatem in Beth- the mouth of infants and of
 aniam, ibique mansit. sucklings thou hast per-
 fected praise ? And leaving
 them, he went out of the
 city into Bethania, and re-
 mained there.

Our forty days have scarcely begun, and we find the implacable enemies of Jesus showing their hatred against Him : that hatred will soon work His death. But how is this ? Have they not been witnesses of His wonderful works ? True ; but pride and jealousy have made them lose their senses. These faithless guardians of God's temple saw Jesus exercise His authority in the holy place, and they opened not their lips ; they were astonished at what He did, and they feared Him. They did not even protest when He called the temple His house, for they were awed by His great virtue and superhuman power. But these first impressions having subsided, their bold impiety returns. They hear the little children greeting our Saviour with *Hosanna*, and they are indignant. They affect to be shocked at this honour which is paid to *the Son of David*, who went about everywhere doing good. These doctors of the Law

are blinded by passion, and can neither understand the prophecies, nor their fulfilment. It is the verification of the words of Isaias, which we have just been reading in the Epistle : they would not seek the Lord, while He was near them ; and now that they are even speaking with Him, they do not recognize Him for their Messias. Little children know Him and bless Him ; the sages of Israel see in Him but an enemy of God, and a blasphemer ! Let us, at least, profit by the visit He is now granting us ; lest He should treat us, as He did the chief priests and scribes, and *leave* us. He withdrew His presence from them, He went out of the city, and returned to Bethania, which was near Jerusalem. It is there that Lazarus was living with his two sisters, Martha and Mary Magdalene. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, had also retired thither, awaiting the terrible event. St. Jerome observes here, that the word *Bethania* signifies the ‘ house of obedience ’ : this, says the holy Doctor, should remind us, that our Saviour withdraws from those who are rebels to His grace, and that He loves to be with them that are obedient.¹ Let us learn the lesson well ; and during these days of salvation let us show by our obedience to the Church and our submission to the guide of our conscience, that we are thoroughly convinced of this truth : that there is no salvation for us, except in humility and simplicity of heart.

Humiliate capita vestra Deo. Bow down your heads to God.

Ascendant ad te, Domine, preces nostræ : et ab Ecclesia tua cunctam repelle nequitiam. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen. May our prayers, O Lord, ascend to thee ; and deliver thy Church from all wickedness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Gothic Church of Spain, in her Mozarabic missal, offers us this formula, which our readers will justly appreciate.

¹ In *Matthæum*, Cap. xxi.

SUPPLICATION

(Dominica II. in Quadragesima)

V. Miserere et parce, clementissime Domine, populo tuo :

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Prostrati omnes lacrymas producimus : pandentes tibi occulta quæ admisimus, a te Deus veniam deprecimur.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Orationes sacerdotum accipe, et quæque postulant affluenter tribue : ac tuæ plebi miserere, Domine.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Furorem tuum adduxisti super nos : nostra delicta dira curvaverunt nos : et absque ulla spe defecimus.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Traditi sumus malis quæ nescimus, et omne malum irruit super nos : et invocavimus : et non audivimus.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Omnes clamamus : omnes te requirimus : te pœnitentes lacrymis prosequimur : cujusque iram ipsi provocavimus.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Te deprecantes, te ge-

V. Have pity on us, O most merciful Lord, and spare thy people ;

R. For we have sinned against thee.

V. We all prostrate before thee, and pour out our tears : we confess unto thee our hidden sins, and beseech thee, O God, to pardon us.

R. For we have sinned against thee.

V. Receive the prayers of thy priests, and abundantly grant what they ask : and have mercy on thy people, O Lord.

R. For we have sinned against thee.

V. Thou art angry against us : our heinous crimes have bowed us down to the earth : and we have grown faint, because there is no hope within us.

R. For we have sinned against thee.

V. We have been made a prey to evils that we know not, and every evil has come upon us : we have called upon thee, and we have heard no reply.

R. For we have sinned against thee.

V. We all cry unto thee : we all seek thee : we are repentant, and weeping follow thee, for we have provoked thy anger.

R. For we have sinned against thee.

V. We beseech thee, we

mentes poscimus : te, Jesu
Christe, prosternati peti-
mus : tua potestas jam sub-
levet miseros.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Confessionem tuæ ple-
bis accipe : quam lamen-
tantes coram te effundimus :
et pro admissis corde inge-
miscimus.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Pacem rogamus, pa-
cem nobis tribue : amove
bella et nos omnes erue :
humili prece postulamus,
Domine.

R. Quia peccavimus tibi.

V. Inclina aurem, Deus
clementissime : jam ablue-
tur delictorum maculæ : et
a periculis tu benignus exi-
me.

R. Miserere et parce.

sigh out our prayers to thee :
O Jesus, we prostrate before
thee, and petition thee : let
thy power raise us from our
misery.

R. For we have sinned
against thee.

V. Receive thy people's
confession : full of sorrow, we
pour it out before thee : and
our hearts are sad for the
sins we have committed.

R. For we have sinned
against thee.

V. We sue for peace ;
grant us peace ! Avert the
scourge of war, and deliver
us, we humbly beseech thee,
O Lord !

R. For we have sinned
against thee.

V. Bow down thine ear, O
most merciful God ! Cleanse
us from the stains of our sins,
and, in thy pity, deliver us
from all dangers.

R. Have mercy on us and
spare us.

WEDNESDAY

IN EMBER WEEK

THE fast of to-day is prescribed by a double law : it is Lent, and it is Ember Wednesday. It is the same with the Friday and Saturday of this week. There are two principal objects for the Ember days of this period of the year : the first is to offer up to God the season of spring, and, by fasting and prayer, to draw down His blessing upon it ; the second is, to ask Him to enrich with His choicest graces the priests and sacred ministers who are to receive their Ordination on Saturday. Let us, therefore, have a great respect for these three days ; and let those who violate, upon them, the laws of fasting or abstinence, know that they commit a twofold sin.

Up to the eleventh century the Ember days of spring were kept in the first week of March ; and those of summer, in the second week of June. It was St. Gregory VII. who fixed them as we now have them ; that is, the Ember days of spring in the first week of Lent, and those of summer in Whitsun-week.

The Station for to-day is in the basilica of Saint Mary Major. Let us honour the Mother of God, the refuge of sinners ; and let us ask her to present to our divine Judge the humble tribute of our penance.

COLLECT

Devotionem populi tui quæsumus Domine, beni- gnus intende : ut qui per abstinentiam macerantur in corpore, per fructum boni	We beseech thee, O Lord, mercifully to regard the devo- tion of thy people ; that mortifying their bodies by fasting, their minds may be
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operis reficiantur in mente. refreshed by good works.
Per Dominum nostrum Je- Through Jesus Christ our
sum Christum. Amen. Lord. Amen.

The Epistle of the Mass for all the Ember Wednesdays consists of two lessons from sacred Scripture. To-day the Church brings before us the two great types of Lent, Moses and Elias, in order to impress us with an idea of the importance of this forty days' fast, which Christ Himself solemnly consecrated when He observed it, thus fulfilling, in His own Person, what the Law and the Prophets had but prefigured.

FIRST LESSON

Lectio libri Exodi.

Lesson from the Book of
Exodus.*Cap. xxiv.**Ch. xxiv.*

In diebus illis: dixit Dominus ad Moysen: Ascende ad me in montem et esto ibi, daboque tibi tabulas lapideas, et legem ac mandata, quæ scripsi, ut doceas filios Israël. Surrexerunt Moyses, et Josue minister ejus. Ascendensque Moyses in montem Dei, senioribus ait: Expectate hic donec revertamur ad vos. Habetis Aaron et Hur vobiscum. Si quid natum fuerit quæstionis, referetis ad eos. Cumque ascendisset Moyses, operuit nubes montem, et habitavit gloria Domini super Sinai, tegens illum nube sex diebus: septimo autem die vocavit eum de medio caliginis. Erat autem species gloriæ Domini, quasi ignis ardens super verticem montis in conspectu filio-

In those days: the Lord said to Moses: Come up to me into the mount, and be there; and I will give thee tables of stone, and the law, and the commandments which I have written, that thou mayst teach them. Moses rose up, and his minister Josue; and Moses going up into the mount of God, said to the ancients: Wait ye here till we return to you. You have Aaron and Hur with you: if any question shall arise, you shall refer it to them. And when Moses was gone up, a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the Lord dwelt upon Sinai, covering it with a cloud six days; and the seventh day he called him out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the

rum Israël. Ingressusque Moyses medium nebulæ, ascendit in montem : et fuit ibi quadraginta diebus et quadraginta noctibus.

Lord was like a burning fire upon the top of the mount, in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses entering into the midst of the cloud, went up into the mountain ; and he was there forty days and forty nights.

SECOND LESSON

Lectio libri Regum.

Lesson from the Book of Kings.

3. Cap. xix.

3. Ch. xix.

In diebus illis : venit Elias in Bersabee-Juda, et dimisit ibi puerum suum, et perrexit in desertum, viam unius diei. Cumque venisset, et sederet subter unam juniperum, petivit animæ suæ ut moreretur, et ait : Sufficit mihi, Domine : tolle animam meam : neque enim melior sum quam patres mei. Projecitque se et obdormivit in umbrâ juniperi : et ecce angelus Domini tetigit eum, et dixit illi : Surge, et comede. Respexit, et ecce ad caput suum subcinericius panis, et vas aquæ : comedit ergo et bibit, et rursus obdormivit. Reversusque est angelus Domini secundo, et tetigit eum, dixitque illi : Surge, comede : grandis enim tibi restat via. Qui cum surrexisset, comedit et bibit, et ambulavit in fortitudine cibi illius, quadraginta diebus et quadraginta noctibus usque ad montem Dei Horeb.

In those days : Elias came into Bersabee of Juda, and left his servant there. And he went forward one day's journey into the desert. And when he was there, and sat under a juniper tree, he requested for his soul that he might die, and said : It is enough for me, Lord : take away my soul, for I am no better than my fathers. And he cast himself down, and slept in the shadow of the juniper tree ; and behold an angel of the Lord touched him, and said to him : Arise and eat. He looked, and behold there was at his head a hearth-cake and a vessel of water ; and he ate and drank, and he fell asleep again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said to him : Arise, eat, for thou hast yet a great way to go. And he arose, and ate, and drank, and walked in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights, unto the mount of God, Horeb.

Moses and Elias fast for forty days and forty nights, because God bids them come near to Him. Man must purify himself, he must unburden himself, in some measure at least, of the body which weighs him down, if he would enter into communication with Him who is the Spirit. And yet the vision of God granted to these two holy personages was very imperfect: they felt that God was near them, but they beheld not His glory. But when the fulness of time came,¹ God manifested Himself in the flesh: and man saw, and heard, and touched Him.² We, indeed, are not of the number of those favoured ones who lived with Jesus, the Word of life: but in the holy Eucharist He allows us to do more than see Him: He enters into our breasts, He is our food. The humblest member of the Church possesses God more fully than either Moses on Sinai, or Elias on Horeb. We cannot, therefore, be surprised that the Church, in order to fit us for this favour at the Easter solemnity, bids us go through a preparation of forty days, though its severity is not to be compared with the rigid fast which Moses and Elias had to observe as the condition of receiving what God promised them.

GOSPEL.

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xii.

In illo tempore: Responderunt Jesu quidam de scribis et pharisæis, dicentes: Magister, volumus a te signum videre. Qui respondens, ait illis: Generatio mala et adultera signum quærit: et signum non dabitur ei; nisi signum Jonæ prophetæ. Sicut enim fuit

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Ch. xii.

At that time: Some of the scribes and pharisees answered him, saying: Master we would see a sign from thee. Who answering said to them: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign; and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was

¹ Gal. iv. 4.

² 1 St. John i. 1.

Jonas in ventre ceti tribus diebus et tribus noctibus, sic erit Filius hominis in corde terræ tribus diebus et tribus noctibus. Viri Ninivitæ surgent in iudicio cum generatione ista, et condemnabunt eam: quia pœnitentiam egerunt in prædicatione Jonæ; et ecce plus quam Jonas hic. Regina Austri surget in iudicio cum generatione ista, et condemnabit eam: quia venit a finibus terræ audire sapientiam Salomonis; et ecce plus quam Salomon hic. Cum autem immundus spiritus exierit ab homine, ambulat per loca arida, quærens requiem, et non invenit. Tunc dicit: Revertar in domum meam, unde exivi. Et veniens invenit eam vacantem, scopis mundatam, et ornatam. Tunc vadit, et assumit septem alios spiritus secum nequiores se, et intrantes habitant ibi: et fiunt novissima hominis illius pejora prioribus. Sic erit et generationi huic pessimæ. Adhuc eo loquente ad turbas, ecce mater ejus et fratres stabant foris quærentes loqui ei. Dixit autem ei quidam: Ecce mater tua, et fratres tui foris stant, quærentes te. At ipse respondens dicenti sibi, ait: Quæ est mater mea, et qui sunt fratres mei? Et extendens manum in discipulos suos, dixit: Ecce mater mea, et fratres mei: quicumque enim fecerit voluntatem Patris mei, qui in

in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. The men of Ninive shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas; and behold a greater than Jonas here. The queen of the south shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon here. When an unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest and findeth none. Then he saith: I will return into my house, from whence I came out. And coming, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then he goeth, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is made worse than the first. So shall it be also to this wicked generation. As he was yet speaking to the multitudes, behold his Mother and his brethren stood without, seeking to speak to him. And one said unto him: Behold thy Mother and thy brethren stand without, seeking thee. But he answering him that told him said: Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And stretch-

caelis est, ipse meus frater,
et soror, et mater est.

ing forth his hand towards his disciples, he said : Behold my mother and my brethren ; for whosoever shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Our Lord forewarns Israel of the chastisements which its voluntary blindness and hardness of heart will bring upon it. The men of Israel refuse to believe, unless they *see signs* and prodigies ; they have them in abundance, but will not see them. Such are the unbelievers of the present day. They say they want proofs of the divine origin of the Catholic religion. What is history but a tissue of proofs ; what are the events of the present age, but testimony of the truth ? And yet they remain incredulous. They have their own views and prejudices, and they intend to keep to them ; how, then, can it be wondered at that they never embrace the true faith ? Infidels, who have not had the like opportunities, will *rise in judgment* with such a *generation* and condemn it for its resistance to grace. Let us Catholics remember that amidst the great religious movement which is now going on, it is our duty to be not only most firm in our faith, but also most zealous in the observance of the laws of the Church, such, for example, as Lent. The apostolate of example will produce its fruits ; and if a mere handful of Christians was to the Roman empire like that leaven of which our Saviour speaks,¹ and which leavened the whole mass, what results might we not expect in a country like our own, which has retained so much Catholic practice and doctrine, if the Catholics themselves were but zealous in the exercise of their duties ?

¹ See the Gospel for the sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, in our 'Septuagesima.'

Humiliate capita vestra Deo. Bow down your heads to God.

Mentes nostras, quæsumus, Domine, lumine tuæ claritatis illustra: ut videre possimus quæ agenda sunt, et quæ recta sunt, agere valeamus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen. Enlighten, we beseech thee, O Lord, our minds with the light of thy brightness, that we may discern what is to be done, and be able to do it. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We take the following devout stanzas on fasting from the *Triodion* of the Greek Church.

HYMN

Mirabilia arma oratio, et jejunium; hoc Moysen legislatorem effecit, et Heliam inter sacrificia zelatorem: huic firmiter insistentes, fideles, ad Salvatorem clamemus: Peccavimus tibi soli, miserere nostri. Wonderful is the armour of prayer and fasting! With it, Moses became a legislator, and Elias a zealous priest. Let us, O ye faithful, resolutely take it unto ourselves, and cry out to our Saviour: To thee alone have we sinned; have mercy on us.

Spirituale jejunium jejunemus, tortuosos laqueos omnes abrumpamus, declinemus pariter malorum exemplorum nequitiam, dimittamusque fratribus debita, ut nobis quoque delicta nostra dimittantur; ita enim clamare poterimus: Dirigatur, Domine, oratio nostra, sicut incensum, in conspectu tuo. Let us fast a spiritual fast, break all the snares of the serpent, shun the wickedness of evil example, and forgive our brethren their offences against us, that our own sins may be forgiven; for thus shall we be able to say: May our prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in thy sight!

Solus bonus, fons misericordiae, Agnus Dei, qui, utpote Deus, tollis peccata mundi, serva me criminum procellis agitatam, et ad poenitentiae semitas dirige. O thou that alone art Good! O fount of mercy! O Lamb of God, who, being thyself God, takest away the sins of the world! I am tossed by the storms of sin; save me, and lead me to the paths of penance.

Purum jejunium, fuga peccati, pravorum affectuum abscessus, charitas. The true fast is fleeing from sin, turning away from evil affections, love of God,

erga Deum, orationis studium, lacryma cum compunctione, et pauperum cura, quemadmodum Christus in Scripturis præcepit.

Animam peccati gladio transfossam, multisque criminibus lancinatam sana, o animarum nostrarum medice, utpote benefactor, adhibens mihi sapientium mandatorum tuorum remedia, o clemens.

Compunctioni idoneum nacti præsens jejunii tempus, magnopere lugeamus atque ingemamus, manusque ad solum Redemptorem, ut animas nostras solvat, expendamus.

Utinam mihi quoque detur pravos affectus omnes extinguere, et tui amorem, Christe, concipere, divinis ditescere, mi bone Jesu, tibi que famulatum impendere.

Vide, attende, anima, ne forte dum jejunas, crapulæ loco tibi sint injuriæ, inimicitia, contentiones adversus proximum, atque a Deo propter tuam negligentiam excidas.

Qua ratione, Christe meus, iram tuam sustinebo, dum ad judicandum veneris? quidve illic respondebo, cum jussa tua neque fecerim, neque peregerim, Christe? quare mihi ante exitum ignosce.

E cupiditatum tyrannide vindica, Domine, animam meam, ut libere voluntatem tuam implens, gaudeam,

earnest prayer, tears of compunction, and charity towards the poor, as Christ teaches us in the Scripture.

My soul is pierced with the sword of sin, and is mangled by manifold crimes: heal it, O thou kind physician of souls! Apply unto me, O merciful Jesus, the remedy of thy all-wise commandments.

Now is the time for compunction, for it is the time of the fast; let us earnestly give ourselves to tears and sighs, and stretch forth our hands to our only Redeemer, beseeching him to unfetter our souls.

Give me the grace, O my good Jesus! to stifle all my wicked affections, to be filled with the love of thee, to be rich in divine gifts, and to serve thee with all devotedness.

Take heed, my soul, lest, whilst fasting, thou be guilty of the gluttony of injuring and hating thy neighbour, and quarrelling with him; and thus lose thy God, by thy negligence.

How shall I be able, O my Jesus, to endure thy wrath, when thou comest to judge me? What answer shall I then make unto thee, if now I refuse to fulfil thy just commands? O pardon me, before my departure hence.

Liberate my soul, O Lord, from the tyranny of my passions, that I may enjoy the freedom of doing thy will,

atque glorificem potentiam
tuam in sæcula.

Oderis, anima mea, Esau
intemperantiam, et Jacobi
bona æmuleris, Belial ab-
stinencia supplantas, divina
thesaurizes, et laudes Deum
in sæcula.

Tranquillum jejunii mare
nobis nulla actis tempestate
prætergredi tribue, donec
ad portum Resurrectionis
tuæ perveniamus, miseri-
cors, te in sæcula celebra-
tes.

and give glory to thy power,
for eternity.

Hate, O my soul, the intem-
perance of Esau, and imitate
the holy Jacob; destroy
Belial by abstinence, make
treasure to thyself of divine
riches, and let the praise of
God be for ever on thy lips.

Grant unto us, O merciful
Saviour, that we may traverse
the sea of our fast unmolested
by storms: and that we, who
are ever celebrating thy
praise, may be brought to
the haven of thy Resurrec-
tion.

THURSDAY

OF THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

TO-DAY'S Station is in the church of St. Laurence
in Paneperna, one of those which the piety of the
faithful of Rome has built in honour of this the
most celebrated of the martyrs of the holy city.

COLLECT

Devotionem populi tui,
quæsumus, Domine, beni-
gnus intende, ut qui per ab-
stinenciam macerantur in
corpore, per fructum boni
operis reficiantur in mente.
Per Christum Dominum
nostrum. Amen.

We beseech thee, O Lord,
mercifully to regard the devo-
tion of thy people; that mortif-
ying their bodies by fasting,
their minds may be refreshed
by good works. Through
Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio Ezechielis Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet
Ezechiel.

Cap. xviii.

Ch. xviii.

In diebus illis: Factus est
sermo Domini ad me, di-
cens: Quid est quod inter

In those days: The word of
the Lord came to me, saying:
What is the meaning that you

vos parabolam vertitis in proverbium istud in terra Israël, dicentes: Patres comederunt uvam acerbam, et dentes filiorum obstupescunt? Vivo ego, dicit Dominus Deus, si erit ultra vobis parabola hæc in proverbium in Israël. Ecce omnes animæ meæ sunt; ut anima patris, ita et anima filii mea est: anima quæ peccaverit, ipsa morietur. Et vir, si fuerit justus, et fecerit iudicium et justitiam, in montibus non comederit, et oculos suos non levaverit ad idola domus Israël: et uxorem proximi sui non violaverit, et ad mulierem menstruatam non accesserit: et hominem non contristaverit: pignus debitori reddiderit: per vim nihil rapuerit: panem suum esurienti dederit, et nudum operuerit vestimento: ad usuram non commodaverit, et amplius non acceperit: ab iniquitate averterit manum suam, et iudicium verum fecerit inter virum et virum: in præceptis meis ambulaverit, et iudicia mea custodierit, ut faciat veritatem: hic justus est, vita vivet, ait Dominus omnipotens.

use among you this parable as a proverb in the land of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, this parable shall be no more to you a proverb in Israel. Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth, the same shall die. And if a man be just, and do judgment and justice, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, nor come near to a menstruous woman; and hath not wronged any man, but hath restored the pledge to the debtor, hath taken nothing away by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment, hath not lent upon usury, nor taken any increase, hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, and hath executed true judgment between man and man, hath walked in my commandments, and kept my judgments, to do truth; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.

These words of the prophet declare to us the wonderful mercy of God towards the Gentiles, who are preparing to pass from darkness to light by the grace of holy Baptism. The Jews had a favourite proverb: *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge*: but God assures us, even in the old Testament, that sins are

personal, that is, they belong to him who commits them, and to no one else ; so that the son of a wicked father, if he walk in the path of righteousness, shall find mercy and salvation. The apostles and their disciples preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles were obedient to the call ; they were the children of idolaters, and yet they were seen flocking to the font of regeneration, abjuring the evil ways of their fathers, and becoming the objects of God's love. The same happened in the conversion of the barbarians of the west ; it is happening now in our own times among infidel nations ; and many will be the catechumens who, at the coming Easter, will receive the sacrament of Baptism.

God frequently visits children with temporal punishments, because of the sins of their parents ; it is a providence, which acts as a check upon men, deterring them from evil out of fear of bringing misery upon their families. But in the moral order, each individual is treated according to his own merits or demerits ; and as God does not impute to a virtuous son the iniquities of the father, so neither do the virtues of the father cover the son's iniquity. Philip the Fair was the grandson of St. Louis ; and Wulfere, the wicked king of Mercia, was father of the two saints, Wulfhad and Ruffin. Similar contrasts are often found in families, for, as the Scripture says, ' God hath left man in the hand of his own counsel. . . . Before man is life and death, good and evil ; that which he shall choose, shall be given unto him.'¹ And yet, such is the mercy of the Lord our God, that, if a man have made a bad choice, but afterwards cast away from himself the evil, and turn to what is good, *he shall surely live*, and his repentance shall restore to him what he had forfeited.

¹ Ecclus. xv. 14, 18.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xv.

In illo tempore: egressus Jesus, secessit in partes Tyri et Sidonis. Et ecce mulier Chananæa a finibus illis egressa clamavit, dicens ei: Miserere mei, Domine, fili David: filia mea male a dæmonio vexatur. Qui non respondit ei verbum. Et accedentes discipuli ejus rogabant eum, dicentes: Dimitte eam, quia clamat post nos. Ipse autem respondens, ait: Non sum misus nisi ad oves quæ perierunt domus Israël. At illa venit, et adoravit eum, dicens: Domine, adjuva me. Qui respondens, ait: Non est bonum sumere panem filiorum et mittere canibus. At illa dixit: Etiam, Domine; nam et catelli edunt de micis quæ cadunt de mensa dominorum suorum. Tunc respondens Jesus, ait illi: O mulier, magna est fides tua: fiat tibi sicut vis. Et sanata est filia ejus ex illa hora.

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to St. Matthew.

Ch. xv.

At that time: Jesus went from thence, and retired into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a woman of Canaan who came out of those coasts, crying out, said to him: Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David: my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil. Who answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying: Send her away, for she crieth after us. And he answering, said: I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel. But she came, and adored him, saying: Lord, help me. Who answering said: It is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to the dogs. But she said: Yea, Lord; for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters. Then Jesus answering, said to her: O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt. And her daughter was cured from that hour.

Jesus is in admiration at the woman's faith: He praises her for it; He would have us imitate her. And yet she was a Gentile; probably, she had been an idolatress; but maternal love induces her to come to Jesus, and throw herself at His feet. She obtains from Him her daughter's cure, and, undoubtedly, her

own conversion. It is an illustration of the consoling promise we have just been hearing from the prophet Ezechiel : there are chosen souls in every race, even in that cursed one of Canaan. Our Lord treats this woman with apparent harshness, although He intends to grant her what she asks : He would have her faith gain strength by being tried, and thus deserve to be rewarded. Let us pray, during these days of mercy, with persevering confidence. The daughter of this Canaanite woman was *troubled by a devil*, that is, her body was possessed by an evil spirit. How many are there, everywhere in the Church, whose souls are a prey to satan, by being in the state of mortal sin ! Are they conscious of their misery ? Do they beg of our Lord to *have mercy* on them, and deliver them ? And if, at first, He defer their pardon, do they humble themselves like this woman of our Gospel, who confesses that she quite deserves this contempt wherewith Jesus seems to treat her ? *Lost sheep of the house of Israel !* make good use of this holy season, when your good Shepherd is so nigh unto you. Before forty days have elapsed, He will be put to death, and the people that shall deny Him shall not be His.¹ Before forty days are over, we shall be celebrating the anniversary of this great sacrifice ; and the sinner that shall not be converted from the error of his ways, and shall not have come to Jesus, as did this humble woman of Canaan, will deserve to be for ever rejected. Let us, then, be earnest in the great work of our conversion, and fit ourselves for pardon. Such is the generosity of our heavenly Father, that if we desire, with all the sincerity of our soul, to be once more His faithful *children*, He will give us more than *the crumbs which fall from His table* ; He will give us Jesus, the Bread of life ; and oh, what a pledge of reconciliation is that !

¹ Dan. ix. 26.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Da quæsumus, Domine,
populis Christianis, et quæ
profitentur agnoscere: et
coeleste munus diligere,
quod frequentant. Per Chri-
stum Dominum nostrum.
Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech
thee, that all Christian people
may acknowledge what they
profess, and love the heavenly
mystery they so often ap-
proach. Through Christ our
Lord. Amen.

Let us read this admirable preface, taken from the Mozarabic missal. It shows us how Jesus is the Bread of life, which supports us during our fast. It will not be the less acceptable, because it is almost word for word a repetition of one already given from the Ambrosian rite.

PREFACE

(Illatio. *Dominica III. Quadragesimæ*)

Dignum et justum est,
æquum vere et salutare est:
nos tibi gratias agere, omni-
potens Pater, et Jesu Christo
Filio tuo Domino nostro;
in quo jejunantium fides
alitur: spes provehitur,
charitas roboratur. Ipsé
est enim panis vivus et
verus qui est et substantia
æternitatis, et esca virtutis.
Verbum enim tuum est,
per quod facta sunt omnia:
quia non solum humana-
rum mentium: sed ipsorum
quoque panis est angelo-
rum. Hujus panis alimento
Moyses famulus tuus qua-
draginta diebus et noctibus
legem suscipiens jejunavit:
et a carnalibus cibis, ut tuæ
suavitatis capacior esset,
abstinuit; de Verbo tuo
vivens et valens: cujus et
dulcedinem bibebat in spi-

It is meet and just, yea
truly right and available to
salvation, that we should give
thanks, O almighty Father,
to thee, and to our Lord Jesus
Christ, thy Son: in whom
they that fast find the nou-
rishment of their faith, the
advancement of their hope,
the strengthening of their
charity. For he is the true
and living Bread, who is the
nourishment of eternity, and
the food of virtue. For he is
thy Word, by whom all things
were made; the Bread, not
only of the souls of men, but
likewise of the very angels.
With this Bread was thy ser-
vant Moses fed, when, receiv-
ing thy Law, he fasted forty
days and forty nights, and
abstained from bodily food,
that he might be the better
able to partake of thy sweet-

ritu, et lucem accipiebat in vultu. Inde nec famem sensit, et terrenarum est oblitus escarum: quia illum et gloriæ tuæ glorificabat aspectus: et influente Spiritu sancto sermo pascebat interiorius. Hunc panem etiam nobis ministrare non desinis: sed ut eum indeficienter esuriamus hortaris. Cuius carne dum pascimur, roboramur: et sanguinem dum potamus, abluimur.

ness. He lived and grew strong on thy Word, of whose sweetness his spirit drank, and with whose light his face did beam. Hence, he felt not hunger, and forgot all earthly food, for the sight of thy glory shone upon him, and, through the infusion of the holy Spirit, he ate interiorly of the word. To us likewise, thou ceasest not to administer this Bread; yea, thou biddest us unceasingly hunger after it. When we feed on this Flesh, we are strengthened; when we drink of this Blood, we are cleansed.

FRIDAY

IN EMBER WEEK

THE Station is in the basilica of the twelve apostles; it is one of the grandest of the churches of Rome, and is enriched by the bodies of the two apostles, St. Philip and St. James the less.

COLLECT

Esto, Domine, propitius plebi tuæ: et quam tibi facis esse devotam, benigno refove miseratus auxilio. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum. Amen.

Be propitious, O Lord, to thy people and mercifully strengthen those by thy aid, whom thou fillest with devotion to thee. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio Ezechielis Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet Ezechiel.

Cap. xviii.

Ch. xviii.

Hæc dicit Dominus Deus: Anima quæ peccaverit, ipsa morietur: filius non por-

Thus saith the Lord God: The soul that sinneth, the same shall die: the son shall

tabit iniquitatem patris, et pater non portabit iniquitatem filii: justitia justi super eum erit, et impietas impii erit super eum. Si autem impius egerit pœnitentiam ab omnibus peccatis suis, quæ operatus est, et custodierit omnia præcepta mea, et fecerit judicium et justitiam: vita vivet, et non morietur. Omnium iniquitatum ejus, quas operatus est, non recordabor: in justitia sua, quam operatus est, vivet. Numquid voluntatis meæ est mors impii, dicit Dominus Deus, et non ut convertatur a viis suis, et vivat? Si autem averterit se justus a justitia sua, et fecerit iniquitatem secundum omnes abominaciones quas operari solet impius, numquid vivet? Omnes justitiæ ejus, quas fecerat, non recordabuntur: in prævaricatione qua prævaricatus est, et in peccato suo quod peccavit, in ipsis morietur. Et dixistis: Non est æqua via Domini. Audite ergo, domus Israël: Numquid via mea non est æqua, et non magis viæ vestræ pravæ sunt? Cum enim averterit se justus a justitia sua, et fecerit iniquitatem, morietur in eis: in injustitia, quam operatus est, morietur. Et cum averterit se impius ab impietate sua, quam operatus est, et fecerit judicium et justitiam: ipse animam suam vivificabit. Considerans enim, et avertens se ab omnibus

not bear the iniquity of the father, and the father shall not bear the iniquity of the son: the justice of the just shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked do penance for all his sins, which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment and justice; living he shall live, and shall not die. I will not remember all his iniquities that he hath done; in his justice, which he hath wrought, he shall live. Is it my will that a sinner should die; saith the Lord God, and not that he should be converted from his ways and live? But if the just man turn himself away from his justice, and do iniquity according to all the abominations which the wicked man useth to work, shall he live? All his justices which he hath done, shall not be remembered; in the prevarication, by which he hath prevaricated, and in his sin, which he hath committed, in them he shall die. And you have said: The way of the Lord is not right. Hear ye, therefore, O house of Israel: Is it my way that is not right, and are not rather your ways perverse? For when the just turneth himself away from his justice, and committeth iniquity, he shall die therein; in the injustice that he hath wrought, he shall die. And when the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness, which he hath wrought,

iniquitatibus suis, quas operatus est, vita vivet, et non morietur, ait Dominus omnipotens. and doeth judgment and justice, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth and turneth away himself from all his iniquities, which he hath wrought, he shall surely live, and not die, saith the Lord almighty.

Let us not forget the ancient discipline of the Church, during Lent. We should frequently be at a loss to understand her liturgy of this season, unless we picture her to ourselves as preparing the public penitents for a renewed participation in the mysteries. But first they must be reconciled with God, whom they have offended. Their soul is dead by sin ; can it be restored to life ? Yes ; we have God's word for it. The lesson from the prophet Ezechiel, which the Church began yesterday for the catechumens, is continued to-day for the benefit of the public penitents. *If the wicked do penance for all his sins, which he hath committed, and keep all My commandments, and do judgment and justice ; living he shall live, and shall not die.* But his iniquities are upon him, and rise up against him, crying to heaven for eternal vengeance ! And yet God, who knows all things, and forgets nothing, assures us that He *will not remember* iniquities which have been redeemed by penance. Such is the affection of His fatherly Heart, that He will forget the outrage offered Him by His son, if this son will but return to his duty. Thus, then, our penitents are to be reconciled ; and on the feast of the Resurrection they will be associated with the just, because God will have forgotten their iniquities ; they themselves will be just men. Thus it is that the liturgy, which never changes, brings frequently before us the ancient discipline of public penance. Nowadays, sinners are not visibly separated from the faithful ; the Church doors are not closed against them ; they frequently stand near the

holy altar, in the company of the just; and when God's pardon descends upon them, the faithful are not made cognizant of the grace by any special and solemn rite. Let us here admire the wonderful mercy of our heavenly Father, and profit by the indulgent discipline of our holy mother the Church. The lost sheep may enter the fold at any hour and without any display; let him take advantage of the condescension thus shown him, and never more wander from the Shepherd, who thus mercifully receives him. Neither let the just man be puffed up with self-complacency, by preferring himself to the lost sheep; let him rather reflect on those words of to-day's lesson: *If the just man turn himself away from his justice, and do iniquity . . . the justices which he hath done shall not be remembered.* Let us, therefore, tremble for ourselves, and have compassion on sinners. One of the great means on which the Church rests her hopes for the reconciliation of sinners is the fervent prayers offered up for them by the faithful during Lent.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. v.

In illo tempore: Erat dies festus Judæorum, et ascendit Jesus Jerosolymam. Est autem Jerosolymis Probatica piscina, quæ cognominatur hebraice Bethsaïda, quinque porticus habens. In his jacebat multitudo magna languentium, cæcorum, claudorum, aridorum, exspectantium aquæ motum. Angelus autem Domini descendebat secundum tempus in piscinam: et movebatur aqua. Et qui prior descen-

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. v.

At that time: There was a festival day of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem a pond, called Probatica, which in Hebrew is named Bethsaïda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick, of blind, of lame, of withered, waiting for the moving of the water. And an angel of the Lord descended at certain times into the pond; and the water was moved. And he that went down first

disset in piscinam post motionem aquæ, sanus fiebat a quacumque detinebatur infirmitate. Erat autem quidam homo ibi, triginta et octo annos habens in infirmitate sua. Hunc cum vidisset Jesus jacentem, et cognovisset quia jam multum tempus haberet, dicit ei: Vis sanus fieri? Respondit ei languidus: Domine, hominem non habeo, ut cum turbata fuerit aqua, mittat me in piscinam: dum venio enim ego, alius ante me descendit. Dicit ei Jesus: Surge, tolle grabatum tuum, et ambula. Et statim sanus factus est homo ille: et sustulit grabatum suum, et ambulabat. Erat autem sabbatum in die illo. Dicebant ergo Judæi illi qui sanatus fuerat: Sabbatum est, non licet tibi tollere grabatum tuum. Respondit eis: Qui me sanum fecit, ille mihi dixit: Tolle grabatum tuum et ambula. Interrogaverunt ergo eum: Quis est ille homo qui dixit tibi: Tolle grabatum tuum, et ambula? Is autem qui sanus fuerat effectus, nesciebat quis esset. Jesus enim declinavit a turba constituta in loco. Postea invenit eum Jesus in templo, et dixit illi: Ecce sanus factus es: jam noli peccare, ne deterius tibi aliquid contingat. Abiit ille homo, et nuntiavit Judæis quia Jesus esset, qui fecit eum sanum.

into the pond after the motion of the water, was made whole of whatsoever infirmity he lay under. And there was a certain man there, that had been eight-and-thirty years under his infirmity. Him, when Jesus had seen lying, and knew that he had been now a long time, he saith to him: Wilt thou be made whole? The infirm man answered him: Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond; for whilst I am coming, another goeth down before me. Jesus saith to him: Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole; and he took up his bed and walked. And it was the Sabbath that day. The Jews therefore said to him that was healed: It is the Sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. He answered them: He that made me whole, he said to me: Take up thy bed and walk. They asked him, therefore: Who is that man who said to thee: Take up thy bed, and walk? But he who was healed, knew not who it was: for Jesus went aside from the multitude standing in the place. Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the temple, and saith to him: Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee. The man went his way, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole.

Let us return to our penitents of the ancient discipline of the Church ; those of the present day, and we ourselves, can easily make a practical application of the reflections suggested by the Gospel. We have just been told by the prophet that God is ever ready to pardon a penitent sinner. But how is this pardon to be administered ? Who is to pronounce the sentence of absolution ? The answer is given in our Gospel. He that had been *eight-and-thirty years under his infirmity*, is a figure of the inveterate sinner : and yet he is *made whole*, and recovers the use of his limbs. How has the cure been wrought ? First of all, the infirm man says to Jesus : *I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond.* The water would have cured him ; but observe, he has need of some *man* to lead him to the water. This *Man* is the Son of God, and He became *Man* in order to heal us. As *Man*, He has received power to forgive sins ; and, before leaving this earth, He gives that same power to other men, and says to them : ‘ Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them.’¹ Our penitents, then, are to be reconciled with God by virtue of this supernatural power ; and the *infirm man*, who takes up his bed and walks, is a figure of the sinner, whose sins have been forgiven him by the Church, by the divine power of the keys.

In the third century, a heretic, named Novatian, taught that the Church has not the power to forgive sins committed after Baptism. This doctrine was condemned by the Councils and the holy doctors of the Church ; and in order to offer to the faithful some outward expression of the power given to the Son of Man of forgiving sins to such as repent, there was painted on the walls of the places where the Christians used to assemble, the infirm man of our Gospel, walking with his bed upon his shoulders.

¹ St. John xx. 23.

This consoling symbol is frequently met with in the frescoes which were painted, even in the age of the martyrs, in the Roman catacombs. They show us how the early Christians were taught to understand this passage of the Gospel, which the Church, so many centuries ago, assigned to this day.

The water of the Probatica was also a symbol ; and here our Gospel conveyed a special instruction to the catechumens. By water they were to be made whole, and by water endowed with a supernatural virtue. The miraculous pond of Jerusalem could cure only the body, and that at rare intervals, and the favour could be conferred only upon a single individual ; but now that the angel of the Great Counsel has come down from heaven, and sanctified the waters of the Jordan, the Probatica is everywhere ; it is giving health to the souls of men, without any limitation either of time or of number. *Man* is the minister of this grace ; but it is the Son of God, become the Son of *Man*, that works by the human minister.

Let us also consider the *multitude of sick*, who, as the Gospel tells us, were *waiting for the moving of the water*. They represent the various classes of sinners, who are seeking, during this holy time, to be converted to their God. There are the *sick*, or, as the Latin word has it, the *languid* ; these are the tepid, who never thoroughly give up their evil habits ; there are the *blind* ; these are they whose spiritual eye is dead ; there are the *lame*, who limp and falter in the path of salvation ; and, lastly, there are the *withered*, who seem incapable of doing a single good action. All are waiting for the favourable moment. Jesus will soon be with them, and will say to each of them : *Wilt thou be made whole ?* Let them answer this question with love and confidence, and they will be healed.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Exaudi nos, misericors
Deus, et mentibus nostris
gratiæ tuæ lumen ostende.
Per Christum Dominum
nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Graciously hear us, O merciful
God, and manifest the
light of thy grace to our souls.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Let us address ourselves to the heavenly Physician of our souls, in these words of the *Triodion* of the Greek Church.

HYMN

(*Feria VI. Hebdomadæ I. Jejuniorum.*)

Qui passionibus tuis tradidisti omnibus vacuitatem a passionibus, effice, Domine, ut divina cruce carnis meæ affectionibus extinctis, sanctam pariter Resurrectionem tuam conspiciam.

Puritatis fons, conserva nos, misericors, jejunii ope, respice ad nos ante te proidentes, attende elevationi manuum nostrarum, qui manus tuas in ligno pro mortalibus omnibus crucifixus expandisti, angelorum unus Dominus.

Inimici fraudibus obtenebratum me illumina, Christe meus, qui cruci suspensus solem quondam obscurasti, et vero remissionis lumine fideles palam irradiasti, quo in mandatorum tuorum luce ambulans, purus ad salutiferæ resurrectionis tuæ splendorem perveniam.

Salvator, vitis instar e ligno pendens, incorruptionis mero fines terræ irri-

Do thou, O Lord, whose Passion has merited for us the deliverance from our passions, grant that my carnal affections may be quenched by the virtue of thy divine cross, and that I may contemplate thy holy Resurrection.

O Fount of purity, most merciful Saviour, preserve us by the merits of this our fast. Behold us here prostrate before thee. Disdain not our uplifted hands, O thou the sovereign Lord of the angels, that didst stretch forth thy hands on thy cross for all mankind.

The snares of the enemy have involved me in darkness: enlighten me, O Christ, who, when hanging on the cross, didst obscure the sun, and bring to thy faithful the rays of pardon. May I walk in the light of thy commandments and, being purified, come to the brightness of thy saving Resurrection.

Thou, O my Saviour, and Christ! hanging like a vine on the wood of the cross,

gasti, O Christe. Unde exclamo: Mihi tremulentia peccatorum miserum in modum semper obcæcato dulcem veræ compunctionis succum largitus, præbe nunc vires ut jejunare a voluptatibus valeam, utpote bonus, atque misericors.

O crucis tuæ potentiam! hæc abstinentiæ germen in Ecclesia efflorescere fecit, prisca in Eden Adami intemperantia radicitus evulsa; ex hac siquidem mors in homines derivavit, ex illa vero incorruptus immortalitatis latex mundo effluit, veluti ex alio paradisi fonte, vivifico sanguine tuo, atque aqua simul effusis, unde universa vitam receperunt; indeque dulces nobis effice jejunii delicias, Deus Israël, qui magnam habes misericordiam.

didst enrich the whole earth with the wine of immortality. Therefore do I cry out unto thee: I was miserably blinded by the intoxication of sin, but thou didst bestow upon me the sweet refreshment of true compunction; grant me, now, the strength that I may fast from sinful pleasures, for thou art a good and merciful God.

O wonderful power, of thy cross! It was thy cross that made the plant of abstinence to bloom in the Church, after having uprooted the old intemperance of Adam in Eden. From the intemperance came death upon mankind; but from the other, the ever pure stream of immortality flowed upon the world, for from thy side, as from a fount of paradise, streamed thy life-giving Blood, mingled with water, and from these have all creatures received life. Therefore do we beseech thee, O God of Israel, to grant us, in thy great mercy, that we may experience the sweet delights of fasting.

SATURDAY

IN EMBER WEEK

THE Station is in the basilica of Saint Peter on the Vatican, where the people were wont to assemble towards evening, that they might be present at the Ordination of the priests and sacred ministers. This day was called *Twelve-Lesson-Saturday*, because, formerly, twelve passages from the holy Scriptures were read, as upon Holy Saturday. The Mass, during which the Ordinations were given, was celebrated during the night; so that by the time it was over, the Sunday had begun. Later on, the Ordination Mass was said early on the Saturday, as we now have it; but in memory of the ancient practice, the Gospel for Saturday is repeated on the Sunday. The same is observed on the Saturday in the Advent Ember week; because the Ordination Mass of that season was also anticipated.

COLLECT

Populum tuum, quæsumus, Domine, propitius respice: atque ab eo flagellatæ iracundiæ clementer averte. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Mercifully, O Lord, look down on thy people, and in thy clemency turn away from them the scourges of thy wrath. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

LESSON

Lectio libri Deuteronomii.

Lesson from the Book of Deuteronomy.

Cap. xxvi.

Ch. xxvi.

In diebus illis: Locutus est Moyses ad populum dicens: Quando compleveris

In those days: Moses spoke to the people, saying: When thou hast made an end of

decimam cunctarum frugum tuarum, loqueris in conspectu Domini Dei tui: Abstuli quod sanctificatum est de domo mea, et dedi illud levitæ et advenæ, et pupillo ac viduæ, sicut jussisti mihi: non præterivi mandata tua, nec sum oblitus imperii tui. Obedivi voci Domini Dei mei, et feci omnia sicut præcepisti mihi. Respice de sanctuario tuo, et de excelso cœlorum habitaculo, et benedic populo tuo Israël, et terræ quam dedisti nobis, sicut jurasti patribus nostris, terræ lacte et melle mananti. Hodie Dominus Deus tuus præcepit tibi ut facias mandata hæc atque judicia; et custodias et impleas ex toto corde tuo, et ex tota anima tua. Dominum elegisti hodie, ut sit tibi Deus, et ambules in viis ejus, et custodias cæremonias illius, et mandata atque judicia, et obedias ejus imperio. Et Dominus elegit te hodie, ut sis ei populus peculiaris, sicut locutus est tibi, et custodias omnia præcepta illius: et faciat te excelsiorem cunctis gentibus quas creavit, in laudem, et nomen, et gloriam suam: ut sis populus sanctus Domini Dei tui, sicut locutus est.

tithing all thy fruits thou shalt speak thus in the sight of the Lord thy God: I have taken that which was sanctified out of my house, and I have given it to the levite and to the stranger, and to the fatherless and to the widow, as thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed thy commandments, nor forgotten thy precepts. I have obeyed the voice of the Lord my God, and have done all things as thou hast commanded me. Look from thy sanctuary, and thy high habitation of heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou didst swear to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey. This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these commandments and judgments, and to keep and fulfil them with all thy heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast chosen the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways and keep his ceremonies and precepts, and judgments, and obey his command. And the Lord hath chosen thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath spoken to thee, and to keep all his commandments; and to make thee higher than all nations, which he hath created, to his own praise, and name, and glory; that thou mayst be a holy people of the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken.

God here assures us that a nation, which is faithful in observing the laws regarding the divine service,

shall be blessed above other nations. History is one long illustration of the truth of this promise. Of all the nations which have fallen, there is not one that has not brought the chastisement upon itself by its neglect of the Law of God. At times, the Almighty delays to strike ; but it is only that the chastisement may be the more evident and produce a more salutary effect upon mankind. When we would know the future of a country, we need only observe how it comports itself with regard to the laws of the Church. If its own laws are based on the principles and practices of Christianity, that country is sound, in spite of certain weaknesses here and there : revolutions may disturb its peace, but it will triumph over all. If the bulk of its people is faithful in the observance of external practices prescribed by the Church : for example, if they observe the Lord's day, and the holy fast of Lent ; there is a fund of morality in that country, which is sure to draw down upon it the blessings of heaven. Irreligious men will scoff at all this, and call it superstition, prejudice of weak minds, and out of date for an age of progress like ours ; but if their theories were to rule, and a country, which up to this time had been practically Catholic, were to seek progress by infringing the law of Christian ritual, it would, in less than a hundred years, find that public and private morality had lost ground, and its own security would be menaced. Man may talk and write as he likes : God wishes to be served and honoured by His people, and it is for Him to prescribe what are to be the forms of this service and adoration. Every injury offered to external worship, which is the great social link, is an injury to the interests of mankind. Even were there not the word of God for it, it is but just that such a consequence should follow.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xvii.

In illo tempore: Assumpsit Jesus Petrum, et Jacobum, et Joannem fratrem ejus, et duxit illos in montem excelsum seorsum: et transfiguratus est ante eos. Et resplenduit facies ejus sicut sol, vestimenta autem ejus facta sunt alba sicut nix. Et ecce apparuerunt illis Moyses et Elias cum eo loquentes. Respondens autem Petrus dixit ad Jesum: Domine, bonum est nos hic esse: si vis, faciamus hic tria tabernacula, tibi unum, Moysi unum, et Eliæ unum. Adhuc eo loquente, ecce nubes lucida obumbravit eos. Et ecce vox de nube, dicens: Hic est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi bene complacui: ipsum audite. Et audientes discipuli, ceciderunt in faciem suam, et timuerunt valde. Et accessit Jesus, et tetigit eos, dixitque eis: Surgite et nolite timere. Levantes autem oculos suos, neminem viderunt nisi solum Jesum. Et descendentibus illis de monte, præcepit eis Jesus, dicens: Nemini dixeritis visionem, donec Filius hominis a mortuis resurgat.

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Ch. xvii.

At that time: Jesus taketh unto him Peter and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart: and he was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as the sun: and his garments became white as snow. And behold there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then Peter answering, said to Jesus: Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. And as he was yet speaking, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them. And lo, a voice out of the cloud, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him. And the disciples hearing, fell upon their face, and were very much afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said to them: Arise and fear not. And they, lifting up their eyes, saw no one, but only Jesus. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying: Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of Man be risen from the dead.

This Gospel, which, as we have already explained, is to be repeated to-morrow, is the one that is read in the Mass of to-day's Ordinations. The following

is the interpretation given by the ancient liturgists, among whom we may especially mention the learned abbot Rupert. The Church would have us think upon the sublime dignity which has been conferred upon the newly ordained priests. They are represented by the three apostles, who were taken by Jesus to the high mountain, and favoured with the sight of His glory. The rest of the disciples were left below; Peter, James, and John were the only ones permitted to ascend to Thabor, and they, when the time should come, were to tell their fellow-apostles, and the whole world, how they had seen the glory of their Master, and heard the words of the Father declaring the Divinity of the Son of Man. 'This voice,' says St. Peter, 'coming down to Him from the excellent glory: This is My beloved Son, in whom I have pleased Myself; hear ye Him. And this voice we heard, brought from heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount.'¹ In like manner, these priests who have just been ordained, and for whom you have been offering up your prayers and fast, will enter into the cloud with the Lord. They will offer up the Sacrifice of your salvation in the silence of the sacred Canon. God will descend into their hands, for your sake; and though they are mortal and sinners, yet will they, each day, be in closest communication with the Divinity. The forgiveness of your sins, which you are now preparing to receive from your heavenly Father, is to come to you through their hands; their superhuman power will bring it down from heaven upon your souls. It is thus that God has cured our pride. The serpent said to us, through our first parents: 'Eat of this fruit, and you shall be as gods.' We unfortunately believed the tempter, and the fruit of our transgression was death. God took pity on us, and resolved to save us; but it is by the hands of *men* that He would save us, and this in

¹ 2 St. Peter i. 17, 18.

order to humble our haughtiness. His own eternal Son became Man, and He left other men after Him, to whom He said : ' As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you.'¹ Let us, then, show honour to these men, who have, this very day, been raised to so high a dignity. One of the duties imposed on us by our holy religion is respect to the priesthood.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Fideles tuos, Deus, benedictio desiderata confirmet : quæ eos et a tua voluntate nunquam faciat discrepare, et tuis semper indulgeat beneficiis gratulari. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

May thy much desired blessing, O God, give strength to thy faithful people : may it hinder them from ever swerving from thy will, and make them always enjoy thy favours. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

This is Saturday ; let us have recourse to Mary, the refuge of sinners. Let us put under her maternal protection the humble penances we are now going through ; for this end we may make use of the following sequence, taken from the Cluny missal :

SEQUENCE

Salvatoris Mater pia,
Mundi hujus spes Maria,
Ave plena gratia.
Porta cœli,
Templum Dei,
Maris portus ad quem rei
Currunt cum fiducia.
Summi Regis sponsa digna,
Cunctis clemens et benigna,
Operum suffragio.
Cæcis lumen,
Claudis via,
Nudis Martha et Maria,
Mentis desiderio.

Hail Mary, full of grace !
dear Mother of Jesus, and
hope of the world !

O gate of heaven ! O temple
of God ! O haven of the sea,
where sinners confidently seek
shelter and repose.

Thou art the worthy bride
of the great King, and, by
thy powerful prayers, thou art
kind and loving to all.

Thou art light to the blind,
and a sure path to such as are
lame. Thou art, by thy loving
affection, both Martha and
Mary to the needy.

¹ St. John xx. 21.

Inter spinas flos fuisti ;
Sic flos flori patuisti,
Pietatis gratia.

Verbum verbo concepisti,
Regem regum peperisti,
Virgo viri nescia.

Regi nato adhæsisti,
Quem lactasti et pavisti,
More matris debito.

Quæ conjuncta nunc ei-
dem,
Et Regina facta pridem,
Operum pro merito.
Reis ergo fac, Regina,
Apud Regem ut ruina
Relaxentur debita.

Et regnare fac renatos,
A reatu expurgatos,
Pietate solita.
Amen.

Thou wast the flower
among the thorns ; the flower
that, by its rich graces,
bloomed to the divine Flower,
thy Jesus.

Thou didst speak thy word,
and then conceivedst the
Word ; thou didst give birth
to the King of kings, thou
that wast a pure Virgin.

Thou wast ever faithful to
this King, thy Child ; and,
using a mother's privilege,
thou didst feed him at thy
breast.

Now, thou art united with
him, and in reward for thy
merits, thou art made the
Queen of heaven and earth.

Then pray for us, O Queen,
to him that is our King, be-
seeching him to pardon us
poor fallen sinners.

Show us thy wonted clem-
ency, and, having obtained
us the new life of remission
of our sins, bring us to the
kingdom, there to reign for
ever. Amen.

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

THE subject offered to our consideration, on this second Sunday, is one of the utmost importance for the holy season. The Church applies to us the lesson which our Saviour gave to three of His apostles. Let us endeavour to be more attentive to it than they were.

Jesus was about to pass from Galilee into Judea, that He might go up to Jerusalem and be present at the feast of the Pasch. It was that last Pasch, which was to begin with the immolation of the figurative lamb, and end with the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. Jesus would have His disciples know Him. His works had borne testimony to Him, even before those who were, in a manner, strangers to Him; but as for His disciples, had they not every reason to be faithful to Him, even to death? Had they not listened to His words, which had such power with them that they forced conviction? Had they not experienced His love, which it was impossible to resist? And had they not seen how patiently He had borne with their strange and untoward ways? Yes, they must have known Him. They had heard one of their company, Peter, declare that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God.¹ Notwithstanding this, the trial to which their faith was soon to be put was of such a terrible kind, that Jesus would mercifully arm them against temptation by an extraordinary grace.

The cross was to be a scandal and a stumbling-block² to the Synagogue, and alas! to more than it. Jesus said to His apostles at the last Supper: 'All of you shall be scandalized in Me this night.'³ Carnal-minded as they then were, what would they think when they should see Him seized by armed men,

¹ St. Matt. xvi. 16. ² 1 Cor. i. 23. ³ St. Matt. xxvi. 31.

handcuffed, hurried from one tribunal to another, and doing nothing to defend Himself! And when they found that the high priests and pharisees, who had hitherto been so often foiled by the wisdom and miracles of Jesus, had now succeeded in their conspiracy against Him, what a shock to their confidence! But there was to be something more trying still: the people, who, but a few days before, greeted Him so enthusiastically with their *Hosannas*, would demand His execution; and He would have to die, between two thieves, on the cross, amidst the insults of His triumphant enemies.

Is it not to be feared that these disciples, when they witness His humiliations and sufferings, will lose their courage? They have lived in His company for three years; but when they see that the things He foretold would happen to Him are really fulfilled, will the remembrance of all they have seen and heard keep them loyal to Him? Or will they turn cowards and flee from Him? Jesus selects three out of the number, who are especially dear to Him: Peter, whom He has made the rock, on which His Church is to be built, and to whom He has promised the keys of the kingdom of heaven; James, the son of thunder, who is to be the first martyr of the apostolic college; and John, James's brother, and His own beloved disciple. Jesus has resolved to take them aside, and show them a glimpse of that glory, which, until the day fixed for its manifestation, He conceals from the eyes of mortals.

He therefore leaves the rest of His disciples in the plain near Nazareth, and goes in company with the three privileged ones towards a high hill called Thabor, which is a continuation of Libanus, and which the psalmist tells us was to rejoice in the name of the Lord.¹ No sooner has He reached the summit of the mountain, than the three apostles

¹ Ps. lxxxviii. 13.

observe a sudden change come over Him ; His Face shines as the sun, and His humble garments become white as snow. They observe two venerable men approach and speak with Him upon what He is about to suffer in Jerusalem. One is Moses, the lawgiver ; the other is Elias, the prophet, who was taken up from earth on a fiery chariot without having passed through the gates of death. These two great representatives of the Jewish religion, the Law and the Prophets, humbly adore Jesus of Nazareth. The three apostles are not only dazzled by the brightness which comes from their divine Master ; but they are filled with such a rapture of delight, that they cannot bear the thought of leaving the place. Peter proposes to remain there for ever and build three tabernacles, for Jesus, Moses, and Elias. And while they are admiring the glorious sight, and gazing on the beauty of their Jesus' human Nature, a bright cloud overshadows them, and a voice is heard speaking to them : it is the voice of the eternal Father, proclaiming the Divinity of Jesus, and saying : ' This is My beloved Son !'

This transfiguration of the Son of Man, this manifestation of His glory, lasted but a few moments : His mission was not on Thabor ; it was humiliation and suffering in Jerusalem. He therefore withdrew into Himself the brightness He had allowed to transpire ; and when He came to the three apostles, who, on hearing the voice from the cloud, had fallen on their faces with fear, they could see no one save only Jesus. The bright cloud was gone ; Moses and Elias had disappeared. What a favour they have had bestowed upon them ! Will they remember what they have seen and heard ? They have had such a revelation of the Divinity of their dear Master ! Is it possible that, when the hour of trial comes, they will forget it, and doubt His being God ? And when they see Him suffer and die, will they be

ashamed of Him and deny Him? Alas! the Gospel has told us what happened to them.

A short time after this, our Lord celebrated His last Supper with His disciples. When the supper was over, He took them to another mount, Mount Olivet, which lies to the east of Jerusalem. Leaving the rest at the entrance of the garden, He advances with Peter, James, and John, and then says to them: 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death: stay you here and watch with Me.'¹ He then retires some little distance from them, and prays to His eternal Father. The Heart of our Redeemer is weighed down with anguish. When He returns to His three disciples, He is enfeebled by the agony He has suffered, and His garments are saturated with Blood. The apostles are aware that He is sad even unto death, and that the hour is close at hand when He is to be attacked: are they keeping watch? are they ready to defend Him? No: they seem to have forgotten Him; they are fast asleep, for their eyes are heavy.² Yet a few moments, and all will have fled from Him; and Peter, the bravest of them all, will be taking his oath that he never knew the Man.

After the Resurrection our three apostles made ample atonement for this cowardly and sinful conduct, and acknowledged the mercy wherewith Jesus had sought to fortify them against temptation, by showing them His glory on Thabor a few days before His Passion. Let us not wait till we have betrayed Him: let us at once acknowledge that He is our Lord and our God. We are soon to be keeping the anniversary of His Sacrifice; like the apostles, we are to see Him humbled by His enemies and bearing, in our stead, the chastisements of divine justice. We must not allow our faith to be weakened, when we behold the fulfilment of those prophecies of David and Isaias, that the Messiah is to be treated as a worm

¹ St. Matt. xxvi. 38.

² *Ibid.* 43.

of the earth,¹ and be covered with wounds, so as to become like a leper, the most abject of men, and the Man of sorrows.² We must remember the grand things of Thabor, and the adorations paid Him by Moses and Elias, and the bright cloud, and the voice of the eternal Father. The more we see Him humbled, the more must we proclaim His glory and divinity; we must join our acclamations with those of the angels and the four-and-twenty elders, whom St. John, one of the witnesses of the Transfiguration, heard crying out with a loud voice: 'The Lamb that was slain, is worthy to receive power and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction!'³

The second Sunday of Lent is called, from the first word of the Introit, *Reminiscere*; and also Transfiguration-Sunday, on account of the Gospel which is read in the Mass.

The Station at Rome is in the church of St. Mary *in Dominica*, on Monte Celio. Tradition tells us that in this basilica was the *diaconicum* of which St. Laurence had charge, and from which he distributed to the poor the alms of the Church.

MASS

The Church, in the Introit, encourages us to confidence in God, who will deliver us from our *enemies*, if we ask it of Him with fervent prayer. There are two favours which, during Lent, we ought to beseech Him to grant us: the pardon of our sins, and His help to avoid a relapse.

INTROIT

Reminiscere miseratio- Remember, O Lord, Thy
num tuarum, Domine, et bowels of compassion, and
misericordiæ tuæ, quæ a thy mercies that are from the

¹ Ps. xxi. 7.

² Is. liii. 3, 4.

³ Apoc. v. 12.

sæculo sunt: ne unquam beginning of the world. Let
dominentur nobis inimici not our enemies ever rule
nostri: libera nos, Deus over us: deliver us, O God of
Israel, ex omnibus angustiis Israel, from all our distress.
nostris.

Ps. Ad te, Domine, levavi animam meam: Deus meus, in te confido, non erubescam. *V.* Gloria Patri. Reminiscere.

Ps. To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul; in thee O my God, I put my trust, let me not be ashamed. *V.* Glory. Remember.

In the Collect, we beg of God to watch over us in all our necessities, of both body and soul. If our prayer be humble and earnest, it will be granted. God will provide for us in our corporal necessities, and will defend our souls against the suggestions of our enemy, who strives to sully even our *thoughts*.

COLLECT

Deus qui conspicias omni nos virtute destitui, interius exteriusque custodi: ut ab omnibus adversitatibus muniamur in corpore, et a pravis cogitationibus mundemur in mente. Per Dominum.

O God, who seest how destitute we are of all strength, preserve us both within and without, that our bodies may be free from all adversity, and our souls purified from all evil thoughts. Through, &c.

The second and third Collects are given on the first Sunday of Lent, page 129.

EPISTLE

Lectio Epistolæ beati Pauli Apostoli ad Thessalonicenses.

1 Cap. iv.

Fratres: Rogamus vos et obsecramus in Domino Jesu, ut quemadmodum accepistis a nobis, quomodo oporteat vos ambulare, et placere Deo, sic et ambuletis, ut abundetis magis. Scitis enim quæ præcepta dederim vobis per Do-

Lesson of the Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians.

1 Ch. iv.

Brethren: We pray and beseech you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us, how you ought to walk and to please God, so also you would walk, that you may abound the more. For you know what precepts I have

minum Jesum. Hæc est enim voluntas Dei sanctificatio vestra : ut abstineatis vos a fornicatione, ut sciat unusquisque vestrum vas suum possidere in sanctificatione et honore : non in passione desiderii, sicut et Gentes quæ ignorant Deum : et ne quis supergrediatur, neque circumveniat in negotio fratrem suum : quoniam vindex est Dominus de his omnibus, sicut prædiximus vobis, et testificati sumus. Non enim vocavit nos Deus in immunditiam, sed in sanctificationem : in Christo Jesu Domino nostro.

given to you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification ; that you should abstain from fornication ; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles, that know not God ; and that no man over-reach, nor circumvent his brother in business ; because the Lord is the avenger of all these things, as we have told you before, and have testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification : in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here the apostle shows what manner of life should be followed by Christians ; and the Church, by repeating his words, exhorts the faithful to profit of the present season of grace, and regain all the beauty of the image of God, which the grace of Baptism first gave them. A Christian is a 'vessel of honour,' formed and enriched by the hand of God ; let him, therefore, shun whatsoever would degrade his noble origin, and turn him into a vessel of dishonour, fit only to be broken and cast with the unclean into the sink of hell. The Christian religion has so far ennobled man, that even his very body may share in the soul's sanctity ; on the other hand it teaches us that this sanctity of the soul is impaired, yea altogether effaced, by the loss of the body's purity. The whole man, therefore, both body and soul, is to be reformed by the practices of this holy season. Let us purify the soul by the confession of our sins, by compunction of heart, by the love of God ; and let us give back its dignity to the body, by making it bear the yoke of penance, that so it may be, henceforth, subservient and docile to the

soul, and, on the day of the general resurrection, may partake in her endless bliss.

In the Gradual, man cries out to his God to deliver him from the *evils* that threaten him, and give him victory over the invisible enemy, who so cruelly humbles and insults him.

The Tract is both a canticle of confidence in the divine mercy, and a prayer addressed by the Church to her Saviour, beseeching Him to *visit* and *save* her faithful children on the great feast, which is still so far off, but towards which each day brings us nearer.

GRADUAL

Tribulationes cordis mei dilatatæ sunt ; de necessitatibus meis eripe me, Domine.

V. Vide humilitatem meam et laborem meum : et dimitte omnia peccata mea.

The distress of my soul is increased : deliver me, O Lord, from my necessities.

V. See to what I am reduced, see what I suffer : and forgive me all my sins.

TRACT

Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus : quoniam in sæculum misericordia ejus.

V. Quis loquetur potentias Domini, auditas faciet omnes laudes ejus ?

V. Beati qui custodiunt iudicium, et faciunt justitiam in omni tempore.

V. Memento nostri, Domine, in beneplacito populi tui : visita nos in salutari tuo.

Give glory to the Lord, for he is good : for his mercy endureth for ever.

V. Who shall declare the powers of the Lord ? who shall set forth all his praises ?

V. Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do justice at all times.

V. Remember us, O Lord, in favour of thy people : visit us with thy salvation.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xvii.

In illo tempore : Assumpsit Jesus Petrum, et Jacobum, et Joannem fratrem ejus, et

Sequel of the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Ch. xvii.

At that time : Jesus taketh unto him Peter and James, and John his brother, and

duxit illos in montem excelsum seorsum : et transfiguratus est ante eos. Et resplenduit facies ejus sicut sol : vestimenta autem ejus facta sunt alba sicut nix. Et ecce apparuerunt illis Moyses et Elias cum eo loquentes. Respondens autem Petrus, dixit ad Jesum : Domine, bonum est nos hic esse : si vis, faciamus hic tria tabernacula, tibi unum, Moysi unum, et Eliæ unum. Adhuc eo loquente ecce nubes lucida obumbravit eos. Et ecce vox de nube, dicens : Hic est Filius meus dilectus in quo mihi bene complacui : ipsum audite. Et audientes discipuli, ceciderunt in faciem suam, et timuerunt valde. Et accessit Jesus, et tetigit eos, dixitque eis : Surgite et nolite timere. Levantes autem oculos suos, neminem viderunt nisi solum Jesum. Et descendentibus illis de monte, præcepit eis Jesus, dicens : Nemini dixeritis visionem, donec Filius hominis a mortuis resurgat.

bringeth them up into a high mountain apart : and he was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as the sun : and his garments became white as snow. And behold there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then Peter answering, said to Jesus : Lord, it is good for us to be here : if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. And as he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And lo, a voice out of the cloud, saying : This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased : hear ye him. And the disciples hearing, fell upon their face, and were very much afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said to them : Arise and fear not. And they lifting up their eyes saw no one, but only Jesus. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying : Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of Man be risen from the dead.

Thus did Jesus encourage His apostles, when the time of temptation was near ; He sought to impress them with His glory, that it might keep up their faith in that trying time, when the outward eye would see nothing in His Person but weakness and humiliation. Oh, the loving considerateness of divine grace, which is never wanting, and which shows us in so strong a light the goodness and the justice of our God ! Like the apostles, we also have sinned ;

like them, we have neglected to profit of the help that was sent us from heaven ; we have shut our eyes against the light ; we have forgotten the fair vision that was granted us, and which made us so fervent and happy ; and we fell. We have not, then, been tempted above our strength¹ and it is indeed our own fault that we committed sin. The three apostles were exposed to a terrible temptation, when they beheld their divine Master robbed of all His majesty ; but how easy for them to resist the temptation, by thinking of what they had seen, but a few days before ! Instead of that, they lost their courage, and forgot prayer, which would have brought their courage back ; and thus the favoured witnesses of Thabor became cowards and deserters in the garden of Mount Olivet. There was but one thing left them to do : throw themselves upon the loving mercy of their Jesus, as soon as He had triumphed over His enemies ; they did so, and His generous Heart pardoned them.

Let us imitate them here too. We have abused the grace of God and rendered it fruitless, by our want of correspondence. The fountain of this grace is not yet dried up ; as long as we are in this world, we may always draw from this source, which comes from the Blood and merits of our Redeemer. It is grace that is now urging us to the amendment of our lives. It is given to us in abundance during the present time, and it is given mainly by the holy exercises of Lent. Let us go up the mountain with Jesus ; there we shall not be disturbed by the noise of earthly things. Let us there spend our forty days with Moses and Elias, who long ago sanctified this number by their fasts. Thus, when *the Son of Man shall have risen from the dead*, we will proclaim the favours He has mercifully granted us on Thabor.

In the Offertory, the Church bids us *meditate* on

¹ 1 Cor. x. 13.

the *commandments* of God. Would that we might love them as fervently as the royal prophet, whose words these are !

OFFERTORY

Meditabor in mandatis tuis, quæ dilexi valde: et levabo manus meas ad mandata tua, quæ dilexi.	I will meditate on thy law, which I have loved exceedingly: and I will practise thy commandments, which I have loved.
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The holy Sacrifice of the Mass is a source of devotion; let us, as the Church, in the Secret, prays we may, profit by our to-day's assistance at it. It contains the pledge and price of our *salvation*, and, if we put no obstacle in the way, it will complete our reconciliation with our Lord.

SECRET

Sacrificiis præsentibus, Domine, quesumus, intendente placatus: ut et devotioni nostræ proficiant, et salutem. Per Dominum.	Look down, O Lord, we beseech thee, on this our sacrifice, that it may increase our devotion and procure our salvation. Through, &c.
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The other Secrets as on the first Sunday, page 136.

The penitent soul, having seen how this ineffable mystery has given her to enjoy the presence of Him who is her Saviour and her Judge, offers to Him her prayers with all the fervour of confidence. She says to Him these words of the psalmist, which form the Communion-antiphon :

COMMUNION

Intellige clamorem meum: intende voci orationis meæ, Rex meus et Deus meus: quoniam ad te orabo, Domine.	Understand my cry, hearken to the voice of my prayer, O my King and my God! For to thee will I pray, O Lord!
--	--

In the Postcommunion, the Church prays especially for those of her children who have partaken

of the Victim she has just been offering. Jesus has nourished them with His own Flesh; it behoves them to prove themselves worthy of Him by the renewal of their lives.

POSTCOMMUNION

Supplices te rogamus,	Grant, we humbly beseech
omnipotens Deus, ut quos	thee, O almighty God, that
tuis reficis sacramentis, tibi	those whom thou hast re-
etiam placitis moribus di-	freshed with thy sacraments,
gnanter deservire concedas.	may worthily serve thee in
Per Dominum.	the conduct of their lives.
	Through, &c.

The other Postcommunions as on the first Sunday, page 138.

VESPERS

The psalms and antiphons are given on page 99.

CAPITULUM

(1 *Thess.* iv.)

Fratres: Rogamus vos et	Brethren, We pray and be-
obsecramus in Domino Jesu,	seech you in the Lord Jesus,
ut quemadmodum accepistis	that as you have received of
a nobis, quomodo vos oporteat	us, how you ought to walk
ambulare, et placere Deo, sic	and to please God, so also you
et ambuletis ut abundetis	would walk, that you may
magis.	abound the more.

For the hymn and versicle, see page 106.

ANTIPHON OF THE MAGNIFICAT

Visionem quam vidistis,	Tell the vision ye have seen
nemini dixeritis, donec a	to no man, till the Son of
mortuis resurgat Filius ho-	Man be risen from the dead.
minis.	

OREMUS

LET US PRAY

Deus qui conspicias omni	O God, who seest how desti-
nos virtute destitui, interius	tute we are of all strength,
exteriusque custodi: ut ab	preserve us both within and

omnibus adversitatibus muniamur in corpore, et a pravis cogitationibus mundemur in mente. Per Dominum. without, that our bodies may be free from all adversity, and our souls purified from all evil thoughts. Through, &c.

We may close our Sunday by reciting the following beautiful prayer taken from the Mozarabic breviary.

CAPITULUM

(In II. Dominica Quadragesimæ)

Christe Deus, luminis perenne principium, qui septimum diei curriculum sanctificatione potius quam operatione voluisti esse continentium; quærimus ecce faciem tuam, sed impedimur conscientiæ nostræ tenebra consueta: conamur adsurgere, sed relabimur in mœrorem; non ergo abjicias te quærentes, qui non quærentibus apparere dignatus es. Ecce dierum nostrorum decimas sancto tuo nomini annuis recursibus persolventes, septimum nunc ex ipsis decimis peregrinum diem; da ergo nobis adjutorium in hujus laboriosi itineris via, quo inlibata tibi nostra dedicentur obsequia: ut labores nostros amoris tui desiderio releves, et socordiam sensus nostri fervida dilectionis tuæ ubertate exsuscites: ut in te vita nostra non habeat casum, sed fides inveniat præmium.

O Jesus, our God, eternal first beginning of light, who willedst that thy servants should devote the seventh day to sanctification, rather than to work: lo! we come, seeking how we may find thee, but we are prevented by the habitual darkness of our conscience; we make efforts to arise, but we fall back again, and are dejected. Therefore, we beseech thee, cast not away from thy face them that seek thee, for thou didst deign to show thyself to them that did not seek thee. Now is the season of the year, when we are offering to thy holy name a tithe of our days; and of these days, seven have passed: grant us thine assistance in the path of this fatiguing journey, that so our proffered homage may be without blemish. Sweeten our toil by filling us with an ardent love of thy Majesty, and awaken us from the sluggishness of the body, by the fervent abundance of thy charity. May our life, being thus in thee, know no faltering, and our faith find its reward.

MONDAY

OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of Saint Clement, Pope and Martyr. In this, more than in any other church of the city of Rome, there has been preserved the ancient arrangement of the early Christian basilicas. Under its altar reposes the body of its holy patron, together with the relics of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, and of the consul St. Flavius Clemens.

COLLECT

Præsta quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut familia tua quæ se, affligendo carnem, ab alimentis abstinere, sectando justitiam, a culpa jejundet. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that thy people who mortify themselves by abstinence from meat, may likewise fast from sin, and follow righteousness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio Danielis Prophætæ.

Lesson from the Prophet Daniel.

Cap. ix.

Ch. ix.

In diebus illis: Oravit Daniel Dominum, dicens: Domine, Deus noster, qui eduxisti populum tuum de terra Ægypti in manu forti, et fecisti tibi nomen secundum diem hanc: peccavimus, iniquitatem fecimus, Domine, in omnem justitiam tuam. Avertatur, obsecro, ira tua et furor tuus a civitate tua Jerusalem, et a monte sancto tuo. Propter peccata

In those days: Daniel prayed to the Lord, saying: O Lord our God, who hast brought forth thy people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand, and hast made thee a name as at this day: we have sinned, we have committed iniquity, O Lord, against all thy justice. Let thy wrath and thy indignation be turned away, I beseech thee, from thy city Je-

enim nostra, et iniquitates patrum nostrorum, Jerusalem et populus tuus, in opprobrium sunt omnibus per circuitum nostrum. Nunc ergo exaudi, Deus noster, orationem servi tui et preces ejus: et ostende faciem tuam super sanctuarium tuum, quod desertum est, propter temetipsum. Inclina, Deus meus, aurem tuam, et audi: aperi oculos tuos, et vide desolationem nostram, et civitatem super quam invocatum est nomen tuum: neque enim in justificationibus nostris prosternimus preces ante faciem tuam, sed in miserationibus tuis multis. Exaudi, Domine; placare, Domine: attende et fac: ne moreris, propter temetipsum Deus meus: quia nomen tuum invocatum est super civitatem et super populum tuum, Domine Deus noster.

Jerusalem, and from thy holy mountain. For, by reason of our sins, and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are a reproach to all that are round about us. Now, therefore, O our God, hear the supplication of thy servant, and his prayers: and show thy face upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for thy own sake. Incline, O my God, thy ear and hear: open thine eyes, and see our desolation, and the city upon which thy name is called: for it is not for our justifications that we present our prayers before thy face, but for the multitude of thy tender mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, be appeased; hearken, and do; delay not for thy own sake, O my God; because thy name is invoked upon thy city, and upon thy people, O Lord our God.

Such was the prayer and lamentation of Daniel, during the captivity in Babylon. His prayer was heard; and, after seventy years of exile, the Jews returned to their country, rebuilt the temple, and were once more received by the Lord as His chosen people. But what are the Israelites now? What has been their history for the last eighteen hundred years? The words of Daniel's lamentation but faintly represent the sad reality of their present long chastisement. God's anger lies heavily on Jerusalem; the very ruins of the temple have perished; the children of Israel are dispersed over the whole earth, a reproach to all nations. A curse hangs over this people; like Cain, it is a wanderer and a fugitive; and God watches over it, that it become not extinct.

The rationalist is at a loss how to explain this problem : whereas the Christian sees in it the punishment of the greatest of crimes. But what is the explanation of this phenomenon ? The light shone in darkness ; and the darkness did not comprehend it !¹ If the darkness had received the light, it would not be darkness now ; but it was not so ; Israel, therefore, deserved to be abandoned. Several of its children did, indeed, acknowledge the Messias, and they became children of the light ; nay, it is through them that the light was made known to the whole world. When will the rest of Israel open its eyes ? When will this people address to God the prayer of Daniel ? They have it ; they frequently read it ; and yet, it finds no response in their proud hearts. Let us, the Gentiles, pray for the Jews—the younger for the elder. Every year there are some who are converted, and seek admission into the new Israel of the Church of Christ. Right welcome are they ! May God, in His mercy, add to their number ; that thus all men may adore the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, together with Jesus Christ, His Son, whom He sent into this world.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii Sequel of the holy Gospel
secundum Joannem. according to John.

Cap. viii.

Ch. viii.

In illo tempore : Dixit
Jesus turbis Judæorum : Ego
vado, et quæretis me, et in
peccato vestro moriemini.
Quo ego vado, vos non po-
testis venire. Dicebant ergo
Judæi : Numquid interficiet
semetipsum, quia dixit : Quo
ego vado, vos non potestis

At that time : Jesus said to
the multitude of the Jews : I
go, and you shall seek me, and
you shall die in your sin.
Whither I go, you cannot
come. The Jews, therefore,
said : Will he kill himself, be-
cause he said : Whither I go,
you cannot come ? And he

¹ St. John i. 5.

venire ? Et dicebate eis : Vos de deorsum estis ; ego de supernis sum. Vos de mundo hoc estis ; ego non sum de hoc mundo. Dixi ergo vobis, quia moriemini in peccatis vestris : si enim non credideritis quia ego sum, moriemini in peccato vestro. Dicebant ergo ei : Tu quis es ? Dixit eis Jesus : Principium, qui et loquor vobis. Multa habeo de vobis loqui, et iudicare. Sed qui me misit, verax est ; et ego quæ audivi ab eo, hæc loquor in mundo. Et non cognoverunt quia Patrem ejus dicebat Deum. Dixit ergo eis Jesus : Cum exaltaveritis Filium hominis, tunc cognoscetis quia ego sum, et a meipso facio nihil, sed sicut docuit me Pater, hæc loquor : et qui me misit, mecum est, et non reliquit me solum : quia ego, quæ placita sunt ei, facio semper.

said to them : You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you, that you shall die in your sins. For if you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin. They said therefore to him : Who art thou ? Jesus said to them : The beginning, who also speak unto you. Many things I have to speak and to judge of you. But he that sent me is true ; and the things I have heard of him, these same I speak in the world. And they understood not that he called God his Father. Jesus therefore said to them : When you shall have lifted up the Son of man, then shall you know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as the Father hath taught me, these things I speak : and he that sent me is with me, and he hath not left me alone : for I do always the things that please him.

I go ; could Jesus say anything more awful ? He has come to save this people ; He has given them every possible proof of His love. A few days ago, we heard Him saying to the Canaanite woman, that He was sent not but for the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel. Alas ; these lost sheep disown their Shepherd. He tells the Jews that He is soon going to leave them, and that they will not be able to follow Him ; but it makes no impression on them. His works testify that He is *from above* ; they, the Jews, are *of this world*, and they can think of no other. The Messiah they hope for, is to be one of great earthly power ; he is to be a great conqueror. In

vain, then, does Jesus go about doing good ;¹ in vain is nature obedient to His commands ; in vain do His wisdom and teaching exceed all that mankind has ever heard : Israel is deaf and blind. The fiercest passions are raging in his heart ; nor will he rest, till the Synagogue shall have imbrued its hands in the blood of Jesus. But then the measure of iniquity will be filled up, and God's anger will burst upon Israel in one of the most terrible chastisements that the world has ever witnessed. It makes one tremble to read the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem, and the massacre of that people that had clamoured for the death of Jesus. Our Lord assures us that nothing more terrible had ever been from the beginning of the world, or ever would be.²

God is patient ; He waits a long time : but when His anger bursts upon a guilty people like the Jews, the chastisement is without mercy, and serves as an example to future generations. O sinners ! you who, so far, have turned a deaf ear to the admonitions of the Church, and have refused to be converted to the Lord your God, tremble at these words of Jesus : *I go*. If this Lent is to be spent like so many others, and to leave you in your present state, are you not afraid of that terrible threat : *You shall die in your sin ?* By remaining in your sins, you number yourselves with those who cried out against Jesus : 'Crucify Him, crucify Him !' Oh ! if He chastised a whole people—a people that He had loaded with favours, and protected and saved innumerable times—think you, He will spare you ? He must triumph ; if it be not by mercy, it will be by justice.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Adesto supplicationibus
nostris, omnipotens Deus :

Hear our prayers and en-
treaties, O almighty God ;

¹ Acts x. 38.

² St. Matt. xxiv. 21.

et quibus fiduciam sperandæ pietatis indulges: consuetæ misericordiæ tribue benignus effectum. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

and grant that those, to whom thou givest hopes of thy mercy, may experience the effects of thy usual clemency. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We will begin to-day the beautiful hymn of Prudentius on fasting. Its extreme length obliges us to divide it into fragments. We reserve the stanzas which refer to the fast of Ninive for Monday in Passion-week. Formerly, several Churches of the Roman rite introduced this hymn into the Divine Office, but they only made a selection from it; whereas the Mozarabic breviary gives the whole hymn from beginning to end.

HYMN

O Nazarene, lux Bethlem,
verbum Patris,
Quem partus alvi virginalis
protulit,
Adesto castis, Christe, parci-
moniis,
Festumque nostrum Rex se-
renus aspice,
Jejuniorum dum litamus vic-
timam.

Nil hoc profecto purius
mysterio,
Quo fibra cordis expiatur
vividi:
Intemperata quo domantur
viscera,
Arvina putrem ne resudans
crapulam,
Obstrangulatæ mentis in-
genium premat.

Hinc subjugatur luxus et
turpis gula;
Vini, atque somni degener
soccordia,
Libido sordens, inverecundus
lepos,

O Jesus of Nazareth, O
Light of Bethlehem, O Word
of the Father, born to us
from a Virgin's womb, be
thou with us in our chaste
abstinence. Do thou, our
King, look with a propitious
eye upon our feast, whereon
we offer thee the tribute of
our fast.

Truly, nothing can be more
holy than this fast, which
purifies the inmost recesses of
man's heart. By it is tamed
the unruly carnal appetite;
that thus the ardent soul
may not be choked by the
surfeiting of a pampered body.

By fasting are subdued
luxury and vile gluttony. The
drowsiness that comes of wine
and sleep; lust with its de-
filements; the impudence of
buffoonery; yea, all the pests

Variaque pestes languidorum
sensuum
Parcam subactæ disciplinam
sentiunt.

Nam si licenter diffluens
potu, et cibo,
Jejuna rite membra non
coerceas,
Sequitur, frequenti marcida
oblectamine
Scintilla mentis ut tepescat
nobilis,
Animusque pigris stertat in
præcordiis.

Frænentur ergo corporum
cupidines,
Detersa et intus emicet pru-
dentia :
Sic excitato perspicax acu-
mine,
Liberque flatu laxiore spiritus
Rerum parentem rectius pre-
cabitur.

that come from our sluggish
flesh, are hereby disciplined
into restraint.

For, if thou freely indulgest
in meat and drink, and brid-
lest not thine appetite by fast-
ing, it needs must be that the
noble fire of the spirit, smo-
thered by the frequent indul-
gence of the body, should grow
dull, and the soul, like the
drowsy flesh it inhabits, fall
into heavy sleep.

Therefore, let us bridle our
bodily desires, and follow the
clear interior light of pru-
dence. Thus, the soul having
her sight made keener, will
breathe more freely, and will
pray to the Creator with the
stronger hope.

TUESDAY

OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of Saint Balbina. This holy virgin of Rome was the daughter of the tribune Quirinus, and suffered martyrdom during the pontificate of Alexander I., in the second century. She consecrated her virginity to God, and led a life rich in good works.

COLLECT

Perfice, quæsumus, Domine, benignus in nobis observantiæ sanctæ subsidium : ut quæ, te auctore, facienda cognovimus, te operante impleamus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant us, O Lord, we beseech thee, thy assistance, whereby we may go through the observance of this holy fast, that what we have undertaken by thy appointment, we may accomplish by thy grace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Regum.

Lesson from the Book of Kings.

III. *Cap.* xvii.

III. *Ch.* xvii.

In diebus illis : Factus est sermo Domini ad Eliam Thesbiten, dicens : Surge, et vade in Sarephta Sidoniorum, et manebis ibi : præcepi enim ibi mulieri viduæ ut pascat te. Surrexit et abiit in Sarephta. Cumque venisset ad portam civitatis, apparuit ei mulier vidua colligens ligna, et vocavit eam, dixitque ei : Da mihi paululum aquæ in vase, ut bibam. Cumque illa pergeret ut afferret, clamavit

In those days : The word of the Lord came to Elias the Thesbite, saying : Arise, and go to Sarephta of the Sidonians, and dwell there ; for I have commanded a widow woman there to feed thee. He arose and went to Sarephta. And when he was come to the gate of the city, he saw the widow woman gathering sticks, and he called her, and said to her : Give me a little water in a vessel that I may

post tergum ejus dicens: Affer mihi, obsecro, et bucellam panis in manu tua. Quæ respondit: Vivit Dominus Deus tuus, quia non habeo panem, nisi quantum pugillus capere potest farinæ in hydria, et paululum olei in lecytho: en colligo duo ligna ut ingrediar et faciam illud mihi et filio meo, ut comedamus, et moriamur. Ad quam Elias ait: Noli timere, sed vade, et fac sicut dixisti: verumtamen mihi primum fac de ipsa farinula subcinericium panem parvulum, et affer ad me: tibi autem et filio tuo facies postea. Hæc autem dicit Dominus Deus Israel: Hydria farinæ non deficiet, nec lecythus olei minuetur usque ad diem in qua Dominus daturus est pluviam super faciem terræ. Quæ abiit, et fecit juxta verbum Eliæ; et comedit ipse, et illa, et domus ejus: et ex illa die hydria farinæ non defecit, et lecythus olei non est imminutus, juxta verbum Domini, quod locutus fuerat in manu Eliæ.

drink. And when she was going to fetch it, he called after her, saying: Bring me also, I beseech thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand. And she answered: As the Lord thy God liveth, I have no bread, but only a handful of meal in a pot, and a little oil in a cruse; behold I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elias said to her: Fear not, but go, and do as thou hast said; but first make for me of the same meal a little hearth cake, and bring it to me: and after, make for thyself and thy son. For thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: The pot of meal shall not waste, nor the cruse of oil be diminished, until the day wherein the Lord will give rain upon the face of the earth. She went, and did according to the word of Elias; and he ate, and she, and her house: and from that day the pot of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil was not diminished, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke in the hand of Elias.

The instruction of the catechumens is continued by means of the Gospel facts, which are each day brought before them; and the Church reads to them the prophecies from the old Testament, which are to be fulfilled by the rejection of the Jews, and the vocation of the Gentiles. Elias, who is our faithful companion during Lent, is represented to us to-day as foreshadowing, in his own conduct, the treatment which God is one day to show towards His ungrateful

people. A three years' drought had been sent upon the kingdom of Israel; but the people continued obstinate in their sins. Elias goes in search of some one that will provide him with food. It is a great privilege to entertain the prophet; for God is with him. Then, whither will he go? Is it to any family in the kingdom of Israel? Or will he pass into the land of Juda? He neglects them both, and directs his steps towards the land of the Gentiles. He enters the country of Sidon; and coming to the gates of a city called Sarephta, he sees a poor widow; it is to her that he transfers the blessing which Israel had rejected. Our Lord Himself has taken notice of this event in the prophet's life, which portrays, in such strong colours, the justice of God towards the Jews, and His mercy towards us Gentiles: 'In truth I say to you, there were many widows in the days of Elias in Israel: and to none of them was he sent, but to Sarephta of Sidon, to a widow woman.'¹

So, then, this poor woman is a figure of the Gentiles, who were called to the faith. Let us study the circumstances of this prophetic event. The woman is a widow; she has no one to defend or protect her: she represents the Gentiles, who were abandoned by all, and had no one that could save them from the enemy of mankind. All the mother and her child have to live upon, is a handful of meal and a little oil: it is an image of the frightful dearth of truth, in which the pagans were living at the time when the Gospel was preached to them. Notwithstanding her extreme poverty, the widow of Sarephta receives the prophet with kindness and confidence; she believes what he tells her, and she and her child are saved: it is thus that the Gentiles welcomed the apostles, when these shook the dust from their feet and left the faithless Jerusalem. But what mean the two pieces of wood, which the widow holds in her hands?

¹ St. Luke iv. 25, 26.

St. Augustine, St. Cesarius of Arles, and St. Isidore of Seville (who, after all, are but repeating what was the tradition of the early Church), tell us that this wood is a figure of the cross. With this wood the widow bakes the bread that is to support her ; it is from the cross that the Gentiles receive life by Jesus, who is the living Bread. Whilst Israel dies of famine and drought, the Gentile Church feeds abundantly on the heavenly wheat, and on the oil, which is the symbol of strength and charity. Glory then be to Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light¹ of faith ! But let us tremble at witnessing the evils which the abuse of grace has brought upon a whole people. If God in His justice has not spared a whole nation, but cast it off ; will He spare you or me, if we dare to resist His call ?

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xxiii.

In illo tempore : Locutus est Jesus ad turbas, et ad discipulos suos, dicens : Super cathedram Moysi sederunt scribæ et pharisæi. Omnia ergo quæcumque dixerint vobis, servate et facite : secundum opera vero eorum nolite facere : dicunt enim et non faciunt. Alligant enim onera gravia, et importabilia, et imponunt in humeros hominum : digito autem suo nolunt ea movere. Omnia vero opera sua faciunt ut videantur ab hominibus : dilatant enim phylacteria sua, et magnificent fimbrias. Amant autem primos recubitus in cœnis, et primas cathe-

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Ch. xxiii.

At that time : Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to his disciples, saying : The scribes and the pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do ; but according to their works, do ye not ; for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy and insupportable burdens, and lay them on men's shoulders ; but with a finger of their own they will not move them. And all their works they do to be seen of men : for they make their phylacteries broad, and enlarge their fringes. And they love the

¹ 1 St. Peter ii. 9.

dras in synagoga, et salutationes in foro, et vocari ab hominibus Rabbi. Vos autem nolite vocari Rabbi. Unus est enim Magister vester, omnes autem vos fratres estis. Et patrem nolite vocare vobis super terram: unus est enim Pater vester qui in caelis est. Nec vocemini magistri: quia Magister vester unus est, Christus. Qui major est vestrum, erit minister vester. Qui autem se exaltaverit, humiliabitur: et qui se humiliaverit, exaltabitur.

first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the marketplace, and to be called by men, Rabbi. But be not you called Rabbi; for one is your master, and all you are brethren. And call none your father upon earth; for one is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, Christ. He that is the greatest among you, shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

The doctors of the law were sitting on the *chair of Moses*; therefore, Jesus bids the people abide by their teachings. But this chair—which, in spite of the unworthiness of them that sit on it, is the chair of truth—is not to remain long in Israel. Caiphas, because he is a high priest for the year, will prophesy; but his crimes have rendered him unworthy of his office; and the chair, on which he sits, is to be taken away and set in the midst of the Gentiles. Jerusalem, which is preparing to deny her Saviour, is to be deprived of her honours; and Rome, the very centre of the pagan world, is to possess within her walls that chair which was the glory of Jerusalem, and from which were proclaimed the prophecies so visibly fulfilled in Jesus. Henceforth, this chair is never to be moved, though all the fury of the gates of hell will seek to prevail against it; it is to be the unfailing source, at which all nations are to receive the teaching of revealed truth. The torch of faith has been removed from Israel, but it has not been extinguished. Let us live in its light, and merit by our humility that its rays ever shine upon us.

What is it that caused Israel's loss? His pride. The favours he had received from God excited him to self-complacency; he scorned to recognize any one for the Messias, who was not great in this world's glory; he was indignant at hearing Jesus say that the Gentiles were to participate in the grace of redemption; he sought to imbrue his hands in the Blood of the God-Man, and this because He reproached him for the hardness of his heart. These proud Jews, even when they saw that the day of God's judgment was close upon them, kept up their stubborn haughtiness. They despised the rest of the world as unclean and sinners. The Son of God became the Son of Man. He is our *Master*, and yet He ministered to us, as though He were our Servant. Does not this show us how precious a virtue is humility? If our fellow-creatures call us *master* or *father*, let us not forget that no one is master or father but by God's appointment. No one deserves to be called *master*, but he by whose lips Jesus gives us the lessons of divine wisdom; he alone is truly a *father*, who acknowledges that his paternal authority comes from God alone; for the apostle says: 'I bow my knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named.'¹

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Propitiare, Domine, supplicationibus nostris, et animarum nostrarum medere languoribus: ut remissione percepta, in tua semper benedictione lætemur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Be appeased, O Lord, by our prayers, and heal the infirmities of our souls: that our sins being forgiven, we may ever rejoice in thy blessings. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us continue the hymn we began yesterday; our readers will remember it is by Prudentius, the prince of Christian poets.

¹ Eph. iii. 14, 15.

HYMN

Helia tali crevit obser-
vantia,
Vetus sacerdos ruris hospes
aridi :

Fragore ab omni quem re-
motum et segregem

Sprevisse tradunt criminum
frequentiam,

Catso fruentem syrtium si-
lentio.

Sed mox in auras igneis
jugalibus,

Curruque raptus evolavit
præpeti,

Ne de propinquo sordium
contagio

Dirus quietum mundus af-
flaret virum,

Olim probatis incolytum je-
junii.

Non ante cœli Principem
septemplicis

Moses tremendi fidus inter-
pres throni

Potuit videre, quam decem
recursibus

Quater volutis sol peragrans
sidera,

Omni carentem cerneret
substantia.

Victus precanti solus in
lacrymis fuit :

Nam flendo pernox irriga-
tum pulverem,

Humi madentis ore pressit
cernuo :

Donec loquentis voce præ-
strictus Dei

Expavit ignem non feren-
dum visibus.

Joannes hujus artis haud
minus potens,

Dei perennis præcurrit
Filiū,

It was by the observance of
a forty-days' fast, that Elias
the venerable priest, the
guest of the desert, received
his great glory. We read
that he fled far from the
noisy world, and the wicked-
ness of cities, and lived in
the happy innocence of silent
deserts.

But soon was he carried to
heaven in a chariot drawn by
swift fiery steeds ; for so long
as he remained nigh this
wretched world, it might
breathe something of the
contagion of its vices upon
the prophet, though his life
was one of retirement, and
his spirit had long been
fortified by holy fasts.

Moses, the faithful inter-
preter of the dread throne,
was not permitted to see the
King of the seventimes holy
heaven, until the sun had
forty times passed over his
head and witnessed him ab-
staining from every food.

Prayer and weeping, these
were his only nourishment.
He spent the night in weep-
ing, and lay prostrate on the
ground, which was bedewed
with his tears : till at length,
aroused by the voice of God,
he directed his steps towards
the fire on which no man
could fix his gaze.

John, too, was fervent in
the practice of fasting. He
was the precursor of the Son
of God, who was to make the

Curvos viarum qui retorsit
tramites,
Et flexuosa corrigens dis-
pendia,
Dedit sequendam calle recto
lineam.

Hanc obsequelam præpa-
rabat nunciis,
Mox affuturo construens iter
Deo,
Clivosa planis, confragosa
ut lenibus
Converterentur, neve quid-
quam devium
Illapsa terris inveniret Ve-
ritas.

Non usitatis ortus hic
natalibus,
Oblita lactis jam vieto in
pectore
Matris tetendit serus infans
ubera :
Nec ante partu de senili ef-
fusus est,
Quam prædicaret Virginem
plenam Deo.

Post in patentes ille soli-
tudines,
Amictus hirtis bestiarum
pellibus,
Setisve tectus, hispida et
lanugine,
Secessit, horrens inquinari
ac pollui
Contaminatis oppidorum
moribus.

Illic dicata parcus absti-
nentia,
Potum, cibumque vir se-
veræ industriæ
In usque serum respuebat
vesperum,
Parvum locustis, et favo-
rum agrestium
Liquore pastum corpori sue-
tus dare.

crooked ways straight, and
the rough ways plain, and
was to teach men the right
path wherein to walk.

The Baptist, as a herald
that was preparing the way
of the Lord who was soon to
come, exacted this of men :
that every mountain and hill
should be made low, and that
all should be in the right
path, when Truth should
come down upon the earth.

His birth was not like that
of other children. Elizabeth,
old as she was, was made to
bear this child within her
hitherto barren womb. She
fed him, too, at her own
breast. Before his birth, he
announced to his mother the
presence of the Virgin that
was full of God.

He retired into the vast
wilderness, clad in the rough
and bristly skins of wild
beasts, and in camels' hair ;
for he trembled lest he might
become defiled and contami-
nated by the wickedness of
them that dwelt in cities.

There did he lead a life of
fasting. This man of rigid
penance neither ate nor drank
till the evening was far spent ;
and then, a few locusts and a
little wild honey were the
only refreshment he took.

Hortator ille primus et
 doctor novæ
 Fuit salutis: nam sacrato
 in flumine
 Veterum piatas lavit erro-
 rum notas:
 Sed tincta postquam mem-
 bra defæcaverat,
 Cælo refulgens infuebat
 Spiritus.

He was the first to teach
 the new salvation, and the
 first to invite men to receive
 it. In the sacred stream, he
 washed away the stains of the
 old errors; but after he had
 administered to men this out-
 ward baptism, the heavenly
 Spirit worked within their
 souls.

WEDNESDAY

OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the basilica of Saint Cecily. This church, one of the most venerable in Rome, was the house of the illustrious virgin and martyr whose name it bears. The body of Saint Cecily is under the high altar, together with those of Saints Valerian, Tiburtius, and Maximus, and of the holy Popes Urban and Lucius, all martyrs.

COLLECT

Populum tuum, quæsu-
 mus, Domine, propitius re-
 spice: et quos ab escis car-
 nalibus præcipis abstinere, a
 noxiis quoque vitiis cessare
 concede. Per Christum Do-
 minum nostrum. Amen.

Mercifully regard thy peo-
 ple, O Lord, we beseech thee;
 and grant that those whom
 thou commandest to abstain
 from flesh, may likewise
 cease from all sin. Through
 Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Esther.

Lesson from the Book of
 Esther.

Cap. xiii.

Ch. xiii.

In diebus illis: Oravit
 Mardocheus ad Dominum,
 dicens: Domine, Domine,
 Rex omnipotens, in ditone
 enim tua cuncta sunt posita,

In those days: Mardochai
 besought the Lord, and said:
 O Lord, Lord, almighty
 King, for all things are in thy
 power, and there is none that

et non est qui possit tuæ resistere voluntati, si decreveris salvare Israël. Tu fecisti cælum et terram, et quidquid cœli ambitu continetur. Dominus omnium es, nec est qui resistat majestati tuæ. Et nunc, Domine Rex, Deus Abraham, miserere populi tui, quia volunt nos inimici nostri perdere, et hæreditatem tuam delere. Ne despicias partem tuam, quam redemisti tibi de Ægypto. Exaudi deprecationem meam, et propitius esto sorti et funiculo tuo, et converte luctum nostrum in gaudium, ut viventes laudemus nomen tuum, Domine, et ne claudas ora te canentium, Domine Deus noster.

can resist thy will, if thou determine to save Israel. Thou hast made heaven and earth, and all things that are under the cope of heaven. Thou art Lord of all, and there is none that can resist thy majesty. And now, O Lord, O King, O God of Abraham, have mercy on thy people, because our enemies resolve to destroy us, and extinguish thine inheritance. Despise not thy portion, which thou hast redeemed for thyself out of Egypt. Hear my supplication and be merciful to thy lot and inheritance, and turn our mourning into joy, that we may live and praise thy name, O Lord, and shut not the mouths of them that sing to thee, O Lord, our God.

This petition, which Mardochai presented to God in favour of a whole nation that was doomed to destruction, represents the prayers which the saints of the old Testament offered for the salvation of the world. The human race was, to a great extent, in the power of satan, who is figured by Aman. The *almighty King* had given sentence against mankind: 'Ye shall die the death.' Who was there that could induce Him to revoke the sentence? Esther made intercession with Assuerus, her lord; and she was heard. Mary presented herself before the throne of the eternal God: and it is she that, by her divine Son, crushes the head of the serpent, who was to have tormented us for ever. The sentence, then, is to be annulled; all shall live that wish to live.

To-day we have the Church praying for her children who are in the state of sin. She trembles at

seeing them in danger of being eternally lost. She intercedes for them, and she uses Mardochai's prayer. She humbly reminds her divine Spouse, that He has *redeemed them out of Egypt*; and, by Baptism, has made them His members, *His inheritance*. She beseeches Him to change their *mourning into joy*, even into the great Easter joy. She says to Him: *Oh! shut not the mouths of them that sing to Thee!* It is true, these poor sinners have in past times offended their God by word, as well as by deed and thought; but now they speak but words of humble prayer for mercy; and, when they shall have been pardoned, how fervently will they *sing* to their divine Deliverer, and bless Him in canticles of grateful love!

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xx.

In illo tempore: Ascendens Jesus Jerosolymam, assumpsit duodecim discipulos secreto, et ait illis: Ecce ascendimus Jerosolymam, et Filius hominis tradetur principibus sacerdotum et scribis, et condemnabunt eum morte, et tradent eum gentibus ad illudendum, et flagellandum, et crucifigendum, et tertia die resurget. Tunc accessit ad eum mater filiorum Zebedæi cum filiis suis, adorans et petens aliquid ab eo. Qui dixit ei: Quid vis? Ait illi: Dic ut sedeant hi duo filii mei, unus ad dexteram tuam, et unus ad sinistram, in regno tuo. Respondens autem Jesus, dixit: Nescitis

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Ch. xx.

At that time: Jesus going up to Jersusalem, took the twelve disciples apart, and said to them: Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and the third day he shall rise again. Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee, with her sons, adoring and asking something of him. Who said to her: What wilt thou? She saith to him: Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy

quid petatis. Potestis bibere calicem, quem ego bibiturus sum? Dicunt ei: Possumus. Ait illis: Calicem quidem meum bibetis: sedere autem ad dexteram meam vel sinistram, non est meum dare vobis, sed quibus paratum est a Patre meo. Et audientes decem, indignati sunt de duobus fratribus. Jesus autem vocavit eos ad se, et ait: Scitis quia principes gentium dominantur eorum: et qui majores sunt, potestatem exercent in eos. Non ita erit inter vos: sed quicumque voluerit inter vos major fieri, sit vester minister: et qui voluerit inter vos primus esse, erit vester servus. Sicut Filius hominis non venit ministrari, sed ministrare, et dare animam suam redemptionem pro multis.

kingdom. And Jesus answering, said: You know not what you ask. Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink? They said to him: We can. He saith to them: My chalice, indeed, you shall drink; but to sit on my right or left hand, is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father. And the ten hearing it, were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them to him, and said: You know that the princes of the gentiles lord it over them; and they that are the greater, exercise power over them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister; and he that will be first among you, shall be your servant. Even as the Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption for many.

This is He that *gave His own life* in order to appease the anger of the almighty King, and redeem His people from death. It is Jesus, the Son of the new Esther, and the Son of God, who comes forward to humble the pride of Aman, at the very time when this perfidious enemy of ours is making sure of his victory. He goes up to Jerusalem, for it is there that the great battle is to be fought. He foretells to His disciples all that is to happen. He will be delivered up to the chief priests, who will condemn Him to death, and hand Him over to the Roman governor and soldiers. He will be mocked, scourged, and

crucified ; but He will rise again on the third day. The apostles heard this prophecy, for the Gospel says, that Jesus *took the twelve apart*, in order to tell them these things. Judas, consequently, was present ; so were Peter, James, and John, the three that had witnessed the Transfiguration of their Master on Thabor, and had a clearer knowledge of His Divinity. And yet, all abandoned Him. Judas betrayed Him, Peter denied Him, and the whole flock fled away in fear, when the Shepherd was in the power of His enemies. Not one of them recollected how He had said that on the third day He would rise again : unless it were Judas, who was perhaps encouraged to commit his crime by the reflection that Jesus would soon triumph over His enemies and be again free. The rest could see no further than the scandal of the cross ; that put an end to all their faith, and they deserted their Master. What a lesson for all future generations of Christians ! How very few there are who look upon the cross, either for themselves or for others, as a sign of God's special love !

We are men of little faith ; we cannot understand the trials God sends to our brethren, and we are often tempted to believe that He has forsaken them, because He sends them the cross. We are men of little love, too ; worldly tribulation seems an evil to us, and we think ourselves hardly dealt with, at the very time when our God is showing us the greatest mercy. We are like *the mother of the sons of Zebedee* : we would hold a high and conspicuous place near the Son of God, forgetting that we must first merit it, by drinking of the chalice that He drank, that is, the chalice of suffering. We forget, too, that saying of the apostle : ' That we may be glorified with Jesus, we must suffer with Him !'¹ He, the just by excellence, entered not into His rest by honours, and pleasures :

¹ Rom. viii. 17

the sinner cannot follow Him, save by treading the path of penance.

Humiliate capita vestra Deo.

Deus, innocentiae restitutor et amator, dirige ad te tuorum corda servorum: ut Spiritus tui fervore concepto, et in fide inveniantur stabiles, et in opere efficaces. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to God.

O God, the restorer and lover of innocence, draw to thyself the hearts of thy servants, that being inflamed by thy holy Spirit, they may be constant in faith, and zealous in good works. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Christian poet continues his subject—the merits of fasting. To-day he is going to show us how Jesus consecrated it by His own practice of it.

Sed cur vetustæ gentis exemplum loquor?

Pridem caducis quum gravatus artubus

Jesus, dicato corde jejuna-
verit:

Prænuncupatus ore qui proph-
phetico

Emmanuel est, sive nobiscum Deus.

Qui corpus istud molle naturaliter,

Captumque laxo sub voluptatum jugo,

Virtutis arcta lege fecit liberum,

Emancipator servientis plasmatis,

Regnantis ante victor et cupidinis.

Inhospitali namque secretus loco,

Quinis diebus octies labentibus,

Nullam ciborum vindicavit gratiam,

Firmans salubri scilicet jejunio
Vas appetendis imbecillum
gaudiis.

But why give I examples from the old Law? Jesus, whom the prophet had announced to the world as the Emmanuel, that is, *God with us*, when here on earth sharing the miseries of our mortality, fasted rigidly out of love for us.

'Twas he that by the stringent law of virtue, set these our bodies free from their natural effeminacy, and from the yoke of unbridled indulgence. He emancipated his creatures from their slavery; he conquered the tyrant concupiscence, that had reigned till then.

He withdrew into a desert place, and for forty days refused himself the use of food. By this salutary fast, he strengthened the weakness of our bodies, which crave after gratification.

Miratur hostis, posse li-
mum tabidum
Tantum laboris sustinere ac
perpeti.
Explorat arte sciscitator
callida,
Deusne membris sit rece-
ptus terreis :
Sed, increpata fraude, post
tergum ruit.

The enemy wonders within himself how a frail body, that is but clay, can bear and suffer pain as long and sharp as this. He, by cunning craft, contrives a plot, whereby to sift this Jesus, and see if he perchance be God in human form. But, rebuked and foiled, he flees away with shame.

THURSDAY

OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

THE Station for to-day is in the celebrated basilica, St. Mary's *across the Tiber*. It was consecrated in the third century, under the pontificate of St. Callixtus, and was the first church built in Rome in honour of our blessed Lady.

COLLECT

Præsta nobis, quæsumus
Domine, auxilium gratiæ
tuæ, ut jejuniis et orationi-
bus convenienter intenti, li-
beremur ab hostibus mentis
et corporis. Per Christum
Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant us, we beseech thee,
O Lord, the assistance of thy
grace; that whilst we duly
apply ourselves to fasting and
prayer, we may be delivered
from all enemies both of soul
and body. Through Christ
our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio Jeremiæ Prophetæ. Lesson from the Prophet
Jeremias.

Cap. xvii.

Ch. xvii.

Hæc dicit Dominus Deus :
Maledictus homo qui confi-
dit in homine, et ponit car-

Thus saith the Lord :
Cursed be the man that trust-
eth in man, and maketh flesh

nem brachium suum, et a Domino recedit cor ejus. Erit enim quasi myricæ in deserto, et non videbit cum venerit bonum; sed habitabit in siccitate in deserto, in terra salsuginis et inhabitabili. Benedictus vir, qui confidit in Domino, et erit Dominus fiducia ejus. Et erit quasi lignum quod transplantatur super aquas, quod ad humorem mittit radices suas: et non timebit cum venerit æstus. Et erit folium ejus viride, et in tempore siccitatis non erit sollicitum, nec aliquando desinet facere fructum. Pravum est cor omnium et inscrutabile: quis cognoscet illud? Ego Dominus scrutans cor, et probans renes; qui do unicuique juxta viam suam, et juxta fructum adinventionum suarum, dicit Dominus omnipotens.

his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like tamarick in the desert, and he shall not see when good shall come; but he shall dwell in dryness in the desert, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed be the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his confidence. And he shall be as a tree that is planted by the waters, and spreadeth out its roots towards moisture; and it shall not fear when the heat cometh. And the leaf thereof shall be green, and in the time of drought it shall not be solicitous, neither shall it cease at any time to bring forth fruit. The heart is perverse above all things, and unsearchable; who can know it? I am the Lord who search the heart, and prove the reins; who give to every one according to his way, and according to the fruit of his devices, said the Lord almighty.

The Epistle and Gospel for to-day are intended as instructions upon Christian morality. Let us, for a moment, turn away our eyes from the sad spectacle of the plot which is being formed against our Redeemer, by His enemies; let us, to-day, think of our own sins, and how to apply a remedy. The prophet Jeremias here gives us the description of two classes of men: to which class do we belong? There are some men who *make flesh their arm*; that is to say, they care only for this present life and for created things; and this disposition of mind necessarily leads them to frequent violations of the com-

mandments of their Creator. It was so with us, when we sinned : we lost sight of our last end, and the threefold concupiscence blinded us. Let us lose no time, but return to the Lord our God ; a delay might bring upon us that curse, which our prophet says overtakes the unrepenting sinner ; *he shall not see good, when good shall come.* The holy season of Lent is fast advancing ; the choicest graces are being daily offered us ; woe to the man whose mind is distracted by the fashion of this world that passeth away,¹ and takes no thought for eternity and heaven, and, even in this time of grace, is *like tamarick, a worthless weed of the desert.* Oh how numerous is this class ! and how terrible is their spiritual indifference ! Pray for them, O ye faithful children of the Church, pray for them without ceasing. Offer up your penances and your almsgivings for them. Despair not ; and remember that, each year, many straying sheep are brought to the fold by such intercession as this.

The prophet next describes *the man that trusteth in the Lord* ; his whole hope is in God, and his whole care is to serve Him and to do His blessed will. He is like a beautiful tree that is planted near a stream of water, with its leaf ever green, and its fruit abundant. ‘I have appointed you,’ says our Redeemer, ‘that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain.’² Let us become this favoured and ever fruitful tree. The Church, during this holy time, is pouring out upon our hearts rich streams of God’s grace : let us faithfully welcome them. *The Lord searcheth the heart* : if He find that our desire to be converted is sincere, what an Easter will the coming one be to us !

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 31.

² St. John xv. 16.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Lucam.

Cap. xvi.

In illo tempore : Dixit Jesus pharisæis : Homo quidam erat dives, qui induebatur purpura et bysso : et epulabatur quotidie splendide. Et erat quidam mendicus, nomine Lazarus, qui jacebat ad januam ejus, ulceribus plenus, cupiens saturari de micis quæ cadebant de mensa divitis, et nemo illi dabat ; sed et canes veniebant, et lingebant ulcera ejus. Factum est autem ut moreretur mendicus, et portaretur ab angelis in sinum Abrahæ. Mortuus est autem et dives, et sepultus est in inferno. Elevans autem oculos suos, cum esset in tormentis, vidit Abraham a longe, et Lazarum in sinu ejus : et ipse clamans dixit : Pater Abraham miserere mei, et mitte Lazarum ut intingat extremum digiti sui in aquam, ut refrigeret linguam meam, quia crucior in hac flamma. Et dixit illi Abraham : Fili, recordare quia recepisti bona in vita tua, et Lazarus similiter mala : nunc autem hic consolatur, tu vero cruciaris. Et in his omnibus, inter nos et vos chaos magnum firmatum est : ut hi, qui volunt hinc transire ad vos, non possint, neque inde huc transmeare. Et ait : Rogo ergo te, pater,

Sequel of the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Ch. xvi.

At that time : Jesus said to the pharisees : There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him : moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died, and he was buried in hell. And lifting up his eyes, when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said : Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. And Abraham said to him : Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos ; so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot, nor from thence come hither. And

ut mittas eum in domum patris mei; habeo enim quinque fratres, ut testetur illis, ne et ipsi veniant in hunc locum tormentorum. Et ait illi Abraham: Habent Moysen et prophetas: audiant illos. At ille dixit: Non, pater Abraham: sed si quis ex mortuis ierit ad eos, pœnitentiam agent. Ait autem illi: Si Moysen et prophetas non audiunt, neque si quis ex mortuis resurrexerit, credent.

he said: Then, father, I beseech thee that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments. And Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. But he said: No, father Abraham, but if any one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. And he said to him: If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead.

The commandments of God cannot be broken with impunity; he that sins shall be punished. This is the teaching of to-day's Gospel; and after reading it, we exclaim with the apostle: 'How fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God!'¹ What a terrible truth is here told us! A man is in the enjoyment of every comfort and luxury this life can give; when suddenly death surprises him, and *he is buried in hell!* In the midst of those eternal burnings, he asks for a drop of water, and that drop is refused him. Other men, whom he knew on earth a few hours ago, are now in the abode of eternal happiness, and *a great chaos* separates him from them for ever. Oh, what misery! To be in despair for endless ages! And yet there are men that live and die without giving so much as one day to think upon hell! Happy, then, are they that fear, for this fear will aid them to lighten that weight of their sins, which would drag them into the bottomless pit.

Alas! what strange darkness has come upon the mind of man as a consequence of sin! People that

¹ Heb. x. 31.

are shrewd, and prudent, and far-sighted in everything that regards their temporal concerns, are mere idiots and fools in every question that regards eternity. Can we imagine anything more frightful than their surprise when they awaken in the next world and find themselves *buried in hell*? Observe, too, that our Saviour, in order to make His instruction more impressive, has not here described the condemnation of one whose crimes scandalize the neighbourhood, and make even worldlings look upon him as a sure prey of hell. The history He gives us is that of a man who led a quiet life; he was agreeable in company, and sought after; he was respected, and did honour to the position he held in society. He is not accused of any public scandals; there is no mention made of any atrocious crime; our Saviour simply says of him: *he was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day*. It is true, he was not charitable to the poor man who lay at his gate; but he did not ill-treat him: he allowed him to lie there, and did not even insult his misery. Why, then, was this *rich man* condemned to burn eternally in that fire which God created for the wicked? It is because a man who leads a life of luxury and feasting, such as he lived—never thinking of eternity, caring for nothing but this world, which we are told to use as though we used it not,¹ with nothing about him of the spirit of the cross of Christ—such a man as this is already a victim to the triple concupiscence of pride, avarice, and luxury; he is their slave, and seems determined to continue so, for he never makes an effort to throw off their tyranny. He has yielded himself up to them; and they have worked their work in him—the death of the soul. It was not enough that he should not ill-treat the poor man that sat at his gate, he ought to have shown him kindness and charity, for such is God's command-

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 31.

ment. His very *dogs* had more compassion than he ; therefore, his condemnation and perdition were most just. But had he been told of his duty ? Yes, he had the Scriptures ; *he had Moses and the prophets* ; nay more, he had Jesus and the Church. Men who are leading a life like this, are now surrounded by the graces of the holy season of Lent. What excuse will they have, if they so far neglect them, that they do not even give themselves the trouble to think of them ? They will have turned their Lent into judgment against themselves, and it will have been but one great step nearer to eternal misery.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Adesto, Domine, famulis
tuis, et perpetuam benigni-
tatem largire poscentibus :
ut iis qui te auctore et gu-
bernatore gloriantur, et con-
gregata restaures, et restau-
rata conserves. Per Christum
Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Be favourable, O Lord, to
thy servants, and hear their
prayers in the grant of ever-
lasting mercy ; that glorying
in thee their Creator and
Governor, they may have all
things perfected and perpetu-
ated to them. Through Christ
our Lord. Amen.

The hymn of Prudentius, which we have followed with so much interest during this week, thus closes :

HYMN

Hoc nos sequamur quis-
que nunc pro viribus,
Quod consecrati tu magister
dogmatis
Tuis dedisti, Christe, secta-
toribus ;
Ut quum vorandi vicerit libi-
dinem,
Late triumphet imperator
spiritus.

O Jesus ! Teacher of holy
doctrine ! grant that we may
all now walk courageously in
the path thou hast marked
out for thy followers ; that
our spirit, having subdued
gluttony, may in all things
triumph and be master.

Hoc est, quod atri livor
hostis invidet,
Mundi, polique quod guber-
nator probat,

O blessed fasting ! It is
the object of the devil's
hatred : it is dear to the King
of earth and heaven ; it makes

Altaris aram quod facit placabilem,
 Quod dormientis excitat cordis fidem,
 Quod limat ægram pectorum rubiginem.

Perfusa non sic amne flamma exstinguitur,
 Nec sic calente sole tabescunt nives,
 Ut turbidarum scabra culparum seges
 Vanescit almo trita sub junio,
 Si blanda semper misceatur largitas.

Est quippe et illud grande virtutis genus
 Operire nudos, indigentes passcere,
 Opem benignam ferre supplicanti-
 bus,
 Unam paremque sortis humanæ vicem
 Inter potentes, atque egenos ducere.

Satis beatus quisque dextram porrigit
 Laudis rapacem, prodigam pecuniæ,
 Cujus sinistra dulce factum nesciat.
 Illum perennes protinus complent opes,
 Ditatque fructus fœnerantem centuplex.

the great sacrifice of the altar acceptable: it stirs up the faith of the drowsy heart; it takes from the soul the rust that clogs her power.

As fire is quenched by water, or as snow is melted by a scorching sun; so (but by a higher law) are the wild weeds of our base sins uprooted by the sacred power of fasting, when joined with charitable alms unstintingly bestowed.

For this, too, is a great virtue: to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to kindly help the needy, and to behave towards all, both rich and poor, as members of the one great family of mankind.

Right blessed is he, whose right hand works the praiseworthy deed of lavish alms, but whose left hand knows not the sweet charity done! Such a man shall receive eternal riches, and interest a hundredfold shall be given to him who thus lends to the poor.

FRIDAY

OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

THE Station for to-day is in the church of Saint Vitalis, martyr, the father of the two illustrious Milanese martyrs, Saints Gervasius and Protasius.

COLLECT

Da, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus; ut sacro nos purificante jejunio, sinceris mentibus ad sancta ventura facias pervenire. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, O almighty God, that being purified by this fast, we may come to the approaching solemnity with clean hearts. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Genesis.

Lesson from the Book of Genesis.

Cap. xxxvii.

Ch. xxxvii.

In diebus illis: Dixit Joseph fratribus suis: Audite somnium meum quod vidi: Putabam nos ligare manipulos in agro: et quasi consurgere manipulum meum, et stare, vestrosque manipulos circumstantes adorare manipulum meum. Responderunt fratres ejus: Numquid rex noster eris? aut subjiciemur ditioni tuæ? Hæc ergo causa somniorum atque sermonum, invidiæ et odii fomitem ministravit. Aliud quoque vidit somnium, quod narrans fratribus ait: Vidi per somnium quasi solem, et lunam, et stellas undecim adorare me.

In those days: Joseph said to his brethren: Hear my dream which I have dreamed. I thought we were binding sheaves in the field; and my sheaf arose, as it were, and stood, and your sheaves, standing about, bowed down before my sheaf. His brethren answered: Shalt thou be our king? or shall we be subject to thy dominion? Therefore this matter of his dreams and words ministered nourishment to their envy and hatred. He dreamed also another dream, which he told his brethren, saying: I saw in a dream, as it were, the sun,

Quod quum patri suo et fratribus retulisset, increpavit eum pater suus, et dixit: Quid sibi vult hoc somnium quod vidisti? Num ego, et mater tua, et fratres tui adorabimus te super terram? Invidebant ei igitur fratres sui: pater vero rem tacitus considerabat. Cumque fratres illius in pascendis gregibus patris morarentur in Sichem, dixit ad eum Israël: Fratres tui pascunt oves in Sichimis: veni, mittam te ad eos. Quo respondente: Præsto sum; ait ei: Vade, et vide si cuncta prospera sint erga fratres tuos, et pecora: et renuntia mihi quid agatur. Missus de valle Hebron, venit in Sichem: invenitque eum vir errantem in agro, et interrogavit quid quæreret. At ille respondit: Fratres meos quæro: indica mihi ubi pascant greges. Dixitque ei vir: Recesserunt de loco isto; audivi autem eos dicentes: Eamus in Dothain. Perrexit ergo Joseph post fratres suos, et invenit eos in Dothain. Qui cum vidissent eum procul, antequam accederet ad eos, cogitaverunt illum occidere, et mutuo loquebantur: Ecce somniator venit: venite, occidamus eum, et mittamus in cisternam veterem: dicemusque: Fera pessima devoravit eum, et tunc apparebit quid illi prosint somnia sua. Audiens autem hoc Ruben, nitebatur liberare eum de manibus eorum, et dicebat: Non interficiatis animam ejus, nec effundatis

and the moon, and eleven stars, worshipping me. And when he had told this to his father and brethren, his father rebuked him and said: What meaneth this dream that thou hast dreamed? shall I and thy mother, and thy brethren, worship thee upon the earth? His brethren therefore envied him, but his father considered the thing with himself. And when his brethren abode in Sichem, feeding their father's flocks, Israel said to him: Thy brethren feed the sheep in Sichem; come, I will send thee to them. And when he answered: I am ready; he said to him: Go, and see if all things be well with thy brethren and the cattle, and bring me word again what is doing. So being sent from the vale of Hebron, he came to Sichem. And a man found him there wandering in the field, and asked him what he sought. But he answered: I seek my brethren; tell me where they feed their flocks. And the man said to him: They are departed from this place; for I heard them say: Let us go to Dothain. And Joseph went forward after his brethren, and found them in Dothain. And when they saw him afar off, before he came nigh them, they thought to kill him, and said one to another: Behold the dreamer cometh; come, let us kill him, and cast him into some old pit: and we will say: Some evil beast hath devoured him: and then it shall appear

sanguinem ; sed projicite eum in cisternam hanc, quæ est in solitudine, manusque vestras servate innocias. Hoc autem dicebat, volens eripere eum de manibus eorum, et reddere patri suo.

what his dreams avail him. And Ruben hearing this, endeavoured to deliver him out of their hands, and said : Do not take away his life, nor shed his blood ; but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and keep your hands harmless. Now he said this, being desirous to deliver him out of their hands, and to restore him to his father.

To-day the Church reminds us of the apostasy of the Jewish nation, and of the consequent vocation of the Gentiles. This instruction was intended for the catechumens ; let us, also, profit by it. The history here related from the old Testament is a figure of what we read in to-day's Gospel. Joseph is exceedingly beloved by his father Jacob, not only because he is the child of his favourite spouse Rachel, but also because of his innocence. Prophetic dreams have announced the future glory of this child : but he has brothers ; and these brothers, urged on by jealousy, are determined to destroy him. Their wicked purpose is not carried out to the full ; but it succeeds at least this far, that Joseph will never more see his native country. He is sold to some merchants. Shortly afterwards, he is cast into prison ; but he is soon set free, and is made the ruler, not of the land of Chanaan that had exiled him, but of a pagan country, Egypt. He saves these poor Gentiles from starvation, during a most terrible famine, nay, he gives them abundance of food, and they are happy under his government. His very brothers, who persecuted him, are obliged to come down into Egypt, and ask food and pardon from their victim. We easily recognize in this wonderful history our divine Redeemer, Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary. He was the victim of His own people's jealousy, who refused to

acknowledge in Him the Messiah foretold by the prophets, although their prophecies were so evidently fulfilled in Him. Like Joseph, Jesus is the object of a deadly conspiracy; like Joseph, He is sold. He traverses the shadow of death, but only to rise again, full of glory and power. But it is no longer on Israel that He lavishes the proofs of His predilection; He turns to the Gentiles, and with them He henceforth dwells. It is to the Gentiles that the remnant of Israel will come seeking Him, when, pressed by hunger after the truth, they are willing to acknowledge, as the true Messiah, this Jesus of Nazareth, their King, whom they crucified.

GOSPEL.

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xxi.

In illo tempore: Dixit Jesus turbis Judæorum, et principibus sacerdotum parabolam hanc: Homo erat paterfamilias, qui plantavit vineam, et sepem circumdedit ei, et fodit in ea torcular, et ædificavit turrim, et locavit eam agricolis, et peregre profectus est. Cum autem tempus fructuum appropinquaret, misit servos suos ad agricolas, ut acciperent fructus ejus. Et agricolæ, apprehensis servis ejus, alium ceciderunt, alium occiderunt, alium vero lapidaverunt. Iterum misit alios servos plures prioribus, et fecerunt illis similiter. Novissime autem misit ad eos filium suum, dicens: Verebuntur filium meum. Agricolæ autem videntes filium, dixerunt intra se: Hic

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Ch. xxi.

At that time: Jesus spoke to the multitude of the Jews, and to the chief priests this parable: There was a man an householder, who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a strange country. And when the time of the fruits drew nigh, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits thereof. And the husbandmen laying hands on his servants, beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the former; and they did to them in like manner. And last of all he sent to them his son, saying: They will reverence my son. But

est hæres : venite, occidamus eum, et habebimus hæreditatem ejus. Et apprehensum eum ejecerunt extra vineam, et occiderunt. Cum ergo venerit dominus vineæ, quid faciet agricolis illis ? Aiunt illi : Malos male perdet : et vineam suam locabit aliis agricolis, qui reddant ei fructum temporibus suis. Dicit illis Jesus : Nunquam legis in Scripturis : Lapidem quem reprobaverunt ædificantes, hic factus est in caput anguli ? A Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile in oculis nostris. Ideo dico vobis, quia auferetur a vobis regnum Dei, et dabitur genti facienti fructus ejus. Et qui ceciderit super lapidem istum, confringetur : super quem vero ceciderit, conteret eum. Et cum audissent principes sacerdotum et pharisæi parabolam ejus, cognoverunt quod de ipsis diceret. Et quærentes eum tenere, timuerunt turbas : quoniam sicut prophetam eum habebant.

the husbandmen seeing the son, said among themselves : This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and we shall have his inheritance. And taking him, they cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. When, therefore, the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen ? They say to him : He will bring those evil men to an evil end : and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen that shall render him the fruit in due season. Jesus saith to them : Have you never read in the Scriptures : The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner ? By the Lord this has been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes. Therefore I say to you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken ; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and pharisees had heard his parables, they knew that he spoke of them. And seeking to lay hands on him they feared the multitude ; because they held him as a prophet.

Here we have more than the mere figures of the old Law, which show us our Redeemer in the far distant future ; we have the great reality. Yet a little while, and the thrice holy Victim will have

fallen beneath the blows of His persecutors. How awful and solemn are the words of Jesus, as His last hour approaches! His enemies feel the full weight of what He says; but, in their pride, they are determined to keep up their opposition to Him, who is the Wisdom of the Father. They have made up their minds not to acknowledge Him to be what they well know He is—the *stone, on which he that falls shall be broken, and which shall grind to powder him on whom it shall fall.* But what is the *vineyard*, of which our Lord here speaks? It is revealed truth; it is the rule of faith and morals; it is the universal expectation of the promised Redeemer; and, lastly, it is the family of the children of God, His inheritance, His Church. God had chosen the Synagogue as the depository of such a treasure; He willed that His vineyard should be carefully kept, that it should yield fruit under their keeping, and that they should always look upon it as His possession, and one that was most dear to Him. But, in its hard-heartedness and avarice, the Synagogue appropriated the Lord's vineyard to itself. In vain did He, at various times, send His prophets to reclaim His rights; the faithless *husbandmen* put them to death. The Son of God, *the Heir*, comes in Person. Surely, they will receive Him with due respect, and pay Him the homage due to His divine character! But no; they have formed a plot against Him; they intend to *cast Him forth out of the vineyard*, and kill Him. Come, then, ye Gentiles, and avenge this God! Leave not a stone on a stone of the guilty city that has uttered this terrible curse: 'May His Blood be upon us and upon our children!'¹ But you shall be more than the ministers of the divine justice; you yourselves are now the favoured people of God. The apostasy of these ungrateful Jews is the beginning of your salvation. You are to be keepers of the *vineyard* to the

¹ St. Matt. xxvii. 25.

end of time ; you are to feed on its fruits, for they now belong to you. From east and west, from north and south, come to the great Pasch, that is being prepared ! Come to the font of salvation, O ye new people, who are gathered unto God from all nations under the sun ! Your mother the Church will fill up from you, if you be faithful, the number of the elect ; and when her work is done, her Spouse will return, as the dread Judge, to condemn those who would not know the time of their visitation.¹

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Da, quæsumus, Domine,
populo tuo salutem mentis
et corporis : ut bonis operibus
inhærendo, tuæ semper vir-
tutis mereatur protectione
defendi. Per Christum Do-
minum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Grant, we beseech thee, O
Lord, to thy people health
both of soul and body, that
by the continual practice of
good works they may always
be defended by thy powerful
protection. Through Christ
our Lord. Amen.

Let us encourage within ourselves the spirit of humility and penance by the following hymn, which we take from the Greek liturgy. It was composed by St. Andrew of Crete.

HYMN

(*Feria V. quintæ hebdomadæ*)

Unde primum miseræ vitæ
meæ actiones lamenter ? quod,
Christe, hodierni planctus
initium faciam ? enim vero,
qui misericors sis, debitorum
veniam concede.

Veni, misera anima, tua
carne comite, omnium con-
fiteri Creatori, deincepsque
antiqua abstine aliena a ra-

I would mourn over the
sins of my wretched life ; but
where shall I begin ? O Je-
sus ! how shall I commence
the lamentation I fain would
make this day ? Do thou, my
merciful God, forgive me my
sins.

Come, my poor soul and
thou, too, my body, come,
and confess to the great Crea-
tor ; and, henceforth, restrain

¹ St. Luke xix. 44.

tione affectione, ac Deo lacrymas pœnitens exhibe.

Qui Adam protoplastum prævaricando sim æmulatus; Deo, æternoque regno et voluptate, meis cognovi peccatis me nudatum.

Heu me, misera anima! ut quid primæ Evæ similis facta es? male quippe vidisti, direque vulnerata es; ac manum admovisti ligno, petulansque escam absonam gustasti.

Jure merito Adam, ut qui unum tuum mandatum, O Salvator, non custodivisset, Eden illa ejectus est: at ego, qui continue vivifica eloquia tua spernam, quid sustinero?

Tempus est pœnitentiæ: ad te accedo, fictorem meum: grave a me tolle peccati jugum: mihique, ut misericors, tribue veniam delictorum.

Ne me, Salvator, abomineris, ne projicias a facie tua: grave a me tolle peccati jugum: mihique, ut misericors, tribue veniam delictorum.

Voluntaria mea debita præterque voluntatem, manifesta et occulta, cognita omnia et incognita, tu Salvator, condona, velut Deus indulgens; propitius esto, ac me salvum facito.

your senseless passions, and offer to God the tears of repentance.

I have imitated my first parent in his sin; I acknowledge my nakedness, for I have lost my God, and the kingdom and the joys of eternity.

Alas, unhappy soul! wherefore hast thou made thyself like unto Eve! Oh that guilty look! Oh that cruel wound! Thou didst stretch forth thy hand to the tree; and, in thy frowardness, didst eat the forbidden fruit.

Adam was deservedly driven out of paradise, because he broke one of thy commandments. O my Saviour! I, then, who am for ever setting thy life-giving words at defiance, what punishment shall I not have?

Now is the time for repentance. I come to thee, O my Creator! Take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and, for thy mercy's sake, pardon me my crimes.

Despise me not, my Saviour! Cast me not away from thy face. Take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and, for thy mercy's sake, pardon me my crimes.

Do thou, my Saviour, and my merciful God, pardon me my sins, deliberate or indeliberate, public or private, known or unknown. Have mercy on me, and save me!

SATURDAY

OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of Saints Peter and Marcellinus, two celebrated martyrs of Rome under the persecution of Diocletian. Their names are inserted in the Canon of the Mass.

COLLECT

Da, quæsumus, Domine, nostris effectum jejuniis salutarem: ut castigatio carnis assumpta, ad nostrarum vegetationem transeat animarum. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, this saving effect of our fast, that the chastisement of the flesh, which we have undertaken, may become the improvement of our souls. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Genesis.

Cap. xxvii.

In diebus illis: Dixit Rebecca filio suo Jacob: Audivi patrem tuum loquentem cum Esaü fratre tuo et dicentem ei: Affer mihi de venatione tua, et fac cibos ut comedam, et benedicam tibi coram Domino antequam moriar. Nunc ergo, fili mi, acquiesce consiliis meis: et pergens ad gregem, affer mihi duos hædos optimos, ut faciam ex eis escas patri tuo, quibus libenter vescitur: quas cum intuleris, et come-

Lesson from the Book of Genesis.

Ch. xxvii.

In those days: Rebecca said to her son Jacob: I heard thy father talking with Esau thy brother, and saying to him: Bring me of thy hunting, and make me meats that I may eat, and bless thee in the sight of the Lord before I die. Now, therefore, my son, follow my counsel: and go thy way to the flock, bring me two kids of the best, that I may make of them meat for thy father, such as he gladly eateth; which when thou

derit, benedicat tibi priusquam moriatur. Cui ille respondit: Nosti quod Esau frater meus homo pilosus sit, et ego lenis: si attrectaverit me pater meus, et senserit, timeo ne putet me sibi voluisse illudere, et inducam super me maledictionem pro benedictione. Ad quem mater: In me sit, inquit, ista maledictio, fili mi: tantum audi vocem meam, et pergens affer quæ dixi. Abiit, et attulit, deditque matri. Paravit illa cibos sicut velle noverat patrem illius. Et vestibus Esau valde bonis, quas apud se habebat domi, induit eum: pelliculasque hædorum circumdedit manibus, et colli nuda protexit. Deditque pulmentum, et panes quos coxerat tradidit. Quibus illatis dixit: Pater mi! At ille respondit: Audio. Quis es tu, fili mi? Dixitque Jacob: Ego sum primogenitus tuus Esau: feci sicut præcepisti mihi: surge, sede, et comede de venatione mea, ut benedicat mihi anima tua. Rursumque Isaac ad filium suum: Quomodo, inquit, tam cito invenire potuisti fili mi? Qui respondit: Voluntas Dei fuit, ut cito occurreret mihi quod volebam. Dixitque Isaac: Accede huc, ut tangam te, fili mi, et probem utrum tu sis filius meus Esau, an non. Accessit ille ad patrem, et palpato eo, dixit Isaac: Vox quidem, vox Jacob est: sed manus, manus sunt Esau. Et non cognovit eum, quia pilosæ manus similitudinem

hast brought in, and he hath eaten, he may bless thee before he die. And he answered her: Thou knowest that Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am smooth; if my father shall feel me, and perceive it, I fear lest he will think I would have mocked him, and I shall bring upon me a curse instead of a blessing. And his mother said to him: Upon me be this curse, my son; only hear thou my voice, and go, fetch me the things which I have said. He went, and brought, and gave them to his mother. She dressed meats such as she knew his father liked. And she put on him very good garments of Esau, which she had at home with her; and the little skins of the kids she put about his hands, and covered the bare of his neck. And she gave him the savoury meat, and delivered him bread that she had baked. Which when he had carried in, he said: My father? But he answered: I hear; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said: I am Esau thy first-born; I have done as thou didst command me; arise, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said to his son: How couldst thou find it so quickly, my son? He answered: It was the will of God, that what I sought came quickly in my way. And Isaac said: Come hither, that I may feel thee, my son,

majoris expresserant. Benedicens ergo illi, ait: Tu es filius meus Esau? Respondit: Ego sum. At ille: Affer mihi, inquit, cibos de venatione tua, fili mi, ut benedicat tibi anima mea. Quos cum oblatos comedisset, obtulit ei etiam vinum. Quo hausto, dixit ad eum: Accede ad me, et da mihi osculum, fili mi. Accessit, et osculatus est eum. Statimque ut sensit vestimentorum illius fragrantiam, benedicens illi, ait: Ecce odor filii mei, sicut odor agri pleni, cui benedixit Dominus. Det tibi Deus de rore cœli, et de pinguedine terræ, abundantiam frumenti et vini. Et serviant tibi populi, et adorent te tribus: esto dominus fratrum tuorum, et incurventur ante te filii matris tuæ. Qui maledixerit tibi, sit ille maledictus: et qui benedixerit tibi, benedictionibus repleatur. Vix Isaac sermonem impleverat: et egresso Jacob foras, venit Esau, coctosque de venatione cibos intulit patri, dicens: Surge, pater mi, et comede de venatione filii tui, ut benedicat mihi anima tua. Dixitque illi Isaac: Quis enim es tu? Qui respondit: Ego sum filius tuus primogenitus Esau. Expavit Isaac stupore vehementi, et ultra quam credi potest, admirans, ait: Quis igitur ille est, qui dudum captam venationem attulit mihi, et comedi ex omnibus priusquam tu venires? Benedixitque ei, et erit benedictus. Auditis Esau sermonibus pa-

and may prove whether thou be my son Esau or not. He came near to his father, and when he had felt him, Isaac said: The voice, indeed, is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he knew him not, because his hairy hands made him like to the elder. Then blessing him, he said: Art thou my son Esau? He answered: I am. Then he said: Bring me the meats of thy hunting, my son, that my soul may bless thee. And when they were brought and he had eaten, he offered him wine also; which after he had drunk, he said to him: Come near me, and give me a kiss, my son. He came near, and kissed him. And immediately as he smelled the fragrant smell of his garments, blessing him, he said: Behold the smell of my son is as the smell of a plentiful field, which the Lord hath blessed. God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn and wine. And let peoples serve thee, and tribes worship thee; be thou lord of thy brethren, and let thy mother's children bow down before thee. Cursed be he that curseth thee, and let him that blesseth thee be filled with blessings. Isaac had scarce ended his words when Jacob being now gone out abroad, Esau came, and brought in to his father meats made of what he had taken in hunting, saying: Arise, my father, and eat of thy son's

tris, irrugit clamore magno : et consternatus, ait : Benedic etiam et mihi, pater mi. Qui ait : Venit germanus tuus fraudulenter, et accepit benedictionem tuam. At ille subjunxit : Juste vocatum est nomen ejus Jacob : supplantavit enim me in altera vice : primogenita mea ante tulit, et nunc secundo surripuit benedictionem meam. Rursumque ad patrem : Numquid non reservasti, ait, et mihi benedictionem ? Respondit Isaac : Dominum tuum illum constitui, et omnes fratres ejus servituti illius subjugavi : frumento et vino stabilivi eum ; et tibi post hæc, fili mi, ultra quid faciam ? Cui Esaü : Num unam, inquit, tantum benedictionem habes, pater ? Mihi quoque obsecro ut benedicas. Cumque ejulatu magno fieret, motus Isaac, dixit ad eum : In pinguedine terræ, et in rore coeli desuper erit benedictio tua.

venison ; that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said to him : Why ! who art thou ? He answered : I am thy first-born son Esau. Isaac was struck with fear, and astonished exceedingly, and wondering beyond what can be believed, said : Who is he then that even now brought me venison that he had taken and I ate of all before thou camest ? and I have blessed him and he shall be blessed. Esau having heard his father's words, roared out with a great cry, and being in a consternation, said : Bless me also, my father. And he said : Thy brother came deceitfully and got thy blessing. But he said again : Rightly is his name called Jacob, for he hath supplanted me, lo ! this second time ; my first birth-right he took away before, and now this second time he hath stolen away my blessing. And again he said to his father : Hast thou not reserved me also a blessing ? Isaac answered : I have appointed him thy lord, and have made all his brethren his servants : I have established him with corn and wine, and after this, what shall I do more for thee, my son ? And Esau said to him : Hast thou only one blessing, father ? I beseech thee, bless me also. And when he wept with a loud cry, Isaac being moved, said to him : In the fat of the earth and in the dew of heaven from above, shall thy blessing be.

The two sons of Isaac are another illustration of God's judgments upon Israel, and His vocation of the Gentiles. The instruction contained in this passage from Genesis was intended for the catechumens. Here we have two brothers, Esau the elder, and Jacob the younger; Esau represents the Jewish people; he is his father's heir, and, as such, he has a glorious future before him. Jacob, though twin-brother to Esau, is the second-born, and has no right to the special blessing which Esau claimed; he is the figure of the Gentiles. How, then, is it that Jacob receives the blessing and not Esau? The sacred volume tells us that Esau is a carnal-minded man. Rather than deny himself the momentary gratification of his appetite, he sacrifices the spiritual advantages which his father's blessing is to bring him; he sells his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage. We know the mother's plan for securing Jacob's claim; and how the aged father is, unsuspectingly, the instrument in God's hands, ratifying and blessing this substitution, of which he himself has no knowledge. Esau, having returned home, is made aware of the greatness of his loss; but it is too late, and he becomes an enemy to his brother. The same thing happens with the Jewish people; they are carnal-minded and lose their birthright, their pre-eminence over the Gentiles. They refuse to acknowledge a Messiah who is poor and persecuted; their ambition is for earthly triumph and earthly greatness; and the only kingdom that Jesus holds out to His followers is a spiritual one. The Jews, then, reject this Messiah; but the Gentiles receive Him, and they become the *first-born*, the favoured people. And, whereas the Jews repudiate this substitution (to which, however, they assented, when they said to Pilate: 'We will not have this Man to reign over us'),¹ they are indignant at seeing the heavenly Father bestowing all His love and

¹ St. Luke xix. 14.

blessings on the Christian people. They that are children of Abraham according to the flesh are disinherited; and they that are the children of Abraham by faith alone are evidently the children of the promise; according to those words of the Lord, which He spoke to that great patriarch: 'I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is by the sea-shore. . . . In thy seed (that is, in Him who is to be born of thy race) all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.'¹

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Lucam.

Cap. xv.

In illo tempore: Dixit Jesus pharisæis et scribis parabolam istam: Homo quidam habuit duos filios: et dixit adolescentior ex illis patri: Pater, da mihi portionem substantiæ quæ me contingit. Et divisit illis substantiam. Et non post multos dies, congregatis omnibus, adolescentior filius peregre profectus est in regionem longinquam, et ibi dissipavit substantiam suam vivendo luxuriose. Et postquam omnia consummasset, facta est fames valida in regione illa, et ipse cœpit egere. Et abiit, et adhæsit uni civium regionis illius. Et misit illum in villam suam ut pasceret porcos. Et cupiebat implere ventrem suum de siliquis quas porci manducabant: et nemo illi dabat. In se autem reversus,

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Luke.

Ch. xv.

At that time: Jesus spoke to the scribes and pharisees this parable: A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And not many days after, the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country, and there wasted his substance, living riotously. And, after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country, and he began to be in want. And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. And returning to himself he

¹ Gen. xxii. 17, 18.

dixit: Quanti mercenarii in domo patris mei abundant panibus: ego autem hic fame pereo! Surgam, et ibo ad patrem meum, et dicam ei: Pater, peccavi in cœlum et coram te; jam non sum dignus vocari filius tuus: fac me sicut unum de mercenariis tuis. Et surgens venit ad patrem suum. Cum autem adhuc longe esset, vidit illum pater ipsius, et misericordia motus est, et accurrens cecidit super collum ejus, et osculatus est eum. Dixitque ei filius: Pater, peccavi in cœlum, et coram te: jam non sum dignus vocari filius tuus. Dixit autem pater ad servos suos: Cito proferte stolam primam, et induite illum, et date annulum in manum ejus, et calceamenta in pedes ejus: et adducite vitulum saginatum, et occidite, et manducemus et epulemur: quia hic filius meus mortuus erat, et revixit: perierat, et inventus est. Et cœperunt epulari. Erat autem filius ejus senior in agro: et cum veniret, et appropinquaret domui, audivit symphoniam, et chorum; et vocavit unum de servis, et interrogavit quid hæc essent. Isque dixit illi: Frater tuus venit, et occidit pater tuus vitulum saginatum, quia salvum illum recepit. Indignatus est autem, et nolebat introire. Pater ergo illius egressus, cœpit rogare illum. At ille respondens, dixit patri suo: Ecce tot annis servio tibi, et nunquam mandatum tuum præ-

said: How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger! I will arise and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee; I am not now worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up, he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion; and running to him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him. And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee; I am not now worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry; because this my son was dead, and is come to life again, was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field: and when he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing, and he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said to him: Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe. And he was angry, and would not go in. His father therefore coming out began to entreat him. And

terivi, et numquam dedisti mihi hœdum, ut cum amicis meis epularer: sed postquam filius tuus hic, qui devoravit substantiam suam cum meretricibus, venit, occidisti illi vitulum saginatum. At ipse dixit illi: Fili, tu semper mecum es, et omnia mea tua sunt: epulari autem et gaudere oportebat, quia frater tuus hic mortuus erat, et revixit: perierat et inventus est.

he answering said to his father: Behold for so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment, and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son is come, who hath devoured his substance with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. But he said to him: Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine. But it was fit that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is come to life again, he was lost, and is found.

The mystery brought before us in the Epistle is repeated in our Gospel. Again it is the history of two brothers; the elder is angry at seeing his father show mercy to the younger. This *younger* brother has gone *abroad into a far country*; he has quitted his father's house, that he might be under no control, and indulge in every kind of disorder. But when a *mighty famine came*, and he was *perishing with hunger*, he remembered that he had a father; and, at once, he *arose*, and humbly besought his father to receive him, and give him the last place in that *house*, which, but for his own folly, might have been all his own. The father received the prodigal with the tenderest affection; not only did he pardon him, he restored him to all his family rights; nay, he would have a feast kept in honour of this happy return. The elder brother, hearing what the father had done, was indignant, and conceived the bitterest jealousy against his younger brother. Let the Jews be jealous, if they will; let them be indignant with their God for showing His mercy to any but themselves. The

time has come when all the nations of the earth are to be called to the one fold. The Gentiles, notwithstanding all the misery into which their errors and their passions had led them, are to receive the preaching of the apostles. Greeks and Romans, Scythians and barbarians, are to come, humbly acknowledging the evil of their ways, and ask to share in the favours offered to Israel. Not only are they to be allowed to eat of the crumbs that fall from the table, which was all the poor woman of Chanaan dared to hope for ; they are to be made sons and heirs of the Father, with all the attendant rights and privileges. Israel will be jealous, and will protest ; but to no purpose. He will refuse to take part in the feast ; it matters not, the feast is to be. This feast is the Pasch. The prodigals that have come, starved and naked, to the Father's house, are our catechumens, on whom God is about to bestow the grace of adoption.

But there are also the public penitents, who are being prepared by the Church for reconciliation ; they, too, are the *prodigals*, who come seeking mercy from their offended Father. This Gospel was intended for them as well as for the catechumens. But now that the Church has relaxed her severe discipline, she offers this parable to all those who are in the state of sin, and are preparing to make their peace with God. They know not, as yet, how good is the God from whom they have strayed by sin : let them read to-day's Gospel, and see how mercy exalteth itself above judgment,¹ in that God, who so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son.² How far soever they may have gone astray, or how great soever may have been their ingratitude, let them take courage ; a feast is being prepared in their Father's house, to welcome them home again. The loving Father is waiting at the door to receive and embrace them ; the *first robe*, the robe of innocence, is to be

¹ St. James ii. 13.

² St. John iii. 16.

restored to them ; the *ring*, which they alone wear that are of God's family, is to be once more placed on their hand. There is a banquet being prepared for them, at which the angels, out of joy, will sing their glad songs. Let these poor sinners, then, cry out with a contrite heart : *Father ! I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee ; I am not now worthy to be called Thy son : make me as one of Thy hired servants.* This tender-hearted Father asks only this much of them : sincere sorrow for their sins, humble confession, and a firm resolution of being faithful for the time to come. Let them accept these easy terms, and He will receive them, once more, as His dearest children.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Familiam tuam, quæsumus,
Domine, continua pietate
custodi : ut quæ in sola
spe gratiæ cœlestis innititur,
cœlesti etiam protectione
muniatur. Per Christum
Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Protect, O Lord, we beseech
thee, thy family, by thy con-
tinual goodness, that as it
relieth on the hopes of thy
heavenly grace, so it may be
defended by thy heavenly aid.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

This being Saturday, let us have recourse to Mary the Queen of mercy. Let us address ourselves to her in these devout words of a sequence, taken from the ancient Cluny missals. This is our request : that she would obtain for us the pardon of our sins.

SEQUENCE

Ave novi luminis
Stella promens radium,
Quo nostræ propaginis
Deletur opprobrium.

Tu sola spes hominis,
Tu nostrum refugium,
In hora discriminis
Placa nobis Filium.

Hail, fair star ! that yield-
est a ray of new light, where-
by is blotted out the shame of
our race.

O thou the singular hope of
man ! O thou our refuge !
Appease thy Son, at the hour
of our judgment.

Florens Jesse virgula,
Vera veris primula,
Salutem initiatis.

Rosa semper vernula,
Tota sine macula,
Maculosos expians.

Uterus virgineus,
Fons hortorum, puteus
Aquarum viventium.

Imo thronus aureus,
In quo Rex æthereus
Coronavit Filium.

Domus aromatica,
Quam arte mirifica
Fecit summus Artifex.

In qua Christus unica
Sumpta carnis tunica,
Consecratur Pontifex.

Fons distillans oleum,
Imo rorem melleum,
Per amoris fistulas.

Inde surgit balneum,
Purgans omne felleum,
Et peccati maculas.

Mater cujus viscera
Penetrarunt vulnera
Patientis Filii.

Lac profer et ubera ;
Nos a pœnis libera
Tremendi judicii. Amen.

Thou art the flowery rod
of Jesse : thou art the true
first spring-flower, bringing us
our Jesus.

O ever blooming rose !
there is not a stain upon thee,
and thy Fruit taketh our
stains away.

Thy virginal womb is the
fount of the garden, the source
of him that is the water of
life.

Yea, thou art the golden
throne, whereon the King of
heaven crowned his Son.

The palace of sweet per-
fumes, formed with exquisite
skill by the hand of the great
Artificer ;

Wherein Jesus, having put
on the garment of our flesh,
was consecrated High Priest.

Thou art the fount that
givest forth oil, yea, a dew
sweet as honey ; for thou art
all love.

Hence came to us the font
that washeth away the bitter-
ness and the stains of sin.

O Mother ! whose heart
was pierced by the wounds of
thy suffering Son.

Show us a Mother's care
and love ; and when the dread
judgment comes, deliver us
from punishment. Amen.

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

THE holy Church gave us as the subject of our meditation for the first Sunday of Lent, the temptation which our Lord Jesus Christ deigned to suffer in the desert. Her object was to enlighten us with regard to our own temptations, and teach us how to conquer them. To-day, she wishes to complete her instruction on the power and stratagems of our invisible enemies ; and for this she reads to us a passage from the Gospel of St. Luke. During Lent the Christian ought to repair the past and provide for the future ; but he can neither understand how it was he fell, nor defend himself against a relapse, unless he have correct ideas as to the nature of the dangers which have hitherto proved fatal, and which are again threatening him. Hence, the ancient liturgists would have us consider it as a proof of the maternal watchfulness of the Church, that she should have again proposed such a subject to us. As we shall find, it is the basis of all to-day's instructions.

Assuredly we should be the blindest and most unhappy of men if, surrounded as we are by enemies who unceasingly seek to destroy us, and are so superior to us both in power and knowledge, we were seldom or never to think of the existence of these wicked spirits. And yet, such is really the case with innumerable Christians nowadays ; for, truths are decayed from among the children of men.¹ So common, indeed, is this heedlessness and forgetfulness of truth, which the holy Scriptures put before us in almost every page, that it is no rare thing to meet with persons who ridicule the idea of devils being permitted to be on this earth of ours ! They

¹ Ps. xi. 2.

call it a prejudice, a popular superstition of the middle ages! Of course they deny that it is a dogma of faith. When they read the history of the Church or the lives of the saints, they have their own way of explaining whatever is there related on this subject. To hear them talk, one would suppose that they look upon satan as a mere abstract idea to be taken as the personification of evil.

When they would account for the origin of their own or others' sins, they explain all by the evil inclination of man's heart, and by the bad use we make of our free will. They never think of what we are taught by Christian doctrine: namely, that we are also instigated to sin by a wicked being, whose power is as great as is the hatred he bears us. And yet they know, they believe with a firm faith, that satan conversed with our first parents, and persuaded them to commit sin, and showed himself to them under the form of a serpent. They believe that this same satan dared to tempt the Incarnate Son of God, and that he carried Him through the air, and set Him first upon a pinnacle of the temple, and then upon a very high mountain. Again, they read in the Gospel, and they believe, that one of the possessed delivered by our Saviour was tormented by a whole legion of devils, who, upon being driven out of the man, went, by Jesus' permission, into a herd of swine, and the whole herd ran violently into the sea of Genesareth and perished in the waters. These and many other such like facts are believed, by the persons of whom we speak, with all the earnestness of faith; yet, notwithstanding, they treat as a figure of speech, or a fiction, all they hear or read about the existence, the actions, or the craft of these wicked spirits. Are such people Christians, or have they lost their senses? One would scarcely have expected that this species of incredulity could have found its way into an age like this, when sacrilegious consultations of the devil

have been, we might almost say, fashionable. Means which were used in the days of paganism have been resorted to for such consultations; and those who employed them seemed to forget, or ignore, that they were committing what God in the old Law punished with death, and what, for many centuries, was considered by all Christian nations as a capital crime.

But if there be one season of the year more than another in which the faithful ought to reflect upon what is taught us both by faith and experience as to the existence and workings of the wicked spirits, it is undoubtedly this of Lent, when it is our duty to consider what have been the causes of our past sins, what are the spiritual dangers we have to fear for the future, and what means we should have recourse to for preventing a relapse. Let us, then, hearken to the holy Gospel. Firstly, we are told that the devil had possessed a man, and that the effect produced by this possession was dumbness. Our Saviour cast out the devil, and immediately the dumb man spoke. So that, the being possessed by the devil is not only a fact which testifies to God's impenetrable justice; it is one which may produce physical effects upon them that are thus tried or punished. The casting out of the devil restores the use of speech to him that had been possessed. We say nothing about the obstinate malice of Jesus' enemies, who would have it that His power over the devils came from His being in league with the prince of devils: we would now merely show that the wicked spirits are sometimes permitted to have power over the body, and would refute, by this passage from the Gospel, the rationalism of certain Christians. Let these learn, then, that the power of our spiritual enemies is an awful reality; and let them take heed not to lay themselves open to their worst attacks, by persisting in the disdainful haughtiness of their reason.

Ever since the promulgation of the Gospel, the power of satan over the human body has been restricted by the virtue of the cross, at least in Christian countries ; but this power resumes its sway as often as faith and the practice of Christian piety lose their influence. And here we have the origin of all those diabolical practices, which, under certain scientific names, are attempted first in secret, and then are countenanced by being assisted at by well-meaning Christians. Were it not that God and His Church intervene, such practices as these would subvert society. Christians ! remember your baptismal vow ; you have renounced satan : take care, then, that by a culpable ignorance you are not dragged into apostasy. It is not a phantom that you renounced at the font ; he is a real and formidable being, who, as our Lord tells us, was a murderer from the beginning.¹

But if we ought to dread the power he may be permitted to have over our bodies ; if we ought to shun all intercourse with him, and take no share in practices over which he presides, and which are the worship he would have men give him : we ought, also, to fear the influence he is ever striving to exercise over our souls. See what God's grace has had to do in order to drive him from our soul ! During this holy season, the Church is putting within your reach those grand means of victory—fasting, prayer, and almsdeeds. The sweets of peace will soon be yours, and once more you will become God's temple, for both soul and body will have regained their purity. But be not deceived ; your enemy is not slain. He is irritated ; penance has driven him from you ; but he has sworn to return. Therefore, fear a relapse into mortal sin ; and in order to nourish within you this wholesome fear, meditate upon the concluding part of our Gospel.

Our Saviour tells us that when the unclean spirit

¹ St. John viii. 44.

is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water. There he writeth under his humiliation; it has added to the tortures of the hell he carries everywhere with him, and to which he fain would give some alleviation by destroying souls that have been redeemed by Christ. We read in the old Testament that sometimes, when the devils have been conquered, they have been forced to flee into some far-off wilderness: for example, the holy Archangel Raphael took the devil, that had killed Sara's husbands, and bound him in the desert of upper Egypt.¹ But the enemy of mankind never despairs of regaining his prey. His hatred is as active now as it was at the very beginning of the world, and he says: 'I will return into my house, whence I came out.' Nor will he come alone. He is determined to conquer; and therefore, he will, if he think it needed, take with him seven other spirits, even more wicked than himself. What a terrible assault is being prepared for the poor soul, unless she be on the watch, and unless the peace, which God has granted her, be one that is well armed for war! Alas! with many souls the very contrary is the case; and our Saviour describes the situation in which the devil finds them on his return: they are swept and garnished, and that is all! No precautions, no defence, no arms. One would suppose that they were waiting to give the enemy admission. Then satan, to make his re-possession sure, comes with a sevenfold force. The attack is made; but there is no resistance, and straightways the wicked spirits entering in, dwell there; so that the last state becometh worse than the first; for before there was but one enemy, and now there are many.

In order that we may understand the full force of the warning conveyed to us by the Church in this Gospel, we must keep before us the great reality

¹ Tob. viii. 3.

that this is the acceptable time. In every part of the world, there are conversions being wrought; millions are being reconciled with God; divine mercy is lavish of pardon to all that seek it. But will all persevere? They that are now being delivered from the power of satan, will they all be free from his yoke when next year's Lent comes round? A sad experience tells the Church that she may not hope for so grand a result. Many will return to their sins, and that, too, before many weeks are over. And if the justice of God overtake them in that state—what an awful thing it is to say it, yet it is true—some, perhaps many, of these sinners will be eternally lost! Let us, then, be on our guard against a relapse; and in order that we may ensure our perseverance, without which it would have been to little purpose to have been for a few days in God's grace, let us watch, and pray; let us keep ourselves under arms; let us ever remember that our whole life is to be a warfare. Our soldier-like attitude will disconcert the enemy, and he will try to gain victory elsewhere.

The third Sunday of Lent is called *Oculi*, from the first word of the Introit. In the primitive Church, it was called *Scrutiny Sunday*, because it was on this day that they began to examine the catechumens, who were to be admitted to Baptism on Easter night. All the faithful were invited to assemble in the church, in order that they might bear testimony to the good life and morals of the candidates. At Rome, these examinations, which were called the *scrutinies*, were made on seven different occasions, on account of the great number of the aspirants to Baptism; but the principal *scrutiny* was that held on the Wednesday of the fourth week. We will speak of it later on.

The Roman sacramentary of St. Gelasius gives us the form in which the faithful were convoked to these assemblies. It is as follows. 'Dearly beloved

brethren : you know that the day of scrutiny, when our elect are to receive the holy instruction, is at hand. We invite you, therefore, to be zealous and to assemble on N. (*here the day was mentioned*) at the hour of Sext ; that so we may be able, by the divine aid, to achieve without error the heavenly mystery, whereby is opened the gate of the kingdom of heaven, and the devil is excluded with all his pomps.' The invitation was repeated, if needed, on each of the following Sundays. The *scrutiny* of this Sunday ended in the admission of a certain number of candidates : their names were written down and put on the *diptychs* of the altar, that they might be mentioned in the Canon of the Mass. The same also was done with the names of their sponsors.

The Station was, and still is, in the basilica of Saint Laurence *outside the walls*. The name of this, the most celebrated of the martyrs of Rome, would remind the catechumens that the faith they were about to profess would require them to be ready for many sacrifices.

In the Greek Church this Sunday is celebrated for the solemn adoration of the cross, which precedes the week called *Mesonestios* or mid-fast.

MASS

The catechumen who is now expecting the grace of Baptism, and the penitent who is looking forward to the day of his reconciliation, express, in the Introit, the ardour of their longings. They humbly confess their present misery ; but they are full of hope in Him, who is soon to set them free from the *snare*.

INTROIT

Oculi mei semper ad Do-	My eyes are ever towards
minum, quia ipse evellet de	the Lord, for he shall pluck
laqueo pedes meos : respice	my feet out of the snare : look

in me, et miserere mei ;
quoniam unicus et pauper
sum ego.

Ps. Ad te, Domine, levavi
animam meam : Deus meus,
in te confido, non erubescam.
V. Gloria Patri.

Oculi.

thou upon me, and have mercy
on me, for I am alone and
poor.

Ps. To thee, O Lord, have
I lifted up my soul ; in thee,
O my God, I put my trust,
let me not be ashamed. *V.*
Glory, &c.

My eyes.

The great battle with the enemy of mankind is now fiercely raging : the Church beseeches her God to stretch forth His *right hand* in her defence. Such is the petition she makes in to-day's Collect.

COLLECT

Quæsumus, omnipotens
Deus, vota humilium re-
spice : atque ad defensionem
nostram, dexteram tuæ ma-
jestatis extende. Per Domi-
num.

Be attentive, we beseech
thee, O almighty God, to the
prayers of thy servants, and
stretch forth the arm of thy
divine Majesty in our defence.
Through, &c.

The second and third Collects are given on the first Sunday of Lent, page 129.

EPISTLE

Lectio Epistolæ beati Pauli
Apostoli ad Ephesios.

Lesson of the Epistle of Saint
Paul the Apostle to the
Ephesians.

Cap. v.

Fratres : Estote imitatores
Dei, sicut filii charissimi : et
ambulate in dilectione, sicut
et Christus dilexit nos, et
tradidit semetipsum pro nobis
oblationem et hostiam Deo in
odorem suavitatis. Fornica-
tio autem, et omnis immundi-
tia, aut avaritia, nec nomi-
netur in vobis, sicut decet
sanctos : aut turpitudine, aut
stultiloquium, aut scurrilitas,

Ch. v.

Brethren : Be ye followers
of God, as most dear children ;
and walk in love, as Christ
also hath loved us, and hath
delivered himself for us, an
oblation and a sacrifice to
God, for an odour of sweet-
ness. But fornication, and all
uncleanness, or covetousness,
let it not so much as be named
among you, as becometh
saints ; or obscenity, or foolish

quæ ad rem non pertinet ; sed magis gratiarum actio. Hoc enim scitote intelligentes, quod omnis fornicator, aut immundus, aut avarus, quod est idolorum servitus, non habet hæreditatem in regno Christi et Dei. Nemo vos seducat inanibus verbis ; propter hæc enim venit ira Dei in filios diffidentiae. Nolite ergo effici participes eorum. Eratis enim aliquando tenebræ ; nunc autem lux in Domino. Ut filii lucis ambulate : fructus enim lucis est in omni bonitate, et justitia, et veritate.

talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose : but rather giving of thanks. For know ye this and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person, which is serving of idols, hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For you were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk then as children of the light : for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth.

The apostle, speaking to the faithful of Ephesus, reminds them how they once were *darkness* ; but *now*, he says, *ye are light in the Lord*. What joy for our catechumens to think that the same change is to be their happy lot ! Up to this time they have spent their lives in all the abominations of paganism ; and now they have the pledge of a holy life, for they have been received as candidates for Baptism. Hitherto they have been serving those false gods, whose worship was an encouragement to vice ; and now they hear the Church exhorting her children to be *followers of God*, that is to say, to imitate infinite Holiness. Grace—that divine element which is to enable even them to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect¹—is about to be bestowed upon them. But they will have to fight hard in order to maintain so elevated a position ; and of their old enemies, two, in particular, will strive to re-enslave them : impurity and avarice. The apostle would not

¹ St. Matt. v. 48.

have these vices *so much as named among them*, from this time forward; for they, he says, that commit such sins are *idolaters*, and by your vocation to Baptism you have abandoned all your *idols*.

Such are the instructions given by the Church to her future children. Let us apply them to ourselves, for they are also intended for us. We were sanctified almost as soon as we came into the world; have we been faithful to our Baptism? We, *heretofore, were light*; how comes it that we are now *darkness*? The beautiful likeness to our heavenly Father, which was once upon us, is perhaps quite gone! But, thanks to divine mercy, we may recover it. Let us do so by again renouncing satan and his *idols*. Let our repentance and penance restore within us that *light*, whose *fruit* consists in *all goodness, justice, and truth*.

The Gradual expresses the sentiments of a soul that sees herself surrounded by enemies, and begs her God to deliver her.

The Tract is taken from Psalm cxxii., which is a canticle of confidence and humility. The sincere avowal of our misery always draws down the mercy of God upon us.

GRADUAL

Exsurge, Domine, non
prævaleat homo: judicentur
gentes in conspectu tuo.

V. In convertendo inimicum
meum retrorsum, infirmabuntur,
et peribunt a facie tua.

Arise, O Lord, let not man
prevail: let the Gentiles be
judged in thy sight.

V. When my enemy shall
be turned back, they shall be
weakened and perish before
thy face.

TRACT

Ad te levavi oculos meos,
qui habitas in cœlis.

V. Ecce sicut oculi servorum
in manibus dominorum
suorum:

V. Et sicut oculi ancillæ
in manibus dominæ suæ:

To thee have I lifted up my
eyes, who dwellest in heaven.

V. Behold as the eyes of
servants are on the hands of
their master:

V. And as the eyes of the
handmaid are on the hands of

ita oculi nostri ad Dominum Deum nostrum, donec miseretur nobis.

V. Miserere nobis, Domine, miserere nobis.

her mistress, so are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until he have mercy on us.

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii secundum Lucam.

Cap. xi.

In illo tempore : Erat Jesus ejiciens dæmonium, et illud erat mutum. Et cum eiecisset dæmonium, locutus est mutus, et admiratæ sunt turbæ. Quidam autem ex eis dixerunt : In Beelzebub principe dæmoniorum ejicit dæmonia. Et alii tentantes, signum de cælo quærebant ab eo. Ipse autem ut vidit cogitationes eorum, dixit eis : Omne regnum in seipsum divisum desolabitur, et domus supra domum cadet. Si autem et satanas in seipsum divisus est, quomodo stabit regnum ejus ? Quia dicitis in Beelzebub me ejicere dæmonia. Si autem ego in Beelzebub ejicio dæmonia, filii vestri in quo ejiciunt ? Ideo ipsi judices vestri erunt. Porro si in digito Dei ejicio dæmonia, profecto pervenit in vos regnum Dei. Cum fortis armatus custodit atrium suum, in pace sunt ea quæ possidet. Si autem fortior eo superveniens vicerit eum, universa arma ejus auferet, in quibus confidebat, et spolia ejus distribuet. Qui non est mecum, contra me est ; et qui non colligit mecum, dis-

Sequel of the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Ch. xi.

At that time : Jesus was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb. And when he had cast out the devil, the dumb spoke, and the multitudes were in admiration at it. But some of them said : He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. And others tempting, asked of him a sign from heaven. But he, seeing their thoughts, said to them : Every kingdom divided against itself, shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall. And if satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand ? because you say, that through Beelzebub I cast out devils. Now if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out ? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out devils, doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in peace which he possesseth. But if a stronger than he come upon him and overcome him, he will take away all his armour wherein

pergit. Cum immundus spiritus exierit de homine, ambulat per loca inaquosa, quærens requiem: et non inueniens, dicit: Revertar in domum meam unde exivi. Et cum venerit, invenit eam scopis mundatam et ornatam. Tunc vadit et assumit septem alios spiritus secum, nequiores se, et ingressi habitant ibi. Et fiunt novissima hominis illius pejora prioribus. Factum est autem, cum hæc diceret, extollens vocem quædam mulier de turba, dixit illi: Beatus venter qui te portavit, et ubera quæ suxisti. At ille dixit: Quinimo beati qui audiunt verbum Dei, et custodiunt illud.

he trusted, and will distribute his spoils. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest; and not finding, he saith: I will return into my house whence I came out. And when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and entering in they dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. And it came to pass, as he spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice, said to him: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. But he said: Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it.

As soon as Jesus had cast out the devil, the man recovered his speech, for the *possession* had made him dumb. It is an image of what happens to a sinner, who will not, or dare not, confess his sin. If he confessed it, and asked pardon, he would be delivered from the tyranny which now oppresses him. Alas! how many there are who are kept back, by a *dumb devil*, from making the confession that would save them! The holy season of Lent is advancing; these days of grace are passing away; let us profit by them; and if we ourselves be in the state of grace, let us offer up our earnest prayers for sinners, that they may *speak*, that is, may accuse themselves in confession and obtain pardon.

Let us also listen, with holy fear, to what our Saviour tells us with regard to our invisible enemies. They are so powerful and crafty, that our resistance would be useless, unless we had God on our side, and His holy angels, who watch over us and join us in the great combat. It is to these unclean and hateful spirits of hell that we delivered ourselves when we sinned : we preferred their tyrannical sway to the sweet and light yoke of our compassionate Redeemer. Now we are set free, or are hoping to be so ; let us thank our divine Liberator ; but let us take care not to readmit our enemies. Our Saviour warns us of our danger. They will return to the attack ; they will endeavour to force their entrance into our soul, after it has been sanctified by the Lamb of the Passover. If we be watchful and faithful, they will be confounded, and leave us : but if we be tepid and careless, if we lose our appreciation of the grace we have received, and forget our obligations to Him who has thus saved us, our defeat is inevitable ; and as our Lord says, *our last state will be worse than the first.*

Would we avoid such a misfortune ? Let us meditate upon those other words of our Lord, in to-day's Gospel : *He that is not with Me is against Me.* What makes us fall back into the power of satan, and forget our duty to our God, is that we do not frankly declare ourselves for Jesus, when occasions require us to do so. We try to be on both sides, we have recourse to subterfuge, we temporize : this takes away our energy ; God no longer gives us the abundant graces we received when we were loyal and generous ; our relapse is all but certain. Therefore, let us be boldly and unmistakably *with* Christ. He that is a soldier of Jesus, should be proud of his title !

The Offertory describes the consolation that a soul, rescued from satan's grasp, feels in doing the will of her divine Master.

OFFERTORY

<p>Justitiæ Domini rectæ, lætificantés corda, et iudicia ejus dulciora super mel et favum; nam et servus tuus custodit ea.</p>	<p>The justices of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts; his ordinances are sweeter than honey and the honey-comb; therefore thy servant observ- eth them.</p>
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In the Secret, the Church expresses her confidence in the Sacrifice she is about to offer to God; it is the Sacrifice of Calvary, which redeemed the whole world.

SECRET

<p>Hæc hostia, Domine, quæ- sumus, emundet nostra delicta: et ad sacrificium celebrandum, subditorum tibi corpora mentesque sanctificet. Per Dominum.</p>	<p>May this offering, O Lord, we beseech thee, cleanse us from our sins, and sanctify the bodies and souls of thy servants for the celebrating of this sacrifice. Through, &c.</p>
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The second and third Secrets are given on the first Sunday of Lent, page 136.

Borrowing the words of David, the Church, in her Communion-anthem, describes the happiness of a soul that is united to her God in the Sacrament of love. It is the lot reserved for the catechumens, who have just been received as candidates for Baptism; it is to be also that of the penitents, who shall have washed away their sins in the tears of repentance.

COMMUNION

<p>Passer invenit sibi domum, et turtur nidum, ubi reponat pulos suos: altaria tua, Domine virtutum, Rex meus et Deus meus: beati qui habitant in domo tua; in sæculum sæculi laudabunt te.</p>	<p>The sparrow hath found herself a house, and the turtle a nest, where she may lay her young ones; in like manner, O Lord of armies, my King and my God, let my abode be near thy altar: blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they shall praise thee for ever and ever</p>
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In the Postcommunion, the Church beseeches her Lord to grant, through the merits of the *mystery* just partaken of by her children, that sinners may be loosed from the fetters of their sins, and delivered from the danger they have incurred—the danger of eternal perdition.

POSTCOMMUNION

<p>A cunctis nos, quæsumus Domine, reatibus et periculis propitiatus absolve: quos tanti mysterii tribuis esse participes. Per Dominum.</p>	<p>Mercifully, O Lord, we beseech thee, deliver us from all guilt and from all danger, since thou admittest us to be partakers of this great mystery. Through, &c.</p>
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The second and third Postcommunions are given on the first Sunday of Lent, page 138.

VESPERS

The psalms and antiphons are given on page 99.

CAPITULUM

<p>Fratres: Estote imitatores Dei, sicut filii charissimi: et ambulate in dilectione, sicut et Christus dilexit nos, et tradidit semetipsum pro nobis, oblationem et hostiam Deo in odorem suavitatis.</p>	<p>Brethren: Be ye followers of God, as most dear children: and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness.</p>
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For the hymn and versicle, see page 106.

ANTIPHON OF THE MAGNIFICAT

<p>Extollens vocem quædam mulier de turba, dixit: Beatus venter qui te portavit, et ubera quæ suxisti. At Jesus ait illi: Quinimo beati qui audiunt verbum Dei, et custodiunt illud.</p>	<p>A certain woman from the crowd, lifting up her voice, said: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. But Jesus said to her: Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.</p>
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OREMUS

Quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, vota humilium respice : atque ad defensionem nostram, dexteram tuæ majestatis extende. Per Dominum.

LET US PRAY

Be attentive, we beseech thee, O almighty God, to the prayers of thy servants, and stretch forth the arm of thy divine Majesty in our defence. Through, &c.

The Mozarabic breviary offers us this beautiful prayer for the commencement of the third week of Lent.

PRAYER

(In Dominica III. Quadragesimæ)

Quarti nunc et decimi diei de nostrorum dierum decimis curriculo jam peracto, ad te levamus oculos nostros, Domine, qui habitas in cœlis ; impende jam et misericordiam miseris, et medelam porrige vulneratis ; tu nobis adgressum iter placidum effice : tu cor nostrum in mandatorum tuorum semitis dirige : per te lucis inveniamus viam : per te luminosa amoris tui capiamus incendia ; tu laboribus requiem, tu laborantibus tribue mansionem ; ut horum dierum observatione tibi placentes, gloriæ tuæ mereamur esse participes.

Having now passed the fourteenth day of this season, which forms the tithe of our year, we lift up our eyes to thee, O Lord, who dwellest in heaven. Show mercy to the miserable, and heal them that are wounded. Grant that the journey we have begun may be prosperous. Direct our hearts in the way of thy commandments. Through thee may we find the way of light ; through thee, may we be inflamed with the bright burning of thy love. Grant rest to our labours, and a home to us that labour ; that having gained thy good-pleasure by our observance of these days, we may deserve to be partakers of thy glory.

MONDAY

OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of Saint Mark, which was built in the fourth century in honour of the evangelist, by the holy Pope Mark, whose relics are kept there.

COLLECT

Cordibus nostris, quæsumus, Domine, gratiam tuam benignus infunde; ut sicut ab escis carnalibus abstinemus, ita sensus quoque nostros a noxiis retrahamus excessibus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

We beseech thee, O Lord, mercifully to pour forth thy grace into our hearts; that, as we abstain from flesh, so we may keep our senses from all noxious excesses. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Regum.

Lesson from the Book of Kings.

IV. *Cap. v.*

In diebus illis: Naaman princeps militiæ regis Syriæ, erat vir magnus apud dominum suum, et honoratus: per illum enim dedit Dominus salutem Syriæ: erat autem vir fortis et dives, sed leprosus. Porro de Syria egressi fuerant latronculi, et captivam duxerant de terra Israël puellam parvulam, quæ erat in obsequio uxoris Naaman. Quæ ait ad dominam suam: Utinam fuisset dominus meus ad prophetam, qui est in Samaria: profecto curasset eum a lepra quam habet.

IV. *Ch. v.*

In those days: Naaman, general of the army of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable: for by him the Lord gave deliverance to Syria; and he was a valiant man and rich, but a leper. Now there had gone out robbers from Syria, and had led away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid, and she waited upon Naaman's wife. And she said to her mistress: I wish my master had been with the prophet that is in Samaria; he would certainly have healed him of the le-

Ingressus est itaque Naaman ad dominum suum, et nuntiavit ei, dicens: Sic et sic locuta est puella de terra Israël. Dixitque ei rex Syriæ: Vade, et mittam litteras ad regem Israël. Qui cum profectus esset, et tulisset secum decem talenta argenti, et sex millia aureos, et decem mutatoria vestimentorum, detulit litteras ad regem Israël, in hæc verba: Cum acceperis epistolam hanc, scito quod miserim ad te Naaman servum meum, ut cures eum a lepra sua. Cumque legisset rex Israël litteras, scidit vestimenta sua, et ait: Numquid Deus ego sum, ut occidere possim et vivificare, quia iste misit ad me, ut curem hominem a lepra sua? Animadvertite et videte quod occasiones quærat adversum me. Quod cum audisset Elisæus vir Dei, scidisse videlicet regem Israël vestimenta sua, misit ad eum dicens: Quare scidisti vestimenta tua? Veniat ad me, et sciat esse prophetam in Israël. Venit ergo Naaman cum equis et curribus, et stetit ad ostium domus Elisæi: misitque ad eum Elisæus nuntium, dicens: Vade, et lavare septies in Jordane, et recipiet sanitatem caro tua, atque mundaberis. Iratus Naaman recedebat, dicens: Putabam quod egredereetur ad me, et stans invocaret nomen Domini Dei sui, et tangeret manu sua locum lepræ et curaret me. Num-

prosy which he hath. Then Naaman went in to his lord, and told him, saying: Thus and thus said the girl from the land of Israel. And the king of Syria said to him: Go, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment, and brought the letter to the king of Israel, in these words: When thou shalt receive this letter, know that I have sent to thee Naaman my servant, that thou mayest heal him of his leprosy. And when the king of Israel had read the letter, he rent his garments, and said: Am I God, to be able to kill and to give life, that this man hath sent to me, to heal a man of his leprosy? Mark, and see how he seeketh occasions against me. And when Eliseus the man of God had heard this, to wit, that the king of Israel had rent his garments, he sent to him, saying: Why hast thou rent thy garments? Let him come to me, and let him know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and stood at the door of the house of Eliseus; and Eliseus sent a messenger to him, saying: Go, and wash seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh shall recover health, and thou shalt be clean. Naaman was angry, and went away saying: I thought he would have

quid non meliores sunt Abana et Pharphar, fluvii Damasci, omnibus aquis Israël, ut laver in eis et munder? Cum ergo vertisset se, et abiret indignans, accesserunt ad eum servi sui, et locuti sunt ei: Pater, et si rem grandem dixisset tibi Propheta, certe facere debueras: quanto magis quia nunc dixit tibi: Lavare, et mundaberis? Descendit, et lavit in Jordane septies juxta sermonem viri Dei, et restituta est caro ejus, sicut caro pueri parvuli, et mundatus est. Reversusque ad virum Dei cum universo comitatu suo, venit, et stetit coram eo, et ait: Vere scio quod non sit alius Deus in universa terra, nisi tantum in Israël.

come out to me, and standing, would have invoked the name of the Lord his God, and touched with his hand the place of the leprosy, and healed me. Are not the Abana, and the Pharphar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel, that I may wash in them, and be made clean? So as he turned, and was going away with indignation, his servants came to him, and said to him: Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it; how much rather what he now hath said to thee: Wash and thou shalt be clean? Then he went down, and washed in the Jordan seven times, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored, like the flesh of a little child, and he was made clean. And returning to the man of God with all his train, he came and stood before him, and said: In truth I know there is no other God in all the earth, but only in Israel.

Yesterday the Church made known to our catechumens that the day of their Baptism was at hand; to-day she reads them a passage from the old Testament, which relates a history that admirably symbolizes the saving font prepared for them by divine mercy. Naaman's *leprosy* is a figure of sin. There is but one cure for the loathsome malady of the Syrian officer: he must go, and wash seven times in the Jordan, and he shall be made clean. The Gen-

tile, the infidel, the infant with its stain of original sin, all may be made just and holy ; but this can be effected only by water and the invocation of the blessed Trinity. Naaman objects to the remedy, as being too simple ; he cannot believe that one so insignificant can be efficacious : he refuses to try it ; he expected something more in accordance with reason, for instance, a miracle that would have done honour both to himself and to the prophet. This was the reasoning of many a Gentile, when the apostles went about preaching the Gospel ; but they that believed, with simple-hearted faith, in the power of water sanctified by Christ, received regeneration ; and the baptismal font created a new people, composed of all nations of the earth. Naaman, who represents the Gentiles, was at length induced to believe ; and his faith was rewarded by a complete cure. *His flesh was restored like that of a little child*, which has never suffered taint or disease. Let us give glory to God, who has endowed water with the heavenly power it now possesses ; let us praise Him for the wonderful workings of His grace, which produce in docile hearts that faith whose recompense is so magnificent.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii Sequel of the holy Gospel
secundum Lucam. according to Luke.

Cap. iv.

Ch. iv.

In illo tempore : Dixit Jesus pharisæis : Utique dicitis mihi hanc similitudinem : Medice, cura teipsum : quanta audivimus facta in Capharnaum, fac et hic in patria tua. Ait autem : Amen dico vobis, quia nemo propheta acceptus est in patria sua. In veritate dico vobis, multæ viduæ erant in diebus Eliæ in Israël, quando

At that time : Jesus said to the pharisees : Doubtless you will say to me this similitude : Physician, heal thyself ; as great things as we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in thy own country. And he said : Amen, I say to you, that no prophet is accepted in his own country. In truth, I say to you, there were many widows in the

clausum est cœlum annis tribus et mensibus sex, cum facta esset fames magna in omni terra: et ad nullam illarum missus est Elias, nisi in Sarephta Sidoniæ ad mulierem viduam. Et multi leprosi erant in Israël sub Elisæo propheta: et nemo eorum mundatus est, nisi Naaman Syrus. Et repleti sunt omnes in synagoga ira, hæc audientes. Et surrexerunt et ejecerunt illum extra civitatem: et duxerunt illum usque ad supercilium montis, super quem civitas illorum erat ædificata, ut præcipitarent eum. Ipse autem transiens per medium illorum, ibat.

days of Elias in Israel, when heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there was a great famine throughout all the earth: and to none of them was Elias sent, but to Sarephta of Sidon, to a widow woman. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisæus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed but Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, hearing these things, were filled with anger, and they rose up and thrust him out of the city; and they brought him to the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way.

Here, again, we find our Saviour proclaiming the mystery of the Gentiles being called to take the place of the incredulous Jews; and He mentions Naaman as an example of this merciful substitution. He also speaks, in the same sense, of the widow of Sarephta, whose history we had a few days ago. This terrible resolution of our Lord to transfer His light from one people to another, irritates the pharisees of Nazareth against the Messiah. They know that Jesus, who has only just commenced His public life, has been working great miracles in Capharnaum: they would have Him honour their own little city in the same way; but Jesus knows that they would not be converted. Do these people of Nazareth so much as know Jesus? He has lived among them for eighteen years, during all which time He has been advancing in wisdom and age and grace before God and men;¹

¹ St. Luke ii. 52.

but they despise Him, for He is a poor man, and the son of a carpenter. They do not even know that though He has passed so many years among them, He was not born in their city, but in Bethlehem. Not many days before this, Jesus had gone into the synagogue of Nazareth,¹ and had explained, with marvellous eloquence and power, the Prophet Isaias ; He told His audience that the time of mercy had come, and His discourse excited much surprise and admiration. But the pharisees of the city despised His words. They have heard that He has been working *great things* in the neighbourhood ; they are curious to see one of His miracles ; but Jesus refuses to satisfy their unworthy desire. Let them recall to mind the discourse made by Jesus in their synagogue, and tremble at the announcement He then made to them, that the Gentiles were to become God's chosen people. But the divine *Prophet is not accepted in His own country* ; and had He not withdrawn Himself from the *anger* of His compatriots of Nazareth, the Blood of the Just would have been shed that very day. But there is an unenviable privilege which belongs exclusively to Jerusalem : a prophet cannot perish out of Jerusalem !²

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Subveniat nobis, Domine,
misericordia tua : ut ab
imminentibus peccatorum
nostrorum periculis, te me-
reamur protegente, eripi,
te liberante, salvari. Per
Christum Dominum no-
strum. Amen.

May thy mercy, O Lord,
assist us, that by thy protec-
tion we may be delivered
from the dangers of sin that
surround us, and so brought
to eternal happiness. Through
Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us, on this day, offer to God the following solemn supplication, taken from the Gothic missal.

¹ St. Luke iv. 16-22.

² *Ibid.* xiii. 33.

SUPPLICATION

(In Dominica III. Quadragesimæ)

Rogamus te, Rex sæculo-
rum, Deus sancte jam mi-
serere ; peccavimus tibi.

V. Audi clamantes, Pater
altissime, et quæ precamur,
clemens attribue : exaudi
nos Domine.

R. Jam miserere.

V. Bone Redemptor, sup-
plices quæsumus de toto
corde fientes ; requirimus,
adsiste propitiis.

R. Jam miserere.

V. Emitte manum, Deus
omnipotens, et invocantes
potenter protege ex alto,
piissime.

R. Jam miserere.

V. Fertilitatem et pacem
tribue : remove bella, et
famem cohibe, Redemptor
sanctissime.

R. Jam miserere.

V. Indulge lapsis ; indul-
ge perditis ; dimitte noxia :
ablue crimina ; acclines tu
libera.

R. Jam miserere.

We beseech thee, O King
eternal ! O holy God ! have
mercy now upon us, for we
have sinned against thee.

V. Hear our cry, O
Father, most high God ! and
mercifully grant us our re-
quests. Graciously hear us,
O Lord !

R. Have mercy now upon
us.

V. O good Redeemer ! we
suppliantly beseech thee, and
with our whole heart we
pour out our tears before
thee. We seek after thee ;
be propitious, and show thy-
self unto us.

R. Have mercy now upon
us.

V. Stretch forth thy hand,
O almighty God ! and, in thy
exceeding goodness, power-
fully protect us from on high.

R. Have mercy now upon
us.

V. Grant us fertility and
peace, O most holy Re-
deemer ! Drive wars away
from us, and deliver us from
famine.

R. Have mercy now upon
us.

V. Grant pardon to the
fallen : pardon them that
have gone astray ; forgive us
our sins ; cleanse us from
our iniquities ; deliver us
who are here prostrate before
thee.

R. Have mercy now upon
us.

*V. Gemitus vide : fletus
intellige : extende manum :
peccantes redime.*

R. Jam miserere.

*V. See our sighing ; hear
our weeping ; stretch forth
thy hand : redeem us sinners.*

*R. Have mercy now upon
us.*

*V. Hanc nostram, Deus,
hanc pacem suscipe : sup-
plicum voces placatus sus-
cipe : et parce, piissime.*

*R. Rogamus te, Rex sæ-
culorum, Deus sancte jam
miserere : peccavimus tibi.*

*V. Receive, O God, re-
ceive this our prayer for re-
conciliation ; be appeased,
and receive the petition of
thy suppliants ; and spare
us, O most loving God !*

*R. We beseech thee, O
King eternal ! O holy God !
have mercy now upon us,
for we have sinned against
thee.*

TUESDAY

OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of St. Pudentiana, daughter of Pudens the senator. This holy virgin of Rome lived in the second century. She was remarkable for her charity, and for the zeal wherewith she sought for and buried the bodies of the martyrs. Her church is built on the very spot where stood the house in which she lived with her father and her sister St. Praxedes. St. Peter the Apostle had honoured this house with his presence, during the lifetime of Pudentiana's grandfather.

COLLECT

*Exaudi nos, omnipotens
et misericors Deus : et con-
tinentiæ salutaris propitius
nobis dona concede. Per
Christum Dominum no-
strum. Amen.*

*Graciously hear us, O al-
mighty and merciful God,
and grant us the gift of salu-
tary continence. Through
Christ our Lord. Amen.*

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Regum.

Lesson from the Book of Kings.

IV. *Cap.* iv.IV. *Ch.* iv.

In diebus illis: Mulier quaedam clamabat ad Elisæum prophetam, dicens: Servus tuus vir meus mortuus est: et tu nosti quia servus tuus fuit timens Dominum: et ecce creditor venit ut tollat duos filios meos ad serviendum sibi. Cui dixit Elisæus: Quid vis ut faciam tibi? Dic mihi quid habes in domo tua? At illa respondit: Non habeo ancilla tua quidquam in domo mea, nisi parum olei, quo ungar. Cui ait: Vade, pete mutuo ab omnibus vicinis tuis vasa vacua non pauca. Et ingredi, et claude ostium tuum, cum intrinsecus fueris tu et filii tui: et mitte inde in omnia vasa hæc: et cum plena fuerint, tolles. Ivit itaque mulier, et clausit ostium super se, et super filios suos: illi offerebant vasa, et illa infundebat. Cumque plena fuissent vasa, dixit ad filium suum: Affer mihi adhuc vas. Et ille respondit: Non habeo. Stetitque oleum. Venit autem illa, et indicavit homini Dei. Et ille: Vade, inquit, vende oleum, et redde creditori tuo: tu autem et filii tui vivite de reliquo.

In those days: A certain woman cried to Eliseus, saying: Thy servant my husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy servant was one that feared God, and behold the creditor is come to take away my two sons to serve him. And Eliseus said to her: What wilt thou have me do for thee? Tell me, what hast thou in thy house? And she answered: I thy handmaid have nothing in my house but a little oil, to anoint me. And he said to her: Go, borrow of all thy neighbours empty vessels not a few. And go in, and shut thy door, when thou art within, with thy sons, and pour out thereof into all those vessels; and when they are full take them away. So the woman went, and shut the door upon her, and upon her sons; they brought her the vessels and she poured in. And when the vessels were full, she said to her son: Bring me yet a vessel. And he answered: I have no more. And the oil stood; and she came and told the man of God. And he said: Go, sell the oil, and pay thy creditor; and thou and thy sons live of the rest.

It is not difficult to unravel the mystery of this day's lesson. Man's *creditor* is satan; our sins have

made him such. 'Go,' says the prophet, '*and pay the creditor.*' But how is this to be done? We shall obtain the pardon of our sins by works of mercy, of which *oil* is the symbol. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.¹ Let us, then, during these days of salvation, secure our reconciliation and forgiveness by doing all we can to assist our brethren who are in want; let us join almsdeeds to our fasting, and practise works of mercy. Thus shall we touch the Heart of our heavenly Father. Putting our *debts* into His hands, we shall take away from satan all the claims he had upon us. Let us learn a lesson from this woman. She lets no one see her as she *fills the vessels with oil*: let us, also, *shut the door*, when we do good, so that our left hand shall not know what our right hand doth.² Take notice, too, that the woman goes on pouring out the *oil* as long as she has vessels to hold it. So our mercy towards our neighbour must be proportionate to our means. The extent of these means is known to God, and He will not have us fall short of the power He has given us for doing good. Let us, then, be liberal in our alms during this holy season; let us make the resolution to be so at all times. When our material resources are exhausted, let us be merciful in desire, by interceding with those who are able to give, and by praying to God to help the suffering and the poor.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Cap. xviii.

In illo tempore: Dixit
Jesus discipulis suis: Si
peccaverit in te frater tuus,
vade, et corripe eum inter
te et ipsum solum. Si te au-

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Ch. xviii.

At that time: Jesus said to
his disciples: If thy brother
shall offend against thee, go
and rebuke him between thee
and him alone. If he shall

¹ St. Matt. v. 7.

² *Ibid.* vi. 3.

dierit, lucratus eris fratrem tuum. Si autem te non audierit, adhibe tecum adhuc unum vel duos, ut in ore duorum vel trium testium stet omne verbum. Quod si non audierit eos, dic Ecclesiæ. Si autem Ecclesiam non audierit, sit tibi sicut ethnicus et publicanus. Amen dico vobis: quæcumque alligaveritis super terram, erunt ligata et in cælo; et quæcumque solveritis super terram, erunt soluta, et in cælo. Iterum dico vobis, quia si duo ex vobis consenserint super terram, de omni re quæcumque petierint, fiet illis a Patre meo, qui in cælis est. Ubi enim sunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo, ibi sum in medio eorum. Tunc accedens Petrus ad eum, dixit: Domine, quoties peccabit in me frater meus, et dimittam ei? Usque septies? Dicit illi Jesus: Non dico tibi usque septies; sed usque septuagies septies.

hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more; that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church; and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven. Again, I say to you, that if two of you shall consent upon earth, concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by my Father, who is in heaven; for where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter unto him, and said: Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith to him: I say not to thee, till seven times, but till seventy times seven times.

The mercy which God commands us to show to our fellow-creatures, does not consist only in corporal and spiritual almsdeeds to the poor and the suffering; it includes, moreover, the pardon and forgetfulness of injuries. This is the test whereby God proves the sincerity of our conversion. With the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.¹ If we, from our hearts,

¹ St. Luke vi. 38.

pardon our enemies, our heavenly Father will unreservedly pardon us. These are the days when we are hoping to be reconciled with our God ; let us do all we can to *gain our brother* ; and for this end, pardon him, if needs be, *seventy times seven times*. Surely, we are not going to allow the miserable quarrels of our earthly pilgrimage to make us lose heaven ! Therefore, let us forgive insults and injuries, and thus imitate our God Himself, who is ever forgiving us.

But how grand are these other words of our Gospel : *Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven !* Oh, the hope and joy they bring to our hearts ! How countless is the number of sinners, who are soon to feel the truth of this consoling promise ! They will confess their sins, and offer to God the homage of a contrite and humble heart ; and, at the very moment that the hand of the priest shall loose them upon earth, the hand of God will loose them from the bonds which held them as victims to eternal punishment.

And lastly, let us not pass by unnoticed this other sentence, which has a close relation with the one we have just alluded to : *If a man hear not the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and publican.* What is this *Church* ? Men, to whom Jesus Christ said : ‘ He that heareth you, heareth Me ; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me.’¹ Men, from whose lips comes to the world the truth, without which there is no salvation : men, who alone on earth have power to reconcile the sinner with his God, save him from the hell he has deserved, and open to him the gates of heaven. Can we be surprised, after this, that our Saviour—who would have these men to be His instruments, and as it were, the communication between Himself and mankind—should treat as a *heathen*, as one that has never received Baptism, him that refuses to acknowledge their authority ?

¹ St. Luke x. 16.

There is no revealed truth, except through their teaching; there is no salvation, except through the Sacraments which they administer; there is no hoping in Christ Jesus, except where there is submission to the spiritual laws which they promulgate.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Tua nos, Domine, protectione defende: et ab omni semper iniquitate custodi. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Defend us, O Lord, by thy protection, and ever preserve us from all iniquity. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us address ourselves to God in these words of a hymn composed by St. Andrew of Crete. We take it from the Greek liturgy.

HYMN

(In V. Feria V. Hebdomadae)

Audivit propheta adventum tuum, Domine, et timuit: quod esses nasciturus ex Virgine et mundo exhibendus; dixitque: Audivi auditum tuum et timui. Sit gloria, Domine, tuae potentiae.

Ne despexeris tua opera, ac tuum figmentum, juste Judex, neglexeris: quamquam peccavi solus, tu o clemens, qua Homo supra hominem omnem, potestatem tamen dimittendi peccata, qua es Dominus universorum, habes.

Prope est finis, o anima, prope est, nec es sollicita? non te praeparas? tempus urget, exsurge: prope est iudex in januis: velut somnium, velut flos, vita de-

The prophet trembled when he heard that thou, O Lord, wast to come: that thou wast to be born of a Virgin, and be made visible to the world. He said: I heard thy hearing, and was afraid. Glory be to thy power, O Lord!

Despise not, O just Judge, thy works: turn not away from the creature thou hast formed. My sins are indeed all my own work; but thou, O merciful Jesus, as Man above all men, hast power to forgive sin, for thou art the Lord of the universe.

Thy end is near, O my soul! How comes it thou art heedless? How is it, that thou art making no preparation? Time presses; arise! The Judge is near, even at the

currit ; ut quid vero frustra conturbamur ?

Resipisce, O anima mea ! actus quos es operata, recogita, eosque ob oculos statue, atque ab oculis lacrymarum stillas funde. Dic palam Christo actiones tuas et cogitationes, et justificare.

Non fuerit in vita peccatum, actiove, aut malitia, quam ego, Salvator, intellectu et cogitatione atque proposito non peccaverim, affectu, mentis judicio, et actione, et nemo unquam gravius peccaverit.

Inde etiam damnationis incurri reatum ; inde, miser ego, conscientia propria iudice, qua nihil mundus violentius habet, causa cecidi : tu iudex et redemptor, cognitorque meus, parce et libera, salvumque fac servum tuum.

Tempus vitæ meæ exiguum est, laboribusque et molestia plenum : verum poenitentem suscipe et revoca agnoscentem Ne fiam alieni possessio et esca : tu ipse Salvator, mei miserere.

Jam grandiloquum ago, et corde temere audacem. Ne me condemnes cum pharisæo : imo publicani, qui solus misericors sis, humilitatem concede : tu me, juste iudex, huic adcense.

Ipsæ mihi factus sum ido-

very gate. Life is passing away, as a dream, and as a flower. Why trouble we ourselves with vain things ?

Recover thyself, O my soul ! Recall to mind the acts of thy life ; bring them before thee, and let thine eyes shed tears over them. Openly confess thy deeds and thoughts to Christ, and be justified.

There is no sin, or evil action, or wickedness which I, O Jesus ! have not committed in mind and thought and intention. None ever sinned more grievously than I, in desire, in judgment, and in deed.

Therefore, have I incurred damnation ; therefore is sentence given against me, a wretched sinner, whose own conscience is my judge, and whose crimes surpass all that this world has seen. Do thou, my Judge, my Redeemer, and my Witness, spare and deliver and save thy servant.

My life is short, and filled with labour and trouble : but do thou receive me, for I repent ; call me back unto thee, for I acknowledge thee to be my Lord. Let me not become the property and prey of any but thee. Thou art my Saviour ; have mercy on me.

My words are haughty, and my heart presumptuous. Condemn me not with the pharisee, but give me, O thou the one only merciful God, the humility of the publican, and number me with him, O my just Judge !

I have made myself my

lum, vitiis corrumpens animam : verum pœnitentem suscipe, et revoca agnoscentem. Ne efficiar alieno in possessionem et escam : tu ipse Salvator, mei miserere.

idol, and my sins have corrupted my soul : but do thou receive me, for I repent ; call me back unto thee, for I acknowledge thee to be my Lord. Let me not become the property and prey of any but thee. Thou art my Saviour : have mercy on me.

WEDNESDAY

OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

THE Station, at Rome, is in the church of Saint Xystus on the Appian Road. It now goes under the name of *Saint Xystus the Old*, in order to distinguish it from another church that is dedicated to the same holy Pope and Martyr.

COLLECT

Præsta nobis, quæsumus, Domine, ut salutaribus jejuniis eruditi a noxiis quoque vitiis abstinentes, propitiationem tuam facilius impetremus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that being improved by this wholesome fast, we may abstain from all pernicious vice, and by that means, more easily obtain thy mercy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Exodi.

Lesson from the Book of Exodus.

Cap. xx.

Ch. xx.

Hæc dicit Dominus Deus : Honora patrem tuum, et matrem tuam, ut sis longævus super terram, quam Dominus Deus tuus dabit tibi. Non occides. Non mœchaberis. Non furtum facies. Non loqueris contra

Thus saith the Lord God : Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayst be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal.

proximum tuum falsum testimonium. Non concupisces domum proximi tui, nec desiderabis uxorem ejus, non servum, non ancillam, non bovem, non asinum, nec omnia quæ illius sunt. Cunctus autem populus videbat voces, et lampades, et sonitum buccinæ, montemque fumantem: et perterriti, ac pavore concussi steterunt procul, dicentes Moysi: Loquere tu nobis, et audiemus: non loquatur nobis Dominus, ne forte moriamur. Et ait Moyses ad populum: Nolite timere: ut enim probaret vos venit Deus; et ut terror illius esset in vobis, et non peccaretis. Stetitque populus de longe. Moyses autem accessit ad caliginem, in qua erat Deus. Dixit præterea Dominus ad Moysen: Hæc dices filiis Israel: Vos vidistis quod de cælo locutus sim vobis. Non facietis deos argenteos, nec deos aureos facietis vobis. Altare de terra facietis mihi, et offeretis super eo holocausta et pacifica vestra, oves vestras, et boves, in omni loco in quo memoriam fuerit nominis mei.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his. And all the people saw the voices and the flames, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mount smoking: and being terrified and struok with fear, they stood afar off, saying to Moses: Speak thou to us, and we will hear; let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die. And Moses said to the people: Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that the dread of him might be in you, and you should not sin. And the people stood afar off. But Moses went to the dark cloud wherein God was. And the Lord said to Moses: Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: You have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver, nor shall you make to yourselves gods of gold. You shall make an altar of earth unto me, and you shall offer upon it your holocausts and peace-offerings, your sheep and oxen, in every place where the memory of my name shall be.

The Church reminds us to-day of the divine commandments which relate to our duties towards our neighbour, beginning with that which enjoins respect to parents. Now that the faithful are intent on the great work of the conversion and amendment of their lives, it is well that they should be reminded

that their duties towards their fellow-men are prescribed by God Himself. Hence, it is God whom we offended, when we sinned against our neighbour. God first tells us what He Himself has a right to receive from our hands : He bids us adore and serve Him ; He forbids the worship of idols ; He enjoins the observance of the Sabbath, and prescribes sacrifices and ceremonies : but, at the same time, He commands us to love our neighbours as ourselves, and assures us that He will be their avenger when we have wronged them, unless we repair the injury. The voice of Jehovah on Sinai is not less commanding when it proclaims what our duties are to our neighbour, than when it tells us our obligations to our Creator. Thus enlightened as to the origin of our duties, we shall have a clearer view of the state of our conscience, and of the atonement required of us by divine justice. But if the old Law, that was written on tablets of stone, thus urges upon us the precept of the love of our neighbour ; how much more will the new Law, that was signed with the Blood of Jesus when dying upon the cross for His ungrateful brethren, insist on our observance of fraternal charity ! These are the two Laws, on which we shall be judged ; let us, therefore, carefully observe what they command on this head, that thus we may prove ourselves to be Christians, according to those words of our Saviour : ‘ By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.’¹

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum.

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Matthew.

Cap. xv.

Ch. xv.

In illo tempore : Acceserunt ad Jesum ab Jerosolymis scribæ et pharisæi, di-

At that time : The scribes and pharisees came from Jerusalem to Jesus, saying : Why

¹ St. John xiii. 35.

centes: Quare discipuli tui transgrediuntur traditionem seniorum? non enim lavant manus suas cum panem manducant. Ipse autem respondens, ait illis: Quare et vos transgredimini mandatum Dei propter traditionem vestram? Nam Deus dixit: Honora patrem et matrem. Et: Qui maledixerit patri vel matri, morte moriatur. Vos autem dicitis: Quicumque dixerit patri vel matri: Munus quodcumque est ex me tibi proderit: et non honorificabit patrem suum aut matrem suam: et irritum fecistis mandatum Dei, propter traditionem vestram. Hypocritæ, bene prophetauit de vobis Isaias, dicens: Populus hic labiis me honorat: cor autem eorum longe est a me. Sine causa autem colunt me, docentes doctrinas et mandata hominum. Et convocatis ad se turbis, dixit eis: Audite, et intelligite. Non quod intrat in os, coinquinat hominem: sed quod procedit ex ore, hoc coinquinat hominem. Tunc accedentes discipuli ejus, dixerunt ei: Scis quia pharisæi, audito verbo hoc, scandalizati sunt? At ille respondens, ait: Omnis plantatio quam non plantavit Pater meus cælestis, eradicabitur. Sinite illos: cæci sunt, et duces cæcorum. Cæcus autem si cæco ducatum præstet, ambo in foveam cadunt. Respondens autem Petrus, dixit ei: Edissere nobis parabolam

do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answering, said to them: Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition? For God said: Honour thy father and mother; and: He that shall curse father or mother, let him die the death. But you say: Whosoever shall say to father or mother, The gift whatsoever proceedeth from me, shall profit thee. And he shall not honour his father or his mother; and you have made void the commandment of God for your tradition. Hypocrites, well hath Isaias prophesied of you, saying: This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men. And having called together the multitudes unto him, he said to them: Hear ye and understand. Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said to him: Dost thou know that the pharisees, when they heard this word, were scandalized? But he answering, said: Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both fall into

istam. At ille dixit: Adhuc et vos sine intellectu estis? Non intelligitis quia omne quod in os intrat, in ventrem vadit, et in secessum emittitur? Quæ autem procedunt de ore, de corde exeunt, et ea coinquant hominem: de corde enim exeunt cogitationes malæ, homicidia, adulteria, fornicationes, furta, falsa testimonia, blasphemæ. Hæc sunt quæ coinquant hominem. Non lotis autem manibus manducare, non coinquant hominem.

the pit. And Peter answering, said to him: Expound to us this parable. But he said: Are you also yet without understanding? Do you not understand that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy? But the things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man. For from the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands doth not defile a man.

The *Law* that was given by God to Moses enjoined a great number of exterior practices and ceremonies; and they that were faithful among the Jews, zealously and carefully fulfilled them. Jesus Himself, though He was the divine Law-Giver, most humbly complied with them. But the pharisees had added their own superstitious *traditions* to these divine laws and ordinances, and made religion consist in the observance of these fanciful inventions. Our Saviour here tells the people not to be imposed upon by such teaching, and instructs them as to what is the real meaning of the external practices of the Law. The pharisees prescribed a great many ablutions or washings to be observed during the course of the day. They would have it, that they who eat without having washed their hands (and indeed the whole body some time during the day), were defiled, and that the food they thus partook of was unclean, because, as they said, they themselves had become defiled by having come near or touched

objects which were specified by their whims. According to the Law of God, these objects were perfectly innocent ; but according to the law of the pharisees, almost everything was contagious, and the only escape was endless washings ! Jesus would have the Jews throw off this humiliating and arbitrary yoke, and reproaches the pharisees for having corrupted and *made void* the Law of Moses.

He tells them that there is no creature which is intrinsically, and of its own nature, unclean ; and that a man's conscience cannot be defiled by the mere fact of his eating certain kinds of food. *Evil thoughts*, and evil deeds, *these*, says our Saviour, *are the things that defile a man*. Some heretics have interpreted these words as being an implicit condemnation of the exterior practices ordained by the Church, and more especially of abstinence. To such reasoners and teachers we may justly apply what our Saviour said to the pharisees : *They are blind and leaders of the blind*. From this, that the sins into which a man falls by his use of material things are sins only on account of the malice of the will, which is spiritual, it does not follow that therefore man may, without any sin, make use of material things, when God or His Church forbids their use. God forbade our first parents, under pain of death, to eat the fruit of a certain tree ; they ate it, and sin was the result of their eating. Was the fruit unclean of its own nature ? No ; it was a creature of God as well as the other fruits of Eden ; but our first parents sinned by eating it, because their doing so was an act of disobedience. Again, when God gave His Law on Mount Sinai, He forbade the Hebrews to eat the flesh of certain animals ; if they ate it, they were guilty of sin, not because this sort of food was intrinsically evil or cursed, but because they that partook of it disobeyed the Lord. The commandments of the Church regarding fasting and absti-

nence are of a similar nature. It is that we may secure to ourselves the blessing of Christian penance—in other words, it is for our spiritual interest—that the Church bids us abstain and fast at certain times. If we violate her law, it is not the food we take that defiles us, but the resisting a sacred power, which our Saviour, in yesterday's Gospel, told us we are to obey under the heavy penalty which He expressed in those words : *He that will not hear the Church, shall be counted as a heathen and publican.*

Humiliate capita vestra Deo.

Bow down your heads to God.

Concede, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus : ut qui protectionis tuæ gratiam quærimus, liberati a malis omnibus, securam tibi mente serviamus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that we who beg the favour of thy protection, being delivered from all evils, may serve thee with a secure mind. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us take for to-day one of the solemn supplications offered to God by the Gothic Church of Spain during Lent.

SUPPLICATION

(*Breviar. Mozarab. Ad Sextam in IV. fer V. hebdomadæ*)

V. Ad te, Redemptor omnium, rex summe, oculos nostros sublevamus fientes : exaudi, Christe, supplicantium preces.

V. To thee, O Redeemer of all mankind ! O sovereign King ! we raise up our tearful eyes. Graciously hear, O Christ, the prayers of thy suppliants.

R. Et miserere.

R. And have mercy.

V. Dextra Patris, lapis angularis, via salutis, janua celestis, ablue nostri maculas delicti.

V. O thou who art the right hand of the Father, the corner stone, the way of salvation, the gate of heaven, wash away the stains of our sin.

R. Et miserere.

R. And have mercy.

V. Rogamus, Deus, tuam majestatem ; auribus sacris

V. We beseech thy Majesty, O God ! Bow down

gemitus exaudi; crimina
nostra placidus indulge.

R. Et miserere.

V. Tibi fatemur crimina
admissa, contrito corde pan-
dimus occulta: tua, Re-
demptor, pietas ignoscat.

R. Et miserere.

V. Innocens captus, nec
repugnans ductus: testibus
falsis pro impiis damnatus:
quos redemisti, tu conserva,
Christe.

R. Et miserere.

thy divine ear to our sighs,
and mercifully pardon our
crimes.

R. And have mercy.

V. We confess unto thee
the crimes we have com-
mitted; we make known to
thee, with a contrite heart,
what is hidden in our con-
science. Do thou, O Re-
deemer, in thy clemency
forgive.

R. And have mercy.

V. Thou wast led captive
though innocent; thou wast
led, and didst not resist. Thou
wast condemned by false wit-
nesses for the wicked. O
Jesus save us, whom thou
hast redeemed.

R. And have mercy.

THURSDAY

OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

THIS day brings us to the middle of Lent, and is called mid-Lent Thursday. It is the twentieth of the forty fasts imposed upon us, at this holy season, by the Church. The Greeks call the Wednesday of this week *Mesonestios*, that is, the mid-fast. They give this name to the entire week, which, in their liturgy, is the fourth of the seven that form their Lent. But the Wednesday is, with them, a solemn feast, and a day of rejoicing, whereby they animate themselves to courage during the rest of the season. The Catholic nations of the west, though they do not look on this day as a feast, have always kept it with some degree of festivity and joy. The Church of Rome has countenanced the custom by her own observance of

it ; but, in order not to give a pretext to dissipation, which might interfere with the spirit of fasting, she postpones to the following Sunday the formal expression of this innocent joy, as we shall see further on. Yet, it is not against the spirit of the Church that this mid-day of Lent should be marked by some demonstration of gladness ; for example, by sending invitations to friends, as our Catholic forefathers used to do ; and serving up to table choicer and more abundant food than on other days of Lent, taking care, however, that the laws of the Church are strictly observed. But alas ! how many even of those calling themselves Catholics have been breaking, for the past twenty days, these laws of abstinence and fasting ! Whether the dispensations they trust to be lawfully or unlawfully obtained, the joy of mid-Lent Thursday scarcely seems made for them. To experience this joy, one must have earned and merited it, by penance, by privations, by bodily mortifications ; which is just what so many, now-a-days, cannot think of doing. Let us pray for them, that God would enlighten them, and enable them to see what they are bound to do, consistently with the faith they profess.

At Rome, the Station is at the church of Saints Cosmas and Damian, in the forum. The Christians of the middle ages (as we learn from Durandus, in his *Rational of the Divine Offices*) were under the impression that this Station was chosen because these two saints were, by profession, physicians. The Church, according to this explanation, would not only offer up her prayers of this day for the souls, but also for the bodies of her children : she would draw down upon them—fatigued as she knew they must be by their observance of abstinence and fasting—the protection of these holy martyrs, who, whilst on earth, devoted their medical skill to relieving the corporal ailments of their brethren. The remarks

made by the learned liturgiologist Gavantus, in reference to this interpretation, lead us to conclude that, although it may possibly not give us the real motive of the Church's selecting this Station, yet it is not to be rejected. It will, at least, suggest to the faithful to recommend themselves to these saints, and to ask of God, through their intercession, that they may have the necessary courage and strength for persevering to the end of the holy season in what they have, so far, faithfully observed.

COLLECT

Magnificet te, Domine, sanctorum tuorum Cosmæ et Damiani beata solemnitas: qua et illis gloriam sempiternam, et opem nobis ineffabili providentia contulisti. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

May this sacred solemnity of thy servants, Cosmas and Damian, show thy greatness, O Lord; by which, in thy unspeakable providence, thou hast granted them eternal glory, and us the aid of their prayers. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio Jeremiæ Prophete.

Lesson from the Prophet Jeremias.

Cap. vii.

Ch. vii.

In diebus illis: Factum est verbum Domini ad me dicens: Sta in porta domus Domini, et prædica ibi verbum istud, et dic: Audite verbum Domini, omnis Juda, qui ingredimini per portas has, ut adoretis Dominum. Hæc dicit Dominus exercituum, Deus Israel: Bonas facite vias vestras, et studia vestra: et habitabo vobiscum in loco isto. Nolite confidere in verbis mendacii, dicentes: Templum Domini, templum Domini, templum Domini

In those days: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: Stand in the gate of the house of the Lord, and proclaim there this word, and say: Hear ye the word of the Lord, all ye men of Juda, that enter in at these gates, to adore the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Make your ways and your doings good; and I will dwell with you in this place. Trust not in lying words, saying: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the

est. Quoniam si bene dixeritis vias vestras, et studia vestra: si feceritis iudicium inter virum et proximum ejus: advenæ et pupillo, et viduæ non feceritis calumniam, nec sanguinem innocentem effuderitis in loco hoc, et post deos alienos non ambulaveritis in malum vobismetipsis: habitabo vobiscum in loco isto, in terra quam dedi patribus vestris, a sæculo et usque in sæculum, ait Dominus omnipotens.

Lord, it is the temple of the Lord. For if you will order well your ways and your doings; if you will execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if you oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, and walk not after strange gods to your own hurt; I will dwell with you in this place, in the land which I gave to your fathers from the beginning and for ever more, saith the Lord almighty.

There is not a single duty in which the Church does not instruct her children. If, on the one hand, she insists on their fulfilling certain exterior practices of penance, she, on the other, warns them against the false principle of supposing that exterior observances, however carefully complied with, can supply the want of interior virtues. God refuses to accept the homage of the spirit and the heart, if man, through pride or sensuality, refuse that other service which is equally due to his Creator, namely, his bodily service; but to make one's religion consist of nothing but material works, is little better than mockery; for God bids us serve Him in spirit and in truth.¹ The Jews prided themselves on having the temple of Jerusalem, which was the dwelling-place of God's glory; but this privilege, which exalted them above other nations, was not unfrequently turned against themselves, inasmuch as many of them were satisfied with a mere empty respect for the holy place; they never thought of that higher and better duty, of showing themselves grateful to their divine Benefactor, by observing His Law. Those Christians would be guilty of

¹ St. John iv. 24.

a like hypocrisy, who, though most scrupulously exact in the exterior duty of fasting and abstinence, were to take no pains to amend their lives, and to follow the rules of justice, charity, and humility. They would deserve that our Lord should say of them what He said of Israel: 'This people glorify Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me.'¹ This Christian *pharisaism* is very rare now-a-days. What we have to fear is a disregard for the exterior practices of religion. Those of the faithful who are diligent in the fulfilment of the laws of the Church, are not, generally speaking, behindhand in the practice of other virtues. Still, this false conscience is sometimes to be met with, and is a scandal which does much spiritual injury. Let us, therefore, observe the whole law. Let us offer to God a spiritual service, which consists in the heart's obedience to all His commandments; and to this let us join the homage of our bodies, by practising those things which the Church has prescribed. The body is intended to be an aid to the soul, and is destined to share in her eternal happiness; it is but just that it should share in the service of God.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Lucam.

Cap. iv.

In illo tempore: Surgens Jesus de synagoga, introivit in domum Simonis. Socrus autem Simonis tenebatur magnis febribus: et rogaverunt illum pro ea. Et stans super illam, imperavit febrim: et dimisit illam. Et continuo surgens, ministrabat illis. Cum autem sol occi-

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Luke.

Ch. iv.

At that time: Jesus rising up out of the synagogue, went into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever, and they besought him for her. And standing over her, he commanded the fever, and it left her. And immediately rising, she ministered to them.

¹ Is. xxix. 13.

disset, omnes qui habebant infirmos variis languoribus, ducebant illos ad eum. At ille singulis manus imponens, curabat eos. Exibant autem dæmonia a multis, clamantia et dicentia: Quia tu es Filius Dei. Et increpans non sinebat ea loqui, quia sciebant ipsum esse Christum. Facta autem die egressus ibat in desertum locum, et turbæ requirebant eum, et venerunt usque ad ipsum: et detinebant illum ne discederet ab eis. Quibus ille ait: Quia et aliis civitatibus oportet me evangelizare regnum Dei, quia ideo missus sum; et erat prædicans in synagogis Galilææ.

And when the sun was down, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them to him. But he, laying his hands on every one of them, healed them. And devils went out from many, crying out and saying: Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, for they knew that he was Christ. And when it was day, going out, he went into a desert place, and the multitude sought him, and came unto him; and they stayed him that he should not depart from them. To whom he said: To other cities also I must preach the kingdom of God; for therefore am I sent. And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

Let us here admire the goodness of our Redeemer, who deigns to exercise His power for the cure of bodily infirmities. How much more ready will He be to heal our spiritual ailments! Our fever is that of evil passions; Jesus alone can allay it. Let us imitate the eagerness of these people of Galilee, who *brought all their sick to Jesus*; let us beseech Him to heal us. See with what patience He welcomes each poor sufferer! Let us also go to Him. Let us implore of Him *not to depart from us*, but abide with us for ever; He will accept our petition, and remain. Let us pray for sinners: the days of the great fast are quickly passing away: we have reached the second half of Lent, and the Passover of our deliverance will soon be here. Look at the thousands that are unmoved, with their souls still blind to the light, and their hearts hardened against every appeal of God's mercy and justice; they seem resolved on making

their eternal perdition less doubtful than ever, by neglecting both the Lent and the Easter of this year. Let us offer up our penances for them; and beg of Jesus by the merits of His sacred Passion, to redouble His mercies towards them, and to deliver from satan these souls, for whose sake He is about to shed His Blood.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Subjectum tibi populum,
quæsumus Domine, propi-
tiatione celestis amplifcet: et
tuis semper faciat servire
mandatis. Per Christum Do-
minum nostrum. Amen.

May thy heavenly mercy,
O Lord, always increase thy
people, and make them ever
obedient to thy command-
ments. Through Christ our
Lord. Amen.

The Mozarabic liturgy offers us this beautiful exhortation. It will inspire us to persevere in our lenten penances and duties.

MISSA

(Missale Gothicum. Dominica IV. in Quadragesima)

Expectantes beatam illam
spem passionis ac resurrec-
tionis Filii Dei, fratres charis-
simi: et manifestationem
gloriæ beati et Salvatoris
nostri Jesu Christi, resumite
virium fortitudinem: et non
quasi futuro terreamini de
labore: qui ad Paschalis
Dominicæ cupitis anhelando
pervenire celebritatem. Sa-
cratæ etenim Quadragesimæ
tempore mediante, arripite de
futuro labore fiduciam: qui
præteriti jejunii jam transe-
gistis ærumnas. Dabit Jesus
lassis fortitudinem: qui pro
nobis dignatus est infirmari.
Tribuet perfectionem futuri:
qui initia donavit præteriti.

Looking forward, dearly
beloved brethren, to the hope
of the Passion and Resur-
rection of the Son of God, as
also to the manifestation of
the glory of our blessed Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ:
resume your strength and
courage. Be not daunted by
the labour you have to go
through, but remember the
solemnity of the holy Pasch,
for which you are so ardently
longing. One half of holy
Lent is over: you have gone
through the difficulties of
the past, why should you not
be courageous about the
future fast? Jesus, who
deigned to suffer fatigue for

Aderit in auxilio, filii : qui
 suæ nos cupit præstolari
 gloriam Passionis. Amen.

our sake, will give strength to
 them that are fatigued. He
 that granted us to begin the
 past, will enable us to com-
 plete the future. Children !
 He will be with us to assist
 us, who wishes us to hope for
 the glory of his Passion.
 Amen.

FRIDAY

OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is at the church of Saint Laurence *in Lucina*. In this venerable and celebrated church is kept the gridiron, on which the holy archdeacon consummated his martyrdom.

COLLECT

Jejunia nostra, quæsumus, Domine, benigno favore proseguere : ut, sicut ab alimentis abstinemus in corpore, ita a vitiis jejune-
 mus in mente. Per Christum
 Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Let thy kind favour, O Lord, accompany our fast, that as we abstain from corporal food, so we may likewise refrain from all vice. Through Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Numeri.

Lesson from the Book of Numbers.

Cap. xx.

Ch. xx.

In diebus illis : Convenerunt filii Israël adversum Moysen et Aaron : et versi in seditionem, dixerunt : Date nobis aquam, ut bibamus. Ingressusque Moyses et Aaron, dimissa multitudine,

In those days : The children of Israel came together against Moses and Aaron : and making a sedition they said : Give us water to drink. And Moses and Aaron leaving the multitude, went into the

tabernaculum fœderis, corruerunt proni in terram, clamaveruntque ad Dominum, atque dixerunt: Domine Deus, audi clamorem hujus populi, et aperi eis thesaurum tuum, fontem aquæ vivæ, ut satiati, cesset murmuratio eorum. Et apparuit gloria Domini super eos. Locutusque est Dominus ad Moysen, dicens: Tolle virgam, et congrega populum, tu et Aaron frater tuus, et loquimini ad petram coram eis, et illa dabit aquas. Cumque eduxeris aquam de petra, bibet omnis multitudo, et jumenta ejus. Tulit igitur Moyses virgam, quæ erat in conspectu Domini, sicut præceperat ei, congregata multitudine ante petram, dixitque eis: Audite, rebelles et increduli: num de petra hac vobis aquam poterimus ejicere? Cumque elevasset Moyses manum, percussit virga bis silicem, egressæ sunt aquæ largissimæ, ita ut populus biberet, et jumenta. Dixitque Dominus ad Moysen et Aaron: Quia non credidistis mihi, ut sanctificaretis me coram filiis Israël, non introducetis hos populos in terram quam dabo eis. Hæc est aqua contradictionis, ubi jurgati sunt filii Israël contra Dominum, et sanctificatus est in eis.

tabernacle of the covenant, and fell flat upon the ground, and cried to the Lord and said: O Lord God, hear the cry of this people, and open to them thy treasure, a fountain of living water, that being satisfied, they may cease to murmur. And the glory of the Lord appeared over them. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Take the rod, and assemble the people together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak to the rock before them, and it shall yield waters. And when thou hast brought forth water out of the rock, all the multitude and their cattle shall drink. Moses therefore took the rod which was before the Lord, as he had commanded him, and having gathered together the multitude before the rock, he said to them: Hear, ye rebellious and incredulous; can we bring you forth water out of this rock? And when Moses had lifted up his hand, and struck the rock twice with the rod, there came forth water in great abundance, so that the people and their cattle drank. And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron: Because you have not believed me, to sanctify me before the children of Israel, you shall not bring these people into the land which I will give them. This is the water of contradiction, where the children of Israel strove with words against the Lord, and he was sanctified in them.

Here we have one of the most expressive figures of the old Testament: it symbolizes the Sacrament of Baptism, for which our catechumens are now preparing. A whole people asks for *water*; if it be denied them, they must perish in the wilderness. St. Paul, the sublime interpreter of the types of the old Testament, tells us that *the rock* is Christ,¹ from whom came forth the fountain of living water, which quenches the thirst of our souls, and purifies them. The holy fathers observe that the rock yielded not its waters until it had been struck with the *rod*, which signifies the Passion of our Redeemer. The *rod* itself, as we are told by some of the earliest commentators of the Scriptures, is the symbol of the cross; and the two strokes, wherewith the rock was struck, represent the two parts of which the cross was formed. The paintings which the primitive Church has left us in the catacombs of Rome, frequently represent Moses in the act of striking the rock, from which flows a stream of water; and a glass, found in the same catacombs, bears an inscription, telling us that the first Christians considered Moses as the type of St. Peter, who, in the new Covenant, opened to God's people the fountain of grace, when he preached to them on the day of Pentecost; and gave also to the Gentiles to drink of this same water when he received Cornelius, the centurion, into the Church. This symbol of Moses striking the rock, and the figures of the old Testament which we have already come across, or shall still meet with, in the lessons given by the Church to the catechumens, are not only found in the earliest frescoes of the Roman catacombs, but we have numerous proofs that they were represented in all the Churches both of the east and of the west. Up to the thirteenth century and even later, we find them in the windows of our cathedrals, and in the traditional

¹ 1 Cor. x. 4.

form or type which was given to them in the early times. It is to be regretted that these Christian symbols, which were so dear to our Catholic forefathers, should now be so forgotten as to be almost treated with contempt. Let us love them, and, by the study of the holy liturgy, let us return to those sacred traditions, which inspired our ancestors with heroic faith, and made them undertake such grand things for God and for their fellow-men.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. iv.

In illo tempore: Venit Jesus in civitatem Samariæ, quæ dicitur Sichar, juxta prædium quod dedit Jacob Joseph filio suo. Erat autem ibi fons Jacob. Jesus ergo fatigatus ex itinere, sedebat sic supra fontem. Hora erat quasi sexta. Venit mulier de Samaria haurire aquam. Dicit ei Jesus: Da mihi bibere. (Discipuli enim ejus abierant in civitatem ut cibos emerent.) Dicit ergo ei mulier illa Samaritana: Quomodo tu, Judæus cum sis, bibere a me possis, quæ sum mulier Samaritana? Non enim coutuntur Judæi Samaritanis. Respondit Jesus, et dixit ei: Si scires donum Dei, et quis est qui dicit tibi: Da mihi bibere: tu forsitan petisses ab eo, et dedisset tibi aquam vivam. Dicit ei mulier: Domine, neque in quo haurias, habes, et puteus altus est: unde ergo habes aquam vivam? Numquid tu

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. iv.

At that time: Jesus came to a city of Samaria which is called Sichar, near the land which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith to her: Give me to drink. For his disciples were gone into the city to buy meats. Then that Samaritan woman saith to him: How dost thou, being a Jew, ask of me to drink, who am a Samaritan woman? For the Jews do not communicate with the Samaritans. Jesus answered, and said to her: If thou didst know the Gift of God, and who he is that saith to thee, Give me to drink: thou perhaps wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith to him: Sir, thou hast

major es patre nostro Jacob, qui dedit nobis puteum, et ipse ex eo bibit, et filii ejus, et pecora ejus? Respondit Jesus, et dixit ei: Omnis qui bibit ex aqua hac, sitiet iterum: qui autem biberit ex aqua, quam ego dabo ei, non sitiet in æternum; sed aqua, quam ego dabo ei, fiet in eo fons aquæ salientis in vitam æternam. Dicit ad eum mulier: Domine, da mihi hanc aquam, ut non sitiam, neque veniam huc haurire. Dicit ei Jesus: Vade, voca virum tuum, et veni huc. Respondit mulier, et dixit: Non habeo virum. Dicit ei Jesus: Bene dixisti, quia non habeo virum: quinque enim viros habuisti, et nunc quem habes, non est tuus vir: hoc vere dixisti. Dicit ei mulier: Domine, video quia propheta es tu. Patres nostri in monte hoc adoraverunt, et vos dicitis, quia Jerosolymis est locus, ubi adorare oportet. Dicit ei Jesus: Mulier, crede mihi, quia venit hora, quando neque in monte hoc neque in Jerosolymis adorabitis Patrem. Vos adoratis quod nescitis: nos adoramus quod scimus, quia salus ex Judæis est. Sed venit hora, et nunc est, quando veri adoratores adorabunt Patrem in spiritu et veritate. Nam et Pater tales quærit, qui adorent eum. Spiritus est Deus: et eos qui adorant eum, in spiritu et veritate oportet adorare. Dicit ei mulier: Scio quia Messias venit (qui dicitur Christus). Cum ergo venerit

nothing wherein to draw, and the well is deep; from whence then hast thou living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered, and said to her: Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again: but he that shall drink of the water that I will give him, shall not thirst for ever. But the water that I will give him, shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting. The woman saith to him: Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw. Jesus saith to her: Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered, and said: I have no husband. Jesus said to her: Thou hast said well, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband. This thou hast said truly. The woman saith to him: Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers adored on this mountain, and you say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore. Jesus saith to her: Woman, believe me, that the hour cometh, when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, adore the Father. You adore that which you know not; we adore that which we know, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers

ille, nobis annuntiabit omnia. Dicit ei Jesus : Ego sum, qui loquor tecum. Et continuo venerunt discipuli ejus : et mirabantur quia cum muliere loquebatur. Nemo tamen dixit : Quid quæris, aut quid loqueris cum ea ? Reliquit ergo hydriam suam mulier, et abiit in civitatem, et dicit illis hominibus : Venite, et videte hominem qui dixit mihi omnia quæcumque feci : numquid ipse est Christus ? Exierunt ergo de civitate, et veniebant ad eum. Interea rogabant eum discipuli dicentes : Rabbi, manduca. Ille autem dicit eis : Ego cibum habeo manducare, quem vos nescitis. Dicebant ergo discipuli ad invicem : Numquid aliquis attulit ei manducare ? Dicit eis Jesus : Meus cibum est ut faciam voluntatem ejus qui misit me, ut perficiam opus ejus. Nonne vos dicitis, quod adhuc quatuor menses sunt, et messis venit ? Ecce dico vobis : Levate oculos vestros, et videte regiones, quia albæ sunt jam ad messem. Et qui metit, mercedem accipit, et congregat fructum in vitam æternam : ut et qui seminat, simul gaudeat, et qui metit. In hoc enim est verbum verum : quia alius est qui seminat, et alius est qui metit. Ego misi vos metere, quod vos non laborastis : alii laboraverunt, et vos in labores eorum introistis. Ex civitate autem illa multi crediderunt in eum Samaritanorum, propter verbum mulieris testimonium perhi-

shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore him. God is a spirit ; and they that adore him, must adore him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith to him : I know that the Messias cometh, who is called Christ ; therefore when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith to her : I am he, who am speaking with thee. And immediately his disciples came ; and they wondered that he talked with the woman. Yet no man said : What seekest thou, or why talkest thou with her ? The woman therefore left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men there : Come, and see a man who has told me all things whatsoever I have done. Is not he the Christ ? They went therefore out of the city, and came unto him. In the meantime the disciples prayed him, saying : Rabbi, eat. But he said to them : I have meat to eat which you know not. The disciples therefore said one to another : Hath any man brought him to eat ? Jesus saith to them : My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, that I may perfect his work. Do not you say, there are yet four months and then the harvest cometh ? Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit

bentis: Quia dixit mihi omnia quaecumque feci. Cum venissent ergo ad illum Samaritani, rogaverunt eum ut ibi maneret. Et mansit ibi duos dies. Et multo plures crediderunt in eum propter sermonem ejus. Et mulieri dicebant: Quia jam non propter tuam loquelam credimus: ipsi enim audivimus, et scimus quia hic est vere Salvator mundi.

unto life everlasting; that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoice together. For in this is the saying true: that it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth. I have sent you to reap that in which you did not labour; others have laboured, and you have entered into their labours. Now of that city many of the Samaritans believed in him, for the word of the woman giving testimony: He told me all things whatsoever I had done. So when the Samaritans were come to him, they desired him that he would tarry there. And he abode there two days. And many more believed in him because of his own word. And they said to the woman: We now believe, not for thy saying; for we ourselves have heard him, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.

Our Gospel shows us the Son of God continuing the ministry of Moses, by revealing to the Samaritan woman, who represents the Gentiles, the mystery of the *water* that gives life everlasting. We find this subject painted on the walls of the catacombs, and carved on the tombs of the Christians, as far back as the fifth, and even the fourth century. Let us, then, meditate upon this event of our Lord's life, for it tells us of His wonderful mercy. Jesus is *wearied with His journey*; He, the Son of God, who had but to speak and the world was created, is fatigued seeking after His lost sheep. He is obliged to rest His wearied limbs; *He sits*; but it is near a *well*. He

finds a Samaritan woman there ; she is a Gentile, an idolatress ; she comes to *draw water* from the well ; she has no idea of a water of eternal life : Jesus intends to reveal the mystery to her. He begins by telling her that He is tired and thirsty. A few days hence, when expiring on His cross, He will say : ' I thirst ' : and so now, He says to this woman : *Give me to drink*. So true is it that, in order to appreciate the grace brought us by our Redeemer, we must first know this Redeemer in His weakness and sufferings.

But before the woman has time to give Jesus what He asks, He tells her of a water, of which he that drinks *shall not thirst for ever* : He invites her to draw from a *fountain, that springeth up into life everlasting*. The woman longs to drink of this water ; she knows not who He is that is speaking with her, and yet she has faith in what He says. This idolatress evinces a docility of heart, which the Jews never showed to their Messias ; and she is docile, notwithstanding that He who speaks to her belongs to a nation which despises all Samaritans. The confidence wherewith she listens to Jesus is rewarded by His offering still greater graces. He begins by putting her to the test. *Go*, He says, *call thy husband, and come hither*. She was living in sin, and Jesus would have her confess it. She does so without the slightest hesitation ; her humility is rewarded, for she at once recognizes Jesus to be a Prophet, and she begins to drink of the living water. Thus was it with the Gentiles. The apostles preached the Gospel to them ; they reproached them with their crimes, and showed them the holiness of the God they had offended ; but the Gentiles did not therefore reject their teaching ; on the contrary, they were docile, and only wanted to know what they should do to render themselves pleasing to their Creator. The faith had need of martyrs ; and they were found

in abundance amidst these converts from paganism and its abominations.

Jesus seeing such simple-heartedness in the Samaritan, mercifully reveals to her who He is. He tells this poor sinner that the time has come when all men shall adore God; He tells her that the Messiah has come upon the earth, and that He Himself is that Messiah. It is thus that Christ treats a soul that is simple and obedient. He shows Himself to her without reserve. When the disciples arrived, *they wondered*; they had as yet too much of the Jew in them; they, therefore, could not understand how their Master could show anything like mercy to this Samaritan. But the time will soon come, when they will say with the great apostle St. Paul: 'There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for all are one in Christ Jesus.'¹

Meanwhile, the Samaritan becomes an apostle, for she is filled with heavenly ardour. She leaves her pitcher at the well: what cares she for its water, now that Jesus has given her to drink of the *living water*? She goes back to the city; but it is that she may preach Jesus there, and bring to Him, if she can, all the inhabitants of Samaria. In her humility, she gives this proof of His being a great Prophet: that He has told her all the sins of her life! These pagans, whom the Jews despised, hasten to the well, where Jesus has remained speaking to His disciples on the coming harvest. They acknowledge Him to be the Messiah, *the Saviour of the world*; and Jesus condescends to abide two days in this city, where there was no other religion than that of idolatry, with a fragment here and there of some Jewish practice. Tradition tells us that the name of the Samaritan woman was Photina. She and the Magi were the first-fruits of the new people of God. She suffered

¹ Gal. iii. 28.

martyrdom for Him who revealed Himself to her at Jacob's well. The Church honours her memory each year, in the Roman martyrology, on March 20.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Præsta, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus: ut qui in tua protectione confidimus, cuncta nobis adversantia, te adjuvante, vincamus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that we who confide in thy protection, may, through thy grace, overcome all the enemies of our salvation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Mozarabic liturgy celebrates the vocation of the Samaritan woman in the following beautiful Preface :

ILLATIO

(*In Dominica I. Quadragesimæ*)

Dignum et justum est nos tibi semper gratias agere, Domine sancte, Pater æterne, omnipotens Deus, per Jesum Christum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum. Qui ad salvationem humani generis veniens e cælo: sitiens atque fatigatus sedisse ad puteum dicitur. Ille etenim in quo omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter permanebat: quia nostræ mortalitatis corpus assumpserat: veritatem assumptæ carnis quibusdam significationibus demonstrabat. Fatigatum enim eum non aliter credimus ab itinere, nisi infirmatum in carne. Exivit quippe ad currentem viam, per significationem carnis assumptæ; ideo igitur etsi fatigatus ille in carne, non tamen nos sinit infirmari in sua

It is meet and just that we should always give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, eternal Father, almighty God, through Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. Who, having come from heaven for the salvation of mankind, sat near a well, thirsting and wearied. For this is he, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead corporally. But whereas he had assumed the body of our mortality, he wished to show, by certain signs, the reality of the flesh thus assumed; for when we say that he was wearied with a journey, we believe that this weakness was only in the flesh. He went forth to run the way, that he might show that he had taken a true body; hence, although he was wearied in the flesh, yet would he not that our

infirmirate. Nam quod infirmum est illius, fortius est hominibus. Ideoque per humilitatem veniens eripere mundum a potestate tenebrarum: sedit et sitivit quando aquam mulieri petivit. Ille etenim humiliatus erat in carne: quando sedens ad puteum loquebatur cum muliere: sitivit aquam, et exegit fidem ab ea. In ea quippe muliere, fidem quam quæsit, quamque petivit, exegit: atque venientibus dicit de ea discipulis: Ego cibum habeo manducare quem vos nescitis. Ille jam qui in ea creaverat fidei donum: ipse poscebat aquæ sibi ab ea porrigi potum. Quique eam dilectionis suæ flamma cremabat: ipse ab ea poculum quo refrigeraretur sitiens postulabat. Ob hoc nos ad ista tantarum virtutum miracula quid apponemus, sancte et immaculate et piissime Deus: nisi conscientiam mundam et voluntatem dilectioni tuæ omnimodo præparatam? Tuo igitur nomini offerentes victimam mundam: rogamus atque exposcimus: ut opereris in nobis salutem: sicut in muliere illa operatus es fidem. Operare in nobis extirpationem carnalium vitiatorum, qui in illa idololatricæ pertulisti figmentum. Sentiamus quoque te in illa futura examinatione mitissimum: sicut illa te promeruit invenire placatum. Opus enim tuum sumus:

faith should grow weak at the sight of this his weakness; for that which is weak in him, is stronger than men. Having, therefore, come in humility, that he might deliver the world from the power of darkness, he sat and thirsted, when he asked the woman to give him to drink. For he was humbled in the flesh, when, sitting at the well, he spoke with the woman, and thirsted after water, and required of her her faith. Yea, he required from her the faith, which he sought and asked for; and when his disciples came he said to them concerning it: I have meat to eat which you know not of. He that had already created in her the gift of faith, asked her to give him water to drink: and he that had enkindled within her the fire of his love, asked her to give him a cup, whereby to refresh his thirst. Seeing these miracles of divine power, what else shall we offer unto thee, O holy and immaculate and most merciful God, but a pure conscience and a heart that is well prepared to receive thy love? Now, therefore, whilst offering to thy name this clean oblation, we pray and beseech thee, that thou mayst work salvation in us, as thou didst work faith in that woman. Thou didst destroy in her the delusion of idolatry; produce in us the extirpation of our carnal vices. May we find thee full of most tender mercy when thou comest to

qui nisi per te salvari non possumus. Subveni nobis, vera redemptio: pietatis indeficiens plenitudo. Non perdas quod tuum est: quibus dedisti rationis naturam, da æternitatis gloriam indefessam. Ut qui te in hac vita laudamus, in æterna quoque beatitudine multo magis glorificemus. Tu es enim Deus noster: non nos abjicias a facie tua: sed jam respice quos creasti miseratione gratuita: ut cum abstuleris a nobis omne debitum culpæ: et placitos reddideris aspectibus gratiæ tuæ: eruti ab illa noxialis putei profunditate facinorum, hydriam nostrarum relinquentes cupiditatum, ad illam æternam civitatem Hierusalem post hujus vitæ transitum convolemus.

judge us, as she deserved to find thee. We are the work of thy hands, neither can we be otherwise saved than by thee. Come to our assistance, O thou our true Redeemer, the fulness of whose mercy faileth not. Destroy not what is thine own. Thou hast given us a rational nature; bestow upon us exhaustless glory of eternity, that so we who praise thee in this life, may still more fervently glorify thee in a blessed eternity. Thou art our God; cast us not away from thy face, but look upon us, whom thou didst create out of thy pure mercy: that when thou hast taken from us the whole debt of our guilt, and rendered us worthy of thy gracious sight, we, being drawn out from the deep well of our sins, and leaving behind us the pitcher of our evil desires, may, after passing through this life, take our flight to Jerusalem, the eternal city.

SATURDAY

OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of Saint Susanna, virgin and martyr of Rome. The reason of this church having been chosen is that the history of the chaste Susanna, the daughter of Helcias, is read to-day.

COLLECT

Præsta, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui se, affligendo carnem, ab alimentis abstinent, sectando justitiam, a culpa jejurent. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that they who mortify themselves by abstinence from food, may, by observing thy holy law, also fast from all sin. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio Danielis Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet Daniel.

Cap. xiii.

Ch. xiii.

In diebus illis: Erat vir habitans in Babylone, et nomen ejus Joachim: et accepit uxorem nomine Susannam, filiam Helciæ, pulchram nimis, et timentem Deum: parentes enim illius, cum essent justi, erudierunt filiam suam secundum legem Moysi. Erat autem Joachim dives valde, et erat illi pomarium vicinum domui suæ: et ad ipsum confluebant Judæi, eo quod esset honorabilior omnium. Et constituti sunt de populo duo senes judices in illo anno; de quibus locutus est Dominus: Quia egressa est iniquitas de Babylone a se-

In those days: There was a man that dwelt in Babylon, and his name was Joakim; and he took a wife whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Helcias, a very beautiful woman, and one that feared God. For her parents being just, had instructed their daughter according to the law of Moses. Now Joakim was very rich, and had an orchard near his house; and the Jews resorted to him, because he was the most honourable of them all. And there were two of the ancients of the people appointed judges that year, of whom the Lord said: Iniquity

nioribus iudicibus, qui videbantur regere populum. Isti frequentabant domum Joachim, et veniebant ad eos omnes qui habebant iudicia. Cum autem populus revertisset per meridiem, ingrediebatur Susanna, et deambulabat in pomario viri sui. Et videbant eam senes quotidie ingredientem et deambulantem: et exarserunt in concupiscentiam ejus: et everterunt sensum suum, et declinaverunt oculos suos ut non viderent cœlum, neque recordarentur iudiciorum iustorum. Factum est autem, cum observarent diem aptum, ingressa est aliquando sicut heri et nudius tertius, cum duabus solis puellis, voluitque lavari in pomario: æstus quippe erat: et non erat ibi quisquam, præter duos senes absconditos et contemplantes eam. Dixit ergo puellis: Afferte mihi oleum, et smigmata, et ostia pomarii claudite, ut laver. Cum autem egressæ essent puellæ, surrexerunt duo senes, et accurrerunt ad eam, et dixerunt: Ecce ostia pomarii clausa sunt, et nemo nos videt, et nos in concupiscentia tua sumus: quamobrem assentire nobis, et commiscere nobiscum. Quod si nolueris, dicemus contra te testimonium, quod fuerit tecum juvenis, et ob hanc causam emiseris puellas a te. Ingemuit Susanna, et ait: Augustiæ sunt mihi undique: si enim hoc egero,

came out from Babylon from the ancient judges, that seemed to govern the people. These men frequented the house of Joakim, and all that had any matters of judgment came to them. And when the people departed away at noon, Susanna went in, and walked in her husband's orchard. And the old men saw her going in every day, and walking; and they were inflamed with lust towards her; and they perverted their own mind, and turned away their eyes, that they might not look unto heaven, nor remember just judgments. And it fell out, as they watched a fit day, she went in on a time, as yesterday and the day before, with two maids only, and was desirous to wash herself in the orchard, for it was hot weather. And there was nobody there but the two old men, that had hid themselves and were beholding her. So she said to the maids: Bring me oil and washing balls, and shut the doors of the orchard, that I may wash me. Now when the maids were gone forth, the two elders arose, and ran to her, and said: Behold the doors of the orchard are shut, and nobody seeth us, and we are in love with thee; wherefore consent to us, and lie with us. But if thou wilt not, we will bear witness against thee, that a young man was with thee, and therefore thou didst send away thy maids from thee. Susanna sighed

mors mihi est: si autem non egero, non effugiam manus vestras. Sed melius est mihi absque opere incidere in manus vestras, quam peccare in conspectu Domini. Et exclamavit voce magna Susanna; exclamaverunt autem et senes adversus eam. Et cucurrit unus ad ostia pomarii, et aperuit. Cum ergo audissent clamorem famuli domus in pomario, irruerunt per posticum, ut viderent quidnam esset. Postquam autem senes locuti sunt, erubuerunt servi vehementer: quia numquam dictus fuerat sermo hujuscemodi de Susanna. Et facta est dies crastina. Cumque venisset populus ad Joachim virum ejus, venerunt et duo seniores pleni iniqua cogitatione adversus Susannam, ut interficerent eam. Et dixerunt coram populo: Mittite ad Susannam filiam Helciae uxorem Joachim. Et statim miserunt. Et venit cum parentibus, et filiis, et universis cognatis suis. Flebant igitur sui, et omnes qui noverant eam. Consurgentes autem duo seniores in medio populi, posuerunt manus suas super caput ejus. Quæ flens suspexit ad cœlum: erat enim cor ejus fiduciam habens in Domino. Et dixerunt seniores: Cum deambularem in pomario soli, ingressa est hæc cum duabus puellis: et clausit ostia pomarii, et dimisit a se puellas. Venitque ad eam

and said: I am straitened on every side; for if I do this thing, it is death to me, and if I do it not, I shall not escape your hands. But it is better for me to fall into your hands without doing it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord. With that Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and the elders also cried out against her; and one of them ran to the door of the orchard, and opened it. So when the servants of the house heard the cry in the orchard, they rushed in by the back door, to see what was the matter. But after the old men had spoken, the servants were greatly ashamed, for never had there been any such word said of Susanna. And on the next day, when the people were come to Joachim her husband, the two elders also came, full of their wicked device against Susanna, to put her to death. And they said before the people: Send to Susanna, daughter of Helcias, the wife of Joakim. And they presently sent; and she came with her parents, and children, and all her kindred. Therefore her friends and all her acquaintance wept. But the two elders, rising up in the midst of the people, laid their hands upon her head. And she weeping looked up to heaven, for her heart had confidence in the Lord. And the elders said: As we walked in the orchard alone, this woman came in with two maids, and

adolescens, qui erat absconditus, et concubuit cum ea. Porro nos, cum essemus in angulo pomarii, videntes iniquitatem, cucurrimus ad eos, et vidimus eos pariter commiseri. Et illum quidem non quivimus comprehendere, quia fortior nobis erat, et apertis ostiis exiit: hanc autem cum apprehendissemus, interrogavimus, quisnam esset adolescens, et noluit indicare nobis: hujus rei testes sumus. Creditis eis multitudo quasi senibus et iudicibus populi, et condemnaverunt eam ad mortem. Exclamavit autem voce magna Susanna, et dixit: Deus æternæ, qui absconditorum es cognitor, qui nosti omnia antequam fiant, tu scis quoniam falsum testimonium tulerunt contra me: et ecce morior, cum nihil horum fecerim, quæ isti malitiose composuerunt adversum me. Exaudivit autem Dominus vocem ejus. Cumque duceretur ad mortem, suscitavit Dominus spiritum sanctum pueri junioris, cujus nomen Daniel. Et exclamavit voce magna: Mundus ego sum a sanguine hujus. Et conversus omnis populus ad eum, dixit: Quis est iste sermo, quem tu locutus es? Qui cum staret in medio eorum, ait: Sic fatui, filii Israël, non iudicantes, neque quod verum est cognoscentes, condemnastis filiam Israël? Revertimini ad iudicium,

shut the doors of the orchard, and sent away the maids from her. Then a young man that was there hid, came to her, and lay with her. But we that were in the corner of the orchard, seeing this wickedness, ran up to them, and we saw them lie together. And as for him we could not take him, because he was stronger than we, and opening the doors he leaped out; but having taken this woman, we asked who the young man was, but she would not tell us. Of this thing we are witnesses. The multitude believed them as being the elders and judges of the people, and they condemned her to death. Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and said: O eternal God, who knowest hidden things, who knowest all things before they come to pass, thou knowest that they have borne false witness against me; and behold I must die, whereas I have done none of these things, which these men have maliciously forged against me. And the Lord heard her voice. And when she was led to be put to death, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young boy, whose name was Daniel; and he cried out with a loud voice: I am clear from the blood of this woman. Then all the people turning towards him, said: What meaneth this word that thou hast spoken? But he standing in the midst of them, said:

quia falsum testimonium locuti sunt adversus eam. Reversus est ergo populus cum festinatione. Et dixit ad eos Daniel: Separate illos ab invicem procul, et dijudicabo eos. Cum ergo divisi essent alter ab altero, vocavit unum de eis, et dixit ad eum: Inveterate dierum malorum, nunc venerunt peccata tua, quæ operaberis prius, judicans judicia injusta, innocentes opprimens, et dimittens noxios, dicente Domino: Innocentem et justum non interficies. Nunc ergo si vidisti eam, dic sub qua arbore videris eos colloquentes sibi. Qui ait: Sub schino. Dixit autem Daniel: Recte mentitus es in caput tuum. Ecce enim angelus Dei, accepta sententia ab eo, scindet te medium. Et, amoto eo, jus sit venire alium, et dixit ei: Semen Chanaan, et non Juda, species decepit te, et concupiscentia subvertit cor tuum: sic faciebatis filiabus Israël, et illæ timentes loquebantur vobis; sed filia Juda non sustinuit iniquitatem vestram. Nunc ergo dic mihi, sub qua arbore comprehenderis eos loquentes sibi. Qui ait: Sub prino. Dixit autem ei Daniel: Recte mentitus es et tu in caput tuum: manet enim angelus Domini, gladium habens, ut secet te medium, et interficiat vos. Exclamavit itaque omnis cætus voce magna, et benedixerunt Deum, qui salvat

Are ye so foolish, ye children of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth, ye have condemned a daughter of Israel? Return to judgment, for they have borne false witness against her. So all the people turned again in haste. And Daniel said to the people: Separate these two far from one another, and I will examine them. So when they were put asunder one from the other, he called one of them and said to him: O thou that art grown old in evil days, now are thy sins come out which thou hast committed before, in judging unjust judgments, oppressing the innocent, and letting the guilty go free, whereas the Lord saith: The innocent and the just thou shalt not kill. Now then, if thou sawest her, tell me under what tree thou sawest them conversing together. He said: Under a mastick tree. And Daniel said: Well hast thou lied against thy own head; for behold the angel of God, having received the sentence of him, shall cut thee in two. And having put him aside, he commanded that the other should come, and he said to him: O thou seed of Chanaan, and not of Juda, beauty hath deceived thee, and lust hath perverted thy heart; thus did you do to the daughters of Israel, and they for fear conversed with you; but a daughter of Juda would not abide your

sperantes in se. Et consur-
 rixerunt adversus duos se-
 niores (convicerat enim eos
 Daniel ex ore suo falsum
 dixisse testimonium), fece-
 runtque eis sicut male ege-
 rant adversus proximum, et
 interfecerunt eos; et salva-
 tus est sanguis innoxius in
 die illa.

wickedness. Now, therefore,
 tell me under what tree didst
 thou take them conversing
 together? And he answered:
 Under a holm tree. And
 Daniel said to him: Well hast
 thou also lied against thy own
 head; for the angel of the
 Lord waiteth with a sword to
 cut thee in two, and to de-
 stroy thee. With that all the
 assembly cried out with a
 loud voice, and they blessed
 God, who saveth them that
 trust in him. And they rose
 up against the two elders (for
 Daniel had convicted them
 of false witness by their own
 mouth), and they did to them
 as they had maliciously dealt
 against their neighbour, and
 they put them to death, and
 innocent blood was saved in
 that day.

Yesterday, we shared in the joy felt by our cate-
 chumens, as they listened to the Church describing
 that limpid and life-giving fountain, which flows from
 the Saviour; in these waters they were soon to re-
 ceive a new life. To-day the instruction is for the
 penitents, whose reconciliation is drawing near. But
 how can they hope for pardon, who have sullied the
 white robe of their Baptism, and trampled on the
 precious Blood that redeemed them? And yet, they
 are really to be pardoned and saved. If you would
 understand the mystery, read and meditate upon the
 sacred Scriptures; for there you will learn that there
 is a salvation which comes from justice, and a salva-
 tion that proceeds from mercy. To-day we have an
 example of both. Susanna, who is unjustly accused
 of adultery, receives from God the recompense of her
 virtue; He avenges and saves her; another woman,
 who is really guilty of the crime, is saved from death

by Jesus Christ Himself. Let the just, therefore, confidently and humbly await the reward they have merited ; but let sinners also hope in the mercy of the Redeemer, who has come for them rather than for the just. Thus does the holy Church encourage her penitents, and call them to conversion, by showing them the riches of the Heart of Jesus, and the mercies of the new Covenant, which this same Saviour has signed with His Blood.

In this history of Susanna the early Christians saw a figure of the Church, which, in their time, was solicited by the pagans to evil, but remained faithful to her divine Spouse, even though death was the punishment of her resistance. A holy martyr of the third century, St. Hippolytus, mentions this interpretation.¹ The carvings on the ancient Christian tombs, and the frescoes of the Roman catacombs, represent this history of Susanna's fidelity to God's law in spite of the death that threatened her, as a type of the martyrs preferring death to apostasy ; for apostasy, in the language of the sacred Scriptures, is called adultery, which the soul is guilty of by denying her God, to whom she espoused herself when she received Baptism.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. viii.

In illo tempore : Perrexit Jesus in montem Oliveti : et diluculo iterum venit in templum, et omnis populus venit ad eum. Et sedens docebat eos. Adducunt autem scribæ et pharisæi mulierem in adulterio deprehensam : et statuerunt eam in medio, et dixerunt ei : Ma-

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. viii.

At that time : Jesus went to Mount Olivet. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came to him, and sitting down he taught them. And the scribes and pharisees bring unto him a woman taken in adultery, and they set her in the midst, and said

¹ *In Danielem*, page 27. Edit. Fabricius.

gister, hæc mulier modo deprehensa est in adulterio. In lege autem Moyses mandavit nobis hujusmodi lapidare. Tu ergo quid dicis? Hoc autem dicebant tentantes eum, ut possent accusare eum. Jesus autem inclinans se deorsum, digito scribebat in terra. Cum ergo perseverarent interrogantes eum, erexit se, et dixit eis: Qui sine peccato est vestrum, primus in illam lapidem mittat. Et iterum se inclinans, scribebat in terra. Audientes autem, unus post unum exhibant, incipientes a senioribus: et remansit solus Jesus, et mulier in medio stans. Erigens autem se Jesus, dixit ei: Mulier, ubi sunt, qui te accusabant? Nemo te condemnavit? Quæ dixit: Nemo, Domine. Dixit autem Jesus: Nec ego te condemnabo. Vade, et jam amplius noli peccare.

to him: Master, this woman was even now taken in adultery. Now, Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one: but what sayest thou? And this they said tempting him, that they might accuse him. But Jesus, bowing himself down, wrote with his finger on the ground. When therefore they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said to them: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again stooping down, he wrote on the ground. But they hearing this, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest; and Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst. Then Jesus lifting up himself, said to her: Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee? Who said: No man, Lord. And Jesus said: Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more.

This is the salvation that proceeds from mercy. The woman is guilty; the Law condemns her to be put to death; her accusers are justified in insisting on her being punished: and yet, she shall not die. Jesus saves her; and all He asks of her is, that she *sin no more*. What must have been her gratitude! How must she have desired to obey, henceforward, that God, who would not *condemn* her, and to whom she owed her life! Let us enter into the like dispositions towards our Redeemer, for we, too, are sinners. Is it not He that has stayed the arm of divine justice, when it was raised to strike us? Has He not turned the blow upon Himself? Our salvation, then, has

been one of mercy ; let us imitate the penitents of the primitive Church, and, during these remaining days of Lent, consolidate the foundations of the new life we have begun.

The answer made by Jesus to the pharisees, who accused this woman, deserves our respectful attention. It not only shows His compassion for the humble sinner, who stood trembling before Him ; it contains a practical instruction for us. *He that is without sin among you, let him be the first to cast a stone at her.* During these days of conversion and repentance, let us recall to mind the detractions we have been guilty of against our neighbour. Alas ! these sins of the tongue are looked upon as mere trifles ; we forget them almost as soon as we have committed them ; nay, so deeply rooted in us is the habit of finding fault with everyone, that we scarcely know ourselves to be detractors. If this saying of our Redeemer had made the impression it ought to have made upon us ; if we had thought of our own numberless defects and sins ; how could we have dared to criticize our neighbour, publish his faults, and pass judgment upon his very thoughts and intentions ? Jesus knew what sort of life these men had led, who accused the woman ; He knows what ours has been ! Woe to us if, henceforth, we are not indulgent with others !

And lastly, let us consider the malice of Jesus' enemies ; what they said, *they said, tempting Him, that they might accuse Him.* If He pronounce in the woman's favour, they will accuse Him of despising the Law of Moses, which condemns her to be stoned : if He answer in conformity with the Law, they will hold Him up to the people as a man without mercy or compassion. Jesus, by His divine prudence, eludes their stratagem ; but we can foresee what He will have to suffer at their hands, when, having put Himself in their power, that they may do with Him what they please, He will make no other answer to their

calumnies and insults than the silence and patience of an innocent Victim condemned to death.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Prætende, Domine, fidelibus tuis dexteram cœlestis auxilii: ut te toto corde perquirant; et quæ digne postulant, consequi mereantur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to God.

Stretch forth, O Lord, over thy people, the right hand of thy heavenly aid, that they may seek thee with their whole heart, and mercifully obtain what they ask for as they ought. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us offer to Mary, as we are accustomed to do on the last day of each week, some special expression of our love. Let us say, in her honour, the following sequence, which is taken from the ancient Roman-French missals :

SEQUENCE

Mariæ præconio
Serviat cum gaudio,
Fervens desiderio,
Verus amor.

Amoris suffragio
Præsentetur Filio,
Matris in obsequio,
Cordis clamor.

Ave salus hominum,
Virgo decus virginum,
Te decet post Dominum
Laus et honor.

Tu rosa, tu liliū,
Cujus Dei Filium
Carnis ad connubium
Traxit odor.

Ave manans satie
Fons misericordiæ,
Vera mentis sauciæ
Medicina.

Tu pincerna veniæ,
Tu lucerna gratiæ,
Tu supernæ gloriæ
Es regina.

Let this be our joyous
praise of Mary: true and
fervent love.

Let the cry of our heart, as it sings in the Mother's honour, be presented to her Son as a tribute of love.

Hail thou that broughtest salvation to men! O Virgin, and Queen of virgins! to thee, after God, are due praise and honour.

Thou art the fair rose and lily, whose fragrance drew the Son of God to assume our human nature.

Hail overflowing fount of mercy! Hail true balm of the wounded heart!

Thou art the ministrress of pardon, the flame richly fed with grace, the Queen of matchless glory.

Ave carens carie
Speculum munditiæ,
Venustans Ecclesiæ
Sacramentum.

Tu finis miseræ,
Tu ver es lætitiæ,
Pacis et concordiæ
Condimentum.

O felix puerpera,
Nostra pians scelera,
Jure Matris impera
Redemptori.

Da fidei fœdera,
Da salutis opera,
Da in vitæ vespera
Bene mori. Amen.

Hail spotless mirror of
purity, that givest beauty to
the holy Church of God !

Where thou art, there can
be no sadness, for thou art
the spring-time of joy ; thou
art the bond of peace and con-
cord.

O happy Mother ! use a
Mother's right ; and bid thy
Son, our Redeemer, forgive
us our sins.

These are the gifts we ask
of thee : firmness of faith,
works available to salvation,
and in the evening of life, a
happy death. Amen.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

THIS Sunday, called, from the first word of the Introit, *Lætare* Sunday, is one of the most solemn of the year. The Church interrupts her lenten mournfulness ; the chants of the Mass speak of nothing but joy and consolation ; the organ, which has been silent during the preceding three Sundays, now gives forth its melodious voice ; the deacon resumes his dalmatic, and the subdeacon his tunic ; and instead of purple, rose-coloured vestments are allowed to be used. These same rites were practised in Advent, on the third Sunday, called *Gaudete*. The Church's motive for introducing this expression of joy into to-day's liturgy is to encourage her children to persevere fervently to the end of this holy season. The real mid-Lent was last Thursday, as we have already observed ; but the Church, fearing lest the joy might lead to some infringement on the spirit of penance, has deferred her own notice of it to this

Sunday, when she not only permits, but even bids, her children to rejoice !

The Station at Rome is in the basilica of Holy Cross in Jerusalem, one of the seven principal churches of the holy city. It was built in the fourth century, by the emperor Constantine, in one of his villas called Sessorius, on which account it goes also under the name of the Sessorian basilica. The emperor's mother, St. Helen, enriched it with most precious relics, and wished to make it the Jerusalem of Rome. With this intention she ordered a great quantity of earth taken from Mount Calvary to be put on the site. Among the other relics of the instruments of the Passion which she gave to this church was the inscription which was fastened to the cross ; it is still there, and is called the *Title of the Cross*. The name of Jerusalem, which has been given to this basilica, and which recalls to our minds the heavenly Jerusalem towards which we are tending, suggested the choice of it as to-day's Station. Up to the fourteenth century, when Avignon became for a time the city of the Popes, the ceremony of the golden rose took place in this church ; at present, it is blessed in the palace where the sovereign Pontiff happens to be residing at this season.

The blessing of the golden rose is one of the ceremonies peculiar to the fourth Sunday of Lent, which is called on this account Rose Sunday. The thoughts suggested by this flower harmonize with the sentiments wherewith the Church would now inspire her children. The joyous time of Easter is soon to give them a spiritual spring, of which that of nature is but a feeble image. Hence, we cannot be surprised that the institution of this ceremony is of a very ancient date. We find it observed under the pontificate of St. Leo IX. (eleventh century) ; and we have a sermon on the golden rose preached by the glorious Pope Innocent III., on this Sunday,

and in the basilica of Holy Cross in Jerusalem. In the middle ages, when the Pope resided in the Lateran palace, having first blessed the rose, he went on horseback to the church of the Station. He wore the mitre, was accompanied by all the Cardinals, and held the blessed flower in his hand. Having reached the basilica, he made a discourse on the mysteries symbolized by the beauty, the colour, and the fragrance of the rose. Mass was then celebrated. After the Mass, the Pope returned to the Lateran palace. Surrounded by the sacred college, he rode across the immense plain which separates the two basilicas, with the mystic flower still in his hand. We may imagine the joy of the people as they gazed upon the holy symbol. When the procession had reached the palace gates, if there were a prince present, it was his privilege to hold the stirrup, and assist the Pontiff to dismount; for which filial courtesy he received the rose, which had received so much honour and caused such joy.

At present, the ceremony is not quite so solemn; still the principal rites are observed. The Pope blesses the golden rose in the vestiary; he anoints it with holy chrism, over which he sprinkles a scented powder, as formerly; and when the hour for Mass has come, he goes to the palace chapel, holding the flower in his hand. During the holy Sacrifice, it is fastened to a golden rose-branch prepared for it on the altar. After the Mass, it is brought to the Pontiff, who holds it in his hand as he returns from the chapel to the vestiary. It is usual for the Pope to send the rose to some prince or princess, as a mark of honour; sometimes, it is a city or a Church that receives the flower.

We subjoin a free translation of the beautiful prayer used by the sovereign Pontiff when blessing the golden rose. It will give our readers a clearer appreciation of this ceremony, which adds so much

solemnity to the fourth Sunday of Lent. 'O God! by whose word and power all things were created, and by whose will they are all governed! O Thou that art the joy and gladness of all Thy faithful people! we beseech Thy divine Majesty, that Thou vouchsafe to bless and sanctify this rose, so lovely in its beauty and fragrance. We are to bear it, this day, in our hands, as a symbol of spiritual joy; that thus the people that is devoted to Thy service, being set free from the captivity of Babylon by the grace of Thine only-begotten Son who is the glory and the joy of Israel, may show forth, with a sincere heart, the joys of that Jerusalem, which is above, and is our mother. And whereas Thy Church, seeing this symbol, exults with joy for the glory of Thy Name; do Thou, O Lord! give her true and perfect happiness. Accept her devotion, forgive us our sins, increase our faith; heal us by Thy word, protect us by Thy mercy; remove all obstacles; grant us all blessings; that thus this same Thy Church may offer unto Thee the fruit of good works; and walking in the odour of the fragrance of that Flower, which sprang from the root of Jesse, and is called the Flower of the field, and the Lily of the valley, may she deserve to enjoy an endless joy in the bosom of heavenly glory, in the society of all the saints, together with that divine Flower, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.'

We now come to the explanation of another name given to the fourth Sunday of Lent, which was suggested by the Gospel of the day. We find this Sunday called in several ancient documents, the Sunday of the five loaves. The miracle alluded to in this title not only forms an essential portion of the Church's instructions during Lent, but it is also an additional element of to-day's joy. We forget for an instant the coming Passion of the Son of God, to

give our attention to the greatest of the benefits He has bestowed on us ; for under the figure of these loaves multiplied by the power of Jesus, our faith sees that Bread which came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world.¹ 'The Pasch,' says our Evangelist, 'was near at hand'; and, in a few days, our Lord will say to us : 'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you.'² Before leaving this world to go to His Father, Jesus desires to feed the multitude that follows Him ; and in order to this, He displays His omnipotence. Well may we admire that creative power, which feeds five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, and in such wise that even after all have partaken of the feast as much as they would, there remain fragments enough to fill twelve baskets. Such a miracle is, indeed, an evident proof of Jesus' mission ; but He intends it as a preparation for something far more wonderful ; He intends it as a figure and a pledge of what He is soon to do, not merely once or twice, but every day, even to the end of time ; not only for five thousand men, but for the countless multitude of believers. Think of the millions, who, this very year, are to partake of the banquet of the Pasch ; and yet, He whom we have seen born in Bethlehem (the house of bread) is to be the nourishment of all these guests ; neither will the divine Bread fail. We are to feast as did our fathers before us ; and the generations that are to follow us, shall be invited as we now are, to come and taste how sweet is the Lord.³

But observe, it is in a desert place, as we learn from St. Matthew,⁴ that Jesus feeds these men, who represent us Christians. They have quitted the bustle and noise of cities in order to follow Him. So anxious are they to hear His words, that they fear neither hunger nor fatigue ; and their courage is re-

¹ St. John vi. 33.

² St. Luke xxii. 15.

³ Ps. xxxiii. 9.

⁴ St. Matt. xiv. 13.

warded. A like recompense will crown our labours, our fasting and abstinence, which are now more than half over. Let us, then, rejoice, and spend this day with the light-heartedness of pilgrims who are near the end of their journey. The happy moment is advancing, when our soul, united and filled with her God, will look back with pleasure on the fatigues of the body, which, together with our heart's compunction, have merited for her a place at the divine banquet.

The primitive Church proposed this miracle of the multiplication of the loaves as a symbol of the Eucharist, the Bread that never fails. We find it frequently represented in the paintings of the catacombs and on the bas-reliefs of the ancient Christian tombs. The fishes, too, that were given together with the loaves, are represented on these venerable monuments of our faith; for the early Christians considered the fish to be the symbol of Christ, because the word 'fish' in Greek is made up of five letters, which are the initials of these words: *Jesus Christ, Son (of) God, Saviour*.

In the Greek Church this is the last day of the week called, as we have already noticed, *Mesonestios*. Breaking through her rule of never admitting a saint's feast during Lent, she keeps this mid-Lent Sunday in honour of the celebrated abbot of the monastery of Mount Sinai, St. John Climacus, who lived in the sixth century.

MASS

The seventy years' captivity will soon be over. Yet a little while, and the captives shall return to Jerusalem. This is the idea expressed by the Church in all the chants of to-day's Mass. She ventures not to pronounce the heavenly *Alleluia*; but all her canticles bespeak jubilation; for, in a few days

hence, *the house of the Lord* will lay aside her mourning, and will be keeping the gladdest of her feasts.

INTROIT

Lætare, Jerusalem ; et conventum facite omnes, qui diligitis eam : gaudete cum lætitia, qui in tristitia fuistis : ut exsultetis et satiemini ab uberibus consolationis vestræ.

Ps. Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi : In domum Domini ibimus.

V. Gloria Patri. Lætare.

Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and meet together all you who love her ; rejoice exceedingly, you who have been in sorrow, that you may leap for joy, and be satiated with comfort from her breasts.

Ps. I rejoiced at the things that were said to me : we shall go into the house of the Lord.

V. Glory. Rejoice.

In the Collect, the Church acknowledges that her children deserve the penance they are going through ; but she begs that, to-day, the hope of the coming divine consolations may refresh their spirits. The full force of the closing word of her prayer, is that they may *breathe awhile*.

COLLECT

Concede, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus ; ut qui ex merito nostræ actionis affligimur, tuæ gratiæ consolatione respiremus. Per Dominum.

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that we, who are justly afflicted according to our demerits, may be relieved by thy comforting grace. Through, &c.

The second and third Collects are given on the first Sunday of Lent, page 129.

EPISTLE

Lectio Epistolæ beati Pauli Apostoli ad Galatas.

Lesson of the Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Galatians.

Cap. iv.

Ch. iv.

Fratres, scriptum est : Quoniam Abraham duos

Brethren : It is written that Abraham had two sons ; the

filios habuit: unum de ancilla, et unum de libera. Sed qui de ancilla, secundum carnem natus est: qui autem de libera, per repositionem: quæ sunt per allegoriam dicta. Hæc enim sunt duo testamenta. Unum quidem in monte Sina, in servitutem generans: quæ est Agar: Sina enim mons est in Arabia, qui conjunctus est ei quæ nunc est Jerusalem, et servit cum filiis suis. Illa autem, quæ sursum est Jerusalem, libera est, quæ est mater nostra. Scriptum est enim: Lætare, sterilis, quæ non paris: erumpe et clama, quæ non parturis: quia multi filii desertæ, magis quam ejus quæ habet virum. Nos autem, fratres, secundum Isaac, promissionis filii sumus. Sed quomodo tunc is, qui secundum carnem natus fuerat, persequeretur eum, qui secundum spiritum: ita et nunc. Sed quid dicit Scriptura? Ejice ancillam et filium ejus: non enim hæres erit filius ancillæ cum filio liberæ. Itaque, fratres, non sumus ancillæ filii, sed liberæ: qua libertate Christus nos liberavit.

one by a bond-woman, and the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born according to the flesh; but he by the free-woman, was by promise. Which things are said by an allegory. For these are the two testaments. The one from Mount Sina, engendering unto bondage, which is Agar; for Sina is a mountain in Arabia, which hath affinity to that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But that Jerusalem, which is above, is free; which is our mother. For it is written: Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he, that was born according to the flesh, persecuted him that was after the spirit, so also is it now. But what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free; by the freedom wherewith Christ hath made us free.

Let us, then, rejoice! We are children, not of *Sina*, but of *Jerusalem*. Our mother, the holy Church, is not a *bond-woman*, but *free*; and it is unto freedom that she has brought us up. Israel served

God in fear ; his heart was ever tending to idolatry, and could be kept to duty only by the heavy yoke of chastisement. More happy than he, we serve God through love ; our yoke is sweet, and our burden is light !¹ We are not citizens of the earth ; we are but pilgrims passing through it to our true country, *the Jerusalem which is above*. We leave the earthly Jerusalem to the Jew, who minds only terrestrial things, is disappointed with Jesus, and is plotting how to crucify Him. We also have too long been grovelling in the goods of this world ; we have been slaves to sin ; and the more the chains of our bondage weighed upon us, the more we talked of our being free. Now is the favourable time ; now are the days of salvation : we have obeyed the Church's call, and have entered into the practice and spirit of Lent. Sin seems to us, now, to be the heaviest of yokes ; the flesh, a dangerous burden ; the world, a merciless tyrant. We begin to breathe the fresh air of holy liberty, and the hope of our speedy deliverance fills us with transports of joy. Let us, with all possible affection, thank our divine Liberator, who delivers us from the bondage of Agar, emancipates us from the law of fear, and making us His new people, opens to us the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, at the price of His Blood.

The Gradual expresses the joy felt by the Gentiles, when invited to enter the *house of the Lord*, which has now become their own. The Tract shows God protecting His Church, the new *Jerusalem*, which is not to be conquered and destroyed as was that first one. This holy city communicates her own stability and security to them that are in her, for the Lord watches over both the mother and her children.

¹ St. Matt. xi. 30.

GRADUAL

Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus.

V. Fiat pax in virtute tua: et abundantia in turribus tuis.

I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord.

V. Let peace be in thy strength, and abundance in thy towers.

TRACT

Qui confidunt in Domino, sicut mons Sion: non commovebitur in æternum, qui habitat in Jerusalem.

V. Montes in circuitu ejus: et Dominus in circuitu populi sui, ex hoc, nunc, et usque in sæculum.

They that trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Sion; he shall not be moved for ever that dwelleth in Jerusalem.

V. Mountains are round about it; so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth now and for ever.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii secundum Joannem.

Cap. vi.

In illo tempore: Abiit Jesus trans mare Galilææ, quod est Tiberiadis: et sequebatur eum multitudo magna, quia videbant signa quæ faciebat super his qui infirmabantur. Subiit ergo in montem Jesus: et ibi sedebat cum discipulis suis. Erat autem proximum Pascha, dies festus Judæorum. Cum sublevasset ergo oculos Jesus, et vidisset quia multitudo maxima venit ad eum, dixit ad Philippum: Unde ememus panes, ut manducent hi? Hoc autem

Sequel of the holy Gospel according to John.

Ch. vi.

At that time: Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias; and a great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased. Jesus therefore went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. Now the Pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand. When Jesus therefore had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh to him, he said to Philip: Whence shall we buy bread

dicebat tentans eum : ipse enim sciebat quid esset facturus. Respondit ei Philipus : Ducentorum denariorum panes non sufficiunt eis, ut unusquisque modicum quid accipiat. Dicit ei unus ex discipulis ejus, Andreas, frater Simonis Petri : Est puer unus hic, qui habet quinque panes hordeaceos, et duos pisces : sed hæc quid sunt inter tantos ? Dixit ergo Jesus : Facite homines discumbere. Erat autem fœnum multum in loco. Discubuerunt ergo viri, numero quasi quinque millia. Accepit ergo Jesus panes : et cum gratias egisset, distribuit discumbentibus : similiter et ex piscibus quantum volebant. Ut autem impleti sunt, dixit discipulis suis : Colligite quæ superaverunt fragmenta, ne pereant. Collegerunt ergo, et impleverunt duodecim cothinos fragmentorum ex quinque panibus hordeaceis, quæ superfuerunt his qui manducaverant. Illi ergo homines cum vidissent quod Jesus fecerat signum, dicebant : Quia hic est vere propheta, qui venturus est in mundum. Jesus ergo cum cognovisset quia venturi essent ut raperent eum, et facerent eum regem, fugit iterum in montem ipse solus.

that these may eat ? And this he said to try him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him : Two hundred penny-worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to him : There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves, and two fishes ; but what are these among so many ? Then Jesus said : Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. The men therefore sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves ; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to them that were sat down. In like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would ; and when they were filled, he said to his disciples : Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost. They gathered up therefore, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten. Now those men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said : This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world. Jesus therefore, when he knew that they would come to take him by force and make him king, fled again into the mountain himself alone.

These men, whom Jesus has been feeding by a miracle of love and power, are resolved to make

Him their *King*. They have no hesitation in proclaiming Him worthy to reign over them ; for where can they find one worthier ? What, then, shall we Christians do, who know the goodness and the power of Jesus incomparably better than these poor Jews ? We must beseech Him to reign over us, from this day forward. We have just been reading in the Epistle, that it is He who has made us free, by delivering us from our enemies. O glorious liberty ! But the only way to maintain it, is to live under His Law. Jesus is not a tyrant, as are the world and the flesh ; His rule is sweet and peaceful, and we are His children rather than His servants. In the court of such a King ' to serve is to reign.' What, then, have we to do with our old slavery ? If some of its chains be still upon us, let us lose no time, let us break them, for *the Pasch is near at hand* ; the great feast-day begins to dawn. Onwards, then, courageously to the end of our journey ! Jesus will refresh us ; He will make us *sit down* as He did the men of the Gospel ; and the Bread He has in store for us will make us forget all our past fatigues.

In the Offertory, the Church again borrows the words of David, wherewith to praise the Lord ; but, to-day, it is mainly His goodness and power that she celebrates.

OFFERTORY

<p>Laudate Dominum, quia benignus est ; psallite nomini ejus, quoniam suavis est : omnia quæcumque voluit, fecit in cælo et in terra.</p>	<p>Praise ye the Lord, for he is good, sing ye to his name, for he is sweet : what he pleased he hath done, in heaven and on earth.</p>
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The Secret is a prayer for the *increase of devotion*. We ask it by the merits of the Sacrifice at which we are assisting, for it is the source of our *salvation*.

SECRET

Sacrificiis præsentibus, Domine, quæsumus, intende placatus : ut et devotioni nostræ proficiant et salutem. Per Dominum.

We beseech thee, O Lord, mercifully regard this present Sacrifice, that it may both increase our devotion, and advance our salvation. Through, &c.

The second and third Secrets are given on the first Sunday of Lent, page 136.

In the Communion-anthem, the Church sings the praise of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is figured by the basilica of holy cross, as we have already explained. She speaks of the joy of the tribes of the Lord, who are assembled in this venerable temple, and are contemplating, under the graceful symbol of the rose, the divine Spouse, Jesus. The fragrance of His perfections draws our hearts after Him.

COMMUNION

Jerusalem quæ ædificatur ut civitas, cujus participatio ejus in idipsum : illuc enim ascenderunt tribus, tribus Domini, ad confitendum nomini tuo, Domine.

Jerusalem, which is built as a city, which is compact together ; for thither did the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, to praise thy name, O Lord.

The divine mystery of the Bread of life has been brought before us, that we might believe and love it. The Church, therefore, in the Postcommunion, prays that we may have the grace to receive this august mystery with becoming respect and careful preparation.

POSTCOMMUNION

Da nobis, quæsumus, misericors Deus : ut sancta tua, quibus incessanter ex-

Grant, we beseech thee, O merciful God, that we may sincerely respect, and receive

plemur, sinceris tractemus with faith thy holy mysteries,
 obsequiis, et fideli semper with which thou daily feedest
 mente sumamus. Per Do- us. Through, &c.
 minum.

The second and third Postcommunions are given on the first Sunday of Lent, page 138.

VESPERS

The psalms and antiphons are given on page 99.

CAPITULUM

(Gal. iv.)

<p>Fratres : Scriptum est, quoniam Abraham duos filios habuit : unum de ancilla, et unum de libera. Sed qui de ancilla, secundum carnem natus est ; qui autem de libera, per repromissionem : quæ sunt per allegoriam dicta.</p>	<p>Brethren : it is written that Abraham had two sons : the one by a bond-woman, and the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman, was born according to the flesh : but he of the free-woman, was by promise : which things are said by an allegory.</p>
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For hymn and versicle, see page 106.

ANTIPHON OF THE MAGNIFICAT

<p>Subiit ergo in montem Jesus, et ibi sedebat cum discipulis suis.</p>	<p>Jesus therefore went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.</p>
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OREMUS

Concede, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui ex merito nostræ actionis affligimur, tuæ gratiæ consolatione respiremus. Per Dominum.

LET US PRAY

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that we, who are justly afflicted according to our demerits, may be relieved by thy comforting grace. Through, &c.

We borrow the following stanzas from the *Triodion* of the Greek Church. They are in keeping with to-day's Office, and with the sentiments we should have on mid-Lent Sunday.

HYMN

Dominica IV. Jejuniurum.

Sacro jejunii stadio jam
dimidio superemenso, ad
futurum in lætitia recte cur-
ramus, bonorum operum
oleo animos ungentes, ut
Christi Dei nostri divinas
passiones adorare, et ad
ejus venerandam et sanctam
resurrectionem pervenire
mereamur.

Qui vitem plantavit et
operarios vocavit, prope
adest Salvator; venite, jeju-
nii athletæ, mercedem ca-
piamus, quia dives est dis-
pensator et misericors; pa-
rum laborantes, animæ mi-
sericordiam recipiemus.

O Deus qui das vitam,
aperi mihi portas pœnitent-
iæ; vigilat enim ad tem-
plum sanctum tuum spiritus
meus, templum corporis
ferens penitus maculatum:
sed tu miserans, purifica
me propitiabili misericordia
tua.

Venite, faciamus in my-
stica vite fructus pœnitent-
iæ: in illa laborantes, non
epulemur in escis et potibus,
sed in precibus et jejuniis,

We have passed one half of
our journey through the holy
fast; let us, then, as it be-
hoves us, joyfully complete
what remains. Let us anoint
our souls with the oil of good
works, that we may be made
worthy to celebrate the divine
sufferings of Christ our Lord,
and to be brought to his
venerable and holy Resurrec-
tion.

Jesus, he that planted the
vine and hired the labourers,
is near at hand. Come, ye
brave fasters! let us receive
the reward; for he that pays
us is rich and merciful.
After our short labours, he
will requite our souls with
his mercy.

O God! thou Giver of life!
open to me the gate of pen-
ance. My spirit keepeth
watch in thy holy temple;
but the temple of the flesh,
which I have to carry with
me, is defiled with many sins.
Have pity on me, notwith-
standing; and in thy tender
mercy, cleanse me.

Come, let us, who are in the
mystic Vine, produce fruits of
penance. Here labouring, let
our feasting be, not in meat
and drink, but in prayer and

actiones virtutis operantes : fasting and good works. Our
 his complacens Dominus Lord, being pleased with our
 operis denarium præbet, labour, will pay us with that,
 per quod ab iniquitatis de- whereby he, the one God, rich
 bito animas liberat solus in mercy, will forgive us the
 multum Deus misericors. debt of our sins.

MONDAY

OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the venerable church of *the Four Crowned* (brothers); their names are, Severus, Severianus, Carpophorus, and Victorinus; they suffered martyrdom under the persecution of Diocletian. Their bodies, as also the head of the great martyr St. Sebastian, are among the relics of this church.

COLLECT

<p>Præsta, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus: ut observationes sacras annua devotione recolentes, et corpore tibi placeamus et mente. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.</p>	<p>Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that we, who annually celebrate this holy fast, may be well pleasing to thee, both in body and mind. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>
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EPISTLE

Lectio libri Regum.

Lesson from the Book of Kings.

3. *Cap.* iii.

3. *Ch.* iii.

In diebus illis: Venerunt duæ mulieres meretrices ad regem Salomonem, steteruntque coram eo, quarum una ait: Obsecro, mi Domine: ego et mulier hæc habitabamus in domo una, et peperit apud eam in cu-

In those days: Two women that were harlots, came to king Solomon, and stood before him; and one of them said: I beseech thee, my lord, I and this woman dwelt in one house, and I was delivered of a child with her in the

biculo. Tertîa autem die postquam ego peperî, peperit et hæc : et eramus simul, nullusque alius nobiscum in domo, exceptis nobis duabus. Mortuus est autem filius mulieris hujus nocte ; dormiens quippe oppressit eum. Et consurgens intempestæ noctis silentio, tulit filium meum de latere meo ancillæ tuæ dormientis ; et collocavit in sinu suo : suum autem filium, qui erat mortuus, posuit in sinu meo. Cumque surrexissem mane ut darem lac filio meo, apparuit mortuus : quem diligentius intuens clara luce, deprehendi non esse meum, quem genueram. Respondit altera mulier : Non est ita ut dicis, sed filius tuus mortuus est, meus autem vivit. E contrario illa dicebat : Mentiris : filius quippe meus vivit, et filius tuus mortuus est. Atque in hunc modum contendebant coram rege. Tunc rex ait : Hæc dicit : Filius meus vivit et filius tuus mortuus est. Et ista respondit : Non, sed filius tuus mortuus est, meus autem vivit. Dixit ergo rex : Afferte mihi gladium. Cumque attulissent gladium coram rege : Dividite, inquit, infantem vivum in duas partes, et date dimidiam partem uni, et dimidiam partem alteri. Dixit autem mulier, cujus filius erat vivus, ad regem (commota sunt quippe viscera ejus super filio suo) : Obsecro, Domine, date illi infantem vivum, et nolite interficere eum. E contrario illa dicebat : Nec mihi, nec

chamber. And the third day after that I was delivered she also was delivered ; and we were together, and no other person with us in the house, only we two. And this woman's child died in the night, for in her sleep she overlaid him ; and rising in the dead time of the night she took my child from my side, while I thy handmaid was asleep, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold it was dead ; but considering him more diligently when it was clear day, I found that it was not mine which I bore. And the other woman answered : It is not so as thou sayest, but thy child is dead, and mine is alive. On the contrary she said : Thou liest, for my child liveth, and thy child is dead. And in this manner they strove before the king. Then said the king : The one saith my child is alive, and thy child is dead ; and the other answereth : Nay, but thy child is dead, and mine liveth. The king therefore said : Bring me a sword. And when they had brought a sword before the king, Divide, said he, the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. But the woman, whose child was alive, said to the king (for her bowels were moved upon her child), I beseech thee, my lord, give her the child alive, and do not kill it.

tibi sit, sed dividatur. Respondit rex et ait : Date huic infantem vivum, et non occidatur : hæc est enim mater ejus. Audivit itaque omnis Israël judicium quod judicasset rex, et timuerunt regem, videntes sapientiam Dei esse in eo ad faciendum judicium.

But the other said : Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. The king answered and said : Give the living child to this woman and let it not be killed, for she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king, seeing that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.

St. Paul explained to us, in yesterday's Epistle, the antagonism that there is between the Synagogue and the Church ; he showed us how Sara's son, who was the father's favourite, was persecuted by the son of Agar. The two women, who appear before Solomon, are another figure of the same truth. The child they both lay claim to is the Gentile people, which has been brought to the knowledge of the true God. The Synagogue, typified by the woman who has caused death to her child, has misled the people confided to her care ; and now unjustly claims one that does not belong to her. And whereas it is not from any motherly affection, but only from pride, that she puts forward such a claim, it matters little to her what becomes of the child, provided only he be not given to the true mother, the Church. Solomon, the king of peace, who is one of the Scriptural types of Christ, adjudges the child to her that has given him birth, and nourished him ; and the pretensions of the false mother are rejected. Let us, then, love our mother, the holy Church, the bride of Jesus. It is she that has made us children of God by Baptism. She has fed us with the Bread of life ; she has given us the holy Spirit ; and, when we had the misfortune to relapse into death by sin, she, by the divine power given to her, has restored us to life. A filial love for

the Church is the sign of the elect ; obedience to her commandments is the mark of a soul in which God has set His kingdom.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. ii.

In illo tempore : Prope erat Pascha Judæorum, et ascendit Jesus Jerosolymam : et invenit in templo vendentes boves, et oves, et columbas, et nummularios sedentes. Et cum fecisset quasi flagellum de funiculis, omnes ejecit de templo, oves quoque, et boves, et nummulariorum effudit æs, et mensas subvertit. Et his, qui columbas vendebant, dixit : Auferte ista hinc, et nolite facere domum Patris mei, domum negotiationis. Recordati sunt vero discipuli ejus quia scriptum est : Zelus domus tuæ comedit me. Responderunt ergo Judæi, et dixerunt ei : Quod signum ostendis nobis quia hæc facis ? Respondit Jesus, et dixit eis : Solvite templum hoc, et in tribus diebus excitabo illud. Dixerunt ergo Judæi : Quadraginta et sex annis ædificatum est templum hoc, et tu in tribus diebus excitabis illud ? Ille autem dicebat de templo corporis sui. Cum ergo resurrexisset a mortuis, recordati sunt discipuli ejus, quia hoc dicebat, et crediderunt Scripturæ, et sermoni

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. ii.

At that time the Pasch of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And he found in the temple them that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when he had made as it were a scourge of little cords, he drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen ; and the money of the changers he poured out, and the tables he overthrew. And to them that sold doves he said : Take these things hence, and make not the house of my Father a house of traffic. And his disciples remembered that it was written : The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up. The Jews therefore answered, and said to him : What sign dost thou shew unto us, seeing thou dost these things ? Jesus answered and said to them : Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said : Six and forty years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days ? But he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen again from

quem dixit Jesus. Cum autem esset Jerosolymis in Pascha in die festo, multi crediderunt in nomine ejus, videntes signa ejus, quæ faciebat. Ipse autem Jesus non credebat semetipsum eis, eo quod ipse nosset omnes, et quia opus ei non erat ut quis testimonium perhiberet de homine, ipse enim sciebat quid esset in homine.

the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture, and the word that Jesus had said. Now when he was at Jerusalem, at the Pasch, upon the festival day, many believed in his name, seeing his signs which he did. But Jesus did not trust himself to them, for that he knew all men, and because he needed not that any should give testimony of man, for he knew what was in man.

We read in the Gospel of the first Tuesday of Lent, that Jesus drove from the temple them that were making it a place of traffic. He twice showed this zeal for His Father's house. The passage we have just read from St. John refers to the first time. Both occasions are brought before us during this season of Lent, because this conduct of our Saviour shows us with what severity He will treat a soul that harbours sin within her. Our souls are the temple of God, created and sanctified by God to the end that He might dwell there. He would have nothing to be in them, which is unworthy of their destination. This is the season for self-examination; and if we have found that any passions are profaning the sanctuary of our souls, let us dismiss them; let us beseech our Lord to drive them out by the scourge of His justice, for we, perhaps, might be too lenient with these sacrilegious intruders. The day of pardon is close at hand; let us make ourselves worthy to receive it. There is an expression in our Gospel which deserves a special notice. The evangelist is speaking of those Jews who were more sincere than the rest, and believed in Jesus, because of the miracles He wrought; he says: *Jesus did not trust Himself to them, because He knew all men.* So that there may be persons who

believe in and acknowledge Jesus, yet whose hearts are not changed ! Oh the hardness of man's heart ! Oh cruel anxiety for God's priests ! Sinners and worldlings are now crowding round the confessional ; they have faith, and they confess their sins : and the Church has no confidence in their repentance ! She knows that, a very short time after the feast of Easter, they will have relapsed into the same state in which they were on the day when she marked their foreheads with ashes. These souls are divided between God and the world ; and she trembles as she thinks on the danger they are about to incur by receiving holy Communion without the preparation of a true conversion. Yet, on the other hand, she remembers how it is written that the bruised reed is not to be broken, nor the smoking flax to be extinguished.¹ Let us pray for these souls, whose state is so full of doubt and danger. Let us, also, pray for the priests of the Church, that they may receive from God abundant rays of that light, whereby Jesus *knew what was in man*.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Deprecationem nostram,
quæsumus, Domine, beni-
gnus exaudi : et quibus sup-
plicandi præstas affectum,
tribue defensionis auxilium.
Per Christum Dominum no-
strum. Amen.

We beseech thee, O Lord,
hear our prayer, and grant us
thy protection, as it is thou
who inspirerest us to ask it.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Let us pray for the conversion of sinners, using the beautiful Preface given us by the Roman pontifical, and formerly recited during the reconciliation of the public penitents.

¹ Is. xlii. 3.

PREFACE

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper, et ubique gratias agere, Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus, per Christum Dominum nostrum: Quem, omnipotens Genitor, ineffabiliter nasci voluisti, ut debitum Adæ tibi persolveret æterno Patri, mortemque nostram sua interficeret, et vulnera nostra in suo corpore ferret, nostrasque maculas sanguine suo dilueret; ut qui antiqui hostis corruperamus invidia, et ipsius resurgeremus clementia. Te per eum, Domine, supplices rogamus ac petimus, ut pro aliorum excessibus nos digneris exaudire, qui pro nostris non sufficimus exorare. Tu igitur, clementissime Domine, hos famulos tuos, quos a te separaverunt flagitia, ad te revoca pietate solita. Tu namque nec Achab sceleratissimi humiliationem despexisti, sed vindictam debitam protelasti. Petrum quoque lacrymantem exaudisti, clavesque postmodum cælestis regni ipsi tradidisti; et confitenti latroni ejusdem regni præmia promisti. Ergo, clementissime Domine, hos, pro quibus preces tibi fundimus, clemens recollige, et tuæ Ecclesiæ gremio redde, ut nequaquam de eis valeat triumphare hostis, sed tibi

It is truly meet and just, right and available to salvation, that we should always and in all places give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, almighty Father, eternal God, through Christ our Lord: Whom thou, O almighty Father, didst will to be born among us by an ineffable Birth, that so he might pay to thee, his eternal Father, the debt contracted by Adam, and put our death to death by his own, and bear our wounds in his own Flesh, and cleanse away our stains by his Blood; hereby enabling us, who had fallen by the envy of the old enemy, to rise again by his mercy. Through him, O Lord, we suppliantly beseech and pray thee that thou graciously hear us making intercession for the sins of others, who are not worthy to plead for our own. Do thou, O most merciful Lord, recall to thyself, with thy wonted goodness, these thy servants, who have separated themselves from thee by their sins. For neither didst thou reject the most wicked Achab when he humbled himself before thee, but didst avert from him the punishment he had deserved. So, likewise, didst thou graciously hear Peter, when he wept, and didst afterwards give to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and thou didst promise the reward of that

reconciliet Filius tibi cœqualis, emundetque eos ab omni facinore, et ad tuæ sacratissimæ Cœnæ dapes dignetur admittere. Sicque sua carne, et sanguine reficiat ut post hujus vitæ cursum ad cœlestia regna perducatur.

same kingdom to the thief when he trusted in thee. Therefore, O most merciful Lord! mercifully welcome back these for whom we offer to thee our prayers, and restore them to the bosom of thy Church, that the enemy may not triumph over them, but that they may be reconciled unto thee by thy coequal Son, and by him be cleansed from their guilt, and graciously admitted by him to the banquet of thy most holy Supper. May he in such wise refresh them by his Flesh and Blood, as to lead them, after this life's course is run, to the kingdom of heaven.

TUESDAY

OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of Saint Laurence *in Damaso*; so called, because it was built, in the fourth century, in honour of the glorious arch-deacon of Rome, by Pope St. Damasus, whose body rests here.

COLLECT

Sacræ nobis, quæsumus, Domine, observationis jejunia, et piæ conversationis augmentum, et tuæ propitiationis continuum præstent auxilium. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

We beseech thee, O Lord, that the holy fast we observe may be to our improvement in holy conversation, and draw down upon us the constant succours of thy mercy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Exodi.

Lesson from the Book of
Exodus.*Cap. xxxii.**Ch. xxxii.*

In diebus illis, locutus est Dominus ad Moysen, dicens: Descende de monte: peccavit populus tuus, quem eduxisti de terra Ægypti. Recesserunt cito de via, quam ostendisti eis: feceruntque sibi vitulum conflatilem, et adoraverunt, atque immolantes ei hostias, dixerunt: Isti sunt dii tui, Israël, qui te eduxerunt de terra Ægypti. Rursumque ait Dominus ad Moysen: Cerno quod populus iste duræ cervicis sit: dimitte me, ut irascatur furor meus contra eos, et deleam eos, faciamque te in gentem magnam. Moyses autem orabat Dominum Deum suum, dicens: Cur, Domine, irascitur furor tuus contra populum tuum, quem eduxisti de terra Ægypti in fortitudine magna, et in manu robusta? Ne, quæso, dicant Ægyptii: Callide eduxit eos, ut interficeret in montibus, et deleret e terra: quiescat ira tua, et esto placabilis super nequitia populi tui. Recordare Abraham, Isaac, et Israël, servorum tuorum, quibus jurasti per temetipsum, dicens: Multiplicabo semen vestrum sicut stellas cœli; et universam terram hanc, de qua locutus sum, dabo semini vestro, et possidebitis eam semper.

In those days, the Lord spoke to Moses saying: Go, get thee down from the mountain: thy people, which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, hath sinned. They have quickly strayed from the way which thou didst show them; and they have made to themselves a molten calf, and have adored it, and sacrificing victims to it, have said: These are thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And again the Lord said to Moses: I see that this people is stiff-necked: let me alone that my wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them, and I will make of thee a great nation. But Moses besought the Lord his God, saying: Why, O Lord, is thy indignation enkindled against thy people, whom thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand? Let not the Egyptians say, I beseech thee: He craftily brought them out, that he might kill them in the mountains, and destroy them from the earth; let thy anger cease and be appeased upon the wickedness of thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thy

Placatusque est Dominus ne faceret malum, quod locutus fuerat adversus populum suum.

own self, saying : I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven ; and this whole land that I have spoken of, I will give to your seed, and you shall possess it for ever. And the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which he had spoken against his people.

When the world first received the preaching of the Gospel, idolatry was the prevailing crime. For many centuries after, all the catechumens, who were instructed in the true faith, were tainted with it. It was in order to inspire them with a horror of their past lives, that the Church read to them, on this day, the terrible words of God, who, had not Moses interceded, was about to exterminate His people, because they had relapsed into idolatry ; and this, after He had worked in their favour the most unheard-of miracles, and had come in person to give them His Law. The worship of false gods is no longer to be found amongst us ; but it exists in all those countries, where the Gospel has been preached and rejected. Strange as it may sound, yet it is most true : Europe, with all its civilization, would return to idolatry, were it to lose the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not a century ago, an idol was erected to reason ; it had its altar, its decorations and its incense ; and they who paid homage to it were Europeans ! Individuals or peoples, once slaves to satan, are not their own masters to say, ' We will go thus far in sin, and no farther.' The descendants of Noah, notwithstanding the terrible lesson given to them by the deluge, fell into idolatry ; nay, Abraham was called by God from the rest of men, lest he should be led away by the almost universal corruption. Let us be grateful to the Church, who, by her teachings of faith and morals, preserves us from this degrading

abomination ; and let us resist our passions, which, if the light of faith were taken from us, would lead us to idolatry.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. vii.

In illo tempore : Jam die festo mediante, ascendit Jesus in templum, et docebat. Et mirabantur Judæi, dicentes : Quomodo hic litteras scit, cum non didicerit ? Respondit eis Jesus, et dixit : Mea doctrina non est mea, sed ejus qui misit me. Si quis voluerit voluntatem ejus facere, cognoscet de doctrina, utrum ex Deo sit an ego a meipso loquar. Qui a semetipso loquitur, gloriam propriam quærit : qui autem quærit gloriam ejus qui misit eum, hic verax est, et injustitia in illo non est. Nonne Moyses dedit vobis legem ? et nemo ex vobis facit legem. Quid me quæritis interficere ? Respondit turba, et dixit : Dæmonium habes : quis te quærit interficere ? Respondit Jesus, et dixit eis : Unum opus feci, et omnes miramini. Propterea Moyses dedit vobis circumcisionem (non quia ex Moyse est, sed ex patribus) : et in Sabbato circumciditis hominem. Si circumcisionem accipit homo in Sabbato, ut non solvatur lex Moysi : mihi indignamini quia totum hominem sanum fœci in Sabbato ? Nolite judicare secundum faciem, sed

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. vii.

At that time : About the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews wondered, saying : How doth this man know letters, having never learned ? Jesus answered them, and said : My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do the will of him, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory ; but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true, and there is no injustice in him. Did not Moses give you the law ? And yet none of you keepeth the law. Why seek you to kill me ? The multitude answered and said : Thou hast a devil : who seeketh to kill thee ? Jesus answered, and said to them : One work I have done, and you all wonder. Therefore Moses gave you circumcision (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) ; and on the Sabbath-day you circumcise a man. If a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath-day that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry at me, because I

justum iudicium iudicate. Dicebant ergo quidam ex Jerosolymis: Nonne hic est quem quærunt interficere? Et ecce palam loquitur, et nihil ei dicunt. Numquid vere cognoverunt principes quia hic est Christus? Sed hunc scimus unde sit: Christus autem cum venerit, nemo scit unde sit. Clamabat ergo Jesus in templo docens, et dicens: Et me scitis, et unde sim scitis: et a me ipso non veni, sed est verus qui misit me, quem vos nescitis. Ego scio eum: quia ab ipso sum, et ipse me misit. Quærebant ergo eum apprehendere: et nemo misit in illum manus, quia nondum venerat hora ejus. De turba autem multi crederunt in eum.

have healed the whole man on the Sabbath-day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge just judgment. Some therefore of Jerusalem said: Is not this he whom they seek to kill? And behold he speaketh openly, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers known for a truth that this is the Christ? But we know this man whence he is. But when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Jesus therefore cried out in the temple, teaching and saying: You both know me, and you know whence I am; and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom you know not; I know him because I am from him, and he hath sent me. They sought therefore to apprehend him; and no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. But of the people many believed in him.

This Gospel carries our thoughts to the sacrifice of the divine Lamb, which is to be offered up in Jerusalem. The hour has not yet come, but it is fast approaching. His enemies are already seeking how they may put Him to death. So blinded are they by their passions, that they accuse Him of being a violator of the Sabbath, because He healed the sick, by the simple act of His will, on the Lord's day! In vain does Jesus refute their prejudices, by reminding them that they themselves have no scruple in fulfilling the law of circumcision on this day, or (as He said to them, on another occasion) in drawing out of the pit an ass or an ox that may have fallen in.¹

¹ St. Luke xiv. 5.

They are deaf to all He says ; they are men of one idea, and it is, that their victim shall not escape death. His miracles are incontestable, and all are wrought out of a motive of mercy and love. The only time He refuses to work one, is when His enemies ask Him to satisfy their curiosity and pride by letting them see a sign. This exercise of His power of working miracles, far from exciting them to admiration and gratitude, only incites them to envy, and in their envy, they declare, not only that He acts by Beelzebub,¹ but that He has a devil within Him. We shudder at such a blasphemy. Yet, such is the pride of these Jewish doctors that they care neither for common sense nor for religion, and their hearts thirst more and more for the Blood of Jesus. Whilst some of the people allow themselves to be seduced by their leaders into the same feelings against Jesus, others, who affect to be indifferent, reason about Him, and then declare it to be their opinion that this Jesus does not realize in Himself the character of the promised Messiah ! They argue that, *when the Christ cometh, no one will know whence He is*. But have not the prophets declared that He is to be of the family of David ? Now every Jew knows well enough that Jesus is of that royal race. Besides, they own that there is to be something mysterious about the Messiah, and that He is to come from God. Had they listened with docile attention to the teachings of Jesus—teachings which He had confirmed by numerous miracles—they would have been enlightened both as to His temporal birth, and to His being the Son of God. But indifference and the perversity of the human heart keep them in culpable ignorance ; and, perhaps, on the day of His death, they will join in the cry : ‘ Let His Blood be upon us and upon our children !’²

¹ St. Luke xi. 15.

² St. Matt. xxvii. 25.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Miserere, Domine, populo
tuo: et continuis tribula-
tionibus laborantem, propi-
tius respirare concede. Per
Christum Dominum no-
strum. Amen.

Take compassion, O Lord,
on thy people, and merci-
fully refresh them labouring
under continual tribulations.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Greek liturgy supplies us with the following
humble act of contrition. We take it from the
hymn composed by St. Andrew of Crete.

CANON MAGNUS

(*Feria V. Hebdomadæ V. Jejuniorum*)

Peccavimus, inique egi-
mus, injuste fecimus coram
te, nec servivimus, autve
fecimus quemadmodum no-
bis mandasti: verum ne nos,
tu Deus patrum, tradideris
in finem.

We have sinned, we have
done wickedly, we have acted
unjustly against thee, neither
have we served thee, nor have
done what thou commandest:
but abandon us not for ever,
O thou the God of our fathers!

Peccavi, inique egi, ac
mandatum tuum violavi:
quippe natus sum in peccatis,
addidique vulnus livori-
bus meis: verum tu velut
misericors, qui patrum es
Deus, miserere.

I have sinned, I have done
wickedly, I have broken thy
commandment; for I was born
in sins, and have added wound
to wound: but thou art merciful,
and the God of our
fathers; have mercy on me!

Occulta cordis mei tibi meo
judici annuntiavi: vide hu-
militatem meam; vide et
meam afflictionem, ac intende
judicio meo; meique ipse
ut misericors, qui es Deus
patrum, miserere.

To thee, O my Judge, have
I made known the hidden
things of my heart: see me
now humbled before thee;
see, too, my affliction, and be
attentive to my judgment. O
thou that art merciful, and
the God of our fathers, have
mercy on me!

Obrui tuam imaginem, tu-
umque mandatum violavi:
tota species obscurata est,
extinctaque est lampas, O
Salvator! vitis: sed misertus
ipse *redde mihi lætitiã*, ut
canit David,

I have disfigured thine
image, and have broken thy
commandment: all my beauty
is obscured, O my Saviour,
and my lamp is put out, by
my sins. But have mercy on
me, and *restore joy unto me*,
as David sings.

Convertere ; pœnitere ; re-
vela occulta ; dic Deo qui
novit omnia : Tu solus Sal-
vator, scis occulta, tu *mei*,
ut psallit David, *secundum*
misericordiam tuam miserere.

Defecerunt dies mei, sicuti
somnia ejus qui suscita-
tur ; quare velut Ezechias
in lecto meo lacrymor, ut
annos mihi vitæ adjicias.
Cæterum quis tibi, o anima,
Isaias affuerit, præter Deum
illum universorum ?

Be converted, my soul ! Do
penance ; reveal thy hidden
sins ; say to thy God, who
knoweth all things : thou, my
only Saviour, knowest all
things ; do thou, as David
sings, *have mercy on me ac-
cording to thy great mercy.*

My days have vanished as
the dream of one that waken-
eth ; wherefore like Ezechias,
I weep on my couch and be-
seech thee to add to the years
of my life. But who, O my
soul, can be thine Isaias and
help thee, but he that is the
God of all ?

WEDNESDAY

OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

THIS day is called the 'Feria of the great scrutiny,' because in the Church of Rome, after the necessary inquiries and examinations, the list of the catechumens, who were to receive Baptism, was closed. The Station was held in the basilica of St. Paul *outside the walls*, both because of the size of the building, and also in order to honour the apostle of the Gentiles by offering him these new recruits, which the Church was about to make from paganism. The reader will be interested and edified by a description of this ceremony.

The faithful and the aspirants to Baptism being assembled in the basilica, about the hour of noon, the names of these latter were written down, and an acolyte arranged them in order before the people, placing the men on the right, and the women on the

left. A priest then recited over each of them the prayer which made them catechumens, for it is by anticipation that we have hitherto given them this name. He signed their foreheads with the sign of the cross and imposed his hand upon their heads. He then blessed the salt, which signifies wisdom, and each of them tasted it.

After these preliminary ceremonies, they were made to go out of the church, and remained under the exterior portico, until such time as they were called back. As soon as they had left (the assembly of the faithful remaining in the church) the Introit was begun. It is taken from the words of the Prophet Ezechiel, wherein God tells us that He will gather His elect from all nations, and pour upon them a clean water, that shall cleanse them from their sins. The acolyte then read out the names of the catechumens, and they were brought into the church by the porter. They were arranged as before, and the sponsors stood near them. The pontiff then sang the Collect ; after which, at the intimation given by the deacon, each sponsor made the sign of the cross on the forehead of the catechumen, for whom he or she was responsible. Acolytes followed, and pronounced the exorcisms over each of the elect, beginning with the men.

A lector next read the lesson from the Prophet Ezechiel, which we give in its proper place. It was followed by a Gradual, composed of these words of David :

‘ Come, children, hearken to me ; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Come ye to Him, and be enlightened ; and your faces shall not be confounded.’

In the Collect, which followed this lesson, the Church prayed that the faithful might receive the fruits of their lenten fast ; and immediately a second lesson was read, from the Prophet Isaias, in which is foretold the remission of sins to be granted to those

who shall be cleansed in the mysterious laver of Baptism.

A second Gradual gave these words from the royal psalmist :

‘Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; the people whom He hath chosen for His inheritance.’

During the reading of these two lessons, and the chanting of the two Graduals, the mysterious ceremony of opening the ears was being gone through. A priest went to each catechumen, and touching his ears, said : *Ephpheta*, that is, be thou opened. This rite (which was an imitation of what our Saviour did to the deaf and dumb man mentioned in the Gospel)¹ was intended to prepare the catechumens to receive the revelation of the mysteries, which, up to that time, had been shown them only under the veil of allegory. The first initiation made to them was regarding the holy Gospels.

As soon as the second Gradual was finished, there were seen coming from the *secretarium*, preceded by lights and incense, four deacons, each of them carrying one of the four Gospels. They advanced towards the sanctuary, and placed the sacred volumes on the altar, one on each corner. The bishop, or, if he wished it, a priest, addressed to the catechumens the following allocution, which we find still in the Gelasian sacramentary :

Being about to open to you the Gospels, that is, the history of the acts of God, it firstly behoves us, dearly beloved children, to tell you what the Gospels are, whence they come, whose words they contain, why they are four in number, and who wrote them ; in fine, who are the four men who were announced by the holy Spirit, and foretold by the prophet. Unless we were to explain to you these several particulars, we should leave your minds confused ; and whereas you have come to-day that your ears may be opened, it would be unseemly in us to begin by bewildering your

¹ St. Mark vii. 32-34.

minds. Gospel literally means good tidings, because it tells us of Jesus Christ, our Lord. The Gospel came from him, in order to proclaim and show that he, who spoke by the prophets, has now come in the flesh, as it is written : ' I myself that spoke, lo, I am here.' Having briefly to explain to you what the Gospel is, and who are the four men foretold by the prophet, we now give you their names, following the order of the figures under which they are designated. The Prophet Ezechiel says : ' And as for the likeness of their faces, there was the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side of all the four : and the face of an ox on the left side of all the four : and the face of an eagle over all the four.' These four figures are, as we know, those of the evangelists, whose names are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

After this discourse, a deacon, ascending the ambo, thus addressed the catechumens :

Be silent : hear attentively !

Then, opening the Gospel of St. Matthew, which he had previously taken from the altar, he read the beginning, as far as the twenty-first verse.

These verses having been read, a priest spoke as follows :

Dearly beloved children, we wish to hold you no longer in suspense : therefore, we expound to you the figure of each evangelist. Matthew has the figure of a man, because, at the commencement of his book, he gives the genealogy of the Saviour ; for he begins with these words : *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.* You see, then, that it is not without reason, that to Matthew has been assigned the figure of the man, since he begins with the human birth of the Saviour.

Again the deacon from the ambo :

Be silent : hear attentively !

He then read the beginning of St. Mark's Gospel, as far as the eighth verse. After which, the priest spoke as follows :

The evangelist Mark has the figure of the lion, because he begins with the desert, saying : *A voice of one crying in*

the desert : Prepare ye the way of the Lord ; or again, because the Saviour now reigns, and is invincible. This type of the lion is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, and is the application of those words : ' Juda is a lion's whelp : to the prey, my son, thou art gone up : resting, thou hast couched as a lion, and as a lioness : who shall rouse him ?'

The deacon, having repeated his injunction, next read the beginning of the Gospel according to St. Luke, as far as the seventeenth verse ; after which the priest said :

The evangelist Luke has the figure of the ox, which reminds us that the Saviour was offered in sacrifice. This evangelist begins by speaking of Zachary and Elizabeth, from whom, in their old age, was born John the Baptist.

The deacon having announced, in the same solemn manner, the Gospel of St. John, of which he read the first fourteen verses, the priest thus continued his instruction :

John has the figure of the eagle, because he soars aloft in the high places. It is he that says : *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.* David also, speaking of the person of Christ, thus expresses himself : 'Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's'; because our Lord Jesus Christ, having risen from the dead, ascended into heaven. Thus, dearly beloved children, the Church that has begotten you, and still bears you in her womb, exults at the thought of the new increase to be given to the Christian law, when, on the venerable day of Easter, you are to be born again in the waters of Baptism, and to receive, as all the saints, from Christ our Lord, the gift of the childhood of faith.

The manifestation of the four evangelists was followed by the ceremony called the giving of the Symbol (*Traditio Symboli*). It consisted in giving to the catechumens the Apostles' Creed (or Symbol), and in subsequent ages, that of Nicæa, or, as we call it, the Nicene Creed. The following allocution was first made by a priest :

Being now admitted to receive the Sacrament of Baptism, and become new creatures in the Holy Ghost, it behoves you, dearly beloved children, to conceive at once in your hearts the faith whereby you are to be justified : it behoves you, having your minds henceforth changed by the habit of truth, to draw nigh to God, who is the light of your souls. Receive, therefore, the secret of the evangelical Symbol, which was inspired by the Lord, and drawn up by the apostles. Its words are few, but great are the mysteries it contains : for the Holy Ghost, who dictated this formula to the first masters of the Church, has here expressed the faith that saves us, with great precision of words, in order that the truths you have to believe and unceasingly meditate on might neither surpass your understanding, nor escape your memory. Be, then, attentive, that you may learn this Symbol ; and what, having ourselves received, we hand down to you, that same write, not on corruptible things, but on the tablets of your heart. Now, the confession of faith, which you have received, begins thus.

One of the catechumens was then told to come forward, and the priest addressed the following question to the acolyte who accompanied him :

In what language do these confess our Lord Jesus Christ ?

The acolyte answered :

In Greek.

It should be remembered, that under the emperors, the use of the Greek language was almost as general in Rome as that of the Latin. The priest then said to the acolyte :

Make known to them the faith they believe.

Here the acolyte, holding his hand over the catechumen's head, pronounced the Creed in Greek, in a solemn tone. One of the female catechumens, whose language was the Greek, was then brought forward, and the acolyte repeated the Creed in the same manner. The priest then said :

Dearly beloved children, you have heard the Symbol in Greek ; hear it now in Latin.

Accordingly, two catechumens, who spoke the Latin language, were brought forward, first a man, and then a woman. The acolyte recited the Creed in Latin before each of them, and loud enough for all the others to hear. The giving of the Symbol thus completed, the priest made the following allocution :

This is the compendium of our faith, dearly beloved children, and these are the words of the Symbol, drawn up, not according to the conceits of human wisdom, but according to the thoughts of God. There is no one but can understand and remember them. There it is, that is expressed the one and coequal power of God the Father and the Son ; there, that is shown to us the only-begotten Son of God, born, according to the flesh, of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost ; there, that are related his crucifixion, his burial, and his resurrection on the third day ; there, that is proclaimed his ascension above the heavens, his sitting at the right hand of the majesty of the Father, and his future coming to judge the living and the dead ; there, that is announced the Holy Ghost, who has the same divinity as the Father and the Son ; there, in fine, that are taught the vocation of the Church, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the flesh. You, therefore, put off the old man, my dearly beloved children, that you may be reformed according to the new ; once carnal, you begin now to be spiritual ; once of earth, now of heaven. Believe, with firm and unshaken faith, that the Resurrection which was accomplished in Christ will likewise be accomplished in you ; and that this miracle, which has been achieved in him who is our Head, will be repeated in all them that are members of his body. The Sacrament of Baptism, which you are soon to receive, is the visible expression of this hope ; for in it is represented both a death and a resurrection ; there the old man is left, there the new man is assumed. The sinner descends into the water, and comes out justified. He, that had dragged us into death, is cast off ; and he is received who restored us to life, and who, by the grace that he will give you, will make you children of God, not by the flesh, but by the virtue of the Holy Ghost. It is your duty, therefore, to keep this short formula in your hearts, so as to make use of the confession it contains, as a help to you on all occasions. The power of this armour is invincible against all the attacks of the enemy ; it should be worn by the true

soldiers of Christ. Let the devil, who tempts man without ceasing, find you ever armed with this Symbol. Triumph over the adversary, whom you have just renounced. By God's grace, preserve incorruptible and unsullied, even to the end, the grace he is about to give you ; that thus, he in whom you are soon to receive the forgiveness of your sins, may bring you to the glory of the Resurrection. Thus, then, dearly beloved children, you know the Symbol of the Catholic faith ; carefully learn it, not changing one word. God's mercy is powerful ; may it bring you to the faith of the Baptism to which you aspire ; and may it lead us, who this day reveal to you the mysteries, to the heavenly kingdom together with you ; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth, for ever and ever. Amen.

The giving of the Symbol was followed by another gift : the Lord's Prayer. The deacon first made the announcement ; he urged the catechumens to silence and attention ; and then a priest delivered the following allocution :

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, among his other saving precepts, gave to his disciples, on that day when they asked him how they ought to pray, this form of prayer, which we are about to repeat to you, and explain in all its fulness. Let your charity, therefore, now hear how the Saviour taught his disciples to pray to God the Father almighty. 'When thou shalt pray,' said he, 'enter into thy chamber ; and having shut the door, pray to thy Father.' Here, by chamber, he means not a room, but the interior of the heart, which is known to God alone. By saying that we ought to adore God after having shut the door, he signifies that we ought to shut out, with a spiritual key, all bad thoughts from our heart, and speak to God, though our lips may be closed, in purity of soul. What our God hears, is not the sound of our words, but our faith. Let our heart, then, be shut, with the key of faith, against the craft of the enemy ; let it not be opened save to that God, whose temple we know it is ; and the Lord, dwelling thus in our heart, will be propitious and grant our prayers. The prayer taught us by the Word, the Wisdom of God, Christ our Lord, is this :

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN

Observe these words, how full they are of holy liberty and confidence. Live, therefore, in such manner, that you may

be children of God, and brethren of Christ. What rashness would he be guilty of, who dared to call God *his Father*, yet proved himself to be degenerate by opposing God's will! Dearly beloved children, show yourselves to be worthy of the divine adoption; for it is written: 'To them that believe in his name, he gave power to be made the sons of God.'

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

It is not that God, who is ever holy, needs that he be hallowed by us; but what we here ask, is that his name be sanctified in us; so that we, who have been made holy by the Baptism he has given us, may persevere in the new being we have received from him.

THY KINGDOM COME

Our God whose kingdom is for ever, does he not always reign? Yes, undoubtedly: but what we ask for, when we say, *Thy kingdom come*, is the coming of that kingdom which he has promised us, and which Christ has merited for us by his Blood and Passion.

THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

That is to say: May thy will be in such manner fulfilled, that what thou willest in heaven, may be faithfully accomplished by us who are on earth.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

We mean, by this, our spiritual food; for Christ is our bread, as he said: 'I am the living Bread that came down from heaven.' We say our *daily* bread, because we ought unceasingly to ask to be made free from sin, in order that we may be made worthy of the heavenly nourishment.

AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US

These words signify that we cannot merit the forgiveness of our sins, unless we first forgive what others do against us. Thus it is that our Lord says in the Gospel: 'If you will not forgive men their offences, neither will your Father forgive you your offences.'

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

That is : suffer us not to be led into it by the tempter, by the author of evil. For the Scripture says : ' God is not the tempter of evil things.' It is the devil that tempts us ; and that we may overcome him, the Lord says to us : ' Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.'

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL

These words refer to that which is said by the apostle : ' We know not what we should pray for.' We should beseech the one only and omnipotent God, that the evils which we cannot avoid because of human weakness, we may avoid in virtue of that help which will mercifully be granted us by our Lord Jesus Christ, who, being God, liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever.

After this allocution, the deacon said :

Observe order and silence, and lend an attentive ear !

The priest then continued, in these words :

You have just heard, dearly beloved children, the mysteries of the Lord's Prayer : see, therefore, that you fix them in your hearts, both coming in and going out, that you may become perfect, asking and receiving the mercy of God. The Lord our God is mighty, and will lead you, who are on the way to faith, to the laver of the water of regeneration. May he mercifully grant that we, who have delivered unto you the mysteries of the Catholic faith, may be brought, together with you, to the kingdom of heaven : who liveth and reigneth with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever.

After the Gospel, in which was related the cure of the man that was born blind, the deacon, as usual, commanded all the catechumens to leave the church. They were taken out by their sponsors ; but these returned, in order to assist at Mass with the rest of the faithful. At the Offertory, they came up to the altar, and gave the names of their spiritual children ; which names, as also those of the sponsors themselves, were read by the bishop in the Canon. To-

wards the end of Mass, the catechumens were brought back into the church, and were told on what day they were to present themselves for examination on the Symbol and the other instructions they had that day received.

The imposing ceremony, which we have thus briefly described, was not confined to this day : it was repeated as often as needed ; that is, according to the number of the catechumens, and the time required for gaining information regarding their conduct and the preparation they were making for Baptism. In the Church of Rome, these *scrutinies* were held seven times, as we have already remarked ; but the one of to-day was the most numerous and solemn ; each of the seven terminated with the ceremony we have been describing.

COLLECT

Deus, qui et justis præmia meritum, et peccatoribus per jejunium veniam præbes : miserere supplicibus tuis ; ut reatus nostri confessio indulgentiam valeat percipere delictorum. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

O God, who givest to the righteous the reward of their good works, and by fasting, pardon to sinners ; have mercy on thy suppliants, that the acknowledgment of our guilt may procure us the remission of our sins. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Lectio Ezechielis Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet Ezechiel.

Cap. xxxvi.

Ch. xxxvi.

Hæc dicit Dominus Deus : Sanctificabo nomen meum magnum, quod pollutum est inter gentes, quod polluistis in medio earum : ut sciant gentes quia ego Dominus, cum sanctificatus fuero in vobis coram eis. Tollam quippe

Thus saith the Lord God : I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the Gentiles, which you have profaned in the midst of them ; that the Gentiles may know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord of

vos de gentibus, et congregabo vos de universis terris, et adducam vos in terram vestram. Et effundam super vos aquam mundam, et mundabimini ab omnibus inquinamentis vestris, et ab universis idolis vestris mundabo vos. Et dabo vobis cor novum, et spiritum novum ponam in medio vestri: et auferam cor lapideum de carne vestra, et dabo vobis cor carneum. Et Spiritum meum ponam in medio vestri: et faciam ut in præceptis meis ambuletis, et judicia mea custodiat, et operemini. Et habitabitis in terra quam dedi patribus vestris: et eritis mihi in populum, et ego ero vobis in Deum: dicit Dominus omnipotens.

hosts, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the Gentiles, and will gather you together out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. And I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness, and I will cleanse you from all your idols. And I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in the midst of you, and I will cause you to walk in my commandments, and to keep my judgments, and do them. And you shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God, saith the Lord almighty.

These magnificent promises, which are to be fulfilled in favour of the Jewish people, as soon as God's justice shall have been satisfied, are to be realized firstly, in our catechumens. These are they that have been *gathered together from all the countries* of the Gentile world, in order that they may be brought *into their own land*, the Church. A few days hence there will be poured upon them that *clean water*, which shall cleanse them from all the defilements of their past idolatry; they shall receive *a new heart*, and *a new spirit*; they shall be God's *people* for ever.

SECOND LESSON

Lectio Isaiaë Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet
Isaias.*Cap. i.**Ch. i.*

Hæc dicit Dominus Deus :
Lavamini, mundi estote, au-
fertè malum cogitationum
vestrarum ab oculis meis :
quiescite agere perverse, dis-
cite benefacere : quærite ju-
dicium, subvenite oppresso,
judicate pupillo, defendite
viduam. Et venite, et ar-
guite me, dicit Dominus. Si
fuerint peccata vestra ut coc-
cinum, quasi nix dealbabun-
tur : et si fuerint rubra quasi
vermiculus, velut lana alba
erunt. Si volueritis, et audi-
eritis me, bona terræ come-
detis : dicit Dominus omnipo-
tens.

Thus saith the Lord God :
Wash yourselves, be clean,
take away the evil of your
devices from my eyes : cease
to do perversely, learn to do
well : seek judgment, relieve
the oppressed, judge for the
fatherless, defend the widow.
And then come and accuse
me, saith the Lord : if your
sins be as the scarlet, they
shall be made as white as
snow : and if they be red as
crimson, they shall be white
as wool. If you be willing,
and will hearken to me, you
shall eat the good things of
the land, saith the Lord al-
mighty.

It is to her penitents that the Church addresses these grand words of Isaias. There is a baptism also prepared for them ; a laborious baptism indeed, but still, one that has power to cleanse their souls from all their defilements, if only they receive it with sincere contrition, and be resolved to make atonement for the evil they have committed. What could be stronger than the language used by God, in making His promise of forgiveness ? He compares the change He will make, in the soul of a repentant sinner, to that of scarlet and crimson become white as snow. The unjust is to be made just ; darkness is to be turned into light ; the slave of satan is to become the child of God. Let us rejoice with our glad mother, the holy Church ; and redoubling the fervour of our

prayer and penance, let us induce our Lord to grant that, on the great Easter feast, the number of conversions may surpass our hopes.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. ix.

In illo tempore: Præteriens Jesus vidit hominem cæcum a nativitate: et interrogaverunt eum discipuli ejus: Rabbi, quis peccavit, hic, aut parentes ejus, ut cæcus nasceretur? Respondit Jesus: Neque hic peccavit, neque parentes ejus: sed ut manifestentur opera Dei in illo. Me oportet operari opera ejus, qui misit me, donec dies est: venit nox, quando nemo potest operari. Quamdiu sum in mundo, lux sum mundi. Hæc cum dixisset, exspuit in terram, et fecit lutum ex sputo, et linivit lutum super oculos ejus, et dixit ei: Vade, lava in natatoria Siloe (quod interpretatur Missus). Abiit ergo, et lavit, et venit videns. Itaque vicini, et qui viderant eum prius, quia mendicus erat, dicebant: Nonne hic est, qui sedebat, et mendicabat? Alii dicebant: Quia hic est; alii autem: Nequaquam, sed similis est ei. Ille vero dicebat: Quia ego sum. Dicebant ergo ei: Quomodo aperti sunt tibi oculi? Respondit: Ille homo qui dicitur Jesus,

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. ix.

At that time: Jesus passing by, saw a man who was blind from his birth; and his disciples asked him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had said these things, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes, and said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloe, which is interpreted, Sent. He went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing. The neighbours, therefore, and they who had seen him before, that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said: This is he; but others said: No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said

lutum fecit et unxit oculos meos, et dixit mihi : Vade ad natatoria Siloe, et lava. Et abii, lavi, et video. Et dixerunt ei : Ubi est ille ? Ait : Nescio. Adducunt eum ad pharisæos, qui cæcus fuerat. Erat autem Sabbatum quando lutum fecit Jesus, et aperuit oculos ejus. Iterum ergo interrogabant eum pharisæi quomodo vidisset. Ille autem dixit eis : Lutum mihi posuit super oculos, et lavi, et video. Dicebant ergo ex pharisæis quidam : Non est hic homo a Deo, qui sabbatum non custodit. Alii autem dicebant : Quomodo potest homo peccator hæc signa facere ? Et schisma erat inter eos. Dicunt ergo cæco iterum : Tu quid dicis de illo, qui aperuit oculos tuos ? Ille autem dixit : Quia propheta est. Non crediderunt ergo Judæi de illo, quia cæcus fuisset et vidisset, donec vocaverunt parentes ejus, qui viderat : et interrogaverunt eos, dicentes : Hic est filius vester, quem vos dicitis quia cæcus natus est ? Quomodo ergo nunc videt ? Responderunt eis parentes ejus, et dixerunt : Scimus quia hic est filius noster, et quia cæcus natus est : quomodo autem nunc videat, nescimus : aut quis ejus aperuit oculos, nos nescimus, ipsum interrogate : ætatem habet ; ipse de se loquatur. Hæc dixerunt parentes ejus, quoniam timebant Judæo : jam enim conspiraverant Judæi, ut si qui

therefore to him : How were thine eyes opened ? He answered : That man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said to me : Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. And they said to him : Where is he ? He saith : I know not. They bring him that had been blind to the pharisees. Now it was the Sabbath, when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Again therefore the pharisees asked him, how he had received his sight. But he said to them : He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see. Some therefore of the pharisees said : This man is not of God, who keepeth not the Sabbath. But others said : How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles ? And there was a division among them. They say therefore to the blind man again : What sayest thou of him that hath opened thy eyes ? And he said : He is a prophet. The Jews then did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight, and asked them, saying : Is this your son, who you say was born blind ? How then doth he now see ? His parents answered them, and said : We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind, but how he now

eum confiteretur esse Christum, extra synagogam fieret: propterea parentes ejus dixerunt: Quia ætatem habet, ipsum interrogate. Vocaverunt ergo rursus hominem, qui fuerat cæcus, et dixerunt ei: Da gloriam Deo. Nos scimus quia hic homo peccator est. Dixit ergo eis ille: Si peccator est, nescio: unum scio, quia cæcus cum essem, modo video. Dixerunt ergo illi: Quid fecit tibi? quomodo aperuit tibi oculos? Respondit eis: Dixi vobis jam, et audistis: quid iterum vultis audire? numquid et vos vultis discipuli ejus fieri? Maledixerunt ergo ei, et dixerunt: Tu discipulus illius sis: nos autem Moysi, discipuli sumus. Nos scimus quia Moysi locutus est Deus: hunc autem nescimus unde sit. Respondit ille homo, et dixit eis: In hoc enim mirabile est, quia vos nescitis unde sit, et aperuit meos oculos: scimus autem quia peccatores Deus non audit: sed si quis Dei cultor est, et voluntatem ejus facit, hunc exaudit. A sæculo non est auditum, quia quis aperuit oculos cæci nati. Nisi esset hic a Deo, non poterat facere quidquam. Responderunt et dixerunt ei: In peccatis natus es totus, et tu doces nos? Et ejecerunt eum foras. Audivit Jesus quia ejecerunt eum foras; et cum invenisset eum, dixit ei: Tu credis in Filium Dei? Respondit ille, et dixit: Quis est, Domine, ut credam in

seeth we know not, or who hath opened his eyes we know not; ask himself; he is of age, let him speak for himself. These things his parents said, because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask him. They therefore called the man again that had been blind, and said to him: Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner. He said therefore to them: If he be a sinner, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see. They said then to him: What did he do to thee? How did he open thy eyes? He answered them: I have told you already, and you have heard, why would you hear it again? will you also become his disciples? They reviled him, therefore, and said: Be thou his disciple: but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses; but as to this man, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said to them: Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners: but if a man be a server of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.

eum ? Et dixit ei Jesus : From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard, Et vidisti eum : et qui loquitur tecum, ipse est. At that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. At ille ait : Credo, Domine. Unless this man were of God, (Here all kneel.) Et proci- he could not do anything. dens, adoravit eum. They answered and said to him : Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us ? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out ; and when he had found him, he said to him : Dost thou believe in the Son of God ? He answered, and said : Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him ? And Jesus said to him : Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said : I believe, Lord. (Here all kneel.) And falling down, he adored him.

In the early ages of the Church, Baptism was frequently called *illumination*, because this Sacrament confers supernatural faith, whereby man is enlightened with the divine light. It is on this account, that the history of the cure of the man born blind was read on this day, for it is the figure of man's being enlightened by Christ. This subject is frequently met with in the paintings in the catacombs, and on the bas-reliefs of the ancient Christian monuments.

We are all born blind ; Jesus, by the mystery of His Incarnation, figured by this clay which represents our flesh, has merited for us the gift of sight ; but in order that we may receive it, we must go to the pool of Him that is divinely *Sent*, and we must be washed in the water of Baptism. Then shall we be enlightened with the very light of God, and the

darkness of reason will disappear. The humble obedience of the blind man, who executes, with the utmost simplicity, all that our Saviour commands him, is an image of our catechumens, who listen with all docility to the teachings of the Church, for they, too, wish to receive their sight. The blind man of the Gospel is, by the cure of his eyes, a type of what the grace of Christ works in us by Baptism. Let us listen to the conclusion of our Gospel, and we shall find that he is, also, a model for those who are spiritually blind, yet would wish to be healed.

Our Saviour asks him, as the Church asked us on the day of our Baptism : *Dost thou believe in the Son of God ?* The blind man, ardently desiring to believe, answers eagerly : *Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him ?* Faith brings the weak reason of man into union with the sovereign wisdom of God, and puts us in possession of His eternal truth. No sooner has Jesus declared Himself to be God, than this simple-hearted man falls down and adores Him : he that from being blind is blessed with bodily sight is now a Christian ! What a lesson was here for our catechumens ! At the same time, this history showed them, and reminds us, of the frightful perversity of Jesus' enemies. He is shortly to be put to death, He the Just by excellence ; and it is by the shedding of His Blood that He is to merit for us, and for all mankind, the cure of that blindness in which we were all born, and which our own personal sins have tended to increase. Glory, then, love, and gratitude be to our divine Physician, who, by uniting Himself to our human nature, has prepared the ointment, whereby our eyes are cured of their infirmity, and strengthened to gaze, for all eternity, on the brightness of the Godhead !

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Pateant aures misericordiæ tuæ, Domine, precibus supplicantium; et ut petentibus desiderata concedas, fac eos quæ tibi sunt placita postulare. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

May the ears of thy mercy, O Lord, be open to the prayers of thy servants; and in order to obtain the effect of our petitions, grant we may ask what is pleasing to thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Mozarabic liturgy offers us this fine Preface, or Illation, which is suggested by to-day's Gospel.

ILLATIO

(*Dominica II. Quadragesimæ*)

Dignum et justum est nos tibi gratias agere: Domine sancte, Pater æternæ, omnipotens Deus, per Jesum Christum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum. Qui illuminatione suæ fidei tenebras mundi expulit: et fecit filios esse gratiæ, qui tenebantur sub legis justæ damnatione: qui ita in iudicium in hoc mundo venit: ut non videntes viderent: et videntes cæci essent: qualiter et hi qui se in tenebris confiterentur errorum, perciperent lumen æternum, per quod carerent tenebris delictorum. Et hi qui de meritis suis arrogantes lumen in semetipsos habere justitiæ existimabant, in semetipsis merito tenebrescerent; qui elevati superbia sua et de justitia confisi propria, ad sanandum medicum non quærebant. Per Jesum enim, qui ostium esse dixit ad Patrem, poterant introire. Sed

It is meet and just that we should give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, eternal Father, almighty God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son: who by the light of his faith dispelled the darkness of the world. He made them, that were held captives under the just condemnation of the law, become children of grace. He came into the world that he might exercise this judgment: that they who saw not, might see: and they who saw, might become blind. Thus, they that confessed themselves to be in the darkness of error, were to receive the eternal light, whereby they would be delivered from the darkness of their sins: and they that prided themselves on their merits, and seemed to themselves to have the light of justice, were by a just judgment to be shrouded in their own darkness; they

quia de meritis elevati sunt improbe, in sua remanserunt nihilominus cæcitate. Proinde humiles nos venientes, nec de meritis nostris præsumentes, aperimus ante altare tuum, sanctissime Pater, vulnus proprium: tenebras nostrorum fatemur errorum: conscientiæ nostræ aperimus arcanum. Inveniamus, quæsumus, in vulnere medicinam, in tenebris lucem æternam: innocentiae puritatem in conscientia. Cernere etenim totis nisibus volumus faciem tuam: sed impedimur cæcati tenebra consueta. Cælos aspicere cupimus, nec valemus: dum cæcati tenebris peccatorum, nec hos pro sancta vita attendimus, qui propter excellentiam vitæ cæli nomine nuncupati sunt. Occurre igitur, Jesu, nobis in templo tuo orantibus: et cura omnes in hac die, qui in virtutibus facientes noluisti Sabbatum custodire. Ecce ante gloriam nominis tui aperimus vulnera nostra: tu appone nostris infirmitatibus medicinam. Succurre nobis ut promisisti precantibus: qui ex nihilo fecisti quod sumus. Fac collyrium et tange oculos nostri cordis et corporis: ne cæcique labamur in tenebrarum erroribus consuetis. Ecce pedes tuos rigamus fletibus: non nos abjicias humiliatos. O Jesu bone! a vestigiis tuis non recedamus: qui humilis venisti in terris. Audi jam nostrorum omnium precem: et evellens nostrorum

were exalted in their pride, they confided in their own justice: they sought not the physician that could heal them, for they might have entered by Jesus, who calls himself the door whereby we go to the Father. These men, therefore, by a wicked high-mindedness in their own merits, were left in their blindness. We, therefore, humbly come before thee; we presume not on our merits; but here before thy altar, O most holy Father, we confess our wounds, and the darkness of our errors, and the hidden things of our conscience. Grant, we beseech thee, that we may find cure for our wounds, light eternal for our darkness, spotless innocence for our conscience. With all our hearts do we desire to see thy face; but we are prevented by our usual darkness which blinds us. We would look up to heaven, yet cannot, for we are blinded by the darkness of our sins; neither do we, by holiness of life, come nigh to those, who, by reason of their sublime virtues, are called the heavens. Come, then, O Jesus, to us that are praying in thy temple. Heal us all upon this day, O thou that wouldst not have us so keep the Sabbath as to rest from good works. Lo! in thy divine presence, we confess our wounds; do thou heal our infirmities. Help us who pray to thee, for thou hast so

criminum cæcitatem, videmus gloriam faciei tuæ in pacis æternæ beatitudine.

promised ; help us, thou that, out of nothing, didst create us. Make an ointment for us, and touch with it the eyes of our soul and body ; lest, left in our blindness, we fall into our old darkness of error. We throw ourselves at thy feet, and water them with our tears ; cast us not away from thee, humbled thus before thee. O good Jesus ! thou that didst humbly come upon our earth, suffer us to remain near thee and tread in thy footsteps. Hear this our united prayer ; take from us the blindness of our sins ; and grant us to see the glory of thy face in the blessedness of eternal peace.

THURSDAY

OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is at the church of Saints Sylvester and Martin, which is one of the most venerable in Rome. It was originally built by Pope St. Sylvester, and still bears his name : but in the sixth century, it was consecrated to St. Martin of Tours. In the seventh century, it was enriched with the relics of Pope Saint Martin, which were brought from Chersonesus, where he had died a martyr a few years before. This church was the first Title of St. Charles Borromeo. It was also that of the learned liturgiologist, the Blessed Joseph-Mary Tommasi, whose body is now venerated in this church, and has been miraculously preserved, even to this day, in a state of incorruption.

COLLECT

Præsta quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut quos jejunia votiva castigant, ipsa quoque devotio sancta lætificet: ut, terrenis affectibus mitigatis, facilius celestia capiamus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that the devotion which makes us punish ourselves by this yearly fast, may also make us rejoice; to the end that, suppressing in ourselves all earthly affections, we may more easily receive thy heavenly inspirations. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Lectio libri Regum.

Lesson from the Book of Kings.

4. *Cap. iv.*

4. *Ch. iv.*

In diebus illis: Venit mulier Sunamitis ad Eliseum in montem Carmeli: cumque vidisset eam vir Dei e contra, ait ad Giezi puerum suum: Ecce Sunamitis illa. Vade ergo in occursum ejus, et dic ei: Rectene agitur circa te, et circa virum tuum, et circa filium tuum? Quæ respondit: Recte. Cumque venisset ad virum Dei in montem, apprehendit pedes ejus: et accessit Giezi ut amoveret eam. Et ait homo Dei: Dimitte illam, anima enim ejus in amaritudine est, et Dominus celavit a me, et non indicavit mihi. Quæ dixit illi: Numquid petivi filium a domino meo? Numquid non dixi tibi: Ne illudas me? Et ille ait ad Giezi: Accinge lumbos tuos, et tolle baculum meum in manu tua, et vade. Si occurrerit tibi homo, non sa-

In those days: A Sunamitess came to Eliseus on Mount Carmel: and when the man of God saw her coming towards him, he said to Giezi his servant: Behold that Sunamitess. Go therefore to meet her, and say to her: Is all well with thee, and with thy husband, and with thy son? And she answered: Well. And when she came to the man of God to the mount, she caught hold on his feet; and Giezi came to remove her. And the man of God said: Let her alone, for her soul is in anguish, and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me. And she said to him: Did I ask a son of my lord? Did I not say to thee: Do not deceive me? Then he said to Giezi: Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thy hand and go.

lutes eum : et si salutaverit te quispiam, non respondeas illi : et pones baculum meum super faciem pueri. Porro mater pueri ait : Vivit Dominus, et vivit anima tua, non dimittam te. Surrexit ergo, et secutus est eam. Giezi autem præcesserat ante eos, et posuerat baculum super faciem pueri, et non erat vox, neque sensus : reversusque est in occursum ejus, et nuntiavit ei dicens : Non surrexit puer. Ingressus est ergo Eliseus domum, et ecce puer mortuus jacebat in lectulo ejus : ingressusque clausit ostium super se, et super puerum : et oravit ad Dominum. Et ascendit, et incubuit super puerum : posuitque os suum super os ejus, et oculos suos super oculos ejus, et manus suas super manus ejus : et incurvavit se super eum, et calefacta est caro pueri. At ille reversus, deambulavit in domo, semel huc atque illuc : et ascendit, et incubuit super eum : et oscitavit puer septies, aperuitque oculos. At ille vocavit Giezi, et dixit ei : Voca Sunamitidem hanc. Quæ vocata, ingressa est ad eum. Qui ait : Tolle filium tuum. Venit illa, et corruit ad pedes ejus, et adoravit super terram : tulitque filium suum, et egressa est, et Eliseus reversus est in Galgala.

If any man meet thee, salute him not ; and if any man salute thee, answer him not ; and lay my staff upon the face of the child. But the mother of the child said : As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. He arose, therefore, and followed her. But Giezi was gone before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child, and there was no voice nor sense ; and he returned to meet him, and told him, saying : The child is not risen. Eliseus therefore went into the house, and behold the child lay dead on his bed. And going in, he shut the door upon him, and upon the child, and prayed to the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child ; and he put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he bowed himself upon him, and the child's flesh grew warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house, once to and fro ; and he went up, and lay upon him, and the child gaped seven times, and opened his eyes. And he called Giezi, and said to him : Call this Sunamitess. And she being called, went in to him. And he said : Take up thy son. She came and fell at his feet, and worshipped upon the ground, and took up her son, and went out. And Eliseus returned to Galgal.

In this mysterious event are clustered together all the wonders of the plan laid down by God for the salvation of man. If the catechumens were instructed in these sublime truths, it would be a disgrace in us to be ignorant of them ; therefore, let us be attentive to the teachings of this Epistle. This dead child is the human race ; sin has caused its death, but God has resolved to restore it to life. First of all, a servant is sent to the corpse ; this servant is Moses. His mission is from God ; but, of itself, the Law he brings gives not life. This Law is figured by the *staff* which Giezi holds in his hand, and which he lays upon the child's face ; but to no purpose. The Law is severe ; its rule is one of fear, on account of the hardness of Israel's heart ; yet is it with difficulty that it triumphs over his stubbornness ; and they of Israel who would be just must aspire to something more perfect and more filial than the Law of Sinai. The Mediator who is to bring down from heaven the sweet element of charity, has not yet come ; He is promised, He is pre-figured ; but He is not made flesh, He has not yet dwelt among us. The dead *child is not risen*. The Son of God must Himself come down.

Eliseus is the type of this divine Redeemer. See how he takes on himself the littleness of the child's body, and bows himself down into closest contact with its members, and this in the silence of a closed chamber. It was thus that the Word of the Father, shrouding His brightness in the womb of a Virgin, united Himself to our nature, and, as the apostle expresses it, emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men,¹ that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly² than when it was given to them at the beginning. Take notice, too, of what happens to the child, and what are the signs of the resurrection wrought in him.

¹ Phil. ii. 7.

² St. John x. 10.

He breathes seven times : the Holy Ghost with His seven gifts, is to take possession of man's soul and make it His temple. The child opens his eyes : the blindness of death is at an end. Neither must we forget the Sunamitess, the mother of the child : she is the type of the Church, who is praying her divine Eliseus to give her the resurrection of her dear catechumens, and of all unbelievers who are dwelling in the region of the shadow of death.¹ Let us join our prayers with hers, and beg that the light of the Gospel may be spread more and more, and that the obstacles, opposed by satan and the malice of men to its propagation, may be for ever removed.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Lucam.

Cap. vii.

In illo tempore : Ibat Jesus in civitatem quæ vocatur Naim : et ibant cum eo discipuli ejus, et turba copiosa. Cum autem appropinquaret portæ civitatis, ecce defunctus efferebatur, filius unicus matris suæ : et hæc vidua erat : et turba civitatis multa cum illa. Quam cum vidisset Dominus, misericordia motus super eam, dixit illi : Noli flere. Et accessit, et tetigit oculum (hi autem qui portabant steterunt). Et ait : Adolescens, tibi dico, surge. Et resedit qui erat mortuus, et cœpit loqui. Et dedit illum matri suæ. Accepit autem omnes timor : et magnificabant Deum, dicentes : Quia

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Luke.

Ch. vii.

At that time : Jesus went into a city that is called Naim ; and there went with him his disciples, and a great multitude. And when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow ; and a great multitude of the city was with her. Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her, he said to her : Weep not. And he came near, and touched the bier. And they that carried it, stood still. And he said : Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his

¹ Is. ix. 2.

Propheta magnus surrexit in nobis : et quia Deus visitavit plebem suam.

mother. And there came a fear on them all, and they glorified God, saying: A great prophet is risen up among us, and God hath visited his people.

The Church, both to-day and to-morrow, gives us types of the Resurrection; it is an announcement of the coming Pasch, and an encouragement for sinners to hope that their spiritual death will soon be changed into life. Before entering on the two weeks which are to be devoted to the commemoration of our Saviour's Passion, the Church shows her children the tender mercies of Him whose Blood is to purchase our reconciliation with divine Justice. She would have us argue, for our own consolation, that from such a Saviour we may well hope for pardon. Being thus rid of our fears, we shall be the more at liberty to contemplate the Sacrifice of our august Victim, and compassionate His sufferings. Let us attentively consider the Gospel just read to us. A heart-broken mother is following to the grave the corpse of an only son. Jesus has compassion upon her; He stays the bearers; He puts His divine hand on the bier; He commands the young man to arise; and then, as the Evangelist adds, Jesus *gave him to his mother*. This mother is the Church, who mourns over the death of so many of her children. Jesus is about to comfort her. He, by the ministry of His priests, will stretch forth His hand over these dead children; He will pronounce over them the great word that gives resurrection; and the Church will receive back into her arms these children she had lost, and they will be full of life and gladness.

Let us consider the mystery of the three resurrections wrought by our Saviour: that of the ruler's daughter,¹ that of the young man of to-day's Gospel,

¹ It is given in the Gospel for the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost.

and that of Lazarus, at which we are to assist to-morrow. The daughter of Jairus (for such was the ruler's name) had been dead only a few hours: she represents the sinner who has but recently fallen, and has not yet contracted the habit of sin, nor grown insensible to the qualms of conscience. The young man of Naim is the figure of a sinner, who makes no effort to return to God, and whose will has lost its energy: he is being carried to the grave; and but for Jesus' passing that way, he would soon have been of the number of them that are for ever dead. Lazarus is an image of a worse class of sinners. He is already a prey to corruption. The stone that closes his grave seals his doom. Can such a corpse as this ever come back to life? Yes, if Jesus mercifully deign to exercise His power. Now, it is during this holy season of Lent that the Church is praying and fasting, and we with her, to the end that these three classes of sinners may hear the voice of the Son of God, and hearing, rise and live.¹ The mystery of Jesus' Resurrection is to produce this wonderful effect in them all. Let us take our humble share in these merciful designs of God; let us, day and night, offer our supplications to our Redeemer, that, in a few days hence, seeing how He has raised the dead to life, we may cry out, with the people of Naim: *A great Prophet is risen up among us, and God hath visited His people!*

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Populi tui, Deus, institutor, et rector, peccata quibus impugnatur expelle: ut semper tibi placitus, et tuo munimine sit securus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

O God, the author and governor of thy people, deliver them from the sins by which they are assaulted; that they may be always well pleasing in thy sight, and safe under thy protection. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

¹ St. John v. 25.

We offer to our readers this admirable canticle of the Gothic Church of Spain. It is addressed to the catechumens, who are admitted to Baptism; but, here and there, it is applicable to the penitents, who are soon to be reconciled.

HYMN

(Sabbato Hebdomadæ V. in Quadragesima)

Vocaris ad vitam, sacrum Dei genus ;	O holy people of God ! thou art called unto life.
Creator adsciscens, amat quæ condidit ;	The Creator, loving the works of his hands, invites thee : the Redeemer lovingly draws thee, saying : Come, I am thy only God.
Redemptor attrahit benigno spiritu ;	
Venite, dicit, vester unus sum Deus.	
Prorsus relicto claritatis lumine,	You had departed from the bright light ; you had wretchedly fallen into the great abyss ; there was no longer a heaven for you ; cruel death had come upon the earth.
Ingens chaos vos pessime concluserat :	
Locus beatitudinis jam non erat ;	
Cruenta terra qua re mors intraverat.	
En, mitis adveni, creans ; et recreans Deus ;	Lo ! I, your Creator and your Re-Creator, your God, have come to you in love. I, though a sharer of your weak- ness, am the mighty God ; I will carry you in my strength ; come unto me, and the fold of joy shall welcome you back.
Potens, infirmitatis particeps vestræ	Your foreheads shall be marked with the sign of the cross ; and your ears and mouth anointed with oil.
Valenter vos feram, concur- rite ;	Lend the ear of your heart to what you are taught ; and sing the Symbol as a canticle of fervent praise.
Ut jam receptet vos ovile gaudii.	Rejoice in the new name that is given you. You are
Signo crucis frons præno- tetur indito :	
Aures, et os perfusa signet unctio :	
Præbete dictis cordis aurem : vividum	
Confessionis personate can- ticum.	
Omnes novo estote læti nomine :	

<p>Omnes novæ sortis foveat hæreditas : Nullus manebit servus hosti subditus : Eritis unius Dei regnum manens. Honor sit æterno Deo, sit gloria Uni Patri, ejusque soli Filio, Cum Spiritu ; quæ Trinitas perenniter Vivit potens in sæculorum sæcula. Amen.</p>	<p>all made heirs to a new inheritance. Not one of you shall remain a slave to the enemy. You shall be the permanent kingdom of the one God. Honour be to the eternal God ! Glory be to the one Father, and to his only Son, together with the Holy Ghost : the almighty Trinity, that liveth unceasingly for ever and ever. Amen.</p>
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FRIDAY

OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

THE Station is in the church of Saint Eusebius, priest of Rome, who suffered for the faith, in the Arian persecution, under the emperor Constantius.

COLLECT

<p>Deus, qui ineffabilibus mundum renovas sacramentis : præsta quæsumus, ut Ecclesia tua et æternis proficiat institutis, et temporalibus non destituatur auxiliis. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.</p>	<p>O God, who by thy ineffable mysteries givest new life to the world ; grant, we beseech thee, that thy Church may advance in the observance of thy eternal precepts, and never be destitute of thy temporal assistance. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>
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EPISTLE

Lectio libri Regum.

Lesson from the Book of Kings.

3. Cap. xvii.

3. Ch. xvii.

<p>In diebus illis : Ægrotavit filius mulieris matrisfamilias, et erat languor fortissimus,</p>	<p>In those days : The son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick, and the</p>
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ita ut non remaneret in eo halitus. Dixit ergo ad Eliam: Quid mihi et tibi vir Dei? Ingressus es ad me, ut rememorarentur iniquitates meae, et interficeres filium meum? Et ait ad eam Elias: Da mihi filium tuum. Tulitque eum de sinu ejus, et portavit in cœnaculum ubi ipse manebat, et posuit super lectulum suum. Et clamavit ad Dominum et dixit: Domine Deus meus, etiamne viduam, apud quam ego utcumque sustentor, afflixisti ut interficeres filium ejus? Et expandit se, atque mensus est super puerum tribus vicibus, et clamavit ad Dominum, et ait: Domine Deus meus, revertatur, obsecro, anima pueri hujus in viscera ejus. Et exaudivit Dominus vocem Eliæ: et reversa est anima pueri intra eum, et revixit. Tulitque Elias puerum, et deposuit eum de cœnaculo in inferiorem domum, et tradidit matri suæ, et ait illi: En vivit filius tuus. Dixitque mulier ad Eliam: Nunc in isto cognovi, quoniam vir Dei es tu, et verbum Domini in ore tuo verum est.

sickness was very grievous, so that there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elias: What have I to do with thee, thou man of God? Art thou come to me, that my iniquities should be remembered, and that thou shouldst kill my son? And Elias said to her: Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him into the upper chamber where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried to the Lord, and said: O Lord, my God, hast thou afflicted also the widow, with whom I am after a sort maintained, so as to kill her son? And he stretched, and measured himself upon the child three times, and cried to the Lord, and said: O Lord, my God, let the soul of this child, I beseech thee, return into his body. And the Lord heard the voice of Elias; and the soul of the child returned into him, and he revived. And Elias took the child, and brought him down from the upper chamber to the house below, and delivered him to his mother, and said to her: Behold thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elias: Now, by this, I know that thou art a man of God, and the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true.

Again it is a mother that comes, with tears in her eyes, praying for the resurrection of her child. This mother is the widow of Sarephtha, whom we have

already had as the type of the Gentile Church. She was once a sinner, and an idolatress, and the remembrance of the past afflicts her soul ; but the God that has cleansed her from her sins, and called her to be His bride, comforts her by restoring her child to life. The charity of Elias is a figure of that of the Son of God. Observe how this great prophet stretches himself upon the body of the boy, fitting himself to his littleness, as did also Eliseus. Here again, we recognize the divine mystery of the Incarnation. Elias thrice touches the corpse ; thrice, also, will our catechumens be immersed in the baptismal font, whilst the minister of God invokes the three Persons of the adorable Trinity. On the solemn night of Easter, Jesus, too, will say to the Church, His bride : *Behold, thy son liveth* ; and she, transported with joy, will acknowledge the truth of God's promises. Nay, the very pagans bore witness to this truth ; for when they saw the virtuous lives of this new people, which came forth regenerated from the waters of Baptism, they acknowledged that God alone could produce such virtue in man. There suddenly arose from the midst of the Roman empire, demoralized as it was and corrupt beyond imagination, a race of men of angelic purity ; and these very men had, but a short time before their Baptism, wallowed in all the abominations of paganism. Whence had they derived this sublime virtue ? From the Christian teaching, and from the supernatural remedies it provides for man's spiritual miseries. Then it was that unbelievers sought for the true faith, though they knew it was at the risk of martyrdom ; they ran to the Church, asking her to become their mother, and saying to her : *We know that thou art of God, and the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true.*

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. xi.

In illo tempore : Erat quidam languens Lazarus a Bethania, de castello Mariæ et Marthæ sororis ejus. (Maria autem erat, quæ unxit Dominum unguento, et extersit pedes ejus capillis suis : cujus frater Lazarus infirmabatur.) Miserunt ergo sorores ejus ad eum, dicentes : Domine, ecce quem amas, infirmatur. Audiens autem Jesus, dixit eis : Infirmitas hæc non est ad mortem, sed pro gloria Dei, ut glorificetur Filius Dei per eam. Diligebat autem Jesus Martham, et sororem ejus Mariam, et Lazarum. Ut ergo audivit quia infirmabatur, tunc quidem mansit in eodem loco duobus diebus. Deinde post hæc dixit discipulis suis : Eamus in Judæam iterum. Dicunt ei discipuli : Rabbi, nunc quærebant te Judæi lapidare, et iterum vadis illuc ? Respondit Jesus : Nonne duodecim sunt horæ diei ? Si quis ambulaverit in die, non offendit, quia lucem hujus mundi videt : si autem ambulaverit in nocte, offendit, quia lux non est in eo. Hæc ait, et post hæc dixit eis : Lazarus amicus noster dormit : sed vado ut a somno excitem eum. Dixerunt ergo discipuli ejus : Domine, si dormit salvus erit. Dixerat autem Jesus de morte

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. xi.

At that time : There was a certain man sick named Lazarus, of Bethania, of the town of Mary, and of Martha her sister. And Mary was she that anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. His sisters therefore sent to him, saying : Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. And Jesus hearing it said to them : This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he still remained in the same place two days. Then after that, he said to his disciples : Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say to him : Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again ? Jesus answered : Are there not twelve hours of the day ? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world ; but if he walk in the night he stumbleth, because the light is not in him. These things he said, and after that he said to them : Lazarus our friend sleepeth : but I go

ejus : illi autem putaverunt quia de dormitione somni diceret. Tunc ergo Jesus dixit eis manifeste : Lazarus mortuus est ; et gaudeo propter vos, ut credatis, quoniam non eram ibi. Sed eamus ad eum. Dixit ergo Thomas, qui dicitur Didymus, ad discipulos : Eamus et nos, ut moriamur cum eo. Venit itaque Jesus ; et invenit eum quatuor dies jam in monumento habentem. (Erat autem Bethania juxta Jerusalem quasi stadiis quindecim.) Multi autem ex Judæis venerant ad Martham et Mariam, ut consolarentur eas de fratre suo. Martha ergo ut audivit quia Jesus venit, occurrit illi : Maria autem domi sedebat. Dixit ergo Martha ad Jesum : Domine, si fuisses hic, frater meus non fuisset mortuus. Sed et nunc scio quia quæcumque poposceris a Deo, dabit tibi Deus. Dicit illi Jesus : Resurget frater tuus. Dicit ei Martha : Scio quia resurget in resurrectione in novissimo die. Dixit ei Jesus : Ego sum resurrectio et vita : qui credit in me, etiamsi mortuus fuerit, vivet : et omnis qui vivit et credit in me, non morietur in æternum. Credis hoc ? Ait illi : Utique, Domine, ego credidi, quia tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi, qui in hunc mundum venisti. Et cum hæc dixisset, abiit, et vocavit Mariam sororem suam silentio, dicens : Magister adest, et vocat te. Illa, ut audivit, surgit cito, et

that I may awake him out of sleep. His disciples therefore said : Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. But Jesus spoke of his death ; and they thought that he spoke of the repose of sleep. Then therefore Jesus said to them plainly : Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there, that you may believe ; but let us go to him. Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples : Let us also go, that we may die with him. Jesus therefore came, and found that he had been four days already in the grave. (Now Bethania was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.) And many of the Jews were come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Martha, therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was come, went to meet him ; but Mary sat at home. Martha therefore said to Jesus : Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died ; but now also I know, that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith to her : Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith to him : I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said to her : I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live ; and every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die for ever. Be-

venit ad eum ; nondum enim venerat Jesus in castellum, sed erat adhuc in illo loco, ubi occurrerat ei Martha. Judæi ergo, qui erant cum ea in domo, et consolabantur eam, cum vidissent Mariam, quia cito surrexit et exiit, secuti sunt eam, dicentes : Quia vadit ad monumentum, ut ploret ibi. Maria ergo, cum venisset ubi erat Jesus, videns eum, cecidit ad pedes ejus, et dicit ei : Domine, si fuisses hic, non esset mortuus frater meus. Jesus ergo, ut vidit eam plorantem, et Judæos qui venerant cum ea plorantes, infremuit spiritu, et turbavit seipsum, et dixit : Ubi posuistis eum ? Dicunt ei : Domine, veni et vide. Et lacrymatus est Jesus. Dixerunt ergo Judæi : Ecce quomodo amabat eum ! Quidam autem ex ipsis dixerunt : Non poterat hic, qui aperuit oculos cæci nati, facere ut hic non moreretur ? Jesus ergo rursus fremens in semetipso, venit ad monumentum. Erat autem spelunca : et lapis superpositus erat ei. Ait Jesus : Tollite lapidem. Dicit ei Martha, soror ejus qui mortuus fuerat : Domine, jam fœtet, quatruiduanus est enim. Dicit ei Jesus : Nonne dixi tibi, quoniam si crederis, videbis gloriam Dei ? Tulerunt ergo lapidem : Jesus autem, elevatis sursum oculis, dixit : Pater, gratias ago tibi, quoniam audisti me. Ego autem sciebam quia semper me audis, sed propter populum qui circumstat, dixi : ut

lievest thou this ? She saith to him : Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into this world. And when she had said these things, she went, and called her sister Mary secretly, saying : The Master is come, and calleth for thee. She, as soon as she heard this, riseth quickly, and cometh to him ; for Jesus was not yet come into the town, but he was still in that place where Martha had met him. The Jews therefore, who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up speedily, and went out, followed her saying : She goeth to the grave, to weep there. When Mary therefore was come where Jesus was, seeing him, she fell down at his feet, and saith to him : Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus therefore, when he saw her weeping, and the Jews, that were come with her, weeping, groaned in the spirit, and troubled himself, and said : Where have you laid him ? They say to him : Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept. The Jews therefore said : Behold how he loved him ! But some of them said : Could not he, that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man should not die ? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the sepulchre : now it was a cave

credant quia tu me misisti. Hæc cum dixisset, voce magna clamavit : Lazare, veni foras. Et statim prodiit, qui fuerat mortuus, ligatus pedes et manus institis, et facies illius sudario erat ligata. Dixit eis Jesus : Solvite eum, et sinite abire. Multi ergo ex Judæis, qui venerant ad Mariam et Martham, et viderant quæ fecit Jesus, crediderunt in eum.

and a stone was laid over it. Jesus saith : Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith to him : Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days. Jesus saith to her : Did I not say to thee that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God ? They took therefore the stone away ; and Jesus, lifting up his eyes, said : Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me ; and I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. When he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice : Lazarus, come forth ! And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them : Loose him, and let him go. Many therefore of the Jews, who were come to Mary and Martha, and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in him.

Let us meditate upon this admirable history ; and as we meditate, let us hope ; for it not only shows us what Jesus does for the souls of others, but what He has done for ours. Let us, also, renew our prayers for the penitents, who now, throughout the world, are preparing for the great reconciliation. It is not a mother that is here represented as praying for the resurrection of her child ; it is two sisters asking this grace for a brother. The example must not be lost

on us : we must pray for one another. But let us take our Gospel in the order of its truths.

First, Lazarus was sick ; and then, he died. The sinner begins by being tepid and careless ; and then he receives the mortal wound. Jesus could have cured Lazarus of his sickness ; but He permitted it to be fatal. He intends to work such a miracle, and that within sight of Jerusalem, that His enemies shall have no excuse for refusing to receive Him as the Messiah. He would also prove that He is the sovereign Master of life, in order that He might hereby teach His apostles and disciples not to be scandalized at the death He Himself was soon to suffer. In the moral sense, God, in His wisdom, sometimes leaves an ungrateful soul to itself, although He foresees that it will fall into sin. It will rise again ; and the confusion it will feel for having sinned will lead it to that great preservative against a future fall—humility.

The two sisters, Martha and Mary, are full of grief, yet full of confidence in Jesus. Let us observe how their two distinct characters are shown on this occasion. Jesus tells Martha that He is *the resurrection and the life*, and that they who believe in Him shall not die—that is, shall not die the death of sin. But when Mary came to Him, and *He saw her weeping, He groaned in the spirit, and troubled Himself*, because He knew the greatness of her love. His divine Heart was touched with compassion as He beheld these, who were so dear to Him, smarting under that chastisement of death which sin had brought into the world. Having reached the sepulchre where Lazarus was buried, He wept, for He loved Lazarus. Thus did our Redeemer, by His own weeping, sanctify the tears which Christian affection sheds over the grave of a relative or friend. Lazarus has been in the sepulchre four days ; it is the image of the sinner buried in his sins. To see him now, is what even

his sister shudders at : but Jesus rebukes her, and bids them take away the stone. Then with that voice which commands all nature and makes hell tremble, He cries out : *Lazarus, come forth !* He that had been dead rises up in the sepulchre ; but his feet and hands are tied, his face is covered with a napkin ; he lives, but he can neither walk nor see. Jesus orders him to be set free ; and then, by the hands of the men that are present, he recovers the use of his limbs and eyes. So is it with the sinner that receives pardon. There is no voice but that of Jesus which can call him to conversion, and touch his heart, and bring him to confess his sins ; but Jesus has put into the hands of priests the power to loose, enlighten, and give movement. This miracle, which was wrought by our Saviour at this very season of the year, filled up the measure of His enemies' rage, and set them thinking how they could soonest put Him to death. The few days He has still to live, are all to be spent at Bethania, where the miracle has taken place, and which is but a short distance from Jerusalem. In nine days from this, He will make His triumphant entry into the faithless city, after which He will return to Bethania, and after three or four days, will once more enter Jerusalem, there to consummate the Sacrifice, whose infinite merits are to purchase resurrection for sinners.

The early Christians loved to see this history of our Lord's raising Lazarus to life painted on the walls of the catacombs. We also find it carved on the sarcophagi of the fourth and fifth centuries ; and later on, it was not unfrequently chosen as a subject for the painted windows of our cathedrals. This symbol of spiritual resurrection was formerly honoured by a most solemn ceremony, in the great monastery of holy Trinity, at Vendôme, in France. Every year, on this day, a criminal who had been sentenced to death, was led to the church of the monastery. He

had a rope round his neck, and held in his hand a torch weighing thirty-three pounds, in memory of the years spent on earth by our Saviour. The monks made a procession, in which the criminal joined ; after which, a sermon was preached, at which he also assisted. He was then taken to the foot of the altar, where the abbot, after exhorting him to repentance, imposed on him, as a penance, the pilgrimage to St. Martin's church at Tours. The abbot loosened the rope from his neck, and declared him to be free. The origin of this ceremony was, that when Louis of Bourbon, Count of Vendôme, was prisoner in England, in the year 1426, he made a vow that, if God restored him to liberty, he would establish this custom in the church of holy Trinity, as a return of gratitude, and as a homage to Christ, who raised up Lazarus from the tomb. God accepted the vow, and the prince soon recovered his freedom.

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Da nobis, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui infirmitatis nostræ conscii, de tua virtute confidimus, de tua semper pietate gaudeamus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that we, who are sensible of our own weakness, and confide in thy power, may always rejoice in the effects of thy goodness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us pray to-day for the conversion of sinners, using this devout formula given by the Roman pontifical in the reconciliation of penitents :

PRAYER

Deus, humani generis benignissime conditor, et misericordissime reformator, qui hominem invidia diaboli ab æternitate dejectum unici

O God, the most loving Creator, and most merciful Redeemer of mankind ! who, when man, through the devil's malice, forfeited eternal life,

Filii tui sanguine redemisti, vivifica hos famulos tuos, quos tibi nullatenus mori desideras; et qui non derelinquis devios, assume correctos; moveant pietatem tuam, quæsumus, Domine, horum famulorum tuorum lacrymosa suspiria; tu eorum medere vulneribus; tu jacentibus manum porrige salutarem; ne Ecclesia tua aliqua sui corporis portione vastetur; ne grex tuus detrimentum sustineat: ne de familiæ tuæ damno inimicus exsultet; ne renatos lavacro salutari mors secunda possideat. Tibi ergo, Domine, supplices fundimus preces, tibi fletum cordis effundimus; tu parce confitentibus, ut imminentibus pœnis sententiam futuri iudicii, te miserante, non incidant; nesciant quod terret in tenebris, quod stridet in flammis, atque ab erroris via ad iter reversi justitiæ, nequaquam ultra novis vulneribus sauciantur; sed integrum sit eis, ac perpetuum, et quod gratia tua contulit, et quod misericordia reformavit. Per eundem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum. Amen.

didst redeem him by the Blood of thine only Son; restore to life these thy servants, who thou willest not should be dead to thee. Thou abandonest not them that go astray; receive these that have returned to the right path. We beseech thee, O Lord, let thy mercy be moved by the tears and sighs of these thy servants; heal their wounds; stretch forth thy saving hand, and raise them up: lest thy Church be robbed of a part of her body; lest thy flock should suffer loss; lest the enemy should rejoice in the perdition of them that are of thy family; lest the second death should seize them that were regenerated in the waters of salvation. To thee, therefore, O Lord, do we thy suppliants pour forth our prayers, to thee the weeping of our heart. Spare them that trust in thee, and, in thy mercy, suffer them not to fall under the sentence of thy judgment to come, whereby they would be condemned to punishment. Let not the horrors of darkness, or the scorching of flames come nigh to them. They have returned from the way of error to the path of justice; let them not be again wounded. What thy grace hath conferred, and thy mercy hath reformed, let it remain in them whole and for ever. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SATURDAY

OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

THIS Saturday, in the early ages of Christianity, was called *Sitientes*, from the first word of the Introit of the Mass, in which the Church addresses her catechumens in the words of Isaias, and invites them that *thirst* after grace, to come and receive it in the holy Sacrament of Baptism. At Rome, the Station was originally in the basilica of Saint Laurence *outside the walls*; but it was found inconvenient, on account of its great distance from the city; and the church of Saint Nicholas *in carcere*, which is within the walls, was selected for to-day's Station.

COLLECT

<p>Fiat, Domine, quæsumus, per gratiam tuam, fructuosus nostræ devotionis affectus: quia tunc nobis proderunt suscepta jejunia, si tuæ sint placita pietati. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.</p>	<p>Grant us, O Lord, we beseech thee, an increase of devotion: for then only will our fasts avail us, when they are well pleasing to thy goodness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>
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EPISTLE

Lectio Isaiæ Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet Isaias.

*Cap. xlix.**Ch. xlix.*

Hæc dicit Dominus: In tempore placito exaudivi te, et in die salutis auxiliatus sum tui: et servavi te, et dedi te in fœdus populi, ut suscitares terram, et possideres hæreditates dissipatas; ut

Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee; and I have preserved thee, and given thee to be a covenant of the people, that thou mightest

diceret his qui vincti sunt : Exite : et his qui in tenebris : Revelamini. Super vias pascentur, et in omnibus planis pascua eorum. Non esurient, neque sitient, et non percutiet eos æstus et sol : quia miserator eorum reget eos, et ad fontes aquarum potabit eos. Et ponam omnes montes meos in viam, et semitæ meæ exaltabuntur. Ecce isti de longe venient, et ecce illi ab aquilone et mari, et isti de terra australi. Laudate, cœli, et exulta, terra ; jubilate, montes, laudem : quia consolatus est Dominus populum suum, et pauperum suorum miserabitur. Et dixit Sion : Dereliquit me Dominus, et Dominus oblitus est mei. Numquid oblivisci potest mulier infantem suum, ut non miseretur filio uteri sui ? Et si illa oblita fuerit, ego tamen non obliviscar tui, dicit Dominus omnipotens.

raise up the earth and possess the inheritances that were destroyed ; that thou mightest say to them that are bound : Come forth ; and to them that are in darkness : Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in every plain. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun strike them : for he that is merciful to them shall be their shepherd, and at the fountains of waters he shall give them drink. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my paths shall be exalted. Behold these shall come from afar, and behold these from the north and from the sea, and these from the south country. Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth ; ye mountains, give praise with jubilation ; because the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his poor ones. And Sion said : The Lord hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb ? And if she should forget, yet will I not forget thee, saith the Lord almighty.

How these words of love must have consoled the hearts of our catechumens ! Never did our heavenly Father express His tender mercy towards us in more glowing terms ; and He bade His prophet deliver them to us. He gives the whole earth to His Son, Jesus Christ, our Incarnate Lord, not that He may judge and condemn it, as it deserves, but that He

may save it.¹ This divine Ambassador, having come on the earth, tells all that are galled by fetters, or that sit in the gloomy shadow of death, to come to Him, promising them liberty and light. Their hunger shall be appeased, and their thirst quenched. They shall no longer pant under the scorching rays of the sun, but shall be led by their merciful Shepherd to the cool shades on the banks of the water of life. They came from every nation under heaven: *the fountain*, the font, shall be the centre where all the human race is to meet. The Gentile world is to be henceforth called *Sion*, and the Lord loveth the gates of this new Sion above all the tabernacles of Jacob.² God had not forgotten her during the long ages of her idol worship; His love is tender as that of the fondest mother; yea, and though a mother's heart may *forget* her child, God never will forget His Sion. You, then, who received Baptism at your very entrance into the world, but have, since then, served another master besides Him to whom you swore perpetual allegiance at the font, be of good heart! If the grace of God has found you submissive, if the holy exercises of Lent and the prayers offered for you by the Church have had their effect, and you are now preparing to make your peace with God, read these words of your heavenly Father, and fear not! How can you fear? He has given you to His own Son; He has told Him to save, heal, and comfort you. Are you in the bonds of sin? Jesus can break them. Are you in spiritual darkness? He is the light of the world, and can dispel the thickest gloom. Are you hungry? He is the Bread of life. Are you thirsty? He is the fountain of living water. Are you scorched, are you burnt to the very core, by the heat of concupiscence? Even so, poor sufferers! you must not lose courage; there is a cool fountain ready to refresh you, and heal all

¹ St. John iii. 17.

² Ps. lxxxvi. 2.

your wounds ; not indeed the first font, which gave you the life you have lost ; but the second Baptism, the divine Sacrament of Penance, which can restore you to grace and purity !

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Joannem.

Cap. viii.

In illo tempore : Locutus est Jesus turbis Judæorum, dicens : Ego sum lux mundi : qui sequitur me, non ambulat in tenebris, sed habebit lumen vitæ. Dixerunt ergo ei pharisæi : Tu de teipso testimonium perhibes : testimonium tuum non est verum. Respondit Jesus, et dixit eis : Et si ego testimonium perhibeo de meipso, verum est testimonium meum : quia scio unde veni, et quo vado : vos autem nescitis unde venio, aut quo vado. Vos secundum carnem judicatis : ego non judico quemquam : et si judico ego, judicium meum verum est : quia solus non sum, sed ego, et qui misit me, Pater. Et in lege vestra scriptum est, quia duorum hominum testimonium verum est. Ego sum qui testimonium perhibeo de meipso : et testimonium perhibet de me, qui misit me, Pater. Dicebant ergo ei : Ubi est Pater tuus ? Respondit Jesus : Neque me scitis, neque Patrem meum : si me sciretis, forsitan et Patrem meum sciretis. Hæc verba locutus est Jesus in gazophylacio, docens in

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to John.

Ch. viii.

At that time : Jesus spoke to the multitude of the Jews, saying : I am the light of the world ; he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The pharisees therefore said to him : Thou givest testimony of thyself ; thy testimony is not true. Jesus answered and said to them : Although I give testimony of myself, my testimony is true : for I know whence I came and whither I go, but you know not whence I come, or whither I go. You judge according to the flesh, I judge not any man. And if I do judge, my judgment is true ; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. And in your law it is written, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one, that give testimony of myself ; and the Father that sent me, giveth testimony of me. They said therefore to him : Where is thy Father ? Jesus answered : Neither me do you know, nor my Father ; if you did know me, perhaps you would know my Father also. These words Jesus spoke in the treasury,

templo : et nemo apprehendit eum, quia necdum venerat hora ejus.	teaching in the temple : and no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.
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What a contrast between the tender mercy of God, who invites all men to receive His Son as their Redeemer, and the obduracy of heart wherewith the Jews receive the heavenly Ambassador ! Jesus has proclaimed Himself to be the Son of God, and, in proof of His divine origin, has, for three long years, wrought the most astounding miracles. Many of the Jews have believed in Him, because they argued that God could never have authorized falsity by miracles ; and they therefore accepted the doctrine of Jesus as coming from heaven. The pharisees hate the light, and love darkness ; their pride will not yield even to the evidence of facts. At one time they denied the genuineness of Jesus' miracles ; at another, they pretended to explain them by the agency of the devil. Then, too, they put questions to Him of such a captious nature, that, in what way soever Jesus answered, they might accuse Him of blasphemy, or contempt for the Law. To-day, they have the audacity to make this objection to Jesus' being the Messias : that He gives testimony in His own favour ! Our blessed Lord, who knows the malice of their hearts, deigns to refute their impious sarcasm ; but He avoids giving them an explicit answer. It is evident that the light is passing from Jerusalem, and is to bless other lands. How terrible is this punishment of a soul that abuses the truth, and rejects it by an instinctive hatred ! Her crime is that sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.¹ Happy he that loves the truth, though it condemns his evil passions, and troubles his conscience ! Such an one proves that he reveres the wisdom of God ; and if it do not altogether rule

¹ St. Matt. xii. 32.

his conduct it does not abandon him. But happier far he that yields himself wholly to the truth, and, as a humble disciple, follows Jesus. *He walketh not in darkness ; he shall have the light of life.* Let us, then, lose no time, but take at once that happy path marked out for us by Him who is our light and our life. Keeping close to His footsteps, we went up the rugged hill of Quarantana, and there we witnessed His rigid fast ; but now that the time of His Passion is at hand, He invites us to follow Him up another mount, that of Calvary, there to contemplate His sufferings and death. Let us not hesitate ; we shall be repaid : *we shall have the light of life.*

Humiliate capita vestra
Deo.

Deus, qui sperantibus in te misereri potius eligis quam irasci : da nobis digne flere mala quæ fecimus, ut tuæ consolationis gratiam invenire mereamur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Bow down your heads to
God.

O God, who choosest rather to show mercy, than to be angry with those that hope in thee, grant we may worthily lament the evil we have committed, that so we may find the favour of thy consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us end these first four weeks of Lent with a hymn to our blessed Lady, the Mother of mercy. Saturday is always sacred to her. The hymn we give is taken from the ancient Roman-French missals.

SEQUENCE

Ave Maria,
Gratia plena.
Dominus tecum,
Virgo serena.
Benedicta tu
In mulieribus,
Quæ peperisti
Pacem hominibus,
Et angelis gloriam.

Hail Mary, full of grace !
The Lord is with thee, O
gentle Virgin !

Blessed art thou among
women, for thou didst bring
forth peace to men and glory
to the angels.

Et benedictus
Fructus ventris tui,
Qui cohæredes
Ut essemus sui,
Nos fecit per gratiam.

Per hoc autem Ave,
Mundo tam suave,
Contra carnis jura
Genuisti prolem,
Novum stella solem,
Nova genitura.

Tu parvi et magni,
Leonis et Agni,
Salvatoris Christi
Templum exstitisti ;
Sed virgo intacta.

Tu Solis et Roris,
Panis et Pastoris,
Virginum Regina,
Rosa sine spina,
Genitrix es facta.

Tu civitas Regis justitiæ,
Tu mater es misericordiæ,
De lacu fœcis et miseræ
Theophilum reformans gratiæ.

Te collaudat cœlestis curia
Tu Mater es Regis et filia,
Per te reis donatur venia,
Per te justis confertur gratia.

Ergo maris stella,
Verbi Dei cella,
Et solis aurora,
Paradisi porta,
Per quam lux est orta,
Natum tuum ora,
Ut nos solvat a peccatis,
Et in regno claritatis,
Quo lux lucet sedula,
Collocet per sæcula.
Amen.

And blessed is the fruit of
thy womb Jesus, who, by his
grace, made us to be his co-
heirs.

By this *Ave*, which sounded
so sweetly to the world, thou
didst conceive, and not by
nature's laws. Thou wast the
new star that wast to bring
forth a new Sun.

Thou, though ever the pur-
est of virgins, wast the temple
of our Saviour Jesus Christ
(who united in his person the
little and the great), of Jesus,
the Lion and the Lamb.

O Queen of virgins ! O rose
without thorns ! Thou wast
made Mother of him who is
our Sun, our Dew, our Bread,
and our Shepherd.

Thou art the city of the
just King ; thou art the
Mother of mercy, bringing
grace to Theophilus, by draw-
ing him out of the den of filth
and misery.

The heavenly court praises
thee, for thou art both Mother
and Daughter of its King.
By thee, the guilty obtain
pardon ; by thy prayers, the
just receive grace.

Therefore, O star of the sea,
O tabernacle of the Word, O
aurora of the divine Sun,

O gate of heaven, by whom
Light arose to the world !
pray for us to thy Son,

That he loose us from sin,
and introduce us into the
kingdom of brightness, where
perpetual light shines for ever.

Amen.

PROPER OF THE SAINTS

MARCH 12

SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT

POPE AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

AMONG all the pastors whom our Lord Jesus Christ has placed, as His vicegerents, over the universal Church, there is not one whose merits and renown have surpassed those of the holy Pope, whose feast we keep to-day. His name is Gregory, which signifies watchfulness; his surname is 'the Great,' and he was in possession of that title, when God sent the Seventh Gregory, the glorious Hildebrand, to govern His Church.

In recounting the glories of this illustrious Pontiff, it is but natural we should begin with his zeal for the services of the Church. The Roman liturgy, which owes to him some of its finest hymns, may be considered as his work, at least in this sense, that it is he who collected together and classified the prayers and rites drawn up by his predecessors, and reduced them to the form in which we now have them. He collected also the ancient chants of the Church, and arranged them in accordance with the rules and requirements of the divine Service. Hence it is, that our sacred music, which gives such solemnity to the liturgy, and inspires the soul with respect and devotion during the celebration of the great mysteries of our faith, is known as the Gregorian chant.

He is, then, the apostle of the liturgy, and this alone would have immortalized his name; but we must look for far greater things from such a Pontiff as Gregory. His name was added to the three, who had hitherto been honoured as the great Doctors of the Latin Church. These three are Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome; who else could be the fourth but Gregory? The Church found in his writings such evidence of his having been guided by the Holy Ghost, such a knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, such a clear appreciation of the mysteries of faith, and such unction and authority in his teachings, that she gladly welcomed him as a new guide for her children.

Such was the respect wherewith everything he wrote was treated, that his very letters were preserved as so many precious treasures. This immense correspondence shows us that there was not a country, scarcely even a city, of the Christian world, on which the Pontiff had not his watchful eye steadily fixed; that there was not a question, however local or personal, which, if it interested religion, did not excite his zeal and arbitration as the Bishop of the universal Church. If certain writers of modern times had but taken the pains to glance at these letters, written by a Pope of the sixth century, they would never have asserted, as they have, that the prerogatives of the Roman Pontiff are based on documents fabricated, as they say, two hundred years after the death of Gregory.

Throned on the apostolic See, our saint proved himself to be a rightful heir of the apostles, not only as the representative and depositary of their authority, but as a fellow-sharer in their mission of calling nations to the true faith. To whom does England owe her having been, for so many ages, 'the island of saints'? To Gregory, who, touched with compassion for those *Angli*, of whom, as he playfully said, he would fain

make *Angeli*, sent to their island the monk Augustine with forty companions, all of them, as was Gregory himself, children of St. Benedict. The faith had been sown in this land as early as the second century, but it had been trodden down by the invasion of an infidel race. This time the seed fructified, and so rapidly that Gregory lived to see a plentiful harvest. It is beautiful to hear the aged Pontiff speaking with enthusiasm about the results of his English mission. He thus speaks in the twenty-seventh Book of his *Morals* : ' Lo ! the language of Britain, which could once mutter naught save barbarous sounds, has long since begun to sing, in the divine praises, the Hebrew *Alleluia* ! Lo ! that swelling sea is now calm, and saints walk on its waves. The tide of barbarians, which the sword of earthly princes could not keep back, is now hemmed in at the simple bidding of God's priests.'¹

During the fourteen years that this holy Pope held the place of Peter, he was the object of the admiration of the Christian world, both in the east and in the west. His profound learning, his talent for administration, his position, all tended to make him beloved and respected. But who could describe the virtue of his great soul ? That contempt for the world and its riches, which led him to seek obscurity in the cloister ; that humility, which made him flee the honours of the papacy, and hide himself in a cave, where, at length, he was miraculously discovered, and God Himself put into his hands the keys of heaven, which he was evidently worthy to hold, because he feared the responsibility ; that zeal for the whole flock, of which he considered himself not the master, but the servant, so much so indeed that he assumed the title, which the Popes have ever since retained, of ' servant of the servants of God ' ; that charity which took care of the poor throughout

¹ *Moral. in Job.* Lib. xxvii. Cap. xi.

the whole world ; that ceaseless solicitude, which provided for every calamity, whether public or private ; that unruffled sweetness of manner, which he showed to all around him, in spite of the bodily sufferings which never left him during the whole period of his laborious pontificate ; that firmness in defending the deposit of the faith, and crushing error wheresoever it showed itself ; in a word, that vigilance with regard to discipline, which made itself felt for long ages after in the whole Church ? All these services and glorious examples of virtue have endeared our saint to the whole world, and will cause his name to be blessed by all future generations, even to the end of time.

Let us now read the abridged life of our saint, as given us in the liturgy.

Gregorius magnus, Romanus, Gordiani senatoris filius, adolescens philosophiæ operam dedit, et prætorio officio functus, patre mortuo, sex monasteria in Sicilia ædificavit ; Romæ septimum sancti Andreae nomine in suis ædibus, prope basilicam sanctorum Joannis et Pauli ad clivum Scauri : ubi Hilarione ac Maximiano magistris monachi vitam professus, postea abbas fuit. Mox Diaconus Cardinalis creatus, Constantinopolim a Pelagio Pontifice ad Tiberium Constantinum imperatorem legatus mittitur ; apud quem memorabile etiam illud effecit, quod Eutychium patriarcham, qui scripserat contra veram ac tractabilem corporum resurrectionem, ita convicit, ut ejus librum imperator in ignem injiceret. Quare Eutychius paulo post

Gregory the Great, a Roman by birth, was son of the senator Gordian. He applied early to the study of philosophy, and was entrusted with the office of prætor. After his father's death he built six monasteries in Sicily, and a seventh, under the title of Saint Andrew, in his own house in Rome, near the basilica of Saints John and Paul, on the hill Scaurus. In this last named monastery, he embraced the monastic life, under the guidance of Hilarion and Maximian, and was, later on, elected abbot. Shortly afterwards, he was created Cardinal-Deacon, and was by Pope Pelagius sent to Constantinople, as legate, to confer with the emperor Constantine. While there, he achieved that celebrated victory over the patriarch Eutychius, who had

cum in morbum incidisset, instante morte, pellem manus suæ tenebat, multis præsentibus, dicens: Confiteor quia omnes in hac carne resurgemus.

Romam rediens, Pelagio pestilentia sublato, summo omnium consensu Pontifex eligitur: quem honorem ne acciperet, quamdiu potuit, recusavit. Nam alieno vestitu in spelunca delituit: ubi deprehensus indicio igneæ columnæ, ad Sanctum Petrum consecratur. In pontificatu multa successoribus doctrinæ ac sanctitatis exempla reliquit. Peregrinos quotidie ad mensam adhibebat: in quibus et angelum, et Dominum angelorum peregrini facie accepit. Pauperes et urbanos et externos, quorum numerum descriptum habebat, benigne sustentabat. Catholicam fidem multis locis labefactatam restituit. Nam Donatistas in Africa, Arianos in Hispania repressit: Agnoitas Alexandria eiecit. Pallium Syagrio Augustodunensi episcopo dare noluit, nisi Neophytos hæreticos expelleret ex Gallia. Gothos hæresim Arianam relinquere coegit. Missis in Britanniam doctis et sanctis viris Augustino et aliis monachis, insulam ad Jesu

written against the resurrection of the flesh, maintaining that it would not be a real one. Gregory so convinced him of his error, that the emperor threw his book into the fire. Eutychius himself fell ill not long after, and when he perceived his last hour had come, he took between his fingers the skin of his hand, and said before the many who were there: 'I believe that we shall all rise in this flesh.'

On his return to Rome, he was chosen Pope, by unanimous consent, for Pelagius had been carried off by the plague. He refused, as long as it was possible, the honour thus offered him. He disguised himself and hid himself in a cave; but he was discovered by a pillar of fire shining over the place, and was consecrated at Saint Peter's. As Pontiff, he was an example to his successors by his learning and holiness of life. He every day admitted pilgrims to his table, among whom he received, on one occasion, an angel, and, on another, the Lord of angels, who wore the garb of a pilgrim. He charitably provided for the poor, both in and out of Rome, and kept a list of them. He re-established the Catholic faith in several places where it had fallen into decay. Thus, he put down the Donatists in Africa, and the Arians in Spain; and drove the Agnoites out of Alexandria. He refused to give the pallium to Syagrius, bishop of Autun,

Christi fidem convertit, vere a Beda presbytero Angliæ vocatus apostolus. Joannis patriarchæ Constantinopolitani audaciam fregit, qui sibi universalis Ecclesiæ episcopi nomen arrogabat. Mauritium imperatorem, eos qui milites fuissent, monachos fieri prohibentem, a sententia deterruit.

Ecclesiam ornavit sanctissimis institutis et legibus. Apud Sanctum Petrum coacta synodo, multa constituit. In iis, ut in Missa Kyrie eleison novies repeteretur; ut extra id tempus, quod continetur Septuagesima et Pascha, Alleluia diceretur: ut adderetur in Canone: Diesque nostros in tua pace disponas. Litanias, Stationes, et Ecclesiasticum officium auxit. Quatuor Conciliis, Nicæno, Constantinopolitano, Ephesino et Chalcedonensi, tamquam quatuor Evangelii honorem haberi voluit. Episcopis Siciliæ, qui ex antiqua Ecclesiarum consuetudine Romam singulis triennii conveniebant, quinto quoque anno semel venire indulsit. Multos libros confecit: quos cum dictaret, testatus est Petrus diaconus se

until he should have expelled the Neophyte heretics from Gaul. He induced the Goths to abandon the Arian heresy. He sent Augustine and other monks into Britain, and, by these learned and saintly men, converted that island to the faith of Christ Jesus; so that Bede truly calls him the Apostle of England. He checked the haughty pretensions of John, the patriarch of Constantinople, who had arrogated to himself the title of bishop of the universal Church. He obliged the emperor Mauritius to revoke the decree, whereby he had forbidden any soldier to become a monk.

He enriched the Church with many most holy practices and laws. In a Council held at St. Peter's he passed several decrees. Among these, the following may be mentioned: That in the Mass the *Kyrie eleison* should be said nine times; that the *Alleluia* should always be said, except during the interval between Septuagesima and Easter. That these words should be inserted in the Canon: *Diesque nostros in tua pace disponas (And mayst thou dispose our days in thy peace)*. He increased the number of processions (litanies) and stations, and completed the Office of the Church. He would have the four Councils, of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, to be received with the same honour as the four Gospels. He allowed the

Spiritum sanctum columbæ specie in ejus capite sæpe vidisse. Admirabilia sunt quæ dixit, fecit, scripsit, decrevit, præsertim infirma semper et ægra valetudine. Qui denique multis editis miraculis, Pontificatus anno decimo tertio, mense sexto, die decimo, quarto Idus Martii, qui dies festus a Græcis etiam propter insignem hujus Pontificis sapientiam ac sanctitatem, præcipuo honore celebratur, ad cælestem beatitudinem evocatus est. Cujus corpus sepultum est in basilica sancti Petri, prope secretarium.

bishops of Sicily, who, according to the ancient custom of their Churches, used to visit Rome every three years, to make that visit once every fifth year. He wrote several books; and Peter the deacon assures us, that he frequently saw the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove resting on the head of the Pontiff, while he was dictating. It is a matter of wonder that, with his incessant sickness and ill-health, he could have said, done, written, and decreed, as he did. At length, after performing many miracles, he was called to his reward in heaven, after a pontificate of thirteen years, six months and ten days; it was on the fourth of the Ides of March (March 12), which the Greeks also observe as a great feast, on account of this Pontiff's extraordinary learning and virtue. His body was buried in the basilica of Saint Peter near the secretarium.

To these admirable lessons we subjoin a selection of antiphons and responsories, which are taken from an Office approved of by the holy See, for this feast of so great a saint.

ANTIPHONS AND RESPONSORIES*

Beatus Gregorius in cathedra Petri sublimatus, Vigi-	The blessed Gregory, being raised to the chair of Peter,
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* We may be permitted to express a hope, that the day is not far distant, when the Proper Offices, approved of by the holy See, will be adopted in England, for those saints in whom England has a special interest. Proper hymns, &c., have been composed and approved for St. Augustine of Canterbury and St. Anselm. [TRANSLATOR.]

lantis nomen factis implevit.

Pastor eximius pastoralis vitæ specimen tradidit et regulam.

Dum paginæ sacræ mysteria panderet, columba nive candidior apparuit.

Gregorius, monachorum speculum, pater Urbis, orbis deliciæ.

Gregorius, respiciens Anglorum juvenes, ait: Angelicam habent faciem; et tales angelorum in cælis decet esse consortes.

R. Gregorius, ab annis adolescentiæ suæ, Deo cœpit devotus existere. * Et ad supernæ vitæ patriam totis desideriis anhelavit.

V. Pauperibus opes distribuens, Christum pro nobis egenum, egenus ipse secutus est.

* Et ad supernæ vitæ patriam totis desideriis anhelavit.

R. Sex in Sicilia monasteria constituens, fratres illic Christo servituros aggregavit; septimum vero intra Romanæ urbis muros instituit: * In quo et ipse militiam cœlestem aggressus est.

fulfilled, by his actions, the meaning of his name, 'the Watchman.'

This glorious Pastor was the model, and wrote the rule, of the pastoral life.

While he was interpreting the mysteries of the sacred volume, there was seen upon him a dove whiter than snow.

Gregory was the mirror of monks, the father of the holy city, and the favourite of mankind.

Gregory looks upon some youths from Anglia, and says: They have the faces of angels, and such children must needs be companions of angels in heaven.

R. From his early youth, Gregory was devout in God's service, * And with all his heart sighed after the land of heavenly life.

V. He distributed his wealth to the poor, and became poor himself, after the example of Christ, who made himself poor for us.

* And with all his heart sighed after the land of heavenly life.

R. Six monasteries did he found in Sicily, and put in them communities of brethren, who should serve Christ; a seventh also he founded within the walls of Rome's city, * Wherein he, too, enrolled himself in the heavenly warfare.

V. Mundum cum flore despiciens, dilectæ solitudinis locum quæsivit.

* In quo et ipse militiam cœlestem aggressus est.

R. Ad summi Pontificatus apicem quæsitus, quum ad sylvarum et cavernarum latebras confugisset, * Visa est columna lucis a summo cœli usque ad eum linea recta refulgens.

V. Tam eximium pastorem sitiens populus, jejuniis et orationibus ad cœlum insistebat.

* Visa est columna lucis a summo cœli usque ad eum linea recta refulgens.

R. Ecce nunc magni maris fluctibus quatuor, pastoralis curæ procellis illisus: * Et quum priorem vitam recolo, quasi post tergum reductis oculis viso littore suspiro.

V. Immensis fluctibus turbatus feror, vix jam portum valeo videre quem reliqui.

* Et quum priorem vitam recolo, quasi post tergum reductis oculis, viso littore suspiro.

V. He despised the world with its flowers, and sought out a place of solitude most dear to his soul.

* Wherein he, too, enrolled himself in the heavenly warfare.

R. When they were in search of him to set him on the throne of the Papal dignity, he fled to the woods and caves and hid himself; * But a bright pillar of light was seen to shine upon him, in a straight line from the high heavens.

V. The people, in their eager desire to have so excellent a pastor, besieged heaven with their fastings and prayers.

* But a bright pillar was seen to shine upon him, in a straight line from the highest heavens.

R. Lo! now I am tossed by the waves of the great sea, and am buffeted by the storms of pastoral care: * And when I remember my former life, I sigh like one that looks back on the shore he has left behind.

V. I am carried to and fro on huge waves, which scarcely permit me to see the port I sailed from.

* And when I remember my former life, I sigh like one that looks back on the shore he has left behind.

R. E fonte Scripturarum moralia et mystica proferens, fluentia Evangelii in populos derivavit: * Et defunctus adhuc loquitur.

V. Velut aquila perlustrans mundum amplitudine charitatis majoribus et minimis providet.

* Et defunctus adhuc loquitur.

R. Cernens Gregorius Anglorum adolescentulos, dolebat tam lucidi vultus homines a tenebrarum principe possideri: * Tantamque frontis speciem, mentem ab internis gaudiis vacuam gestare.

V. Ex intimo corde longa trahens suspiria, lugebat imaginem Dei ab antiquo serpente deturpatam.

* Tantamque frontis speciem, mentem ab internis gaudiis vacuam gestare.

R. Quum Joannes episcopus arroganter primæ Sedis jura dissolvere tentaret, surxit Gregorius fortis et mansuetus: * Apostolica fulgens auctoritate, humilitate præclarus.

V. Petri claves invictus asseruit, et cathedram principalem illæsam custodivit.

* Apostolica fulgens auctoritate, humilitate præclarus.

R. He drew moral and mystical interpretations from the Scripture fountain, and made the streams of the Gospel flow upon the people: * And being dead, he yet speaketh.

V. Like an eagle flying from one end of the world to the other, he provided for all, both little and great, by his large-hearted charity.

* And being dead, he yet speaketh.

R. As he gazed on the boys of Anglia, it grieved him to think that such bright-faced youths should be in the power of the prince of darkness: * And that they who had such comely faces, should have souls devoid of interior joy.

V. Deeply did he sigh, and, from his inmost soul, grieve that the image of God should be disfigured by the old serpent.

* And that they who had such comely faces, should have souls devoid of interior joy.

R. When John, the bishop, arrogantly strove to interfere with the rights of the first See, bravely and meekly did Gregory rise up, * Radiant with apostolic authority, and humble exceedingly.

V. Unflinchingly did he defend the keys of Peter, and guard from insult the principal Chair.

* Radiant with apostolic authority, and humble exceedingly.

R. Gregorius, præsul meritis et nomine dignus, antiquas divinæ laudis modulationes renovans, * Militantis Ecclesiæ vocem triumphantis sponsæ concentibus sociavit.

V. Sacramentorum codicem mystico calamo rescribens, veterum patrum instituta posteris transmisit.

* Militantis Ecclesiæ vocem triumphantis sponsæ concentibus sociavit.

R. Stationes per basilicas et martyrum cœmeteria ordinavit : * Et sequebatur exercitus Domini Gregorium præeuntem.

V. Ductor cœlestis militiæ arma spiritualia proferebat.

* Et sequebatur exercitus Domini Gregorium præeuntem.

St. Peter Damian, whose feast we kept a few days back, composed the following hymn in honour of our apostle :

Anglorum jam apostolus,
Nunc angelorum socius,
Ut tunc, Gregori, gentibus
Succurre jam credentibus.

Tu largas opum copias,
Omnemque mundi gloriam
Spernis, ut inops inopem
Jesum sequaris principem.

Videtur egens naufragus,
Dum stipem petit angelus ;

R. Gregory, a Pontiff great in merit and name, restored the ancient melodies used in the divine praise, * And united the songs of the Church militant with those of the bride triumphant.

V. His mystic pen transcribed the book of the Sacraments, and handed down to posterity the institutions of the ancient fathers.

* And united the songs of the Church militant with those of the bride triumphant.

R. He regulated the Stations to be made at the basilicas and cemeteries of the martyrs : * And the army of Christ went in procession, with Gregory at their head.

V. He was the leader of the heavenly warfare, and gave to all their spiritual armour.

* And the army of Christ went in procession, with Gregory at their head.

O Gregory, that once wast the apostle of the Angli, and now art a companion of the angels ! protect now, as of old, the nations that believe in Christ.

Thou spurnest wealth and riches and all the glory of the world, that so thou, being poor, mayst follow the Lord Jesus, who was poor.

An angel presents himself to thee, in the garb of one that

Tu munus jam post geminum,
Præbes et vas argenteum.

Ex hoc te Christus tempore
Sua præfert Ecclesiæ :
Sic Petri gradum percipis,
Cujus et normam sequeris.

O Pontifex egregie,
Lux et decus Ecclesiæ,
Non sinas in periculis,
Quos tot mandatis instruis.
Mella cor obdulcantia
Tua distillant labia,
Fragrantum vim aromatum
Tuum vincit eloquium.

Scripturæ sacræ mystica
Mire solvis ænigmata,
Theorica mysteria
Te docet ipsa Veritas.

Tu nactus apostolicam
Vicem simul et gloriam,
Nos solve culpæ nexibus,
Redde polorum sedibus.

Sit Patri laus ingenito,
Sit decus Unigenito,
Sit utriusque parili
Majestas summa Flamini.
Amen.

Father of the Christian people! Vicar of the charity, as well as of the authority, of Christ! O Gregory, *vigilant* Pastor! the Church, which thou hast so faithfully loved and served, turns to thee with confidence. Thou canst not forget the flock, which keeps up such an affectionate remembrance of thee; hear the prayer she offers thee on this thy solemnity. Protect and guide the Pontiff, who now holds the place of Peter, as thou didst; enlighten and encourage him in the difficulties wherewith he

was shipwrecked, and asks an alms; thou first makest him a double gift, and then thou givest him a silver vase.

After this, Christ puts thee over his Church, for thou didst imitate the virtues, and now thou hast the honours, of Peter.

O excellent Pontiff! Light and ornament of the Church! Thou hast so richly instructed us, assist us in our dangers.

From thy lips there flows honey that brings sweetness to the heart. Thy words are more fragrant than the richest perfume.

Admirably dost thou solve the obscure figures of sacred Writ. The divine mysteries are taught thee by him that is the very Truth.

O thou that hast the office and the glory of the apostles, pray for us, that we may be loosed from the bonds of sin, and obtain the thrones prepared for us above.

To the unbegotten Father, and to his only-begotten Son, and to the Spirit of them both be praise and highest kingship. Amen.

is beset. Bless the hierarchy of the pastors, which has received from thee such magnificent teachings and such admirable examples. Assist it to maintain inviolate the sacred trust of faith ; bless the efforts it is now making for the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, without which all is disorder and confusion. God chose thee as the regulator of the divine service, the holy liturgy ; foster, by thy blessing, the zeal which is now rising up among us for those holy traditions of prayer, which have been so neglected ; teach us the long-forgotten secret, that the best way of praying is to use the prayers of the Church. Unite all Churches in obedience to the apostolic See, which is the ground and pillar of faith, and the fountain of spiritual authority.

The terrible schism which has separated the east from Catholic unity, began to show itself during thy pontificate. Byzantium has now consummated her crime, which has degraded and enslaved her ; and yet she seems blind to the real cause of all her miseries. In these latter days she has been abetted in her sin and her haughtiness : Russia, the despotic power that has her hands steeped in the blood of martyrs, has made common cause with her in rebellion against the Church, and we have heard the proud threat, that she will rest not till she has put 'one foot on the tomb of our Lord in Jerusalem, and the other on the confession of Saint Peter in Rome,' so that mankind shall make a god of the czar ! Rouse up the zeal of the Christian world, O Gregory ! and inflame them with holy resistance to this false christ. May his fall become a lasting monument of the vengeance of our true Christ, Jesus our Saviour, and a fulfilment of the promise He made to His Church, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against the rock. We know, O holy Pontiff, that this promise is to be fulfilled ; but we dare to pray that we may see its accomplishment verified even in our times.

But there is one country which was most dear to thee—our own native land. O apostle of England ! look down with affection on this island, which has now rebelled from Rome, and has become the resort of countless false religions. But now, after three centuries of apostasy from the true faith, the hand of God's mercy is pressing her to conversion. She is thine own child in Christ Jesus : wilt thou not aid her to return to Him ? Wilt thou not guide her, by thy prayers, to come forth out of the darkness, which still so thickly clouds her, and follow the light which heaven holds out to her ? Oh ! if England were once more Catholic, who can tell the good she would do ? For what country is there that can do grander things for the propagation of the faith ? Pray for her, then ; she may regain her glorious title of *Isle of Saints*, for she has thee for her apostle !

These are the days of salvation ; pray for the faithful, who have entered on their career of penance. Obtain for them compunction of heart, love of prayer, and an appreciation of the liturgy and its mysteries. The solemn and devout homilies which thou didst address, at this season, to the people of Rome, are still read to us ; may they sink into our hearts and fill them with fear of God's justice, and hope in His mercy, for His justice and mercy change not to suit the time. We are weak and timid, and this makes us count as harsh the laws of the Church which oblige us to fasting and abstinence ; get us brave hearts, brave with the spirit of mortification. Thy holy life is an example to us, and thy writings are our instruction ; what we still want is to be made true penitents, and this thy intercession must do for us : that so we may return, with the joy of a purified conscience, to the divine *Alleluia*, which thou hast taught us to sing on earth, and which we hope to chant together with thee in heaven.

MARCH 17

SAINT PATRICK, APOSTLE OF IRELAND

BISHOP AND CONFESSOR

THE saint we have to honour to-day is the apostle of that faithful people, whose martyrdom has lasted three hundred years : it is the great St. Patrick, he that gave Erin the faith. There shone most brightly in this saint that gift of the apostolate, which Christ has left to His Church, and which is to remain with her to the end of time. The ambassadors or missionaries, sent by our Lord to preach His Gospel, are of two classes. There are some who have been entrusted with a small tract of the Gentile world ; they had to sow the divine seed there, and it yielded fruit more or less according to the dispositions of the people that received it : there are others, again, whose mission is like a rapid conquest, that subdues a whole nation, and brings it into subjection to the Gospel. St. Patrick belongs to this second class ; and in him we recognize one of the most successful instruments of God's mercy to mankind.

And then, what solidity there is in this great saint's work ! When is it that Ireland received the faith ? In the fifth century, when Britain was almost wholly buried in paganism ; when the race of the Franks had not as yet heard the name of the true God ; when Germany had no knowledge of Christ's having come upon the earth ; when the countries of northern Europe deeply slumbered in infidelity : yes, it was before these several nations had awakened to the Gospel, that Ireland was converted. The faith, brought to her by her glorious apostle, took deep root and flourished and fructified in this isle, more

lovely even by grace than she is by nature. Her saints are scarcely to be numbered, and went about doing good in almost every country of Europe; her children gave, and are still giving, to other countries, the faith that she herself received from her beloved patron. And when the sixteenth century came with its protestantism; when the apostasy of Germany was imitated by England, Scotland, and the whole north of Europe, Ireland stood firm and staunch; no persecution, however cleverly or however cruelly carried on against her, has been able to detach her from the faith taught her by Saint Patrick.

Let us honour the admirable apostle, chosen by God to sow the seed of His word in this privileged land; and let us listen to the simple account of his labours and virtues, thus given in the lessons of his feast:

Patritius, Hiberniæ dictus apostolus, Calphurnio patre, matre Conchessa, sancti Martini Turonensis episcopi, ut perhibent, consanguinea, majori in Britannia natus, puer in barbarorum sæpius incidit captivitatem. Eo in statu pascendis gregibus præpositus, jam tum futuræ sanctitatis specimen præbuit. Fidei namque, divinique timoris, et amoris spiritu repletus, antelucano tempore per nives, gelu, ac pluvias ad preces Deo fundendas impiger consurgebat; solitus centies interdium, centiesque noctu Deum orare. A servitute tertio exemptus, et inter clericos relatus, in divinis lectionibus longo se tempore exercuit. Galliis, Italia, insulæque Tyrrheni maris labore summo peragratis, divino tandem monitu ad Hibernorum salutem advocatur; et facta a beato Coelestino Papa Evan-

Patrick, called the apostle of Ireland, was born in Great Britain. His father's name was Calphurnius. Conchessa, his mother, is said to have been a relation of St. Martin, bishop of Tours. He was several times taken captive by the barbarians, when he was a boy, and was put to tend their flocks. Even in that tender age, he gave signs of the great sanctity he was afterwards to attain. Full of the spirit of faith, and of the fear and love of God, he used to rise at the earliest dawn of day, and, in spite of snow, frost, or rain, go to offer up his prayers to God. It was his custom to pray a hundred times during the day, and a hundred during the night. After his third deliverance from slavery, he entered the ecclesiastical state and applied himself, for a considerable time, to the study

gelli nunciandi potestate, consecratusque episcopus, in Hiberniam perrexit.

Eo in munere mirum quot vir apostolicus mala, quot erumnas, et labores, quot pertulerit adversarios. Verum Dei afflante benignitate, terra illa, idolorum antea cultrix, eum mox prædicante Patritio fructum dedit, ut sanctorum insula deinde fuerit appellata. Frequentissimi ab eo populi sacro sunt regenerati lavacro : episcopi, clericique plurimi ordinati ; virgines ac viduæ ad continentiæ leges institutæ. Armachanam Sedem, Romani Pontificis auctoritate, totius insulæ principem metropolim constituit, sanctorumque reliquiis ab Urbe relatis decoravit. Supernis visionibus, prophetiæ dono, ingentibusque signis, et prodigiis a Deo exornatus adeo refulsit, ut longe, lateque celebrior Patritii se fama diffuderit.

of the sacred Scriptures. Having made several most fatiguing journeys through Gaul, Italy, and the islands of the Mediterranean, he was called by God to labour for the salvation of the people of Ireland. Pope Saint Celestin gave him power to preach the Gospel, and consecrated him bishop. Whereupon, he set out for Ireland.

It would be difficult to relate how much this apostolic man had to suffer in the mission thus entrusted to him: he had to bear with extraordinary trials, fatigues, and adversaries. But, by the mercy of God, that land, which heretofore had worshipped idols, so well repaid the labour wherewith Patrick had preached the Gospel, that it was afterwards called the island of saints. He administered holy Baptism to many thousands : he ordained several bishops, and frequently conferred Holy Orders in their several degrees ; he drew up rules for virgins and widows, who wished to lead a life of continency. By the authority of the Roman Pontiff, he appointed Armagh the metropolitan See of the whole island, and enriched that church with the saints' relics, which he had brought from Rome. God honoured him with heavenly visions, with the gift of prophecy and miracles ; all which caused the name of the saint to be held in veneration in almost every part of the world.

Præter quotidianam Ecclesiarum sollicitudinem, invictum ab oratione spiritum nunquam relaxabat. Aiunt enim, integrum quotidie psalterium, una cum canticis et hymnis, ducentisque orationibus consuevisse recitare : ter centies per dies singulos flexis genibus Deum adorare, ac in qualibet hora diei canonica centies se crucis signo munire. Noctem tria in spatia distribuens, primum in centum psalmis percurrendis, et bis centies genuflectendo, alterum in reliquis quinquaginta psalmis, algidis aquis immersus, ac corde, oculis manibusque ad cælum erectus, absolvendis insumebat ; tertium vero super nudum lapidem stratus tenui dabat quieti. Humilitatis eximius cultor, apostolico more a manuum suarum labore non abstinuit. Assiduus tandem curis pro Ecclesia consumptus, verbo et opere clarus, in extrema senectute, divinis mysteriis reffectus, obdormivit in Domino ; sepultusque est apud Dunum in Ultonia, a Christiana salute sæculo quinto.

Besides his daily solioitude for the churches, his vigorous spirit kept up an uninterrupted prayer. For it is said, that he was wont to recite every day the whole psalter, together with the canticles and the hymns, and two hundred prayers ; that he every day knelt down three hundred times to adore God ; and that at each canonical hour of the day, he signed himself a hundred times with the sign of the cross. He divided the night into three parts : the first was spent in the recitation of a hundred psalms, during which he genuflected two hundred times : the second was spent in reciting the remaining fifty psalms, which he did standing in cold water, and his heart, eyes, and hands lifted up to heaven ; the third he gave to a little sleep, which he took laid upon a bare stone. Being a man of extraordinary humility, he imitated the apostles, and practised manual labour. At length, being worn out by his incessant fatigues in the cause of the Church, powerful in word and work, having reached an extreme old age he slept in the Lord, after being refreshed with the holy mysteries. He was buried at Down, in Ulster, in the fifth century of the Christian era.

The following sequence, in honour of our saint, is taken from an ancient manuscript missal, published by Messingham, in his *Florilegium Insulæ Sanctorum*, Paris, 1624 :

SEQUENCE

Læta lux est hodierna,
Qua conscendit ad superna
Vir Dei Patricius.

Qui prælatus in hanc lucem
Puer bonus Christi crucem
Veneratur ocyus.

Humo pressit signum crucis,
Fons erupit, donum lucis
Cæco nato præbuit.

In mel aquam convertebat,
Quo nutrici, quæ languebat,
Sanitatem tribuit.

A piratis venditur,
Fit custos porcorum :
Aurum quo redimitur
Reperit decorum.

Opprimens per triduum
Satan hunc vexavit :
Sed Helias artuum
Robur reparavit.

Deprimit a vitiis,
Moribus imbutus,
Corpus abstinentiis,
Moysen secutus ;
In montis cacumina
Scandit et jejunat ;
Glacierum fragmina
Succendens adunat.

Sub Germani disciplina,
Documentis et doctrina
Studet evangelicis.

His a Papa Cœlestino
Doctor est, nutu divino,
Transmissus Hibernicis.

Joyful is the light of this
day's feast, whereon Patrick,
the man of God, ascended to
heaven !

When yet in the early dawn
of life, the holy youth de-
voutly venerated the cross of
Christ.

He made the sign of the
cross on the ground : a fount
gushed forth upon the spot,
and with its waters he gave
sight to one born blind.

He turned water into honey,
and by it restored his nurse to
health.

He was led captive by
pirates, and was made keeper
of swine : but the saint
found a piece of glittering
gold, and with it bought his
freedom.

For three days did satan
harass him with bodily in-
juries ; but Elias healed him,
and gave him back his
strength.

His soul was vigorous in
grace, and, like Moses, he re-
strained his body from vices
by fasting.

He ascends a high moun-
tain, and there he fasts. He
throws ice upon a fire, and
it burns as though it were
wood.

He puts himself under the
care and teaching of Ger-
manus, and studies under him
the maxims of the Gospel.

Pope Celestine, by a divine
inspiration, sends him to teach
salvation to the people of
Hibernia.

Balat hircus ventre furis,
Fur punitur plagis duris,
Et ejus successio.

Fugiens mortem sago tectus
Obiit ante, post revectus
Orante Patricio.

Virosa reptilia
Prece congregata
Pellit ab Hibernia,
Mari liberata.
Cœlos aliquoties
Apertos aspexit ;
Et Jesum suspiciens
Dominum conspexit.
Transit pater ab hac luce
Signis plenus, Christo duce,
Lucis ad palatium.

Ubi nobis, prece sua,
Confer, bone Jesu, tua
Pietate gaudium.
Amen.

The thief, that had stolen a goat, was discovered by its bleating ; and he and his family were punished with a severe scourge.

A man had covered himself with a cloth, and asked to be restored to health. He was first punished with real death, and was then restored to life by Patrick's prayer.

He drew together, by his prayer, all venomous reptiles, and drove them from Hibernia's shore.

At times, he saw the heavens opened ; and as he gazed above, he saw the Lord Jesus.

Our father passed out of this world, under the guidance of Christ ; and, glorious by his miracles, he was taken to the courts of heavenly light.

Mercifully grant unto us, O good Jesus ! by his intercession, that we may enter into joy. Amen.

The following antiphons and prayers are taken from the *Officium Sancti Patricii*, Paris, 1622 :

ANT. Veneranda imminētis diei solemnia, læta mente, concelebrat fidelium turma ; quo beatus præsul Patricius, deposita corporali gleba, felix migravit ad regna cœlestia.

ANT. Ave præsul egregie, pastor gregis Hiberniæ ! O Patrici, præsul pie, nostræ custos familiæ, funde preces quotidie, pro nobis, Regi gloriæ.

ANT. The faithful people, with glad souls, celebrate the venerable solemnity of this day's feast ; whereon the blessed pontiff Patrick laid aside the burden of mortality, and joyfully took his flight to the heavenly kingdom.

ANT. Hail illustrious pontiff, pastor of Hibernia's flock ! O Patrick ! holy bishop ! the guardian of our people ! pray for us daily to the King of glory.

ANT. Benedictus sit Dominus universorum, qui suam visitavit plebem per beatum Patricium, cujus prece absolvamur a vinculis criminum, et requie perfruamur cum illo beatorum.

ANT. Blessed be the Lord of all, who hath visited his people by blessed Patrick; by whose prayers may we be loosed from the bonds of our sins, and come to the enjoyment of rest of the blessed, together with him.

Another favourite antiphon, used in the ancient Proper Office of St. Patrick, was composed of the words spoken to him by the angel :

ANT. Hibernenses omnes clamant ad te pueri: Veni, sancte Patrici, salvos nos facere.

ANT. All the children of Ireland cry out to thee: Come, O holy Patrick, and save us!

We conclude these liturgical extracts with a prayer from an ancient manuscript breviary of Armagh.

PRAYER

Deus qui beatum Patricium Scotorum apostolum tua providentia elegisti, ut Hibernenses gentes, in tenebris et in errore gentilitatis errantes, per lavacra regenerationis filios Dei excelsi efficeres: tribue nobis quæsumus, ut ejus intercessionibus ad ea quæ recta sunt quantocyus festinemus. Per Dominum.

O God, by whose providence the blessed Patrick was chosen to be the apostle of the Irish; that thus the people of Hibernia, who had gone astray in darkness and in the errors of the Gentiles, might be made children of the Most High by the laver of regeneration: grant, we beseech thee, that by his intercession, we may hasten without delay to the paths of justice. Through, etc.

Thy life, great saint, was spent in the arduous toils of an apostle; but how rich was the harvest thou didst reap! Every fatigue seemed to thee light, if only thou couldst give to men the precious gift of faith; and the people to whom thou didst leave it have kept it with a constancy which is one of thy greatest glories. Pray for us, that this faith, with-

out which it is impossible to please God,¹ may take possession of our hearts and minds. It is by faith that the just man liveth,² says the prophet, and it is faith that, during this holy season of Lent, is showing us the justice and mercy of God, in order that we may be converted, and offer to our offended Lord the tribute of our penance. We are afraid of what the Church imposes on us, simply because our faith is weak. If our principles were those of faith, we should soon be mortified men. Thy life, though so innocent, and so rich in good works, was one of extraordinary penance : get us thy spirit, and help us to follow thee, at least at a humble distance. Pray for Erin, that dear country of thine, which loves and honours thee so fervently. She is threatened with danger even now, and many of her children have left the faith thou didst teach. An odious system of proselytism has disturbed thy flock ; protect it, and suffer not the children of martyrs to be apostates. Let thy fatherly care follow them that have been driven by suffering to emigrate from their native land : may they keep true to the faith, be witnesses of the true religion in the countries to which they have fled, and ever show themselves to be the obedient children of the Church. May their misfortunes thus serve to advance the kingdom of God. Holy pontiff ! intercede for England ; pardon her the injustice she has shown to thy children ; and, by thy powerful prayers, hasten the happy day of her return to Catholic unity. Pray, too, for the whole Church ; thy prayer, being that of an apostle, easily finds access to Him that sent thee.

¹ Heb. xi. 6.

² Hab. ii. 4.

MARCH 18

SAINT GABRIEL, THE ARCHANGEL

So far in the Church's calendar, we have not met with any feast in honour of the holy angels. Amidst the ineffable joys of Christmas night, we mingled our timid but glad voices with the hymns of these heavenly spirits, who sang around the crib of our Emmanuel. The very recollection brings joy to our hearts, saddened as they now are by penitential feelings and by the near approach of the mournful anniversary of our Jesus' death. Let us, for a moment, interrupt our sadness, and keep the feast of the Archangel Gabriel. Later on, we shall have Michael, Raphael, and the countless host of the angel guardians; but to-day, the seventh from the Annunciation, it is just that we should honour Gabriel. A week hence we shall see this heavenly ambassador of the blessed Trinity coming down to the Virgin of Nazareth; let us, therefore, recommend ourselves to him, and beseech him to teach us how to celebrate, in a becoming manner, the grand mystery of which he was the messenger.

Gabriel is one of the first of the angelic kingdom. He tells Zachary that he stands before the face of God.¹ He is the angel of the Incarnation, because it is in this mystery, which apparently is so humble, that the power of God is principally manifested: and *Gabriel* signifies *the strength of God*. We find the Archangel preparing for this sublime office, even in the old Testament. First of all, he appeared to Daniel, after this prophet had had the vision of the

¹ St. Luke i. 19.

Persian and Grecian empires; and such was the majesty of his person that Daniel fell on his face trembling.¹ Shortly afterwards, he appeared again to the same prophet, telling him the exact time of the coming of the Messiah: 'Know thou and take notice: that from the going forth of the word to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks,'² that is, sixty-nine weeks of years.

When the fulness of time had come, and heaven was about to send the last of the prophets, who, after preaching to men the approach of the Messiah, is to show Him to the people, saying: 'Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world,' Gabriel descends from heaven to the temple of Jerusalem, and prophesies to Zachary the birth of John the Baptist,³ which was to be followed by that of Jesus Himself.

Six months later on, the holy Archangel again appears on the earth; and this time it is Nazareth that he visits. He brings the great message from heaven. Angel as he is, he reveres the humble Maid, whose name is Mary; he has been sent to her by the most high God, to offer her the immense honour of becoming the Mother of the eternal Word. It is Gabriel that receives the great *Fiat*, the consent of Mary; and when he quits this earth, he leaves it in possession of Him, for whom it had so long prayed in those words of Isaias: Drop down Dew, O ye heavens!⁴

The hour at length came, when the Mother of the Emmanuel was to bring forth the blessed Fruit of her virginal womb. Jesus was born amidst poverty; but heaven willed that His crib should be surrounded by fervent adorers. An angel appeared to some shepherds, inviting them to go to the stable near

¹ Dan. viii. 17.

² *Ibid.* ix. 25.

³ St. Luke i. 13.

⁴ Is. xlv. 8.

Bethlehem. He is accompanied by a multitude of the heavenly army, sweetly singing their hymn: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will!' Who is this angel that speaks to the shepherds, and seems as the chief of the other blessed spirits that are with him? In the opinion of several learned writers, it is the Archangel Gabriel, who is keeping up his ministry as messenger of the good tidings.¹

Lastly, when Jesus is suffering His agony in the garden of Gethsemani, an angel appears to Him, not merely as a witness of His sufferings, but that he might strengthen Him under the fear His human nature felt at the thought of the chalice of the Passion He was about to drink.² Who is this angel? It is Gabriel, as we learn not only from the writings of several holy and learned authors, but also from a hymn which the holy See has permitted to be used in the liturgy, and which we give below.

These are the claims of the great Archangel to our veneration and love; these are the proofs he gives of his deserving his beautiful name, *the strength of God*. God has employed him in each stage of the great work, in which He has chiefly manifested His power; for Jesus, even on His cross, is the Power of God,³ as the apostle tells us. Gabriel prepares the way for Jesus. He foretells the precise time of His coming; he announces the birth of His Precursor; he is present at the solemn moment when the Word is made Flesh; he invites the shepherds of Bethlehem to come to the crib, and adore the divine Babe; and when Jesus, in His agony, is to receive strength from one of His own creatures, Gabriel is found ready in the garden of Gethsemani, as he had been at Nazareth and Bethlehem.

Let us, then, honour the angel of the Incarnation. For this purpose, let us recite in his praise some of

¹ St. Luke ii. 10.

² *Ibid.* xxii. 42, 43.

³ 1 Cor. i. 24.

the pieces which liturgical piety has composed for his feast. The two following hymns are from the Franciscan breviary :

HYMN I

Mentibus lætis jubilemus
omnes,
Plectra tangentes fidibus can-
oris,
Inclytus quando Gabriel ab
alto

Fulget Olympo.

Virginis summæ Paronym-
phus adest
Hodie nobis, simul Angelo-
rum,
Plurimis Christum venerans
triumphis,

Concio tota.

Principis laudes Gabrielis
ergo
Concinat noster chorus, ipse
quando est

Unus ex septem, Domino qui
adstant

Jussa sequentes.

Nuntius cœli, mediator
idem,
Exstat a summis Gabriel
ubique

Lætus, et mundo reserat se-
creta

Omnipotentis.

Nuntia nobis, Gabriel, pre-
camur,
Pacis æternæ speciale munus,
Quo poli tandem teneamus
aulam

Semper ovantes.

Præstet hoc nobis Deitas
beata
Patris, ac Nati, pariterque
sancti

Spiritus cujus resonat per
omnem

Gloria mundum. Amen.

Let us all exult with joyous
hearts, and strike the tuneful
lyre ; 'tis the great Gabriel
that comes in all his bright-
ness from the high heavens.

This is the feast of the
glorious Virgin's messenger,
and with him comes the whole
host of angels, singing in
varied hymns the praise of
Christ.

Let our choir, therefore,
sing the praises of Gabriel the
prince, for he is one of the
seven that stand before the
Lord and do his biddings.

Gabriel cheerfully descends
whithersoever God wills, for
he is the messenger of heaven,
nay the mediator that reveals
to the world the secret decrees
of the omnipotent God.

Be thou, O Gabriel, we be-
seech thee, messenger to us of
the special gift of eternal
peace, wherewith we may
finally reach heaven, and ever-
lastingly rejoice.

May the Godhead ever
blessed of Father, Son, and
Holy Ghost, whose glory is
proclaimed through the whole
world, grant us this our
prayer. Amen.

HYMN II

En noctis medium : surgite
propere,
Cantemus Domino jam nova
cantica ;
Hac hora Gabriel nam fuit
omnibus

Vitæ nuntius optimus.

Hac hora Dominum Vir-
gineus alvus
Humano generi protulit ; in-
super
Devictis pariter funditus hos-
tibus,

Victor surgit ab inferis.

Surgentes igitur mitibus in-
vicem

Oremus precibus cœlica Nu-
mina :

Præsertim Dominum, qui de-
dit angelum

Curam qui gerit hominum.

Quæ virtus hominis pro-
mere sufficit,

Quæ mundo Gabriel munera
conferat ?

Sanctas hic animas visere Do-
minum

Præsto ducit in æthera.

Te, princeps igitur inclyte,
quæsumus,

Pro nobis miseris poscito
gratiam ;

Fac et propitium, qui valet
omnia,

Nobis ut veniam afferat.

Amen.

The Dominican breviary contains this beautiful hymn in honour of the holy Archangel :

HYMN

O Robur Domini, lucide
Gabriel !
Quem de principibus signat
Emmanuel :

'Tis the midnight hour :
quickly arise, and sing your
new canticles to the Lord ; for
it is at this hour that was
sent the most welcome mes-
senger of life to the world.

It is at this hour that the
Virgin's womb brought forth
our Lord, for the salvation of
mankind : and at the same,
that he arose from the grave,
having defeated his enemies.

Let us, then, arise, and in
our humble choral prayers,
make supplication to the
heavenly spirits ; let us pray
especially to the God who
gave us an angel to guard us.

What tongue of man could
tell the blessings brought by
Gabriel to the world ? He it
is that leads holy souls to
heaven, there to contemplate
our Lord.

We beseech thee, therefore,
great prince, pray for us
miserable sinners. Propitiate
him that can do all things,
and obtain for us his pardon.

Amen.

Gabriel, angel of light, and
strength of God ! whom our
Emmanuel selected from the
rest of the heavenly princes,

A quo promeruit discere
Daniel

Hirci prodigium feri.

Tu vatis precibus curris
alacriter,

Monstras hebdomadam sa-
crata tempora :

Quæ nos ætherei germine
Principis,

Ditabunt bene gaudiis.

Baptistæ pariter mira pa-
rentibus

Affers a superis lætaque nun-
tia,

Quod mater, sterili corpore,
pignora

Longævo pariet patri.

Quod vates referunt, mundi
ab origine,

Hoc sacræ veniens tu plene
Virgini

Longo mysterium pandis ab
ordine,

Verum quod pariet Deum.

Pastores Solymos, inclyte,
gaudiis

Implesti, reserans cœlica nun-
tia :

Et tecum celebrat turba
canentium

Nati mysterium Dei.

Oranti Domino nocte no-
vissima,

Dum sudor madidum san-
guine conficit,

Adstas a superis, ut calicem
bibat,

Assensum Patris indicans.

Mentes catholicas, inclyta
Trinitas,

Confirma fidei munere cœlico :

Da nobis gratiam, nos quo-
que gloriam

Per cuncta tibi sæcula.

Amen.

that thou shouldst expound
unto Daniel the mystery of
the savage goat.

Thou didst joyfully hasten
to the prophet as he prayed,
and didst tell him of the
sacred weeks, which were to
give us the birth of the King
of heaven, and enrich us with
plenteous joy.

'Tis thou didst bring to
the parents of the Baptist
the wondrous and gladsome
tidings that Elizabeth, though
barren, and Zachary, though
old, should have a son.

What the prophets had fore-
told from the beginning of
the world, this thou didst an-
nounce in all the fulness of the
mystery to the holy virgin,
telling her that she was to be
the true Mother of God.

Thou, fair spirit, didst fill
the Bethlehem shepherds with
joy, when thou didst tell them
the heavenly tidings ; and
with thee a host of angels
sang the praises of the new-
born God.

As Jesus was in prayer on
that last night, when a bloody
sweat bathed his limbs, thou
didst leave heaven to be near
him, and offer him the chalice
that his Father willed him to
drink.

O blessed Trinity ! strength-
en Catholic hearts with the
heavenly gift of faith. Give
us grace, as we to thee give
glory for ever. Amen.

The whole human race is indebted to thee, O Gabriel! and, on this day, we would fain pay thee the honour and gratitude we owe thee. Thou wast moved to holy compassion on seeing the miseries of the world; for all flesh had corrupted its way, and the forgetfulness of God increased with each new generation of men. Then did the Most High commission thee to bring to the world the good tidings of its salvation. How beautiful thy steps, O prince of the heavenly court, as thou camest down to this our humble sphere! How tender and fraternal is thy love of man, whose nature, though so inferior to thine own, was to be raised, by the mystery of the Incarnation, to union with God Himself! With what respectful awe didst thou approach the Virgin, who surpassed all the angels in holiness!

Blessed messenger of our redemption, whom God selects as His minister when He would show His power, we beseech thee, offer the homage of our gratitude to Him that thus sent thee. Help us to pay the immense debt we owe to the Father, who so loved the world, as to give it His only-begotten Son;¹ to the Son, who emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant;² and to the Holy Ghost, who rested on the Flower that sprang up out of the root of Jesse.³

'Tis thou, O Gabriel! that taughtest us the salutation wherewith we should greet Mary full of grace. Thou wast the first to pronounce these sublime words, which thou broughtest from heaven. The children of the Church are now, day and night, repeating these words of thine; pray for us that we may say them in such a manner, as that our blessed Mother may find them worthy of her acceptance.

Angel of strength, friend of mankind! relent not in thy ministry of aiding us. We are surrounded by terrible enemies; our weakness makes them bold; come to our assistance, get us courage. Pray for us

¹ St. John iii. 16.

² Phil. ii. 7.

³ Is. xi. 1.

during these days of conversion and penance. Obtain for us the knowledge of all we owe to God in consequence of that ineffable mystery of the Incarnation, of which thou wast the first witness. We have forgotten our duties to the Man-God, and we have offended Him : enlighten us, that so, henceforth, we may be faithful to His teachings and examples. Raise up our thoughts to the happy abode where thou dwellest ; assist us to merit the places left vacant by the fallen angels, for God has reserved them for His elect among men.

Pray, O Gabriel, for the Church militant, and defend her against the attacks of hell. The times are evil ; the spirits of malice are let loose, nor can we make stand against them, unless with God's help. It is by His holy angels that He gives victory to His bride. Be thou, *O strength of God!* foremost in the ranks. Drive heresy back, keep schism down, foil the false wisdom of men, frustrate the policy of the world, arouse the well-minded from apathy ; that thus the Christ whom thou didst announce may reign over the earth He has redeemed, and that we may sing together with thee and the whole angelic choir : ' Glory be to God, peace to men !'

MARCH 19

SAINT JOSEPH

SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

YESTERDAY, it was the bright Archangel that visited us ; to-day, it is Joseph, the spouse of Mary, the foster-father of the Son of God, that comes to cheer us by his dear presence. In a few days hence, the august mystery of the Incarnation will demand our fervent adorations : who, after the angel of the Annunciation, could better prepare us for the grand feast, than he that was both the confidant and the faithful guardian of the divine secret ?

The Son of God, when about to descend upon this earth to assume our human nature, would have a Mother ; this Mother could not be other than the purest of Virgins, and her divine maternity was not to impair her incomparable virginity. Until such time as the Son of Mary were recognized as the Son of God, His Mother's honour had need of a protector : some man, therefore, was to be called to the high honour of being Mary's spouse. This privileged mortal was Joseph, the most chaste of men.

Heaven designated him as being the only one worthy of such a treasure : the rod he held in his hand in the temple suddenly produced a flower, as though it were a literal fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaias : ' There shall come forth a rod from the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root.'¹ The rich pretenders to an alliance with Mary were set aside ; and Joseph was espoused to the Virgin of the house of David, by a union which surpassed in

¹ Is. xi. 1.

love and purity everything the angels themselves had ever witnessed.

But he was not only chosen to the glory of having to protect the Mother of the Incarnate Word ; he was also called to exercise an adopted paternity over the very Son of God. So long as the mysterious cloud was over the Saint of saints, men called Jesus the Son of Joseph and the carpenter's Son. When our blessed Lady found the Child Jesus in the temple, in the midst of the doctors, she thus addressed Him : ' Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing ' ;¹ and the holy evangelist adds that Jesus was subject to them, that is, that He was subject to Joseph as He was to Mary.

Who can imagine or worthily describe the sentiments which filled the heart of this man, whom the Gospel describes to us in one word, when it calls him the just man ?² Let us try to picture him to ourselves amidst the principal events of his life : his being chosen as the spouse of Mary, the most holy and perfect of God's creatures ; the angel's appearing to him, and making him the one single human confidant of the mystery of the Incarnation, by telling him that his Virgin bride bore within her the fruit of the world's salvation : the joys of Bethlehem, when he assisted at the birth of the divine Babe, honoured the Virgin Mother, and heard the angels singing ; his seeing first the humble and simple shepherds, and then the rich eastern magi, coming to the stable to adore the new-born Child ; the sudden fears which came to him, when he was told to arise, and, midnight as it was, to flee into Egypt with the Child and the Mother ; the hardships of that exile, the poverty and the privations which were endured by the hidden God, whose foster-father he was, and by the Virgin, whose sublime dignity was now so evident to him ; the return to Nazareth, and the humble and laborious

¹ St. Luke ii. 48.

² St. Matt. i. 19.

life led in that village, where he so often witnessed the world's Creator sharing in the work of a carpenter ; the happiness of such a life, in that cottage where his companions were the Queen of the angels and the eternal Son of God, both of whom honoured, and tenderly loved him as the head of the family—yes, Joseph was beloved and honoured by the uncreated Word, the Wisdom of the Father, and by the Virgin, the masterpiece of God's power and holiness.

We ask, what mortal can justly appreciate the glories of St. Joseph ? To do so, he would have to understand the whole of that mystery, of which God made him the necessary instrument. What wonder, then, if this foster-father of the Son of God was pre-figured in the old Testament, and that by one of the most glorious of the patriarchs ? Let us listen to St. Bernard, who thus compares the two Josephs : ' The first was sold by his brethren, out of envy, and was led into Egypt, thus prefiguring our Saviour's being sold ; the second Joseph, that he might avoid Herod's envy, led Jesus into Egypt. The first was faithful to his master, and treated his wife with honour ; the second, too, was the most chaste guardian of his bride, the Virgin Mother of his Lord. To the first was given the understanding and interpretation of dreams ; to the second, the knowledge of, and participation in, the heavenly mysteries. The first laid up stores of corn, not for himself, but for all the people ; the second received the living Bread that came down from heaven, and kept it both for himself and for the whole world.'¹

Such a life could not close save by a death that was worthy of so great a saint. The time came for Jesus to quit the obscurity of Nazareth, and show Himself to the world. His own works were henceforth to bear testimony to His divine origin ; the ministry of Joseph, therefore, was no longer needed.

¹ Homily II. on the *Misus est*.

It was time for him to leave this world, and await, in Abraham's bosom, the arrival of that day, when heaven's gates were to be opened to the just. As Joseph lay on his bed of death, there was watching by his side He that is the master of life, and that had often called this His humble creature, father. His last breath was received by the glorious Virgin-Mother, whom he had, by a just right, called his bride. It was thus, with Jesus and Mary by his side, caring for and caressing him, that Joseph sweetly slept in peace. The spouse of Mary, the foster-father of Jesus, now reigns in heaven with a glory which, though inferior to that of Mary, is marked with certain prerogatives which no other inhabitant of heaven can have.

From heaven, he exercises a powerful protection over those that invoke him. In a few weeks from this time, the Church will show us the whole magnificence of this protection; we shall be having a special feast in honour of the *Patronage of Saint Joseph*. What the liturgy proposes to us to-day, are his glories and privileges. Let us unite with the faithful throughout the world, and offer to the spouse of Mary the hymns which are this day sung in his praise.

HYMN I

Te, Joseph, celebrent ag-
mina cœlitum,
Te cuncti resonent Christia-
dum chori,
Qui clarus meritis junctus es
inclytæ
Casto fœdere Virgini.
Almo cum tumidam ger-
mine conjugem
Admirans, dubio tangeris
anxius,
Afflatu superi Flaminis an-
gelus
Conceptum puerum docet.

May the heavenly host
praise thee, O Joseph! May
the choirs of Christendom
resound with thy name, for
great are thy merits, who
wast united by a chaste alli-
ance to the holy Virgin.

Seeing that thy bride was
soon to be a Mother, a cruel
doubt afflicts thy heart; but
an angel visits thee, telling
thee that she had conceived
of the Holy Ghost the Child
she bore in her womb.

Tu natum Dominum
stringis ; ad exteras
Ægypti profugum tu sequeris
plagas :
Amissum Solymis quæris, et
invenis,
Miscens gaudia fletibus.

Post mortem reliquos mors
pia consecrat,
Palmamque emeritos gloria
suscepit ;
Tu vivens, Superis par, fru-
eris Deo,
Mira sorte beatior.

Nobis summa Trias, parce
precantibus,
Da Joseph meritis sidera
scandere :
Ut tandem liceat nos tibi
perpetim
Gratum promere canticum.
Amen.

When Jesus was born, thou
hadst to take him in thine
arms, and go with the little
fugitive to Egypt's distant
land. When he was lost in
Jerusalem, thou didst seek
after him ; and having found
him, thy tears were mingled
with joy.

Other saints receive their
beatitude after death, when a
holy death has crowned their
life ; they receive their glory,
when they have won the
palm : but thou, by a strange,
happy lot, hadst, even during
life, what the blessed have in
heaven—thou hadst the sweet
society of thy God.

O sovereign Trinity ! have
mercy on us thy suppliants,
and may the intercession of
Joseph aid us to reach heaven:
that there we may sing to thee
our eternal hymn of grateful
love. Amen.

HYMN II

Cœlitum Joseph decus,
atque nostræ
Certa spes vitæ, columnque
mundi,
Quas tibi læti canimus, be-
nignus
Suscipe laudes.
Te Sator rerum statuit pu-
dicæ
Virginis sponsum, voluitque
Verbi
Te patrem dici, dedit et minis-
trum
Esse salutis.
Tu Redemptorem stabulo
jacentem,

O Joseph, thou that art the
delight of the blessed, the sure
hope of our life, and the pillar
of the world ! Receive, in thy
kind love, the praises we now
joyfully sing to thee.

The Creator appointed thee
the spouse of the holy Virgin ;
willed thee to be called the
father of the Word ; and gave
thee to be an instrument of
our salvation.

Thou didst fix thy glad gaze
on the Redeemer lying in the

Quem chorus vatum cecinit
futurum,
Aspicias gaudens, humilisque
natum

Numen adoras.

Rex, Deus, regum, Domi-
nator orbis,
Cujus ad nutum tremit in-
ferorum

Turba, cui pronus famulatur
æther,
Se tibi subdit.

Laus sit excelsæ Triadi
perennis,
Quæ tibi præbens superos
honores,

Det tuis nobis meritis beatæ
Gaudia vitæ. Amen.

stable, him that the prophets
had foretold was to come ; and
seeing him, thou didst humbly
adore the new-born King.

He that is King, the God of
kings, the Lord of the earth,
at whose bidding hell trembles
and before whom heaven
prostrates ready to do his
will, yea, even he makes him-
self subject to thee.

Praise eternal be to the
most high Trinity ! May he
that has conferred such high
honours upon thee, grant us,
through the merits of thine
intercession, to come to the
joys of heavenly life. Amen.

HYMN III

Iste quem læti colimus
fideles,
Cujus excelsos canimus tri-
umphos,
Hac die, Joseph meruit pe-
rennis

Gaudia vitæ.

O nimis felix, nimis o
beatus,
Cujus extremam vigiles ad
horam

Christus et Virgo simul ad-
stiterunt,

Ore sereno.

Hinc Stygis victor, laqueo
solutus
Carnis, ad sedes placido so-
pore

Migrat æternas, rutilisque
cingit

Tempora sertis.

Ergo regnantem flagitemus
omnes,

It is on this day that
Joseph, whose praises we, the
faithful, now gladly tell, and
whose high triumph we sing,
deserved to receive the joys
of eternal life.

Thrice happy, thrice blessed
saint, at whose last hour Jesus
and Mary stood watching in
tender love.

Death was vanquished, the
snare of the flesh was broken,
and Joseph, sweetly sleeping,
passed to the eternal home,
and received upon his brow
the glittering crown.

Now that he reigns in
heaven, let us beseech him to

Adsit ut nobis, veniamque
nostris

Obtinens culpis, tribuat su-
pernæ

Munera pacis.

Sint tibi plausus, tibi sint
honores,

Trine qui regnas, Deus : et
coronas

Aureas servo tribuis fideli,
Omne per ævum.

Amen.

help us, obtain us the pardon
of our sins, and procure us the
gift of heavenly peace.

Glory and honour be to thee,
O God, O blessed Trinity, who
art our sovereign Lord ! who
givest to thy faithful servant
an everlasting crown of gold.
Amen.

The Greek liturgy, which honours St. Joseph on
the Sunday following the feast of Christmas, thus
hymns his praise in the Menæa :

HYMN

(Dominica post Natale Domini)

Prophetarum prædicationes
evidenter adimpletas vidit
Joseph sponsus, qui ad singu-
larem designatus desponsa-
tionem, revelationes accepit
ab angelis clamantibus : Gloria
Domino, quia pacem terræ
largitus est.

Annuntia, Joseph, Davidi
Dei parenti prodigia : Vir-
ginem vidisti puerum in sinu
habentem ; una cum magis
adorasti, cum pastoribus
gloriam Deo dedisti, ab angelo
præmonitus. Deprecare Chri-
stum Deum, ut animæ nostræ
salventur.

Quem supernæ Deum incir-
cumscriptum tremunt potes-
tates, tu, Joseph, natum ex
Virgine in manibus tuis ac-

Joseph, the spouse, saw
with his own eyes the fulfil-
ment of what the prophets had
foretold. He was destined for
an espousal such as no other
mortal had, and he received
the revelation from angels,
saying : Glory be to the Lord,
for he hath given peace to the
earth !

Tell, O Joseph, to David,
the ancestor of God our
Saviour, the prodigies thou
hast seen. Thou hast seen
the Virgin holding the Infant
in her arms ; thou didst adore
with the magi ; thou didst
unite with the shepherds in
giving glory to God, accord-
ing to the word of the angel.
Do thou beseech Christ our
Lord, that he save us.

The infinite God, before
whom the powers of heaven
tremble, thou, O Joseph, didst
receive into thy arms, when

cipis consecratus venerando contactu ; ideo te honorificamus.

Spiritum divinis mandatis obedientem habens, et purus omnino factus, solam in mulieribus puram et immaculatam tu, beate Joseph, in sponsam accepisti, Virginem castam custodiens, ut Creatoris tabernaculum effici mereretur.

Soli Gabrieli in caelis, et tibi soli, celeberrime, post solam Virginem intactam, mysterium creditum est, maximum et venerandum, beate Joseph, mysterium quod perniciosum principem tenebrarum dejiceret.

Ut divinam nubem, solam castam, in sinu suo Solem absconditum habentem, in Ægyptum ex civitate David perduxisti, ut ejusdem idolatriæ fugares tenebras, Joseph, incomprehensibilis mysterii minister.

Astitisti, sapiens Joseph, Deo in carne puerascenti ministrans, sicut angelus ; et immediate ab illo illustratus es radios ejus spirituales accipiens, beate ; et illuminatissimus corde, et anima visus fuisti.

Qui cælum, terram et mare verbo fabricatus est vocatus fuit filius fabri, tui, Joseph admiratione digne. Vocatus es pater illius qui sine prin-

he was born of the Virgin. Thou wast consecrated by the holy contact ; therefore do we honour thee.

Thy spirit was obedient to the divine commands, and thy purity was without reproach ; therefore, O blessed Joseph, didst thou receive as thy bride her that was pure and immaculate among women. Thou wast the guardian of the chaste Virgin, when she became the worthy tabernacle of the Creator.

To Gabriel alone in heaven, and to thee alone, O blessed Joseph, most worthy of praise, was entrusted, after the spotless Virgin, that great and venerable mystery, which brought the downfall of the cruel prince of darkness.

Thou, O Joseph, the minister of the incomprehensible mystery, in order that the darkness of idolatry might be dispelled, didst lead from the city of David into Egypt the pure Mother, who like a mysterious cloud, held the Sun hidden in her bosom.

O prudent Joseph ! thou, angel-like, didst minister to the Incarnate God when he had reached the age of boyhood. His spiritual rays came direct upon thee, O blessed one ! and enlightened thee. Thy heart and soul were bathed in light.

He that, by his only word, made heaven and earth and sea, was called the carpenter's Son, yes, thine, O Joseph, that deservest all our ad-

cipio est, qui te glorificavit ut mysteriorum supra rationem ministrum.

O quam pretiosa fuit mors tua in conspectu Domini, beate Joseph; tu enim Domino ab infantia sanctificatus, sacer fuisti custos benedictæ Virginis, et cum ea cecinisti: Omnis creatura benedicat Dominum, et superexaltet eum in sempiterna sæcula. Amen.

miration. Thou wast called the father of him that had no beginning, and receivedst from him the glory of being minister of unfathomable mysteries.

Oh! how precious, in the sight of the Lord, was thy death, O blessed Joseph! for thou wast consecrated to him from thine infancy, and wast the holy guardian of the blessed Virgin. Thou didst thus sing together with her: Let every creature bless the Lord, and praise him above all for endless ages. Amen.

We praise and glorify thee, O happy saint! We hail thee as the spouse of the Queen of heaven, and foster-father of our Redeemer. These titles, which would seem too grand for any human being to enjoy, are thine; and they are but the expression of the dignities conferred on thee by God. The Church of heaven admires the sublime favours thou hast received; the Church on earth joyfully celebrates thy glories, and blesses thee for the favours thou art so unceasingly bestowing upon her.

Though born of the kingly race of David, thou wast the humblest of men; thy spirit led thee to seek obscurity, and a hidden life was thine ambition: but God chose thee to be an instrument in the sublimest of all His works. A noble Virgin of the same family of David, the object of heaven's admiration, and the glory and hope of the world, is to be thy bride. The Holy Ghost is to dwell within her as in a most pure tabernacle; it is to thee, the just and chaste, that He entrusts her as an inestimable treasure. Espouse, then, to thyself her whose beauty the very King of heaven so greatly desires.¹

¹ Ps. xliv. 12.

The Son of God comes down to this earth, that He may live the life of man ; He comes that He may sanctify the ties and affections of kindred. He calls thee father ; He obeys thy orders. What strange emotions must have filled thy heart, O Joseph ! when, knowing the prerogatives of thy bride and the divinity of thy adopted Son, thou hadst to be the head of this family, which united heaven and earth into one ! What respectful and tender love for Mary, thy blessed bride ! What gratitude and profound worship of Jesus, who obeyed thee as thy Child ! Oh mysteries of Nazareth ! a God dwells among men, and permits Himself to be called the Son of Joseph !

O sublime minister of the greatest of blessings, intercede for us with God made Man. Ask Him to bestow humility upon us, that holy virtue which raised thee to such exalted dignity, and which must be the basis of our conversion. It is pride that led us into sin, and made us prefer our own will to that of God : yet will He pardon us if we offer Him the sacrifice of a contrite and humble heart.¹ Get us this virtue, without which there can be no true penance. Pray also for us, O Joseph, that we may be chaste. Without purity of mind and body we cannot come nigh the God of all sanctity, who suffers nothing defiled to approach Him. He wills to make our bodies, by His grace, the temples of His holy Spirit : do thou, great saint, help us to maintain ourselves in so exalted a dignity, or to recover it if we have lost it.

And lastly, O faithful spouse of Mary ! recommend us to our Mother. If she cast a look of pity upon us during these days of reconciliation, we shall be saved : for she is the Queen of mercy, and Jesus, her Son, will pardon us and change our hearts, if she intercede for us, O Joseph ! Remind her of Bethle-

¹ Ps. l. 19.

hem, Egypt, and Nazareth, in all of which she received from thee such marks of thy devotedness. Tell her that we, also, love and honour thee ; and Mary will reward us for our devotion to him that was given her by heaven as her protector and support.

MARCH 21

SAINT BENEDICT

ABBOT

FORTY days after the white dove of Cassino had mounted to heaven, Benedict, her glorious brother, ascended by a bright path to the blissful abode, where they were to be united for ever. Both of them reached the heavenly country during that portion of the year which corresponds with the holy season of Lent. It frequently happens, however, that St. Scholastica's feast is kept before Lent has begun ; whereas St. Benedict's day, the twenty-first of March, always comes during the season of penance. God, who is the sovereign Master of time, willed that the faithful, whilst practising their exercises of penance, should always have before their eyes a saint whose example and intercession would inspire them with courage.

With what profound veneration ought we to celebrate the festival of this wonderful saint, who, as St. Gregory says, was filled with the spirit of all the just ! If we consider his virtues, we find nothing superior in the annals of perfection presented to our admiration by the Church. Love of God and man, humility, the gift of prayer, dominion over the passions—form him into a masterpiece of the grace of the Holy Ghost. Miracles seem to constitute his life :

he cures the sick, commands the elements, casts out devils, and raises the dead to life. The spirit of prophecy unfolds futurity to him; and the most intimate thoughts of men are not too distant for the eye of his mind to scan. These superhuman qualifications are heightened by a sweet majesty, a serene gravity, and a tender charity, which shine in every page of his wonderful life; and it is one of his holiest children who wrote it, St. Gregory the Great. It is this holy Pope and Doctor, who had the honour of telling posterity all the wonders which God vouchsafed to work in His servant Benedict.

Posterity had a right to know the life and virtues of a man, whose salutary influence upon the Church and society has been so observable during the ages of the Christian era. To describe the influence exercised by the spirit of St. Benedict, we should have to transcribe the annals of all the nations of the western Church, from the seventh century down to our own times. Benedict is the father of Europe. By his Benedictines, numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sands of the sea-shore, he rescued the last remnants of Roman vigour from the total annihilation threatened by the invasion of barbarians; he presided over the establishment of the public and private laws of those nations, which grew out of the ruins of the Roman empire; he carried the Gospel and civilization into England, Germany, and the northern countries, including Sclavonia; he taught agriculture; he put an end to slavery; and to conclude, he saved the precious deposit of the arts and sciences from the tempest which would have swept them from the world, and would have left mankind a prey to a gloomy and fatal ignorance.

And Benedict did all this by that little book which we call his Rule. This admirable code of Christian perfection and prudence disciplined the countless

legions of religious, by whom the holy patriarch achieved all these prodigies. During the ages which preceded the promulgation of this rule, so wonderful in its simple eloquence, the monastic life in the western Church had produced some few saintly men ; but there was nothing to justify the hope that this kind of life would become, even more than it had been in the east, the principal means of the Christian regeneration and civilization of so many nations. Once this rule was written, all others gradually give place to it, as the stars are eclipsed when the sun has risen. The west was overspread with monasteries ; and from these monasteries flowed upon Europe all those blessings, which have made it the privileged quarter of the globe.

An incredible number of saints, both men and women, who look up to Benedict as their father, purify and sanctify the world, which had not yet emerged from the state of semi-barbarism. A long series of Popes who had once been novices in the Benedictine cloister, preside over the destinies of this new world, and form for it a new legislation, which, being based exclusively on the moral law, is to avert the threatening prevalence of brutal despotism. Bishops innumerable, trained in the same school of Benedict, consolidate this moral legislation in the provinces and cities over which they are appointed. The apostles of twenty barbarous nations confront their fierce and savage tribes, and, with the Gospel in one hand and the rule of their holy father in the other, lead them into the fold of Christ. For many centuries, the learned men, the doctors of the Church, and the instructors of youth, belong, almost exclusively, to the Order of the great patriarch, who, by the labours of his children, pours forth on the people the purest beauty of light and truth. This choir of heroes in every virtue, of Popes, of bishops, of apostles, of holy doctors, proclaiming themselves

as his disciples, and joining with the universal Church in glorifying that God, whose holiness and power shine forth so brightly in the life and actions of Benedict—what a corona, what an aureola of glory for one saint to have !

Let us now read the sketch of his life, as given us in the liturgy :

Benedictus, Nursiæ nobili genere ortus, Romæ liberalibus disciplinis eruditus, ut totum se Jesu Christo daret, ad eum locum qui Sublacus dicitur, in altissimam speluncam penetravit: in qua sic per triennium delituit, ut unus id sciret Romanus monachus, quo ad vitæ necessitatem ministro utebatur. Dum igitur ei quadam die ardentibus ad libidinem facibus a diabolo subicerentur, se in vepribus tamdiu volutavit, dum lacerato corpore, voluptatis sensus dolore opprimeretur. Sed jam erumpente ex illis latebris fama ejus sanctitatis, quidam monachi se illi instituendos tradiderunt: quorum vivendi licentia cum ejus objurgationes ferre non posset, venenum in potione ei dare constituunt. Verum poculum ei præbentibus, crucis signo vas confregit, ac relicto monasterio in solitudinem se recepit.

Benedict was born of a noble family at Nursia. He was sent to Rome, that he might receive a liberal education; but not long after, he withdrew to a place called Subiaco, and there hid himself in a very deep cave, that he might give himself entirely to Jesus Christ. He passed three years in that retirement, unknown to all save a monk, by name Romanus, who supplied him with the necessaries of life. The devil having one day excited him to a violent temptation of impurity, he rolled himself amidst prickly brambles, and extinguished within himself the desire of carnal pleasure by the pain he thus endured. The fame of his sanctity, however, became known beyond the limits of his hiding-place, and certain monks put themselves under his guidance. He sharply rebuked them for their wicked lives; which rebuke so irritated them, that they resolved to put poison in his drink. When he made the sign of the cross over the cup as they proffered it to him, it broke, and he, leaving that monastery, returned to his solitude.

Sed cum multi ad eum quotidie discipuli convenirent, duodecim monasteria ædificavit, eaque sanctissimis legibus communivit. Postea Cassinum migravit, ubi simulacrum Apollinis, qui adhuc ibi colebatur, comminuit, aram evertit, et lucos succendit: ibique Sancti Martini sacellum et Sancti Joannis ædiculam extruxit: oppidanos autem et incolas Christianis præceptis imbuat. Quare augebatur in dies magis divina gratia Benedictus, ut etiam prophetico spiritu ventura prædiceret. Quod ubi accepit Totila Gothorum rex, exploraturus an res ita esset, spatharium suum regio ornata et comitatu præmittit, qui se regem simularet. Quem ut ille vidit: Depone, inquit, fili, depone quod geris; nam tuum non est. Totilæ vero prædixit adventum ejus in Urbem, maris transmissionem, et post novem annos mortem.

Qui aliquot mensibus antequam e vita migraret, præmonuit discipulos quo die esset moriturus: ac sepulchrum, in quo suum corpus condi vellet, sex diebus antequam eo inferretur, aperiri jussit: sexto-

But whereas many daily came to him, beseeching him to take them as his disciples, he built twelve monasteries, and drew up the most admirable rules for their government. He afterwards went to Monte Cassino, where he destroyed an image of Apollo, which was still adored in those parts; and having pulled down the altar and burnt the groves, he built a chapel in that same place, in honour of St. Martin, and another in honour of St. John. He instructed the inhabitants in the Christian religion. Day by day did Benedict advance in the grace of God, and he also foretold, in a spirit of prophecy, what was to take place. Totila, the king of the Goths, having heard of this, and being anxious to know if it were the truth, went to visit him; but first sent his sword-bearer, who was to pretend that he was the king, and who, for this end, was dressed in royal robes and accompanied by attendants. As soon as Benedict saw him, he said: 'Put off, my son, put off this dress, for it is not thine.' But he foretold to Totila, that he would reach Rome, cross the sea, and die at the end of nine years.

Several months before he departed from this life, he foretold to his disciples the day on which he should die. Six days previous to his death, he ordered them to open the sepulchre wherein he wished to be buried. On the

que die deferri voluit in ecclesiam: ubi sumpta Eucharistia, sublatis in cœlum oculis orans, inter manus discipulorum efflavit animam: quam duo monachi euntem in cœlum viderunt, pallio ornatam pretiosissimo, circum eam fulgentibus lampadibus, et clarissima et gravissima specie virum stantem supra caput ipsius dicentem audierunt: Hæc est via, qua dilectus Domini Benedictus in cœlum ascendit.

sixth day, he desired to be carried to the church, and there having received the Eucharist, with his eyes raised in prayer towards heaven, and held up by his disciples, he breathed forth his soul. Two monks saw it ascending to heaven, adorned with a most precious robe, and surrounded by shining lights. They also saw a most beautiful and venerable man, who stood above the saint's head, and they heard him thus speak: 'This is the way whereby Benedict, the beloved of the Lord, ascended to heaven.'

The Benedictine Order celebrates the praise of its illustrious patriarch in these three hymns:

HYMN I

Laudibus cives resonent
canoris,
Templa solemnnes modulentur
hymnos;
Hac die summi Benedictus
arcem
Scandit Olympi.
Ille florentes peragebat an-
nos,
Cum puer dulcis patriæ pe-
nates
Liquit, et solus latuit silenti
Conditus antro.
Inter urticas rigidosque
sentes
Vicit altricem scelerum ju-
ventam:
Inde conscripsit documenta
vitæ
Pulchra beatæ.
Æream turpis Clarii figu-
ram,

Let the faithful give forth
their songs of praise; let our
temples echo with solemn
hymns: for on this day
Benedict ascended to the
highest heavens.

When a boy, and in the
flower of youth, he left his
sweet home, and hid himself
from the sight of all in a
lonely cave.

He conquered his passions
of youth by rolling amidst
nettles and prickly thorns.
After this, he wrote a beauti-
ful rule of a holy life.

He destroyed a brazen sta-
tue of the vile Apollo, and a

Et nemus stravit Veneri di-
 catum,
 Atque Baptistæ posuit sacro
 Monte sacellum.
 Jamque felici residens
 Olympo,
 Inter ardentem Seraphim
 catervas,
 Spectat, et dulci reficit
 clientum
 Corda liquore.
 Gloria Patri, genitæque
 Proli,
 Et tibi compar utriusque
 semper
 Spiritus alme, Deus unus,
 omni
 Tempore sæcli. Amen.

grove that was sacred to Venus : and on the holy mount he built an oratory in honour of the Baptist.

Now he dwells in the happy land above, amidst the burning Seraphim : he looks down on those that invoke him, and refreshes their hearts with a nectar of sweetness.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son that is begotten of him ! To thee, also, O Spirit of love, coequal with them, one God, be glory for endless ages. Amen.

HYMN II

Quidquid antiqui cecinere
 vates,
 Quidquid æternæ monumenta
 legis,
 Continet nobis celebranda
 summi
 Vita monarchæ.
 Extulit Mosen pietas be-
 nignum,
 Inclytum proles Abraham
 decorat,
 Isaac sponsæ decus, et severi
 Jussa parentis.
 Ipse virtutum cumulis onu-
 stus,
 Celsior nostri patriarcha
 cætus
 Isaac, Mosen, Abraham sub
 uno
 Pectore clausit.
 Ipse, quos mundi rapuit
 procellis,
 Hic pius flatu statuat se-
 cundo,

All that the ancient prophets preached, and all that the books of the divine Law tell us of holiness, is contained in the life of the great patriarch which we are now extolling.

Moses was celebrated for his meekness ; Abraham for his being father of all believers ; Isaac for the beauty of his bride, and his obedience to the trying commands of his father.

The sublime patriarch of our family was richly laden with every virtue ; and in his single person represented Isaac, Moses, and Abraham.

May he have a loving care of those whom he has delivered from this stormy world, and lead them with

<p>Pax ubi nullo, requiesque gliscit Mista pavore. Gloria Patri, genitæque Proli, Et tibi compar utriusque semper Spiritus alme, Deus unus, omni Tempore sæcli. Amen.</p>	<p>prosperous gales to the port where there is no fear that can ruffle peace and repose. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son that is begotten of him! To thee, also, O Spirit of love, coequal with them, one God, be glory for endless ages. Amen.</p>
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The third hymn was composed by the celebrated Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, and friend of St. Bernard.

HYMN III

<p>Inter æternas Superum coronas, Quas sacro partas retinent agone, Emicas celsis meritis coru- scus, O Benedicte. Sancta te compsit puerum senectus, Nil sibi de te rapuit voluptas, Aruit mundi tibi flos ad alta Mente levato.</p> <p>Hinc fuga lapsus, patriam, parentes Deseris, fervens nemorum colonus, Edomas carnem, subigisque Christo Tortor acerbus.</p> <p>Ne diu tutus latebras fo- veres, Signa te produnt operum piorum,</p>	<p>Amidst the saints that glitter with the crowns they have won in the holy contest, thou, O Benedict, shinest re- splendent with thy sublime merits.</p> <p>Thy boyhood was graced with the holy gravity of old age; the pleasures of the world had no hold on thee, and its flowers seemed but as withered weeds to a soul like thine, that was fixed on heavenly things.</p> <p>Therefore didst thou flee from the world, leaving thy country and thy parents, and becamest a fervent solitary. Thou didst tame the rebellion of the flesh, and by sharp mortification thou didst bring it into subjection to Christ.</p> <p>But thy fond hope of con- cealment was to be cut short: thy holy miracles betrayed thee, and the glorious fame of</p>
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Spargitur felix celeri per thy sanctity swiftly spread
orbem through the world.

Fama volatu.

Gloria Patri, genitæque Glory be to the Father, and
Proli, to the Son that is begotten of
Et tibi, compar utriusque him ! To thee, also, O Spirit
semper of love, coequal with them,
Spiritus alme, Deus unus, one God, be glory for endless
omni. ages. Amen.

Tempore sæcli. Amen.

The monastic missal contains the following sequence
in honour of St. Benedict :

SEQUENCE

Læta quies magni ducis,
Dona ferens novæ lucis,
Hodie recolitur.

We celebrate, this day, the
happy death of our great
leader, which brings us the
blessings of new light.

Charis datur piæ menti,
Corde sonet in ardenti
Quidquid foris promitur.

On this day grace is given
to the souls of his loving
children. Oh ! may the fer-
vent heart re-echo what the
voice sings forth !

Hunc per callem orientis
Admirèmur ascendentis
Patriarchæ speciem.

Let us admire the beauty of
our patriarch, as he ascends
to heaven by the path of the
east.

Amplum semen magnæ
prolis
Illum fecit instar solis,
Abrahæ persimilem.

He shines as a sun in the
world, he is most like to
Abraham, for he is the rich
seed from which a countless
race hath sprung.

Corvum cernis ministran-
tem ;
Hinc Eliam latitantem
Specu nosce parvulo.

When thou seest him fed
by the crows thou thinkest of
Elias, that hid himself in the
little cave.

Eliseus dignoscatur,
Cum securis revocatur
De torrentis alveo.

He reminds us of Eliseus,
when he makes the head of
the axe return from the bed
of the stream.

Illum Joseph candor mo-
rum,
Illum Jacob futurorum
Mens effecit conscia.

He is like Joseph by the
purity of his life, and like
Jacob by the spirit of pro-
phesy.

Ipsè memor suæ gentis,
Nos perducat in manentis
Semper Christi gaudia.
Amen.

May he be mindful of his
children, and lead us safe to
the joys of our Lord Jesus
Christ, who abideth for ever.
Amen.

The Greek Church has not forgotten, in her liturgy, the praise of the great patriarch of the monks of the west. We take from the *menæa* some of the stanzas, in which she celebrates the name of Saint Benedict :

HYMN

(Die XXI Martii)

Mihi laudabilem memoriam tuam, o sancte, hymnis celebrare aggresso gratiam ac peccatorum omnium remissionem tribui, Benedicte, Sancto deprecare.

In eremo tuam a pueritia crucem tollens, Omnipotentem insecutus es, atque carne mortificata vitam, o beatissime, promeruisti.

Angusta semita calcata pedem in Paradisi latitudine fixisti, o prorsus beate, ac dæmonum calliditates et insidias elusisti.

Lacrymarum tuarum profluviis fructiferi ligni instar irrigatus, o Benedicte, divinos virtutum ac miraculorum fructus, Dei virtute, ubertim attulisti.

Per continentis certamina, o beate, carnis membris mortificatis, mortuos preci-

O holy Benedict! pray to the holy God for me, who now begin to sing a hymn to thy praiseworthy name. Obtain for me that I may receive grace and the forgiveness of all my sins.

From thy childhood, O most blessed one! thou didst carry thy cross in the desert, walking in the footsteps of the Omnipotent. Thou didst merit life, by putting thy flesh to death.

Treading the narrow path, O truly blessed! thou didst take thy stand in the spaciousness of paradise, and didst elude the craft and snares of the devils.

Watered by the streams of thy tears, O Benedict! thou, like unto a fruitful tree, didst, by God's power, bring forth in abundance the divine fruits of virtues and miracles.

O blessed one! by the struggle of continency thou didst mortify thy bodily mem-

bus exsuscitasti, ac debilibus expeditam gradiendi vim tradidisti, morbumque omnem curasti, cum fide in admiratione habitus, o pater.

Siccas, atque aridas animas vivifico sermone tuo, o beate, frugiferas reddidisti, miraculorum exhibitione, et pastor divinitus inspiratus, et speciosissimus monachorum decor effectus.

Misericordem Deum deprecatus, sapiens pater, olei thecam, quemadmodum Elias, illico replevisti, o beatissime, a videntibus cum fide in admiratione habitus.

Utpote mente purus, utpote extra te raptus, universam terram conspexisti, ceu ab unico radio Dei te honorantis illustratus, o beatissime Benedicte.

In Christo imperans fontis aquam, precibus bonorum datorem obsecrans, emanare fecisti, quæ miraculum deprecans, o Benedicte, adhuc perseverat.

Spiritus splendore collustratus, pravorum etiam dæmonum tenebras dissipasti, o miraculorum patrator Benedicte, splendidissimum monachorum luminare.

Te, o beate, venenatis potionibus interimere insipienter volentes, quem divina universi Creatoris manus custodiebat, insipientes confusi sunt. Quos prævia

bers: thy prayers raised the dead to life, gave to the lame the power to walk, and cured every disease, for men were in admiration at thee and had faith in thee, O father!

Thy life-giving words, O blessed one! and the sight of thy miracles, gave fruitfulness to souls that before were parched and dry. Thou wast the divinely inspired shepherd, and the fairest glory of the monastic life.

O wise father! thou didst beseech the God of mercy, and like Elias, thou didst suddenly fill the vessel with oil, for men were in admiration at thee, and had faith in thee, O most blessed Benedict!

Because of thy clean-heartedness, and because thou wast out of thyself with rapture, thou didst behold the whole earth, for God honoured thee with a ray of his own light, O most blessed Benedict!

Thou didst command in the name of Christ, thou didst pray to the Giver of all good gifts, and a fountain of water sprang up at thy bidding: it still exists, O Benedict! the abiding witness of thy miracle.

Enlightened by the bright rays of the holy Spirit, thou didst dispel the darkness of the wicked devils, O Benedict, thou worker of miracles, thou fairest light of monasticism!

Those foolish men that madly plotted to destroy thy life by poison were confounded, for thou wast guarded, O blessed one! by the divine hand of the great

tua per Spiritum scientia
deprehendit.

Te monachorum turbæ a
te convocatæ diu noctuque
concelebrant, corpus tuum in
medio positum servantes,
quod largos miraculorum
fluvios effundit, o pater sa-
piens, eorumque gressus pe-
renni lumine collustrat.

Divinis mandatis obsecu-
tus, o pater, super solares
radios effulsisti, atque ad
inocciduum translatus es,
exorans propitiationem pec-
catorum concedi iis, qui te
cum fide colunt, celebris
Benedicte.

Creator. The knowledge thou
hadst from the holy Spirit
forewarned thee of their plot.

The choirs of monks, whom
thou hast called, celebrate thy
name day and night. They
possess thy body, which is
enshrined in their midst, and
from which flow abundant
streams of miracles, and an
unfading light that illumines
their path, O father full of
wisdom!

By thine obedience to the
divine precepts, O father!
thou hast been made brighter
than the sun, and hast been
taken to the land where the
light sets not. Pray for them
that have confidence in thee
and honour thee; pray that
they may receive the forgive-
ness of their sins, O Benedict!
thou whose name is known
throughout the world.

O Benedict! thou vessel of election, thou palm of
the wilderness, thou angel of earth, we offer thee the
salutation of our love! What man was ever chosen
to work on the earth more wonders than thou hast
done? The Saviour has crowned thee as one of His
principal co-operators in the work of the salvation
and sanctification of men. Who could count the
millions of souls who owe their eternal happiness to
thee? Thy immortal rule has sanctified them in
the cloister, and the zeal of thy Benedictines has
been the means of their knowing and serving the
great God who chose thee. Around thee, in the
realms of glory, a countless number of the blessed
acknowledge themselves indebted to thee, after God,
for their eternal happiness; and upon the earth
whole nations profess the true faith, because the
Gospel was first preached to them by thy disciples.

O father of so many people ! look down upon thine inheritance, and once more bless this ungrateful Europe, which owes everything to thee, yet has almost forgotten thy name ! The light which thy children imparted to it has become dimmed ; the warmth they imparted to the societies they founded and civilized by the cross has grown cold ; thorns have covered a large portion of the land in which they sowed the seed of salvation. Come and forward thine own work ; and, by thy prayers, keep in its expiring life. Give firmness to what has been shaken. May a new Europe, a Catholic Europe, spring up in place of that which heresy and false doctrines have formed.

O patriarch of the servants of God ! look down from heaven on the vineyard which thy hand hath planted, and see into what a state of desolation it has fallen. There was a time when thy name was honoured as that of a father in thirty thousand monasteries, from the shores of the Baltic to the borders of Syria, and from the green Erin to the steppes of Poland. Now, alas ! few and feeble are the prayers that ascend to thee from the whole of that immense patrimony, which the faith and gratitude of the people had once consecrated to thee. The blight of heresy and the rapaciousness of avarice have robbed thee of these harvests of thy glory. The work of sacrilegious spoliation is now centuries old, and unceasingly has it been pursued ; at one time having recourse to open violence, and at another pleading the urgency of political interests. Sainted father of our faith ! thou hast been robbed of those thousands of sanctuaries, which, for long ages, were fountains of life and light to the people. The race of thy children has become almost extinct : watch over them that still remain, and are labouring to perpetuate thy rule. An ancient tradition tells us how our Lord revealed to thee that thy Order would last to

the end of the world, and that thy children would console the Church of Rome and confirm the faith of many in the last great trials : deign to protect, by thy powerful intercession, the remnants of that family which still calls thee its father. Raise it up again ; multiply it ; sanctify it : let the spirit which thou hast deposited in thy holy rule flourish in its midst, and show, by thus blessing it, that thou art ever Benedict, the servant of God.

Support the holy Church, by thy powerful intercession, dear father ! Assist the apostolic See, which has been so often occupied by disciples of thy school. Father of so many pastors of thy people ! obtain for us bishops like those sainted ones whom thy rule has formed. Father of so many apostles ! ask for the countries which have no faith preachers of the Gospel, who may convert the people by their blood and by their words, as did those who went out missionaries from thy cloisters. Father of so many holy doctors ! pray that the science of sacred literature may revive, to aid the Church and confound error. Father of so many sublime ascetics ! rekindle the zeal of Christian perfection, which has grown so cold among the Christians of our days. Patriarch of the religious life in the western Church ! bless all the religious Orders which the holy Spirit has given successively to the Church ; they all look on thee with admiration, as their venerable predecessor : do thou pour out upon them the influence of thy fatherly love.

Lastly, O blessed favourite of God ! pray for all the faithful of Christ during these days which are consecrated to thoughts and works of penance. It was in the midst of the holy austerities of Lent that thou didst mount to the abode of everlasting delight ; ah ! help us Christians, who are, at this very time, in the same campaign of penance. Rouse our courage by thy example and precepts. Teach us to keep down

the flesh, and to subject it to the spirit, as thou didst. Obtain for us a little of thy blessed spirit, that, turning away from this vain world, we may think on the eternal years. Pray for us, that our hearts may never love, and our thoughts never dwell on, joys so fleeting as are those of time.

Catholic piety invokes thee as one of the patrons, as well as one of the models, of a dying Christian. It loves to tell men of the sublime spectacle thou didst present at thy death, when standing at the foot of the altar, leaning on the arms of thy disciples, and barely touching the earth with thy feet, thou didst give back, in submission and confidence, thy soul to its Creator. Obtain for us, dear saint! a death courageous and sweet as was thine. Drive from us, at our last hour, the cruel enemy who will seek to ensnare us. Visit us by thy presence, and leave us not till we have breathed forth our soul into the bosom of the God who has made thee so glorious a saint.

MARCH 25

THE ANNUNCIATION

OF THE EVER BLESSED VIRGIN

THIS is a great day, not only to man, but even to God Himself ; for it is the anniversary of the most solemn event that time has ever witnessed. On this day, the divine Word, by whom the Father created the world, was made flesh in the womb of a virgin, and dwelt among us.¹ We must spend it in joy. Whilst we adore the Son of God who humbled Himself by thus becoming Man, let us give thanks to the Father, who so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son ;² let us give thanks to the Holy Ghost, whose almighty power achieves the great mystery. We are in the very midst of Lent, and yet the ineffable joys of Christmas are upon us : our Emmanuel is conceived on this day, and, nine months hence, will be born in Bethlehem, and the angels will invite us to come and honour the sweet Babe.

During Septuagesima week, we meditated upon the fall of our first parents, and the triple sentence pronounced by God against the serpent, the woman, and Adam. Our hearts were filled with fear as we reflected on the divine malediction, the effects of which are to be felt by all generations, even to the end of the world. But in the midst of the anathemas then pronounced against us, a promise was made us by our God ; it was a promise of salvation, and it enkindled hope within us. In pronouncing sentence against the serpent, God said that his head

¹ St. John i. 14.² *Ibid.* iii. 16.

should one day be crushed, and that, too, by a woman.

The time has come for the fulfilment of this promise. The world has been in expectation for four thousand years ; and the hope of its deliverance has been kept up, in spite of all its crimes. During this time, God has made use of miracles, prophecies, and types, as a renewal of the engagement He has entered into with mankind. The blood of the Messiah has passed from Adam to Noah ; from Sem to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ; from David and Solomon to Joachim ; and now it flows in the veins of Mary, Joachim's daughter. Mary is the woman by whom is to be taken from our race the curse that lies upon it. God has decreed that she should be Immaculate ; and thereby has set an irreconcilable enmity between her and the serpent. She, a daughter of Eve, is to repair all the injury done by her mother's fall ; she is to raise up her sex from the degradation into which it has been cast ; she is to co-operate, directly and really, in the victory which the Son of God is about to gain over His and our enemy.

A tradition, which has come down from the apostolic ages, tells us that the great mystery of the Incarnation was achieved on the twenty-fifth day of March.¹ It was at the hour of midnight, when the most holy Virgin was alone and absorbed in prayer, that the Archangel Gabriel appeared before her, and asked her, in the name of the blessed Trinity, to consent to become the Mother of God. Let us assist, in spirit, at this wonderful interview between the angel and the Virgin : and, at the same time, let us think of that other interview which took place between Eve and the serpent. A holy bishop and martyr of the second century, Saint Irenæus, who had received the tradition from the very disciples of

¹ St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Lib. iv. cap. v.

the apostles, shows us that Nazareth is the counterpart of Eden.¹

In the garden of delights there is a virgin and an angel ; and a conversation takes place between them. At Nazareth a virgin is also spoken to by an angel, and she answers him ; but the angel of the earthly paradise is a spirit of darkness, and he of Nazareth is a spirit of light. In both instances it is the angel that has the first word. ' Why,' said the serpent to Eve, ' hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise ?' His question implies impatience and a solicitation to evil ; he has contempt for the frail creature to whom he addresses it, but he hates the image of God which is upon her.

See, on the other hand, the angel of light ; see with what composure and peacefulness he approaches the Virgin of Nazareth, the new Eve ; and how respectfully he bows himself down before her : ' Hail, full of grace ! The Lord is with thee ! Blessed art thou among women !' Such language is evidently of heaven : none but an angel could speak thus to Mary.

Eve imprudently listens to the tempter's words ; she answers him ; she enters into conversation with one that dares to ask her to question the justice of God's commands. Her curiosity urges her on. She has no mistrust in the serpent ; this leads her to mistrust her Creator.

Mary hears what Gabriel has spoken to her ; but this most prudent Virgin is silent. She is surprised at the praise given her by the angel. The purest and humblest of virgins has a dread of flattery ; and the heavenly messenger receives no reply from her, until he has fully explained his mission by these words : ' Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son : and thou shalt call His

¹ *Adv. hæreses.* Lib. v. cap. xix.

name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His father : and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.'

What magnificent promises are these, which are made to her in the name of God ! What higher glory could she, a daughter of Juda, desire, knowing, as she does, that the fortunate Mother of the Messias is to be the object of the greatest veneration ? And yet it tempts her not. She has for ever consecrated her virginity to God, in order that she may be the more closely united to Him by love. The grandest possible privilege, if it is to be on the condition of violating this sacred vow, would be less than nothing in her estimation. She thus answers the angel : 'How shall this be done ? because I know not man.'

The first Eve evinces no such prudence or disinterestedness. No sooner has the wicked spirit assured her that she may break the commandment of her divine Benefactor and not die ; that the fruit of her disobedience will be a wonderful knowledge, which will put her on an equality with God Himself : than she immediately yields ; she is conquered. Her self-love has made her at once forget both duty and gratitude : she is delighted at the thought of being freed from the twofold tie which binds her to her Creator.

Such is the woman that caused our perdition. But how different is she that was to save us ! The former cares not for her posterity ; she looks but to her own interests : the latter forgets herself to think only of her God, and of the claims He has to her service. The angel, charmed with this sublime fidelity, thus answers the question put to him by Mary, and reveals to her the designs of God : 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of

the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren; because no word shall be impossible with God.' This said, he is silent, and reverently awaits the answer of the Virgin of Nazareth.

Let us look once more at the virgin of Eden. Scarcely has the wicked spirit finished speaking than Eve casts a longing look at the forbidden fruit: she is impatient to enjoy the independence it is to bring her. She rashly stretches forth her hand; she plucks the fruit; she eats it, and death takes possession of her: death of the soul, for sin extinguishes the light of life; and death of the body, which, being separated from the source of immortality, becomes an object of shame and horror, and finally crumbles into dust.

But let us turn away our eyes from this sad spectacle, and fix them on Nazareth. Mary has heard the angel's explanation of the mystery; the will of heaven is made known to her, and how grand an honour it is to bring upon her! She, the humble maid of Nazareth, is to have the ineffable happiness of becoming the Mother of God, and yet the treasure of her virginity is to be left to her! Mary bows down before this sovereign will, and says to the heavenly messenger: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to thy word.'

Thus, as the great St. Irenæus and so many of the holy fathers remark, the obedience of the second Eve repaired the disobedience of the first: for no sooner does the Virgin of Nazareth speak her *fiat*, 'be it done,' than the eternal Son of God (who, according to the divine decree, awaited this word) is present, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, in the chaste womb of Mary, and there He begins His human life. A Virgin is a Mother, and Mother of God; and it is

this Virgin's consenting to the divine will that has made her conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost. This sublime mystery puts between the eternal Word and a mere woman the relations of Son and Mother ; it gives to the almighty God a means whereby He may, in a manner worthy of His majesty, triumph over satan, who hitherto seemed to have prevailed against the divine plan.

Never was there a more entire or humiliating defeat than that which this day befel satan. The frail creature, over whom he had so easily triumphed at the beginning of the world, now rises and crushes his proud head. Eve conquers in Mary. God would not choose man for the instrument of His vengeance ; the humiliation of satan would not have been great enough ; and therefore she who was the first prey of hell, the first victim of the tempter, is selected to give battle to the enemy. The result of so glorious a triumph is that Mary is to be superior not only to the rebel angels, but to the whole human race, yea, to all the angels of heaven. Seated on her exalted throne, she, the Mother of God, is to be the Queen of all creation. Satan, in the depths of the abyss, will eternally bewail his having dared to direct his first attack against the woman, for God has now so gloriously avenged her ; and in heaven, the very Cherubim and Seraphim reverently look up to Mary, and deem themselves honoured when she smiles upon them, or employs them in the execution of any of her wishes, for she is the Mother of their God.

Therefore is it that we, the children of Adam, who have been snatched by Mary's obedience from the power of hell, solemnize this day of the Annunciation. Well may we say of Mary those words of Debbora, when she sang her song of victory over the enemies of God's people : ' The valiant men ceased, and rested in Israel, until Debbora arose, a mother arose in Israel. The Lord chose new wars, and He Himself

overthrew the gates of the enemies.¹ Let us also refer to the holy Mother of Jesus these words of Judith, who by her victory over the enemy was another type of Mary: 'Praise ye the Lord our God, who hath not forsaken them that hope in Him. And by me, His handmaid, He hath fulfilled His mercy, which He promised to the house of Israel; and He hath killed the enemy of His people by my hand this night. . . . The almighty Lord hath struck him, and hath delivered him into the hands of a woman, and hath slain him.'²

FIRST VESPERS

When the Annunciation falls on any other day than Monday, the first Vespers of this feast are sung before midday, according to the rule prescribed for fast-days of Lent: but when it falls on a Monday, this Office is celebrated at the ordinary time of Vespers, and only a commemoration is made of the Sunday by the *Magnificat* antiphon and the prayer.

The Office of first Vespers is always the commencement of a feast. The antiphons of the Vespers, at which we are going to assist, are taken from the Gospel of St. Luke, where the evangelist reveals to us the sublime interview between the angel and the Virgin. The psalms are those which tradition has consecrated to the celebration of Mary's glories. We have elsewhere³ shown how each of the five refers to the Mother of God.

ANT. Missus est Gabriel
angelus ad Mariam Virginem
desponsatam Joseph.

ANT. The angel Gabriel
was sent to Mary, a Virgin
espoused to Joseph.

¹ Judges v. 7, 8.

² Judith xiii. 17, 18; xvi. 7.

³ See our volume for Advent, in the Vespers for December 8.

PSALM 109

Dixit Dominus Domino meo : * Sede a dextris meis.

Donec ponam inimicos tuos : * scabellum pedum tuorum.

Virgam virtutis tuæ emitet Dominus ex Sion : * dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.

Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ in splendoribus sanctorum : * ex utero ante luciferum genui te.

Juravit Dominus, et non pœnitebit eum : * Tu es Sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.

Dominus a dextris tuis : * confregit in die iræ suæ reges.

Judicabit in nationibus, implebit ruinas : * conquasabit capita in terra multorum.

De torrente in via bibet : * propterea exaltabit caput.

ANT. Missus est Gabriel angelus, ad Mariam Virginem desponsatam Joseph.

ANT. Ave, Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum : benedicta tu in mulieribus.

The Lord said to my Lord, *his Son* : Sit thou at my right hand, and reign with me.

Until, *on the day of thy last coming*, I make thy enemies thy footstool.

O Christ! the Lord *thy Father*, will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion : *from thence* rule thou in the midst of thy enemies.

With thee is the principality in the day of thy strength, in the brightness of the Saints : *For the Father hath said to thee* : From the womb, before the day-star, I begot thee.

The Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent : *he hath said, speaking of thee, the God-Man* : Thou art a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech.

Therefore, O Father, the Lord, *thy Son*, is at thy right hand : he hath broken kings in the day of his wrath.

He shall *also* judge among nations : he shall fill the ruins *of the world* : he shall crush the heads in the land of many.

He cometh now in humility : he shall drink, in the way, of the torrent *of sufferings* : therefore, shall he lift up the head.

ANT. The angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, a Virgin, espoused to Joseph.

ANT. Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee : blessed art thou among women.

PSALM 112

Laudate pueri Dominum :
* laudate nomen Domini.

Sit nomen Domini benedictum : * ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum.

A solis ortu usque ad occasum : * laudabile nomen Domini.

Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus : * et super cœlos gloria ejus.

Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster qui in altis habitat : * et humilia respicit in cœlo et in terra ?

Suscitans a terra inopem : * et de stercore erigens pauperem.

Ut collocet eum cum principibus : * cum principibus populi sui.

Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo : * matrem filiorum lætantem.

ANT. Ave, Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum : benedicta tu in mulieribus.

ANT. Ne timeas, Maria ; invenisti gratiam apud Dominum : ecce concipies, et paries filium.

Praise the Lord, ye children : praise ye the name of the Lord.

Blessed be the name of the Lord : from henceforth, now and for ever.

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise.

The Lord is high above all nations : and his glory above the heavens.

Who is as the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high : and looketh down on the low things in heaven and in earth, *nay, who cometh down amidst us ?*

Raising up the needy from the earth : and lifting up the poor out of the dunghill.

That he may place him with princes : with the princes of his people.

Who maketh a barren woman to dwell in a house, the joyful mother of children.

ANT. Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee : blessed art thou among women.

ANT. Fear not, Mary ; thou hast found grace with God : behold thou shalt conceive, and shalt bring forth a Son.

PSALM 121

Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi : * in domum Domini ibimus.

Stantes erant pedes nostri : * in atriis tuis, Jerusalem.

I rejoiced at the things that were said to me : We shall go into the house of the Lord.

Our feet were standing in thy courts, O Jerusalem ! *Our heart loves and confides in thee, O Mary.*

Jerusalem quæ ædificatur
ut civitas : * cujus partici-
patio ejus in idipsum.

Illuc enim ascenderunt
tribus, tribus Domini : * testi-
monium Israël ad confiten-
dum nomini Domini.

Quia illic sederunt sedes
in judicio : * sedes super
domum David.

Rogate quæ ad pacem
sunt Jerusalem : * et abun-
dantia diligentibus te.

Fiat pax in virtute tua :
* et abundantia in turribus
tuis.

Propter fratres meos et
proximos meos : * loquebar
pacem de te.

Propter domum Domini
Dei nostri : * quæsiivi bona
tibi.

ANT. Ne timeas, Maria :
invenisti gratiam apud Do-
minum ; ecce concipies et
paries filium.

ANT. Dabit ei Dominus
sedem David patris ejus, et
regnabit in æternum.

Mary is like to Jerusalem,
that is built as a city ; which
is compact together.

For thither did the tribes go
up, the tribes of the Lord : the
testimony of Israel, to praise
the name of the Lord.

Because seats sat there in
judgment ; seats upon the
house of David, and *Mary is*
of a kingly race.

Pray ye, *through Mary*, for
the things that are for the
peace of Jerusalem : and may
abundance be on them that
love thee, *O Church of our*
God !

The voice of Mary : Let
peace be in thy strength, *O*
thou new Sion ! and abun-
dantia in thy towers.

I, *a daughter of Israel*, for
the sake of my brethren and
of my neighbours, spoke
peace of thee.

Because of the house of the
Lord our God, I have sought
good things for thee.

ANT. Fear not, Mary, for
thou hast found grace with
God : behold thou shalt con-
ceive, and shalt bring forth a
Son.

ANT. And the Lord shall
give unto him the throne of
David his father, and he shall
reign for ever.

PSALM 126

Nisi Dominus ædificaverit
domum : * in vanum labora-
verunt qui ædificant eam.

Nisi Dominus custodierit
civitatem : * frustra vigilat
qui custodit eam.

Unless the Lord build the
house, they labour in vain
that build it.

Unless the Lord keep the
city, he watcheth in vain that
keepeth it.

Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere : * surgite postquam sederitis, qui manducatis panem doloris.

Cum dederit dilectis suis somnum : * ecce hæreditas Domini filii, merces, fructus ventris.

Sicut sagittæ in manu potentis : * ita filii excusorum.

Beatus vir, qui implevit desiderium suum ex ipsis : * non confundetur cum loquetur inimicis suis in porta.

ANT. Dabit ei Dominus sedem David patris ejus, et regnabit in æternum.

ANT. Ecce ancilla Domini : fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

It is vain for you to rise before light ; rise ye after you have sitten, you that eat of the bread of sorrow.

When he shall give sleep to his beloved : behold the inheritance of the Lord are children ; the reward, the fruit of the womb.

As arrows in the hand of the mighty, so the children of them that have been shaken.

Blessed is the man that hath filled his desire with them ; he shall not be confounded when he shall speak to his enemies in the gate.

ANT. And the Lord shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign for ever.

ANT. Behold the handmaid of the Lord : be it done to me according to thy word.

PSALM 147

Lauda, Jerusalem, Dominum : * lauda Deum tuum, Sion.

Quoniam confortavit seras portarum tuarum : * benedixit filiis tuis in te.

Qui posuit fines tuos pacem : * et adipe frumenti satiat te.

Qui emittit eloquium suum terræ : * velociter currit sermo ejus.

Qui dat nivem sicut lanam : * nebulam sicut cinerem spargit.

Praise the Lord, *O Mary, thou true Jerusalem : O Mary, O Sion ever holy, praise thy God.*

Because he hath strengthened *against sin* the bolts of thy gates : he hath blessed thy children within thee.

Who hath placed peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the fat of corn, *with Jesus, who is the Bread of life.*

Who sendeth forth, *by thee,* his Word to the earth : his word runneth swiftly.

Who giveth snow like wool ; scattereth mists like ashes.

Mittit crystallum suam sicut buccellas : * ante faciem frigoris ejus quis sustinebit ?

Emittet verbum suum, et liquefaciet ea : * flabit spiritus ejus, et fluent aquæ.

Qui annuntiat verbum suum Jacob : * justitias, et judicia sua Israël.

Non fecit taliter omni nationi : * et judicia sua non manifestavit eis.

ANT. Ecce ancilla Domini : fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

He sendeth his crystal like morsels ; who shall stand before the face of his cold ?

He shall send forth his Word *by Mary*, and shall melt them : his Spirit shall breathe, and the waters shall run.

Who declareth his word to Jacob : his justices and his judgments to Israel.

He hath not done in like manner to every nation : and his judgments he hath not made manifest to them.

ANT. Behold the handmaid of the Lord : be it done to me according to thy word.

CAPITULUM

(*Is. vii.*)

Ecce virgo concipiet et pariet filium, et vocabitur nomen ejus Emmanuel. Butyrum et mel comedet, ut sciat reprobare malum, et eligere bonum.

Behold a 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.

HYMN¹

Ave, maris stella,
Dei Mater alma,
Atque semper Virgo,
Felix cœli porta.

Sumens illud Ave
Gabrielis ore,
Funda nos in pace,
Mutans Evæ nomen.

Hail, star of the sea !
Blessed Mother of God, yet
ever a Virgin ! O happy gate
of heaven !

Thou that didst receive the
Ave from Gabriel's lips, con-
firm us in peace, and so let
Eva be changed into an Ave
of blessing for us.

¹ In monastic churches it is preceded by this responsory :—

R. breve. Angelus Domini * Nuntiavit Mariæ. Angelus.
V. Et concepit de Spiritu sancto. * Nuntiavit. Gloria Patri.
Angelus.

Solve vincla reis,
Profer lumen cæcis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce.

Monstra te esse Matrem,
Sumat per te preces,
Qui pro nobis natus,
Tulit esse tuus.

Virgo singularis,
Inter omnes mitis,
Nos culpis solutos
Mites fac et castos.

Vitam præsta puram,
Iter para tutum ;
Ut videntes Jesum,
Semper collætetur.

Sit laus Deo Patri,
Summo Christo decus,
Spiritui sancto,
Tribus honor unus.

Amen.

V. Ave, Maria, gratia
plena.

R. Dominus tecum.

Loose the sinner's chains,
bring light to the blind, drive
from us our evils, and ask all
good things for us.

Show thyself a Mother, and
offer our prayers to him, who
would be born of thee, when
born for us.

O incomparable Virgin, and
meekest of the meek, obtain
us the forgiveness of our sins,
and make us meek and chaste.

Obtain us purity of life, and
a safe pilgrimage ; that we
may be united with thee in
the blissful vision of Jesus.

Praise be to God the Father,
and to the Lord Jesus, and to
the Holy Ghost : to the Three
one self-same praise.

Amen.

V. Hail, Mary, full of grace.

R. The Lord is with thee.

ANTIPHON OF THE MAGNIFICAT

Spiritus sanctus in te de-
scendet, Maria, et virtus Al-
tissimi obumbrabit tibi.

The Holy Ghost shall come
upon thee, O Mary, and the
power of the Most High shall
overshadow thee.

OREMUS

Deus, qui de beatæ Ma-
riæ Virginis utero Verbum
tuum, angelo nuntiante,
carnem suscipere voluisti:
præsta supplicibus tuis, ut
qui vere eam Genitricem
Dei credimus, ejus apud te
intercessionibus adjuvemur.
Per eundem.

LET US PRAY

O God, who wast pleased
that thy Word, when the
angel delivered his message,
should take flesh in the womb
of the blessed Virgin Mary,
give ear to our humble peti-
tions, and grant that we, who
believe her to be truly the
Mother of God, may be helped
by her prayers. Through the
same, &c.

MASS

The Church has taken most of the chants of to-day's Mass from the forty-fourth Psalm, wherein the royal prophet celebrates the mystery of the Incarnation. In the Introit, she greets Mary as the Queen of the human race, to whom every creature should pay respectful homage. It is her virginity that fitted Mary to become the Mother of God. This virtue will be imitated in the Church, and each generation will produce thousands of holy virgins, who will walk in the footsteps of her who is their Mother and their model.

INTROIT

Vultum tuum deprecantur omnes divites plebis: adducentur Regi virgines post eam: proximæ ejus adducentur tibi in lætitia et exultatione.

Ps. Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum: dico ego opera mea Regi. *V.* Gloria Patri. Vultum tuum.

All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance: after her shall virgins be brought to the King; her neighbours shall be brought to thee in joy and gladness.

Ps. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. *V.* Glory, &c. All the rich.

In the Collect, the Church glories in her faith in the divine maternity; she puts it forward as a claim to Mary's interceding for her with God, who is her Son. This dogma of Mary's being the Mother of God is founded on the mystery of the Incarnation, which is the basis of our faith, and which was accomplished on this twenty-fifth of March.

COLLECT

Deus, qui de beatæ Mariæ Virginis utero, Verbum tuum, angelo nuntiante, carnem suscipere voluisti:

O God, who wast pleased that thy Word, when the angel delivered his message, should take flesh in the womb

præsta supplicibus tuis: ut qui vere eam Genitricem Dei credimus, ejus apud te intercessionibus adjuvemur. Per eundem.

of the blessed Virgin Mary, give ear to our humble petitions, and grant that we, who believe her to be truly the Mother of God, may be helped by her prayers. Through the same, &c.

To this is added the Collect for the feria of Lent.

EPISTLE

Lectio Isaiaë Prophetæ.

Lesson from the Prophet
Isaias.

Cap. vii.

Ch. vii.

In diebus illis: Locutus est Dominus ad Achaz, dicens: Pete tibi signum a Domino Deo tuo, in profundum inferni, sive in excelsum supra. Et dixit Achaz: Non petam, et non tentabo Dominum. Et dixit: Audite ergo domus David: Numquid parum vobis est, molestos esse hominibus, quia molesti estis et Deo meo? Propter hoc dabit Dominus ipse vobis signum. Ecce Virgo concipiet, et pariet filium: et vocabitur nomen ejus Emmanuel. Butyrum et mel comedet, ut sciat reprobare malum et eligere bonum.

In those days: the Lord spoke unto 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 (Isaias) 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 a 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.

The prophet is speaking to a wicked king, who refused to accept a miraculous proof of God's merciful protection over Jerusalem; and he makes this an opportunity for announcing to Juda the great portent which we are celebrating to-day: *A Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son.* And when was it, that God

fulfilled the prophecy ? It was in an age, when mankind seemed to have reached the highest pitch of wickedness, and when idolatry and immorality reigned throughout the whole world. The fulness of time came, and the tradition, which had found its way into every country, that a Virgin should bring forth a Son, was exciting much interest. This is the day on which the mystery was accomplished ; let us adore the power of God, and the fidelity wherewith He fulfils His promises. The Author of the laws of nature suspends them ; He acts independently of them : virginity and maternity are united in one and the same creature, for the Child that is to be born is God. A Virgin could not bring forth other than God Himself : the Son of Mary is therefore called *Emmanuel*, that is, God with us.

Let us adore this God, the Creator of all things visible and invisible, who thus humbles Himself. Henceforth, He will have every tongue confess, not only His Divinity, but also His human Nature, which He has assumed in order that He might redeem us. From this day forward He is truly the Son of Man. He will remain nine months in His Mother's womb, as other children. Like them, He will, after His birth, be fed on *milk and honey*. He will sanctify all stages of human life, from infancy to perfect manhood, for He is the New Man, who has come down from heaven that He might restore the old. Without losing aught of His Divinity, He shares in our weak finite being, that He may make us partakers of the divine nature.¹

In the Gradual, the Church unites with David in praising the beauty of the Emmanuel, His kingdom and His strength ; for He comes in humility, that He may rise again in glory ; He comes to give battle that He may conquer and triumph.

¹ 2 St. Peter i. 4.

GRADUAL

Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis; propterea benedixit te Deus in æternum.

V. Propter veritatem, et mansuetudinem, et justitiam; et deducet te mirabiliter dextera tua.

Grace is spread on thy lips; therefore hath the Lord blessed thee for ever.

V. For thy truth, meekness and righteousness, shall thy right hand lead thee on wonderfully.

The Church continues the same canticle in the Tract, but it is in praise of Mary, the Virgin and Mother. The Holy Ghost loves her for her incomparable *beauty*; it is on this day that He overshadows her and she conceives the Word. Where is there a glory like that of Mary, who is an object of complacency to the three Persons of the Trinity? God could create nothing more exalted than the Mother of God. David foretells how this, his daughter, was to receive homage from the great ones of the earth, and how she was to be surrounded by holy virgins, who would follow her as their Queen and model. This day is also the triumph of her virginity, for it is raised to the dignity of divine maternity! Her triumph frees her sex from slavery, and renders it capable of everything that is honourable and great.

TRACT

Audi, filia, et vide, et inclina aurem tuam: quia concupivit Rex speciem tuam.

V. Vultum tuum deprecabuntur omnes divites plebis: filiæ regum in honore tuo.

V. Adducentur Regi virgines post eam: proximæ ejus afferentur tibi.

Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear: for the King is taken with thy beauty.

V. All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance: the daughters of kings shall honour thee.

V. Virgins shall be brought in her retinue to the King: the virgins, her companions, shall be presented to thee.

V. Adducentur in lætitia
et exultatione: adducentur
in templum Regis.

V. They shall be brought
with gladness and rejoicing:
they shall be brought into the
temple of the King.

GOSPEL

Sequentia sancti Evangelii
secundum Lucam.

Cap. i.

In illo tempore: Missus est angelus Gabriel a Deo in civitatem Galilææ, cui nomen Nazareth, ad virginem desponsatam viro, cui nomen erat Joseph, de domo David: et nomen virginis, Maria. Et ingressus angelus ad eam, dixit: Ave, gratia plena; Dominus tecum: benedicta tu in mulieribus. Quæ cum audisset, turbata est in sermone ejus: et cogitabat qualis esset ista salutatio. Et ait angelus ei: Ne timeas, Maria: invenisti enim gratiam a quod Deum. Ecce concipies in utero, et paries filium: et vocabis nomen ejus Jesum. Hic erit magnus: et Filius Altissimi vocabitur. Et dabit illi Dominus Deus sedem David patris ejus: et regnabit in domo Jacob in æternum; et regni ejus non erit finis. Dixit autem Maria ad angelum: Quomodo fiet istud? quoniam virum non cognosco. Et respondens angelus, dixit ei: Spiritus sanctus superveniet in te; et virtus Altissimi obumbrabit tibi. Ideoque et quod nascetur ex te sanctum, vocabitur Filius Dei. Et ecce

Sequel of the holy Gospel
according to Luke.

Ch. i.

At that time: the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the Virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father: and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the

Elisabeth cognata tua : et ipsa concepit filium in senectute sua. Et hic mensis sextus est illi, quæ vocatur sterilis ; quia non erit impossibile apud Deum omne verbum. Dixit autem Maria : Ecce ancilla Domini : fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth she also hath conceived a son in her old age ; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren : because no word shall be impossible with God. And Mary said : Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.

By these last words of thine, O Mary ! our happiness is secured. Thou consentest to the desire of heaven, and thy consent brings us our Saviour. O Virgin-Mother ! *Blessed among women !* we unite our thanks with the homage that is paid thee by the angels. By thee is our ruin repaired ; in thee is our nature restored ; for thou hast wrought the victory of man over satan ! St. Bernard, in one of his homilies on this Gospel, thus speaks : ‘ Rejoice, O thou our father Adam ! but thou, O mother Eve, still more rejoice ! You were our parents, but you were also our destroyers ; and, what is worse, you had wrought our destruction before you gave us birth. Both of you must be consoled in such a daughter as this : but thou, O Eve, who wast the first cause of our misfortune, and whose humiliation has descended upon all women, thou hast a special reason to rejoice in Mary. For the time has now come, when the humiliation is taken away ; neither can man any longer complain against the woman, as of old, when he foolishly sought to excuse himself, and cruelly put all the blame on her, saying : “ The woman, whom Thou gavest me, gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Go, Eve, to Mary ; go, mother, to thy daughter ; let thy daughter take thy part, and free thee from thy disgrace, and reconcile thee to her

father : for, if man fell by a woman, he is raised up by a woman.

‘ What is this thou sayest, Adam ? “ The woman, whom Thou gavest me, gave me of the tree, and I did eat ? ” These are wicked words ; far from effacing thy fault, they aggravate it. But divine Wisdom conquered thy wickedness, by finding in the treasury of His own inexhaustible mercy a motive for pardon, which He had in vain sought to elicit by questioning thee. In place of the woman, of whom thou complainest, He gives thee another : Eve was foolish, Mary is wise ; Eve was proud, Mary is humble ; Eve gave thee of the tree of death, Mary will give thee of the Tree of life ; Eve offered thee a bitter and poisoned fruit, Mary will give thee the sweet Fruit she herself is to bring forth, the Fruit of everlasting life. Change, then, thy wicked excuse into an act of thanksgiving, and say : “ The Woman, whom Thou hast given me, O Lord, hath given me of the Tree of life, and I have eaten thereof ; and it is sweeter than honey to my mouth, for by it Thou hast given me life.” ¹

In the Offertory, the Church addresses Mary in the words spoken to her by the Archangel, to which she also adds those used by Elizabeth, when she saluted the Mother of her God.

OFFERTORY

<p>Ave, Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum : benedicta tu in mulieribus, et bene- dictus fructus ventris tui.</p>	<p>Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee : blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.</p>
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In the Secret, the Church renews her profession of faith in the mystery of the Incarnation ; she confesses the reality of the two Natures, divine and human, in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Son of Mary.

¹ St. Bernard. Homil. II. *super Missus est.*

SECRET

In mentibus nostris, quæsumus, Domine, veræ fidei sacramenta confirma: ut, qui conceptum de Virgine Deum verum et hominem confitemur, per ejus salutiferæ resurrectionis potentiam, ad æternam mereamur pervenire lætitiã. Per eumdem.

Strengthen, we beseech thee, O Lord, in our soul, the mysteries of the true faith: that we who confess him, that was conceived of a Virgin, to be true God and true Man, may, by the power of his saving resurrection, deserve to come to eternal joys. Through the same, &c.

To this is added the Secret for the feria of Lent.

The greatness of the solemnity obliges the Church to substitute, for the lenten Preface, the one she uses on our Lady's feasts.

PREFACE

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper et ubique gratias agere: Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus: Et te in Annuntiatione beatæ Mariæ semper Virginis collaudare, benedicere, et prædicare. Quæ et Unigenitum tuum sancti Spiritus obumbratione concepit, et virginitatis gloria permanente, lumen æternum mundo effudit Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum. Per quem majestatem tuam laudant Angeli, adorant Dominationes, tremunt Potestates. Cœli cœlorumque Virtutes, ac beata Seraphim, socia exultatione concelebrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces ut admitti jubeas deprecamur, supplicii confessione dicentes: Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.

It is truly meet and just, right and available to salvation, that we should always and in all places, give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God: and that we should praise, bless, and glorify thee, on the Annunciation of the blessed Mary, ever a Virgin, who by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, conceived thy only-begotten Son, and the glory of her virginity still remaining, brought forth to the world the eternal Light, Jesus Christ our Lord. By whom the Angels praise thy majesty, the Dominations adore it, the Powers tremble before it; the Heavens and the heavenly Virtues, and the blessed Seraphim, with common jubilee, glorify it. Together with whom, we beseech thee that we may be admitted to join our humble voices, saying: *Holy! Holy! Holy!*

The Communion-anthem repeats the prophetic words of the Epistle. It is a Virgin that has conceived and brought forth Him, who, being God and Man, is also the living Bread that came down from heaven, whereby God is with us, and in us.

COMMUNION

<p>Ecce Virgo concipiet, et pariet filium: et vocabitur nomen ejus Emmanuel.</p>	<p>Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.</p>
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In the Postcommunion, the Church gratefully recalls to mind all the mysteries which God has achieved for our salvation, and which are the consequences of the one we honour to-day. After the Incarnation, which unites the Son of God to our human nature, we have had the Passion of this our divine Redeemer; and His Passion was followed by His Resurrection, whereby He triumphed over our enemy death.

POSTCOMMUNION

<p>Gratiam tuam, quæsumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde: ut, qui angelo nuntiante, Christi Filii tui Incarnationem cognovimus; per Passionem ejus et crucem, ad Resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eundem.</p>	<p>Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may, by his Passion and cross, be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Through the same, &c.</p>
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To this is added the Postcommunion of the feria of Lent.

SECOND VESPERS

The antiphons, psalms, hymn, and versicle, are the same as in the first Vespers, pages 449-455. The *Magnificat* antiphon alone is changed, and is as follows:

ANTIPHON OF THE MAGNIFICAT

Gabriel angelus locutus
est Mariæ dicens : Ave, gra-
tia plena, Dominus tecum ;
benedicta tu in mulieribus.

The angel Gabriel spoke
unto Mary, saying : Hail,
full of grace, the Lord is with
thee : blessed art thou among
women.

OREMUS

Deus, qui de beatæ Mariæ
Virginis utero Verbum tuum,
angelo nuntiante, carnem
assumere voluisti : præsta
supplicibus tuis, ut qui vere
eam Genitricem Dei credimus,
ejus apud te intercessionibus
adjuvemur. Per eundem.

LET US PRAY

O God, who wast pleased
that thy Word, when the
angel delivered his message,
should take flesh in the womb
of the blessed Virgin Mary,
give ear to our humble peti-
tions, and grant, that we
who believe her to be truly
the Mother of God, may
be helped by her prayers.
Through the same, &c.

Let us now bring together the different liturgies,
and hear them celebrate the great mystery of this
glad feast. First of all, let us listen to the Church
of Rome, who, in her Office of Matins, thus proclaims
the praises of Mary, the Mother of God :

HYMN

Quem terra, pontus, sidera
Colunt, adorant, prædicant,
Trinam regentem machinam,
Claustrum Mariæ bajulat.

He, whom earth, and sea,
and the firmament, worship,
adore, and praise ; he, the
King of the triple kingdom, is
carried in Mary's womb.

Cui luna, sol et omnia
Deserviunt per tempora,
Perfusa cœli gratia,
Gestant puellæ viscera.

The womb of a Virgin, who
has been filled with heavenly
grace, bears him, whom the
moon, and sun, and all crea-
tures serve in the order mark-
ed for them.

Beata Mater munere,
Cujus, supernus artifex
Mundum pugillo continens,
Ventris sub arca clausus est.

O Mother, blessed in her
great office ! He, the sovereign
Creator, who holds the world
in the palm of his hand, is en-
closed in the tabernacle of her
womb.

Beata cœli nuntio,
Fœcunda sancto Spiritu,
Desideratus gentibus
Cujus per alvum fusus est.

Jesu, tibi sit gloria,
Qui natus es de Virgine ;
Cum Patre et almo Spiritu,
In sempiterna sæcula.
Amen.

The angelic messenger proclaims her blessed ; the holy Spirit makes her fruitful ; and the Desired of nations is born of her.

Glory be to thee, O Jesus, that wast born of the Virgin ! and to the Father, and to the Spirit of love, for everlasting ages. Amen.

Many of the Latin Churches, in the middle ages, used to recite, in the Mass of the Annunciation, the following sequence, which is thought to have been composed by Peter Abailard.

SEQUENCE

Mittit ad Virginem
Non quemvis Angelum,
Sed Fortitudinem
Suum Archangelum,
Amator hominis.

Fortem expediat
Pro nobis nuntium,
Naturæ faciat
Ut præjudicium
In partu Virginis.

Naturam superet
Natus Rex gloriæ :
Regnet et imperet,
Et zyma scorix
Tollat de medio.

Superbientium
Terat fastigia :
Colla sublimium
Calcet vi propria,
Potens in prælio.

Foras ejiciat
Mundanum principem :
Secumque faciat
Matrem participem
Patris imperii.

Exi qui mitteris,
Hæc dona dissere :
Revela veteris

God, the lover of man, sends to the Virgin no less an angel than him who is called *God's Strength*, the Archangel Gabriel.

May this strong messenger be speedily at his work ; may he stay the rights and laws of nature in the Virgin's delivery.

May the King of glory, when born, triumph over nature ; may he reign and command ; may he take away from the midst of men all leaven and rust.

May he humble proud heads ; may this God, mighty in war, trample in his power on the necks of the haughty.

May he cast forth the prince of this world ; and make his Mother share with him the empire which his Father has given him.

Go forth, messenger of God, announce these gifts : lift up, by the virtue of thy Annun-

Velamen litteræ
Virtute nuncii.

Accede, nuncia :
Dic : Ave, cominus,
Dic : Plena gratia,
Dic : Tecum Dominus,
Et dic : Ne timeas.

Virgo suscipias
Dei depositum,
In quo perficias
Casta propositum,
Et votum teneas.

Audit et suscipit
Puella nuntium :
Credidit et concipit,
Et parit Filium,
Sed admirabilem.

Consiliarium
Humani generis :
Deum et hominem,
Et Patrem posteris,
In pace stabilem.

Cujus stabilitas
Nos reddat stabiles,
Ne nos labilitas
Humana labiles
Secum præcipitet.

Sed dator veniæ
Concessa venia,
Per matrem gratiæ
Obtenta gratia,
In nobis habitet.

Qui nobis tribuat
Peccati veniam :
Reatus deleat,
Donet et patriam
In arce siderum.

Amen.

The Ambrosian liturgy gives us this fine Preface, which is used in its celebration of to-day's mystery.

PREFACE

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare : nos

ciation, the veil of the ancient Scripture.

Approach, tell thy announcement : say, when thou art in her presence, 'Hail !' Say : 'O full of grace !' Say : 'The Lord is with thee !' And then : 'Fear not !'

Receive, O Virgin ! the divine deposit ; by him fulfil thy chaste purpose, and keep thy vow.

The Maid hears and accepts the announcement ; she believes and conceives, and brings forth a Son, but he is the Admirable.

The Counsellor of mankind, God and Man, Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace.

May his firmness render us firm, lest human frailty should make us stumble into the abyss.

But may the giver of pardon, granting us pardon and grace, obtained by the Mother of grace, dwell within us.

May he that grants us pardon of our sins, wipe away all our guilt, and give us the country in the starry heaven. Amen.

tibi, Domine Deus omnipotens, gratias agere, et cum tuæ invocatione virtutis, beatæ Mariæ Virginis festa celebrare: de cujus ventre fructus effloruit, qui panis angelici munere nos replevit. Quod Eva voravit in crimine, Maria restituit in salute. Distat opus serpentis et virginis: inde fusa sunt venena discriminis; hinc egressa mysteria Salvatoris. Inde se præbuit tentantis iniquitas; hinc Redemptoris est opitulata majestas. Inde partus occubuit; hinc Conditor resurrexit, a quo humana natura, non jam captiva, sed libera restituitur; quod Adam perdidit in parente, Christo recepit auctore.

tion, that we should give thanks to thee, O Lord God almighty: and that we should, whilst invoking thy power, celebrate the feasts of the blessed Virgin Mary; from whose womb came the Fruit, which has filled us with the Bread of angels. That Fruit, which Eve took from us, when she sinned, Mary hath restored to us, and it hath saved us. Not as the work of the serpent, is the work of Mary. From the one, came the poison of our destruction; from the other, the mysteries of salvation. In the one, we see the malice of the tempter; in the other, the help of the divine Majesty. By the one, came death to the creature; by the other the resurrection of the Creator, by whom human nature, now not captive but free, is restored: and what it lost by its parent Adam, it regained by its Maker, Christ.

The Mozarabic liturgy (which, as we have already observed, keeps the feast of the Annunciation on December 18) has several admirable prayers touching this mystery: we select the following:—

PRAYER

Gratiam plenam habere te credimus, o Virgo Christi genitrix, et humani generis reparatrix, gloriosa Maria, quæ tanta nobis gaudia pariendo contulisti, ut fructus ventris tui, qui est Christus Filius Dei, a dominio in nos sævientis eriperet inimici,

We believe thee to be full of grace, O glorious Mary, Virgin Mother of Christ, and reparatrix of mankind! Great indeed are the blessings thou hast conferred on us by giving him birth: for the Fruit of thy womb, Christ the Son of God, hath delivered us from

et in regno æterno consortes faceret sibimetipsi. Proinde, quæsumus, te rogamus, ut adsis patrona nobis, ut et merito tuo nos filius tuus a delicto exsules reddat, et post in regno suo perenniter habitaturos introducat. Præsta nobis, ut qui te concupiscens sibi advocavit in Matrem, nobis concupiscentiæ suæ opulentam largiatur dulcedinem. Amen.

the tyranny of our cruel enemy, and hath made us his companions in the eternal kingdom. Bethou, therefore, we beseech thee, our advocate; that, through thy merits, thy Son may set us free from our sins, and, after this life, give us to reign for ever in his kingdom. Grant that he, who out of love for thee called thee to be his Mother, may grant unto us the rich sweetness of his love. Amen.

The Greek liturgy, with its wonted abundance, celebrates the glory of Mary in the Incarnation of the Word. We give the following hymn, which comes in the Office of the vigil of the Annunciation. In our opinion, it is finer than the one on the feast itself.

HYMN

(*Die XXIV. Martii*)

Terra, quæ magno hactenus dolore spinas genuisti, jam nunc age choreas et salta: ecce enim immortalis agricola, qui te a spinis maledictionis expurget, nunc appropinquat.

Sed et tu intaminata, o Virgo, tamquam vellus plane divinum, te præpara excipiendo Numini, quod in te velut imber descendat, ut torrentes transgressionis præceptorum exsiccet.

Esto paratus, o diviniæ munditiæ liber; quippe tibi sancti Spiritus digito inscribetur Sapientia divina sed

O Earth! that heretofore hast, with much sorrow, brought forth thorns, now dance and leap with joy; for lo! the immortal Husbandman, who will cleanse thee from the thorns of the curse, is at hand.

And thou, too, O spotless Virgin! as a divine fleece, prepare thyself to receive thy God, who is about to come down upon thee as the Dew, that he may dry up the torrent of iniquity.

Hold thyself in readiness, O book of heavenly purity! for, by the finger of the Holy Ghost, there shall be written

incarnata, quæ insipientiæ
meæ prævaricationem e medio
tollat.

O aureum item candela-
brum, ignem recipe divini-
tatis; ut per te illuceat
mundo, unaque nequitiarum
nostrarum tenebras dissipet.

O magni Regis palatium,
Virgo, aurium tuarum di-
vina vestibula pande: jam-
jam enim ingredietur ad te
ipsa Veritas Christus, ut
habitet in medio tui.

O Agna incontaminata,
Agnus Dei nostri, qui tollit
peccata nostra, uterum tuum
festinat intrare. Mystica
etiam virga brevi germina-
bit florem divinum, de ra-
dice Jesse palam exortum,
ut loquitur Scriptura.

O vitis quoque Maria,
compara te, ut per angeli-
cam vocem fœcundata, bo-
trum quoque maturum, ne-
que corruptioni obnoxium
procees.

O denique mons salve,
quem Daniel prævidit in
Spiritu, ex quo lapis ille
spiritualis abscindetur, qui
inanimata dæmonum sculpti-
lia conteret.

O ratione prædita Arca,
quam verus legislator amore
singulari prosecutus inha-
bitare nunc ceu incola
statuit, impleat te jucun-
ditas mentis: per te enim
innovabit destructos.

Quin et vatum chorus
divina dare præsentia doctus,
tanquam pacatum in te Re-

in thee the divine Wisdom
made Incarnate, who is to
take away the foolishness of
my sin.

Receive, O golden candel-
stick! the flame of the God-
head; that by thee he may
enlighten the world, and
scatter the darkness of our
sins.

O Virgin! Palace of the
great King, throw open the
holy portals of thine ears; for
Christ, the very Truth, is
about to enter into thee, that
he may dwell in thy midst.

O spotless sheep, the Lamb
of our God, who taketh away
the sins of the world, longs to
enter thy womb. The mystic
branch, as the Scripture saith,
shall soon bud forth the
Flower divine, which is to
spring from Jesse's root.

O Mary, thou vine, prepare
thyself to receive, by the
angel's words, the ripe Grape-
Bunch, that knoweth not
corruption.

Hail, O mountain! that
wast foreseen in the Spirit by
Daniel, and from whence
shall be hewn that living
Stone, which is to destroy the
dead idols of the demons.

O intellectual Ark! dear
above all to the true Law-
giver, and which he has
chosen for the place of his
abode! Rejoice exceedingly,
for, by thee, he will restore
what hath been destroyed.

The choir of the prophets,
skilled in announcing divine
mysteries, foresaw the peace-

demptoris ingressum præsentiret exclamat: Cunctorum salve Redemptio, salve unica hominum salus.

O aërea divini luminis nubes, orituro mox soli te para. Nam ecce sol inaccessibleis de sedibus tibi cœlestibus explendescet, ut in te aliquantum absconditus, illuceat mundo, et improbitatis tenebras dissipet.

Ille qui a dextera Patris nunquam digressus, substantiam omnem transcendit, in te sibi diversorium delecturus adventat: ut te a dextris constituat suis, tamquam reginam dignitate sibi propinquam, et excellenti pulchritudine præditam, utque te velut dexteram suam omnibus lapsis ad surgendum extendat.

Inter angelos autem primarius Dei minister, vocem ad te lætabundam emittit, ut ex te corporandum significet magni consilii Angelum.

O Verbum divinum, cœlos inclina, et nunc jam ad nos descende. Modo enim uterus Virginis præparatus est tibi cœu thronus, in quo tamquam rex splendidissimus sedeas, opus dexteræ tuæ a ruina sustollens.

Tu quoque, o Virgo, cœu terra numquam seminata, accingere nunc ad recipiendum sub angeli verbo Verbum

ful entrance of the Redeemer within thee, and they exclaimed: Hail, Redemption of the world! Hail, thou the only salvation of mankind!

O cloud of the divine Light, prepare thyself for the Sun that is about to rise. For lo! the inaccessible Sun shall shine on thee from his heavenly throne, that, after he has been for a while hid in thee, he may shed his light upon the world, and scatter the darkness of iniquity.

He that hath never left the right hand of the Father, and is above all, has chosen thee as his dwelling-place, and is coming unto thee: he will set thee on his right hand, as a Queen whose throne is near his own, and whose beauty surpasses that of all creatures: he will use thee, as his own right hand, to help the fallen to rise.

He that is the chief among the angels to minister unto God, addresses his joyous words to thee, telling thee, that the Angel of the great Counsel is to take flesh from thee.

O divine Word, bow down the heavens, and now descend unto us; for the Virgin's womb is prepared for thee as a throne, whereon thou the all-glorious King mayst sit, and raise up from ruin the work of thy right hand.

Do thou, also, O Maiden, as a virgin soil, prepare thyself to receive, at the angel's word, the heavenly Word,

cœleste, frumento per quam frugifero simile, quod ex te germinans semina enutriet in panem intelligentiæ.	which, like unto most fruitful wheat, shall bud forth its seed from thee, and produce the bread of the spirit.
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O Emmanuel, *God with us!* who, as Thy Church says in her hymn, 'being to take upon Thee to deliver man, didst not disdain the Virgin's womb,' the whole human race gives thanks to Thee on this day, for Thy merciful coming. O eternal Word of the Father! it was not enough for Thee to have drawn man out of nothing by Thy power; Thine exhaustless love would follow him even to the abyss of misery into which he had fallen. By sin man had forfeited the dignity Thou hadst given him: that he might regain it, Thou didst come in person and assume his nature, so to raise him up again to Thyself. In Thee, from this day forward unto all eternity, God is made man, and man is made God. Thy Incarnation is the fulfilment of the promises made in the canticle; Thou unitest Thyself to human nature, and it is in the virginal womb of a daughter of David that Thou celebratest these ineffable espousals. O incomprehensible humiliation! O ineffable glory! The humiliation is for the Son of God, the glory is for the Son of man. Thus hast Thou loved us, O divine Word, thus hast Thou removed from us the degradation of our fall! The rebel angels fell, and Thou didst leave them in the abyss; we fell, and Thou hadst mercy on us. A single look of Thy pity would have sufficed to save us; but it would not satisfy Thy love: therefore didst Thou descend into this world of sin, take upon Thyself the form of a slave,¹ and lead a life of humiliation and suffering. O Word made Flesh, who comest not to judge, but to save,² we adore Thee, we praise Thee, we love Thee. Make us worthy of all that Thy love has led Thee to do for us.

¹ Phil. ii. 7.

² St. John xii. 47.

We salute thee, O Mary, full of grace, on this day whereon thou didst receive thy sublime dignity of Mother of God. Thy incomparable purity drew down upon thee the love of the great Creator, and thy humility drew Him into thy womb; His presence within thee increased the holiness of thy spirit and the purity of thy body. What must have been thy happiness in knowing that this Son of God was living by thy life, and was taking from thine own substance the new being, which His love for us induced Him to assume! Between thee and Him is formed that ineffable union which is granted to none else but to thee: He is thy Creator, and thou art His Mother; He is thy Son, and thou art His creature. Every knee bows down before Him, O Mary! for He is the great God of heaven and earth; but every creature reveres thee, also, for thou hast carried Him in thy womb, thou hast fed Him at thy breast; thou alone canst say to Him, as does His heavenly Father: 'Thou art my Son!' O Mother of Jesus! thou art the greatest of God's works: receive the humble homage of mankind, for thou art most dear to us, seeing that thou art of the same flesh and blood as ourselves.

Thou art a daughter of Eve, but without her sin. By thy obedience to the divine decrees, thou savest thy mother and her race; thou restorest Adam and his children to the innocence they had lost. Jesus, whom thou bearest in thy womb, is our pledge that all these blessings are to be ours; and it is by thee that He comes to us. Without Jesus, we should abide in death; without thee, we should not have had Him to redeem us. It is from thy virginal womb that He receives the precious Blood which is to be our ransom, that Blood whose purity He protected in thy Immaculate Conception, and which becomes the Blood of God by the union, that is consummated in thee, of the divine with the human Nature.

To-day, O Mary ! is fulfilled in thee the promise made by God after Adam's sin, that He would put enmity between the woman and the serpent. Up to this time, the human race had not the courage to resist the enemy ; it was subservient to him, and everywhere were altars raised up in his honour ; but, on this day, his head is crushed beneath thy foot. Thy humility, thy purity, thy obedience, have conquered him ; his tyranny is checked. By thee we are delivered from his sway ; and nothing but our own perversity and ingratitude could again give him the mastery. Let not this be, O Mary ! Come to our assistance. During this season of repentance, we humbly acknowledge that we have abused the grace of God ; we beseech thee, on this the feast of thy Annunciation, intercede for us with Him, who, on this day, became thy Son. Holy Mother of God ! by the salutation addressed to thee by the angel Gabriel, by thy virginal fear, by thy fidelity to God, by thy prudent humility, by thy consent, obtain for us conversion of heart, and sincere repentance ; prepare us for the great mysteries we are about to celebrate. These mysteries are so full of sorrow to thy maternal heart ; and yet thou wouldst have us rejoice on this day, as we think on the ineffable happiness which filled thy soul at the solemn moment when the Holy Ghost overshadowed thee, and the Son of God became thine. Yes, blessed Mother of Jesus ! we will spend the whole of this day near thee, in thy humble dwelling at Nazareth. Nine months hence, we will follow thee to Bethlehem, and there, in company with the shepherds and the angels, we will prostrate ourselves in adoration before the Infant-God, our Saviour : we will join our voices with those of the heavenly host, and we will thus express our gladness : ' Glory be to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will !'

APRIL 2

SAINT FRANCIS OF PAULA

CONFESSOR

THE founder of a religious Order, whose distinguishing characteristics were humility and penance, comes before us to-day ; it is Francis of Paula. Let us study his virtues and beg his intercession. His whole life was one of great innocence ; and yet we find him embracing, from his earliest youth, mortifications which, nowadays, would not be expected from the very worst sinners. How was it that he could do so much ? and we, who have so often sinned, do so little ? The claims of divine justice are as strong now as ever they were ; for God never changes, nor can the offence we have committed against Him by our sins be pardoned, unless we make atonement. The saints punished themselves, with life-long and austere penances, for the slightest sins ; and the Church can scarcely induce us to observe the law of Lent, though it is now reduced to the lowest degree of severity.

What is the cause of this want of the spirit of expiation and penance ? It is that our faith is weak, and our love of God is cold, because our thoughts and affections are so set upon this present life, that we seldom if ever consider things in the light of eternity. How many of us are like the king of France, who having obtained permission from the Pope that St. Francis of Paula should come and live near him, threw himself at the saint's feet, and besought him to obtain of God, that he, the king, might have a long life ! Louis XI. had led a most

wicked life ; but his anxiety was, not to do penance for his sins, but to obtain, by the saint's prayers, a prolongation of a career which had been little better than a storing up of wrath for the day of wrath. We, too, love this present life ; we love it to excess. The laws of fasting and abstinence are broken, not because the obeying them would endanger life, or even seriously injure health—for where either of these is to be feared, the Church does not enforce her lenten penances—but people dispense themselves from fasting and abstinence, because the spirit of immortification renders every privation intolerable, and every interruption of an easy comfortable life insupportable. They have strength enough for any fatigue that business or pleasure calls for ; but the moment there is question of observing those laws which the Church has instituted for the interest of the body as well as of the soul, all seems impossible ; the conscience gets accustomed to these annual transgressions, and ends by persuading the sinner that he may be saved without doing penance.

St. Francis of Paula was of a very different way of thinking and acting. The Church gives us the following abridged account of his life :

Franciscus Paulæ, quod est Calabriae oppidum, loco humili natus est : quem parentes, cum diu prole caruissent, voto facto, beati Francisci precibus susceperunt. Is adolescens divino ardore succensus, in eremum secessit : ubi annis sex victu asperam, sed meditationibus cœlestibus suavem vitam duxit : sed cum virtutum ejus fama longius manaret, multique ad eum pietatis studio concurrerent, fraternitatis causa e solitu-

Francis was born at Paula, in Calabria, of humble parents, who, having been for a long time without children, obtained him from heaven, after having made a vow, and prayed to St. Francis. When very young, being inflamed with the love of God, he withdrew into a desert, where, for six years, he led an austere life, but one that was sweetened by heavenly contemplations. The fame of his virtues having spread abroad, many persons went to him, out of a

dine egressus, ecclesiam prope Paulam ædificavit, ibique prima sui Ordinis fundamenta jecit.

Erat in eo mirifica loquendi gratia: perpetuam virginitatem servavit: humilitatem sic coluit, ut se omnium minimum diceret, suosque alumnos *Minimos* appellari voluerit. Rudi amictu, nudis pedibus incedens, humi cubabat. Cibi abstinentia fuit admirabili: semel in die post solis occasum reficiebatur, et ad panem et aquæ potum vix aliquid ejusmodi obsonii adhibebat, quo vesci in Quadragesima licet: quam consuetudinem, ut fratres sui toto anni tempore retinent, quarto eos voto adstrinxit.

Multis miraculis servi sui sanctitatem Deus testari voluit, quorum illud in primis celebre, quod a nautis rejectus, Siciliæ fretum, strato super fluctibus pallio, cum socio transmisit. Multa etiam futura prophetico spiritu prædixit. A Ludovico undecimo Francorum rege expetitus, magnoque in honore est habitus. Denique annum primum et nonagesimum agens, Turonis migravit ad Dominum, anno salutis millesimo quingentesimo septimo: cujus corpus, dies undecim insepultum, ita incorruptum per-

desire to be trained in virtue. Out of a motive of fraternal charity, he left his solitude, built a church near Paula, and there laid the foundation of his Order.

He had a wonderful gift of preaching. He observed virginity during his whole life. Such was his love for humility, that he called himself the last of all men, and would have his disciples named *Minims*. His dress was of the coarsest kind, he always walked barefooted, and his bed was the ground. His abstinence was extraordinary: he ate only once in the day, and that not till after sunset. His food consisted of bread and water, to which he scarcely ever added those viands which are permitted even in Lent: and this practice he would have kept up by his religious, under the obligation of a fourth vow.

God bore witness to the holiness of his servant by many miracles, of which this is the most celebrated; that when he was rejected by the sailors, he and his companion passed over the straits of Sicily on his cloak, which he spread out on the water. He also prophesied many future events. Louis XI., king of France, had a great desire to see the saint, and treated him with great respect. Having reached his ninety-first year, he died at Tours, in the year of our Lord one thousand five hundred and seven. His body, which was left unburied

mansit, ut suavem etiam odorem efflaret. Eum Leo Papa decimus in sanctorum numerum retulit. for eleven days, so far from becoming corrupt, yielded a sweet fragrance. He was canonized by Pope Leo X.

Apostle of penance : thy life was always that of a saint, and we are sinners : yet do we presume, during these days, to beg thy powerful intercession, in order to obtain of God that this holy season may not pass without having produced within us a true spirit of penance, which may give us a reasonable hope of receiving His pardon. We admire the wondrous works which filled thy life—a life that resembled, in duration, that of the patriarchs, and prolonged the privilege the world enjoyed of having such a saint to teach and edify it. Now that thou art enjoying in heaven the fruits of thy labours on earth, think upon us, and hearken to the prayers addressed to thee by the faithful. Get us the spirit of compunction, which will add earnestness to our works of penance. Bless and preserve the Order thou hast founded. Thy holy relics have been destroyed by the fury of heretics ; avenge the injury thus offered to thy name, by praying for the conversion of heretics and sinners, and drawing down upon the world those heavenly graces, which will revive among us the fervour of the ages of faith.

APRIL 4

SAINT ISIDORE

BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

THE Church presents to us to-day, for our devout admiration, the memory of one of the holiest of her bishops—Isidore, the bishop of Seville, the most learned man of his age, and, what is a still greater praise, the most zealous patriot and friend of his noble country. Let us study his virtues and confide in his patronage : both will help us to fervour during this holy season.

Among Christian lands, there is one that has gained for herself the glorious name of the Catholic kingdom. Towards the close of the seventh century, divine Providence subjected her to a most severe trial, by permitting the Saracen hordes to invade her : so that her heroic children had to struggle for eight hundred years for the recovery of their country. Contemporaneously with Spain, Asia also and Africa fell under the Mussulman yoke, and have continued in their slavery up to the present day. Whence comes it that Spain has triumphed over her oppressors, and that tyranny has never been able to make her children degenerate ? The answer is easily given : Spain, at the period of her invasion, was Catholic, and Catholicity was the very spirit of the land : whereas those other nations, that yielded themselves slaves to the Saracens, were already separated from the Christian Church by heresy or schism. God abandoned them, because they had rejected both the truth of faith, and unity with the Church ; they fell an easy prey to the infidel conqueror.

Nevertheless, Spain had incurred an immense risk. The race of the Goths, by their long invasion of her territory, had sowed the seeds of heresy : Arianism had set up its sacrilegious altars in Iberia. But God did not permit this privileged country to be long under the yoke of error. Before the Saracens came upon her, she had been reconciled to the Church ; and God had chosen one family to be the glorious instrument in the completion of this great work. Even to this day, the traveller through Andalusia will find the squares of its cities adorned with four statues : they are those of three brothers and a sister : St. Leander, bishop of Seville ; St. Isidore, whose feast we are keeping to-day ; St. Fulgentius, bishop of Carthage ; and their sister, St. Florentina, a nun. It was by the zeal and eloquence of St. Leander that king Reccared and his Goths were converted from Arianism to the Catholic faith, in the year 589 ; the learning and piety of our glorious Isidore consolidated the great work ; Fulgentius gave it stability by his virtues and erudition ; and Florentina co-operated in it by her life of sacrifice and prayer.

Let us unite with the Catholic kingdom in honouring this family of saints ; and to-day in a special manner, let us pay the tribute of our devotion to St. Isidore. The holy liturgy thus speaks of him :

Isidorus natione Hispanus, doctor egregius, ex nova Carthagine, Severiano patre provinciæ duce natus, a sanctis episcopis Leandro Hispalensi, et Fulgentio Carthaginensi fratribus suis pie et liberaliter educatus, latinis, græcis et hebraicis litteris, divinisque et humanis legibus instructus, omni scientiarum, atque christianarum virtutum genere præstantissimus evasit.

Isidore, by birth a Spaniard, was an illustrious Doctor of the Church. He was born at Carthage, and his father, whose name was Severianus, was governor of that part of the country. He was solidly trained to piety and learning by his two brothers, Leander, bishop of Seville, and Fulgentius, bishop of Carthage. He was taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew ; he was put through a course of canon

Adhuc adolescens hæresim arianam, quæ gentem Gothorum Hispaniæ latissime dominantem jam pridem invaserat, tanta constantia palam oppugnavit, ut parum abfuerit quin ab hæreticis necaretur. Leandro vita functo ad Hispalensem cathedram invitus quidem, sed urgente in primis Recaredo rege, magnoque etiam cleri, populique consensu assumitur, ejusque electionem sanctus Gregorius Magnus nedum auctoritate apostolica confirmasse, sed et electum transmisso de more pallio decorasse, quin etiam suum, et apostolicæ Sedis in universa Hispania vicarium constituisse perhibetur.

In episcopatu quantum fuerit constans, humilis, patiens, misericors, in christiana et ecclesiastica disciplina instauranda sollicitus, eaque verbo, et scriptis stabilienda indefessus, atque omni demum virtutum ornamento insignitus, nullius lingua enarrare sufficeret. Monastici quoque instituti per Hispaniam promotor et amplificator eximius, plura construxit monasteria; collegia itidem ædificavit, ubi studiis sacris et lectionibus vacans, plurimos discipulos, qui ad eum confluebant, erudit; quos inter sancti Ildephonus Toletanus, et Braulio Casaraugustanus episcopi emicuerunt. Coacto Hispali

and civil law; and there was no science or virtue in which he did not excel. While yet a youth, he so courageously combated the Arian heresy, which had long before infected the Goths who had entered Spain, that he with difficulty escaped being put to death by the heretics. After the death of Leander, he was, in spite of himself, raised to the episcopal See of Seville, by the influence of king Reccared, and with unanimous consent of both clergy and people. His election was not only confirmed by apostolic authority, but St. Gregory the Great, when sending him as usual the pallium, is said to have appointed him his own vicar, and that of the apostolic See, throughout all Spain.

It would be impossible to describe the virtues of Isidore as bishop: how firm, humble, patient, and merciful; how zealously he laboured for the restoration of Christian morals and ecclesiastical discipline, and how untiring he was in his efforts, both by word and writing, to establish them among his people; and, finally, how he excelled in every virtue. He was a fervent promotor of the monastic life in Spain, and built several monasteries. He also built colleges, in which he himself applied himself to teaching the sacred sciences to the many disciples that flocked to him; among whom may be mentioned those two glorious

concilio, Acephalorum hæresim Hispaniæ jam minitantem, acri et eloquenti disputatione fregit atque contrivit. Tantam apud omnes sanctitatis et doctrinæ famam adeptus est, ut elapso vix ab ejus obitu sextodecimo anno, universa Toletana synodo duorum supra quinquaginta episcoporum plaudente, ipsoque etiam sancto Ildephonso suffragante, doctor egregius, Catholicæ Ecclesiæ novissimum decus, in sæculorum fine doctissimus, et cum reverentia nominandus, appellari meruerit; eumque sanctus Braulio non modo Gregorio Magno comparaverit, sed et erudiendæ Hispaniæ loco Jacobi apostoli cœlitus datum esse censuerit.

Scriptis Isidorus libros Etymologiarum, et de ecclesiasticis Officiis, aliosque quamplurimos Christianæ et ecclesiasticæ disciplinæ adeo utiles, ut sanctus Leo Papa quartus ad episcopos Britanniæ scribere non dubitaverit, sicut Hieronymi et Augustini, ita Isidori dicta retinenda esse, ubi contigerit inusitatum negotium, quod per Canones minime definiri possit. Plures etiam ex ejusdem scriptis sententiæ inter canonicas Ec-

pontiffs, Ildephonsus bishop of Toledo, and Braulio bishop of Saragossa. In a Council held at Seville, he spoke with such power and eloquence, that he may be said to have destroyed the heresy of the Acephali, which threatened to undermine the true faith in Spain. So great, indeed, was the universal reputation he had gained for piety and learning, that he had scarcely been dead sixteen years, when, in a Council held at Toledo, and at which fifty-two bishops were present, St. Ildephonsus himself among them, he was called the illustrious doctor, the new glory of the Catholic Church, the most learned man who had been seen in those ages, and one whose name should never be mentioned but with great respect. St. Braulio not only compared him to St. Gregory the Great, but said that he looked on him as having been sent by heaven, as a second St. James the apostle, to instruct the people of Spain.

Isidore wrote a book on Etymologies, and another on Ecclesiastical Offices, and several others, of such importance to Christian and ecclesiastical discipline, that Pope St. Leo IV. hesitated not to say, in a letter addressed to the bishops of Britain, that one ought to adhere to the words of Isidore with the same respect as is shown to those of Jerome and Augustine, as often as a difficult case should arise, which could not

clesiæ leges relatæ conspiciuntur. Præfuit Conoilio Toletano quarto omnium Hispaniæ celeberrimo. Denique cum ab Hispania arianum hæresim eliminasset, morte sua, et regni vastatione a Saracenorū armis publice prænuntiata, postquam quadraginta circiter annos suam rexisset Ecclesiam, Hispali migravit in cælum anno sexcentesimo trigesimo sexto. Ejus corpus inter Leandrum fratrem, et Florentinam sororem, ut ipse mandaverat, primo conditum, Ferdinandus primus Castellæ et Legionis rex, ab Eneto Saraceno Hispali dominante magno pretio redemptum, Legionem transtulit; et in ejus honorem templum ædificatum est, ubi miraculis clarus, magna populi devotione colitur.

be settled by Canon Law. Several sentences of his works have been inserted into the body of the Canon Law. He presided over the fourth Council of Toledo, which is the most celebrated of all those that have been held in Spain. At length, after having driven the Arian heresy out of Spain, he publicly foretold the day of his death, and the devastation of the country by the Saracens; and having governed his See for about forty years, he died at Seville, in the year 636. His body was first buried, as he himself had requested, between those of his brother and sister, Leander and Florentina. Afterwards, Ferdinand I., King of Castille and Leon, purchased it for a large sum of money, from Enetus, the Saracen governor of Seville, and had it translated to Leon. Here a church was built in his honour, and the miracles that are wrought by his intercession have led the people to honour him with great devotion.

Faithful pastor! the Christian people honour thy virtues and thy services; they rejoice in the recompense wherewith God has crowned thy merits; hear the prayers that are offered to thee during these the days of salvation. When on earth, thy vigilance over the flock entrusted to thy care was untiring; consider us as a part of it, and defend us from the ravenous wolves that cease not to seek our destruction. May thy prayers obtain for us the fullness of graces needed for worthily completing the holy season, which is so

near its close. Keep up our courage ; incite us to fervour ; prepare us for the great mysteries we are about to celebrate. We have bewailed our sins, and, though feebly, we have done penance for them ; the work of our conversion has, therefore, made progress ; and now we must perfect it by the contemplation of the Passion and death of our Redeemer. Assist us, O thou His faithful and loving servant ! Do thou, whose life was ever pure, take sinners under thy care and hear the prayers offered to thee on this day by the Church. Look down from heaven on thy beloved Spain, which honours thee with such earnest devotion. Revive her ancient ardour of faith ; restore to her the vigour of Christian morality ; remove from her the tares that have sprung up among the good seed. The whole Church reveres thy noble country for her staunch adhesion to the truths of faith : pray for her, that she may come unhurt from the ordeal she is now being put through, and ever prove herself worthy of that glorious title of the Catholic kingdom, which thou didst help her to gain.

APRIL 5

SAINT VINCENT FERRER

CONFESSOR

TO-DAY, again, it is Catholic Spain that offers one of her sons to the Church, that she may present him to the Christian world as a model and a patron. Vincent Ferrer, or, as he was called, *the angel of the judgment*, comes to us proclaiming the near approach of the Judge of the living and the dead. During his lifetime, he traversed almost every country of Europe, preaching this terrible truth ; and the people of those times went from his sermons striking their breasts, crying out to God to have mercy upon them—in a word, converted. In these our days, the thought of that awful day, when Jesus Christ will appear in the clouds of heaven to judge mankind, has not the same effect upon Christians. They believe in the last judgment, because it is an article of faith ; but, we repeat, the thought produces little impression. After long years of a sinful life, a special grace touches the heart, and we witness a conversion ; there are thousands thus converted, but the majority of them continue to lead an easy, comfortable life, seldom thinking on hell, and still less on the judgment wherewith God is to bring time to an end.

It was not thus in the Christian ages ; neither is it so now with those whose conversion is solid. Love is stronger in them than fear ; and yet the fear of God's judgment is ever living within them, and gives stability to the new life they have begun. Those Christians who have heavy debts towards divine justice, because of the sins of their past lives, and

who, notwithstanding, make the time of Lent a season for evincing their cowardice and tepidity, surely such Christians as these must very rarely ask themselves what will become of them on that day, when the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens, and when Jesus, not as Saviour, but as Judge, shall separate the goats from the sheep. One would suppose that they have received a revelation from God, that, on the day of judgment, all will be well with them. Let us be more prudent; let us stand on our guard against the illusions of a proud, self-satisfied indifference; let us secure to ourselves, by sincere repentance, the well-founded hope, that on the terrible day, which has made the very saints tremble, we shall hear these words of the divine Judge addressed to us: 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!'¹ Vincent Ferrer leaves the peaceful cell of his monastery, that he may go and rouse men to the great truth they had forgotten—the day of God's inexorable justice; we have not heard his preachings, but, have we not the Gospel? Have we not the Church, who, at the commencement of this season of penance, preached to us the terrible truth, which St. Vincent took as the subject of his instructions? Let us, therefore, prepare ourselves to appear before Him, who will demand of us a strict account of those graces which He so profusely poured out upon us, and which were purchased by His Blood. Happy they that spend their Lents well, for they may hope for a favourable judgment!

The liturgy gives us, in the Matins of to-day, the following abridged account of the life of this holy servant of God:

<p>Vincentius honesta stirpe Valentiæ in Hispania natus ab ineunte ætate cor gessit</p>	<p>Vincent was born at Valen- cia, in Spain, of respectable parents. He showed the</p>
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¹ St. Matt. xxv. 34.

senile. Qui dum caliginosi hujus sæculi labilem cursum pro ingenii sui modulo consideraret, religionis habitum in Ordine Prædicatorum decimo octavo ætatis suæ anno suscepit; et emissa solemnī professione, sacris litteris sedulo incumbens, theologiæ lauream summam cum laude consecutus est. Mox obtenta a superioribus licentia verbum Dei prædicare, Judæorum perfidiam arguere, Saracenorum errores confutare, tanta virtute et efficacia cœpit, ut ingentem ipsorum infidelium multitudinem ad Christi fidem perduxerit, et multa Christianorum millia, a peccatis ad pœnitentiam, a vitiis ad virtutem revocarit. Electus enim a Deo, ut monita salutis in omnes gentes, tribus et linguas diffunderet, et extremi tremendique judicii diem appropinquare ostenderet, omnium auditorum animos terrore concussos, atque a terrenis affectibus avulsos, ad Dei amorem excitabat.

In hoc autem apostolico munere hic vitæ ejus tenor perpetuus fuit. Quotidie Missam summo mane cum cantu celebravit, quotidie ad populum concionem habuit, inviolabile semper jejunium nisi urgens adesset necessitas, servavit; sancta et recta consilia

gravity of old age, even when quite a child. Considering within himself, as far as his youthful mind knew it, the dangers of this dark world, he received the Habit in the Order of Preachers when he was eighteen years of age. After his solemn profession, he diligently applied himself to sacred studies, and gained, with much applause, the degree of doctor of divinity. Shortly after this, he obtained leave from his superiors to preach the word of God. He exposed the perfidy of the Jews, and refuted the false doctrines of the Saracens, but with so much earnestness and success, that he brought a great number of infidels to the faith of Christ, and converted many thousand Christians from sin to repentance, and from vice to virtue. God had chosen him to teach the way of salvation to all nations, and tribes, and tongues; as also to warn men of the coming of the last and dread day of judgment. He so preached, that he struck terror into the minds of all his hearers, and turned them from earthly affections to the love of God.

His mode of life, while exercising this office of apostolic preaching, was as follows: he every day sang Mass early in the morning, delivered a sermon to the people, and, unless absolutely obliged to do otherwise, observed a strict fast. He gave holy and prudent advice to all who con-

nullis denegavit, carnes nunquam comedit, nec vestem lineam induit, populorum jurgia sedavit, dissidentia regna pace composuit; et cum vestis inconsutilis Ecclesiæ diro schismate scinderetur, ut uniretur, et unita servaretur, plurimum laboravit. Virtutibus omnibus claruit, suosque detractores et persecutores, in simplicitate, et humilitate ambulans, cum mansuetudine recepit, et amplexus est.

Per ipsum divina virtus, in confirmationem vitæ et prædicationem ejus, multa signa et miracula fecit. Nam frequentissime super ægros manus imposuit, et sanitatem adepti sunt: spiritus immundos e corporibus expulit; surdis auditum, mutis loquelam, cæcis visum restituit; leprosos mundavit, mortuos suscitavit. Senio tandem et morbo confectus infatigabilis Evangelii præco, plurimis Europæ provinciis cum ingenti animarum fructu peragratis, Venetiæ in Britannia minori, prædicationis et vitæ cursum feliciter consummavit, anno salutis millesimo quadringentesimo decimo nono, quem Calixtus tertius Sanctorum numero adscripsit.

The Dominican breviary contains the following responsories and antiphon in honour of this illustrious preacher :

R. Summus Parens, ac rector gentium, in vespere

sulted him. He never ate flesh meat, or wore linen garments. He reconciled contending parties, and restored peace among nations that were at variance. He zealously laboured to restore to, and maintain in, union the seamless garment of the Church, which, at that time, was rent by a direful schism. He shone in every virtue. He was simple and humble, and treated his revilers and persecutors with meekness and affection.

Many were the signs and miracles which God wrought through him, in confirmation of the holiness of his life and preaching. He very frequently restored the sick to health, by placing his hands upon them. He drove out the unclean spirits from the bodies of such as were possessed. He gave hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, sight to the blind. He cured lepers, and raised the dead to life. At length, worn out by old age and bodily infirmities, after travelling through many countries of Europe, and reaping an abundant harvest of souls, this untiring herald of the Gospel terminated his preaching and life at Vannes, in Brittany, in the year of our Lord 1419. He was canonized by Pope Calixtus III.

R. The heavenly Father, the Ruler of all nations, sent,

labentis sæculi, novum vatem misit Vincentium, christiani magistrum populi: refert instare Dei judicium, * Quod spectabunt cunctorum oculi.

V. Timete Deum, clamat sæpius: venit hora judicii ejus. * Quod spectabunt cunctorum oculi.

R. Christi viam secutus arduam, a terrenis procul illecebris; veritatem reddit conspicuam, profligatis errorum tenebris: * Oram illuminat occiduam, toto factus in orbe celebris.

V. Cujus doctrina sole gravior, sermo erat flammis ardentior. * Oram illuminat occiduam, toto factus in orbe celebris.

R. Nocte sacris incumbens litteris, contemplatur vigil in studio: mane pulchri ad instar sideris, miro lucet doctrinæ radio: * Morbos omnis vespere generis salutari pellens remedio.

V. Nulla præterit hora temporis, quo non recti quid agat operis. * Morbos omnis vespere generis salutari pellens remedio.

R. Verba perennis vitæ proferens, animos inflammat adstantium: pectoribus

when the evening of the world came on, a new prophet, Vincent, the teacher of Christian people. He announces to men the approach of God's judgment, * Which all men shall see with their eyes.

V. Fear God: this is his favourite exclamation: the time is at hand for his judgment, * Which all men shall see with their eyes.

R. Treading in the arduous path of Christ, and shunning earthly pleasures, he convinced men of the truth, and put to flight the darkness of error. * He gave light to the countries of the west, and his name was proclaimed throughout the whole world.

V. His doctrines were more welcome than sunlight, his word was more ardent than fire. * He gave light to the countries of the west, and his name was proclaimed throughout the whole world.

R. He spent the night over the sacred Scriptures, wakeful to contemplation and study: in the morn, like to a fair star, he shines with a wondrous ray of wisdom: * At evening he has a saving remedy for every kind of disease.

V. There passes not an hour of his day, wherein he does not some good deed. * At evening he has a saving remedy for every kind of disease.

R. He inflames the minds of his hearers by his words of eternal life: he inspires the

humanis inserens amorem
donorum cœlestium, de vir-
tutibus alta disserens; *
Frænare docet omne vi-
tium.

V. Illum avida turba se-
quitur, dum hoc ore divino
loquitur. * Frænare docet
omne vitium.

hearts of men with a love of
heavenly gifts : sublimely does
he treat of virtues. * Teaching
men how to bridle every vice.

V. Eager crowds follow
him, when he preaches his
divine doctrines. * Teach-
ing men how to bridle every
vice.

ANT. Qui prophetico fre-
tus lumine, mira de mundi
fine docuit; in occiduo
terræ cardine, ut sol Vin-
centius occubuit : et septus
angelorum agmine, lucidas
cœli sedes tenuit.

ANT. Vincent, blessed with
light prophetic, spoke admir-
ably of the end of the world :
he set, as the sun, in the
western world, and surrounded
by a troop of angels, he as-
cended to the bright mansions
of heaven.

How grand must have been thine eloquence, O Vincent, that could rouse men from their lethargy, and give them to feel all the terrors of that awful judgment. Our forefathers heard thy preaching, and returned to God, and were pardoned. We, too, were drowsy of spirit when, at the commencement of this holy season, the Church awakened us to the work of our salvation, by sprinkling our heads with ashes, and pronouncing over us the sentence of our God, whereby we are condemned to die. Yes, we are to die; we are to die soon; and a judgment is to be held upon us, deciding our eternal lot. Then, at the moment fixed in the divine decrees, we shall rise again, in order that we may assist at the solemn and terrible judgment. Our consciences will be laid open, our good and bad actions will be weighed, before the whole of mankind; after which, the sentence already pronounced upon us in our particular judgment will be made public. Sinners as we are, how shall we be able to bear the eye of our Redeemer, who will then be our inexorable Judge? How shall we endure even the gaze of our fellow-creatures, who

will then behold every sin we have committed? But above all, which of the two sentences will be ours? Were the Judge to pronounce it at this very moment, would He place us among the blessed of His Father, or among the cursed? on His right, or on His left?

Our fathers were seized with fear when thou, O Vincent, didst put these questions to them. They did penance for their sins, and, after receiving pardon from God, their fears abated, and holy joy filled their souls. *Angel of God's judgment!* pray for us, that we may be moved to salutary fear. A few days hence we shall behold our Redeemer ascending the hill of Calvary, with the heavy weight of His cross upon Him; we shall hear Him thus speaking to the daughters of Jerusalem: 'Weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children: for if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?'¹ Help us, O Vincent, to profit by these words of warning. Our sins have reduced us to the condition of dry dead branches, that are good for nought but to burn in the fire of divine vengeance; help us, by thy intercession, to be once more united to Him who will give us life. Thy zeal for souls was extreme; take ours under thy care, and procure for them the grace of perfect reconciliation with our offended Judge. Pray, too, for Spain, the country that gave thee life and faith, thy religious profession and thy priesthood. The dangers that are now threatening her require all thy zeal and love; exercise them in her favour, and be her faithful protector.

¹ St. Luke xxiii. 28, 31.

APRIL 9

SAINT MARY OF EGYPT

PENITENT

ONE of the most striking examples of penance ever witnessed, is this day proposed for our consideration : Mary, the sinner and penitent of Egypt, comes to animate us to persevere in our lenten exercises. Like Magdalene and Margaret of Cortona, she had sinned grievously ; like them she repented, atoned for her guilt, and is now the associate of angels. Let us adore the omnipotence of our God, who thus changed a vessel of dishonour into one of honour ; let us lovingly contemplate the riches of His mercy, and hope for our own participation in them. At the same time, let us remember that pardon is not granted save where there is repentance ; and that repentance is not genuine, unless it produce an abiding spirit and deeds of penance. Mary of Egypt had the misfortune to lead a life of sin for seventeen years ; but her penance lasted forty : and what kind of penance must hers have been, living alone in a desert, under a scorching sun, without the slightest human consolation, and amidst every sort of privation ! The pledge of pardon—the holy Communion—which we received so soon after our sins, was not granted to Mary, till she had done penance for nearly half a century. That pledge of Jesus' forgiveness, which He has given us in the Sacrament of His love, and which was communicated to us so promptly, was withheld from this admirable penitent, so that she received it for the second time only at the moment when death was on the point of separating her soul

from her body which was worn out by austerities ! Let us humble ourselves at such a comparison ; let us think with fear on this great truth—that God's justice will require an exact account of all the graces He has heaped upon us ; and with this thought, let us rouse ourselves to a determination to merit, by the sincerity of our repentance, a place near the humble penitent of the desert.

We take the lessons of the Office of St. Mary of Egypt from the ancient Roman-French breviaries :

Maria Ægyptia, duodecennis, tempore Justinii imperatoris, relictis parentibus, Alexandriam venit, fuitque per annos septemdecim ea in civitate peccatrix. Cum autem Hierosolymam profecta, Calvarie templum in festo Exaltationis sancte Crucis ingredi tentasset, ter divinitus repulsa, in atrio coram imagine Deiparæ Virginis vovit pœnitentiam, si liceret sibi vivificum crucis lignum videre et adorare: moxque templum ingressa, vidit et adoravit.

Mary of Egypt left her parents, when she was twelve years of age. It was during the reign of the emperor Justin. She entered Alexandria, and was a sinner in that city, for seventeen years. Having visited Jerusalem, and, it being the feast of the Exaltation of the holy Cross, having endeavoured to enter the church of Calvary, she felt herself thrice repelled by divine power. Standing under the portico, she made a vow before an image of the Virgin Mother of God, that if our Lord would grant her to see and venerate the life-giving wood of the cross, she would lead a life of penance. Immediately, she entered the church ; she saw ; she adored.

Inde sumpto trium panum viatico, perceptaque Eucharistia in oratorio sancti Joannis ad ripam Jordanis, ultra flumen in vastissimam solitudinem recessit. Ibi, consumpto viatico detritisque vestibus, ignota permansit annis quadraginta septem, donec

Then, taking three loaves as provision for her journey, and having received the Eucharist in St. John's church on the banks of the Jordan, she withdrew into an immense wilderness, on the other side of the river. There, her provisions consumed, and her garments worn to tatters, she abode unknown to all, for

ad torrentem quemdam occurrit ei Zozimas presbyter, a quo obtinuit ut vespere in Cœna Domini, in adversam Jordanis ripam afferret sibi Corpus et Sanguinem Domini, quorum participatione tot annos caruerat.

Condicto die accessit ad eundem locum Zozimas, quo et Maria signo crucis impresso super aquas ambulans pervenit; recitatuque Symbolo et Oratione Dominica, ut moris erat, divina dona suscepit; rursumque precata est Zozimam ut anno recurrente ad eundem torrentem veniret. Qui cum eo accessisset, conspexit corpus ejus jacens in terra, in qua scripta hæc legit: Sepeli, Abba Zozima, miseræ Mariæ corpusculum; redde terræ quod suum est, et pulveri adjice pulverem; ora tamen Deum pro me: transeunte mense Pharmuthi, nocte salutiferæ Passionis, post divinæ et sacræ Cœnæ communionem. Corpori ejus leo adveniens, effossa unguis terra, paravit sepulchrum.

forty-seven years, when she was discovered by the priest Zozimus. She asked him to bring to her, on the evening of Maundy Thursday, and on the other side of the Jordan, the Body and Blood of our Lord, which she had not received during all these years.

On the appointed day, Zozimus came to the place that had been agreed on; and Mary, having made the sign of the cross upon the waters, walked over them, and came to the priest. Having recited the Symbol and the Lord's Prayer, as was the custom, she received the divine gifts. She again besought Zozimus that he would come to the same torrent, the following year. He did so, and found her body lying on the ground, on which were written these words: Abbot Zozimus! bury the body of this wretched Mary. Give back to the earth what belongs to it, and add dust unto dust. Yet, pray to God for me. This last day of the month of Pharmuthi, on the night of the saving Passion, after the Communion of the divine and sacred Supper. A lion then came towards the place, and making a hole in the ground with his paws, he prepared a grave for her body.

In praise of our incomparable penitent, we offer to the reader the following beautiful sequence, taken from the ancient missals of Germany:

SEQUENCE

Ex Ægypto Pharaonis
 In amplexum Salomonis
 Nostri transit filia ;
 Ex abjecta fit electa,
 Ex rugosa fit formosa,
 Ex lebete phiala.

Stella maris huic illuxit,
 Ad dilectum quam conduxit
 Pacis nectens fœdera ;
 Matre Dei mediante,
 Peccatrici, Christo dante,
 Sunt dimissa scelera.

Vitam ducens hæc carna-
 lem,
 Pervenit in Jerusalem,
 Nuptura Pacifico ;
 Hinc excluso adultero
 Maritatur Sponso vero
 Ornata mirifico.

Dei templum introire
 Dum laborat, mox redire
 Necdum digna cogitur ;
 Ad cor suum revertitur,
 Fletu culpa submergitur,
 Fletu culpa teritur.

Locus desertus quæritur,
 Leviathan conteritur,
 Mundus, caro vincitur,
 Domus patris postponitur,
 Vultus mentis componitur,
 Decor carnis spernitur.

Lætare filia Thanis,
 Tuis ornata tympanis,
 Lauda quondam sterilis,
 Gaude, plaude, casta, munda,
 Virtutum prole fœcunda,
 Vitis meri fertilis.

This daughter passes from the Egypt of Pharaoh to the espousals with Jesus, our true Solomon. She that was abject, is made a chosen one ; she that was deformed, is made fair ; the vessel of dishonour is made one of honour.

The Star of the sea shone upon her, and leading her to her beloved Son, has knit the bond of peace. The Mother of God interceded ; Christ forgave ; the sinner's sins are pardoned.

She that led a carnal life, came to Jerusalem, to be espoused to the King of peace ; leaving her false lover, she is united to the true Spouse, honoured by the wonderful One.

She strives to enter the house of God, but her unworthiness forbids it ; she is compelled to retire. Then does she return to her own heart ; she weeps for her sins, and her weeping blots them out.

She flees to the desert ; tramples on Leviathan ; conquers the world and the flesh ; forgets her father's house : neglects the beauty of the body, that her spirit may be made comely.

Rejoice, O daughter of Egypt ! Thou, that once wast barren, take up thy harp, and sing. Exult and be joyful, for now thou art chaste and pure, fruitful in virtue, a vine that yields a precious fruit.

Te dilexit noster risus,
 Umbilicus est præcisus
 Tuus continentia ;
 Aquis lotam, pulchram to-
 tam
 Te salivit, te condivit
 Sponsi sapientia.

Septem pannis involuta,
 Intus tota delibuta
 Oleo lætitiæ ;
 Croco rubens charitatis ;
 Byssocincta castitatis,
 Zona pudicitia.

Hinc hyacintho calciaris,
 Dum superna contemparis,
 Mutatis affectibus ;
 Vestiris discoloribus,
 Cubile vernat floribus,
 Fragrat aromatibus.

O Maria, gaude quia
 Decoravit et amavit
 Sic te Christi gratia,
 Memor semper peccatorum,
 Et cunctorum populorum,
 Plaude nunc in gloria.
 Amen.

He that is our Joy hath loved thee ; the shame of thy disorders is effaced by the merit of thy purity. Cleansed and all fair, the wisdom of thy heavenly Spouse has given thee the incorruption of his grace.

Robed in the seven - fold veil of his Spirit, thou wast anointed with the oil of gladness. The scarlet of charity, the lily of chastity, the girdle of modesty—all were upon thee.

Thy feet were decked with violet, for thy affections were changed from earthly to heavenly things. Thy vesture was of every richest hue, and thy couch was decked with flowers, sweeter than those of spring.

Rejoice, O Mary, in that Christ so loved thee, and beautified thee with grace. Be mindful of us sinners ; pray for all mankind ; feast now in thy eternal glory !
 Amen.

Thou wilt sing for all eternity, O Mary, the mercies of the Lord, who changed thee from a sinner into so glorious a saint ; we join thee in thy praises, and we give Him thanks for having shown us so evidently, in thy person, that a true penitent, whatever and how great soever may have been his sins, may not only avoid eternal torments, but merit everlasting bliss. How light must now appear to thee, O Mary, that forty years' penance, the very thought of which terrifies us ! How short a time, when compared with eternity ! How insignificant its austerity, if we think of hell ! And how rich must its reward seem to thee, now that thou art face to face with infinite Beauty !

We, too, are sinners ; dare we say that we are penitents ? Aid our weakness, O Mary ! Thou wast made known to the world at the close of thy hidden life, in order that Christians might learn from thee the grievousness of sin, of which they make so little account ; the justice of God, of which they are so apt to form so false an idea ; and the goodness of that Father, whom they cease not to offend. Pray for us, O Mary, that we may profit by the instructions given to us so profusely during this holy season. Pray that our conversion may be complete ; that we may leave our pride and our cowardice ; that we may appreciate the grace of reconciliation with our Maker ; and, lastly, that we may ever approach to the holy Table with compunction and love such as thou hadst, when, in thy last happy Communion, Jesus gave Himself to thee in His Sacrament, and then took thee to Himself in the kingdom of everlasting rest and joy.

END OF LENT

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