

DECEMBER 27, ST. JOHN, APOSTLE & EVANGELIST

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The feast of St. John is the only feast of an apostle now remaining in the Christmas cycle. The station is at St. Mary Major, dedicated to the Savior; this basilica seemed the most suitable place for the celebration of the Christmas station in honor of St. John to whom the Blessed Virgin had been entrusted, both on account of the Savior's crib there preserved, and of the mosaics of Sixtus III commemorating the Council of Ephesus, held near the tomb of the Evangelist.

The Gradual is drawn from that passage of St. John's Gospel in which reference is made to the popular belief, current in the first generation of Christians in Asia, that the beloved disciple should not die before the *parousia* or last coming of Christ. The advanced age of the Apostle seemed to lend credit to this opinion. So St. John, in the very last chapter of his Gospel, desired - as a sort of final postscript - to rectify this erroneous interpretation of the Savior's words. "So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee?" The words were uttered by Our Lord merely as an hypothesis. "So (if) I will"; but in the several oral versions of the episode the conditional and hypothetical particle "if" was easily passed over; hence St. John felt the necessity of explaining the misunderstanding and setting the matter right.

INTROIT Ecclesiasticus 15: 5

In médio Ecclésiæ aperuit os ejus: et implévit eum Dóminus spírítu sapiéntiæ, et intelléctus: stolam glóriæ induit eum. (Ps. 91: 2) Bonum est confitéri Dómino: et psállere nómini tuo, Altíssime. Glória Patri et Filio et Spírítui Sancto, sicut erat in princípío, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen. In médio Ecclésiæ aperuit os ejus: et implévit eum Dóminus spírítu sapiéntiæ et intelléctus: stolam glóriæ induit eum.

COLLECT

Ecclésiam tuam, Dómine, benígnus illústra: ut, beáti Joánnis Apóstoli tui et Evangelístæ illumináta doctrínis, ad dona pervéniat sempitérna. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spírítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

Commemoration of Christmas

Concéde, quæsumus, omnípotens Deus: ut nos Unigéniti tui nova per carnem Natívitatis líberet; quos sub peccáti jugo vetústa sérvitus tenet. Per eúndem Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spírítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

LESSON Ecclesiasticus 15: 1-6

Qui timet Deum, fáciat bona: et qui cóntinens est justítiæ, apprehéndet illam, et obviábit illi quasi mater honorificáta. Cibábit illum pane vitæ et intelléctus, et aqua sapiéntiæ salutáris potábit illum: et firmábitur in illo, et non fluctétur: et continébit illum, et non confundétur: et exaltábit illum apud próximos suos, et in médio Ecclésiæ apériet os ejus, et adimplébit illum spírítu sapiéntiæ et intelléctus, et stola glóriæ véstiet illum. Jucunditátem et exsultatiónem thesaurizábit super illum, et nómine æténo hereditábit illum, Dóminus Deus noster.

GRADUAL John 21: 23, 19

Exiit sermo inter fratres, quod discipulus ille non móritur: et non dixit Jesus: Non móritur, Sed: Sic eum volo manére, donec véniam: tu me séquere.

LESSER ALLELUIA John 21: 24

Allelúja, allelúja. Hic est discipulus ille, qui testimónium pérhibet de his: et scimus, quia verum est testimónium ejus. Allelúja.

GOSPEL John 21: 19-24

In illo témpore: Dixit Jesus Petro: Séquere me. Convérsus Petrus vidit illum discipulum, quem diligébat Jesus, sequéntem, qui et recúbit in cœna super pectus ejus, et dixit: Dómine, quis est qui tradet te ? Hunc ergo cum vidisset Petrus, dixit Jesu: Dómine, hic autem quid? Dicit ei Jesus: Sic eum volo manére, donec véniam, quid ad te? tu me séquere. Exiit ergo sermo iste inter fratres, quia discipulus ille non móritur. Et non dixit ei Jesus: Non móritur; sed: Sic eum volo manére, donec véniam: quid ad te? Hic est discipulus ille, qui testimónium pérhibet de his, et scripsit hæc: et scimus, quia verum est testimónium ejus.

OFFERTORY Psalms 91: 13

Justus ut palma florébit: sicut cedrus, quæ in Líbano est, multiplicábitur.

SECRET

Súscipe, Dómine, múnera, quæ in ejus tibi solemnitate deférimus, cujus nos confidimus patrocínio liberári. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spírítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

Commemoration of Christmas

Obláta, Dómine, múnera nova Unigéniti tui nativitate sanctífica: nosque a peccatórum nostrórum máculis emúnda. Per eúndem Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spírítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

PREFACE OF THE NATIVITY

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubique grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, æténe Deus. Quia per incarnáti Verbi mystérium, nova mentis nostræ óculis lux tuæ claritátis infúlsit: ut dum visibíliter Deum cognóscimus, per hunc in invisibílium amórem rapiámur. Et ídeo cum Ángelis et Archángelis, cum Thronis et Dóminatióneibus, cumque omni milítia cælestis exércitus, hymnum glóriæ tuæ cánimus, sine fine dicéntes:

COMMUNICANTES FOR CHRISTMAS

Communicántes, et diem sacratíssimum celebrántes, quo beátæ Mariæ intemeráta virginitas huic mundo édedit Salvatórem: sed et memóriam venerántes, in primis ejúsdem gloriósæ semper Vírginis Mariæ, Genetrícis ejúsdem Dei et Dómini nostri Jesu Christi: sed et beáti Joseph, ejúsdem Vírginis Sponsi, et beatórum Apóstolorum ac Mártyrum tuórum, Petri et Pauli, Andréæ, Jacóbi, Joánnis, Thomæ, Jacóbi, Philíppi, Bartholomæi, Matthæi, Simónis et Thaddæi: Lini, Cleti, Cleméntis, Xysti, Cornélii, Cypriáni, Lauréntii, Chrysógoni, Joánnis et Pauli, Cosmæ et Damiáni: et ómnium Sanctórum tuórum; quorum méritis, precibúque concédas, ut in ómnibus per eúndem Christum Dóminum Nostrum. Amen.

COMMUNION John 21: 23

Exiit sermo inter fratres, quod discipulus ille non móritur: et non dixit Jesus: Non móritur; sed: Sic eum volo manére, donec véniam.

POSTCOMMUNION

Refecti cibo potúque cælesti, Deus noster, te súpplices deprecámur: ut, in cujus hæc commemoratióne percépiamus, ejus uniamur et précibus. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spírítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

Commemoration of Christmas

Præsta, quæsumus, omnípotens Deus: ut natus hódie Salvátor mundi, sicut divinæ nobis generatiónis est auctor; ita et immortalitátis sit ipse largítor. Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spírítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

In the midst of the Church the Lord opened his mouth; and filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding; He clothed him with a robe of glory. (Ps. 91: 2) It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to Thy name, Most High. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. In the midst of the Church the Lord opened his mouth; and filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding; He clothed him with a robe of glory.

O Lord, graciously shed light upon Thy Church, so that, enlightened by the teachings of blessed John, Thine Apostle and Evangelist, she may gain Thy everlasting rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that the new birth in the flesh of Thine only-begotten Son may set us free, whom the old bondage doth hold under the yoke of sin. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

He that feareth God, will do good: and he that possesseth justice, shall lay hold on her, and she will meet him as an honorable mother. With the bread of life and understanding she will feed him, and give him the water of wholesome wisdom to drink: and she shall be made strong in him, and he shall not be moved; and she shall hold him fast, and he shall not be confounded; and she shall exalt him among his neighbors, and in the midst of the church she shall open his mouth, and shall fill him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and shall clothe him with a robe of glory. The Lord our God shall heap upon him a treasure of joy and gladness, and shall cause him to inherit an everlasting name.

This saying therefore went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple was not to die. But Jesus had not said, He is not to die. But: So I wish him to remain until I come. Follow thou Me.

Alleluia, alleluia. This is that disciple who bears witness concerning these things: and we know that his witness is true. Alleluia.

At that time, Jesus said to Peter, Follow Me. Turning around, Peter saw that disciple whom Jesus loved following, the one who, at the supper, had leaned back upon His breast and said: Lord, who is he that shall betray Thee? Peter therefore, seeing him, said to Jesus, Lord, and what of this man? Jesus said to him, So I wish him to remain until I come, what is it to thee? Follow thou Me. This saying therefore went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple was not to die. But Jesus had not said: He is not to die; but, If I wish him to remain until I come, what is it to thee? This is the disciple who bears witness concerning these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his witness is true.

The just man shall flourish like the palm tree, like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow.

Receive, O Lord, the gifts which we bring to Thee on the solemnity of him by whose patronage we trust to be delivered. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Sanctify, O Lord, the gifts offered to Thee by the new birth of Thine Only-begotten Son: and cleanse us from the stains of our sins. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

It is truly meet and just, right and for our salvation, that we should at all times and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O holy Lord, Father almighty, everlasting God: for through the mystery of the word made flesh, the new light of Thy glory hath shone upon the eyes of our mind, so that while we acknowledge God in visible form, we may through Him be drawn to the love of things invisible. And therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the hosts of the heavenly army, we sing the hymn of Thy glory, evermore saying:

Communicating, and keeping this most holy day, in which the spotless virginity of blessed Mary brought forth a Savior to this world and also reverencing the memory of the same glorious Mary, ever Virgin Mother of the same our God and Lord Jesus Christ: as also blessed Joseph, Spouse of the Virgin, and of Thy blessed Apostles and Martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Thaddeus: Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian, and of all Thy Saints, through whose merits and prayers grant that we may in all things be defended by the help of Thy protection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

A saying went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple was not to die. But Jesus had not said: He is not to die: but, So I wish him to remain until I come.

Refreshed with celestial food and drink, we humbly beseech Thee our God, that we may be protected by his prayers in whose memory we have received them. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that as the Savior of the world, born on this day, is the Author of our heavenly birth, so He may also be to us the Giver of immortality. Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.