

MARCH CONTEMPLATION

Opening Hymn

Eucharistic Exposition

Leader:

May this time of prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament be a precious opportunity to grow in awareness of the incomparable treasure which Christ has entrusted to his Church. May it encourage a more lively and fervent celebration of the Eucharist, leading to a Christian life transformed by love. May all of us rediscover the gift of the Eucharist as light and strength for our daily lives in the world in the exercise of our respective professions. We pray in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Silent Reflection

Let us keep silent within ourselves that our hearts and ears may be open.

Prayer Before Reading Scripture

Leader: *Let us pray.*

All: Jesus Christ, our Master, You are the Way and the Truth and the life. Grant that we may learn the sublime knowledge of Your charity in the Spirit of St. Paul the Apostle and of the Catholic Church. Send Your Holy Spirit to teach us and remind us of what You have preached. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture Reading: *(Romans 1:1-6, 8, 11-12)*

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

First, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is heralded throughout the world....For I long to see you, that I may share with you some spiritual gift so that you may be strengthened, that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by one another's faith, yours and mine.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *(Psalm 126: 1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6)*

Response: *The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.*

When the LORD brought back the captives of Zion, we were like men dreaming.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with rejoicing. **R/:**

Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad indeed. **R/:**

Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the torrents in the southern desert.

Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing. **R/:**

Although they go forth weeping, carrying the seed to be sown,

They shall come back rejoicing, carrying their sheaves. **R/:**

Glory be to the Father...

Reflection: * *Aperuit Illis*, #12

When sacred Scripture is read in the light of the same Spirit by whom it was written, it remains ever new. The Old Testament is never old once it is part of the New, since all has been transformed thanks to the one Spirit who inspired it. The sacred text as a whole serves a prophetic function regarding not the future but the present of whoever is nourished by this word. Jesus himself clearly stated this at the beginning of his ministry: “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (*Lk* 4:21). Those who draw daily nourishment from God’s word become, like Jesus, a contemporary of all those whom they encounter: they are not tempted to fall into sterile nostalgia for the past, or to dream of ethereal utopias yet to come.

Silent Reflection

Prayer for the Family

God and Father of us all, in Jesus, your Son and our Savior, you have made us your sons and daughters in the family of the Church. May your grace and love help our families in every part of the world be united to one another in fidelity to the Gospel. May the example of the Holy Family, with the aid of your Holy Spirit, guide all families, especially those most troubled, to be homes of communion and prayer and to always seek your truth and live in your love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

Meditation from *Dei Verbum*

The principal purpose to which the plan of the old covenant was directed was to prepare for the coming of Christ, the redeemer of all and of the messianic kingdom, to announce this coming by prophecy,¹ and to indicate its meaning through various types (see 1 Cor. 10:11). Now the books of the Old Testament, in accordance with the state of mankind before the time of salvation established by Christ, reveal to all men the knowledge of God and of man and the ways in which God, just and merciful, deals with men...

God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and that the Old be made manifest in the New.² For, though Christ established the new covenant with His blood (see Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25), still the books of the Old Testament with all their parts, caught up into the meaning of the proclamation of the Gospel,³ acquire and show forth their full meaning in the New Testament⁴ and in turn shed light on it and explain it.

¹ cf. Luke 24:44, John 5:39; 1 Peter 1:10.

² Cf. Mt. 11:27; Jn. 1:14 and 17; 14:6; 17:1-3; 2 Cor. 3:16 and 4:6; Eph. 1:3-14.

³ EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS, c. VII, 4: Funk, APOSTOLIC FATHERS, I, p. 403.

⁴ cf. Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:27; Rom. 16:25-26; 2 Cor. 3:14-16.

Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Chapter 4, *Old Testament*, #15, 16.

Intentions

Let us pray together the Daily Offering with the intention of the Holy Father and our personal intentions:

All:

Eternal Father, we offer you in union with Mary, Mother of the Redeemer of humankind, the Blood Jesus shed with love in his passion and every day is offered on the altar. In union with the Victim offered for the salvation of the world, we offer today's actions in expiation for our sins, for the conversion of sinners, for the souls in purgatory, for the needs of the holy Church, and especially:

For the Holy Father's intention: that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity, we pray. *R/.*

Our response will be: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

That by the Church's sacred remembrance of the mysteries of our salvation, the Lord may pour his divine love into every human heart, we pray. *R/.*

Lord, You have promised to be with your Church always, may the Holy Spirit inspire many more vocations to the priesthood and religious life, we pray. *R/.*

For those who've asked the help of our prayers, for those who have no one to pray for them, and for the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray. *R/.*

Our Father...

Silent Reflection

Closing Prayer

Leader: *Let us pray:*

All: Lord Jesus, in the Eucharist You make your dwelling among us and become our traveling companion; sustain our Christian communities so that they may be ever more open to listening and accepting your Word. May they draw from the Eucharist a renewed commitment to spreading in society, by the proclamation of your Gospel, the signs and deeds of an attentive and active charity. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Benediction and Reposition

Closing Hymn

* This year the *Reflections* will be taken from *Aperuit Illis (Instituting the Sunday of the Word of God)* the Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis to "enable the Church to experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world." (#2)

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