

EMBER WEDNESDAY IN ADVENT

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The solemn fast of the three days in Ember Week, originally peculiar to the Roman Church, was afterwards borrowed by the other Latin dioceses. St. Leo I explains the Ember Days saying that, especially at the end of the year, it is fitting that we dedicate the first fruits to the Divine Providence.

An ancient tradition reserved the ordinations of priests and deacons to the month of December, and the faithful – following a custom introduced by the Apostles themselves – felt constrained to unite with the bishop in prayer and fasting, in order to call down from God an abundance of priestly gifts upon the heads of those newly chosen to minister at the altar.

Originally, on the days of the stational processions, when the great Litany was sung on the way, the Introit was omitted, and the Pope, on reaching the church, recited the Prayer after the last Kyrie. The deacon first invited the faithful to prostrate themselves so that they might pray for a while in secret, the *Flectamus genua*; then, after a few moments spent in prayer, he gave the signal to get up again, the *Levate*, and the Pontiff summed up the petitions of the assembly in a brief formula – *collecta* – and presented them to God.

INTROIT Isaiah 45: 8

Roráte, cæli, désuper et nubes pluant justum: aperiátur terra, et gérmínet Salvatórem. (Ps 18: 2) Cæli enárrant glóriam Dei: et ópera mánuum ejus annúntiat firmaméntum. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen. Roráte, Cæli, désuper et nubes pluant justum: aperiátur terra, et gérmínet Salvatórem.

COLLECT

Orémus.
Flectámus genua.
Leváte.

Præsta, quæsumus, omnípotens Deus: ut redemptiónis nostræ ventúra solémnitas, et præséntis nobis vitæ subsídia cónferat, et ætérnæ beatitúdinis præmia largiátur. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

LESSON Isaiah 2: 2-5

In diébus illis: Dixit Isaías prophéta: Erit in novíssimis diébus præparátus mons domus Dómini in vértice móntium, et elevábitur super colles, et fluent ad eum omnes gentes. Et ibunt pópuli multi, et dicent: Veníte et ascendámus ad montem Dómini, et ad domum Dei Jacob, et docébit nos vias suas, et ambulábimus in sémitis ejus: quia de Sion exíbit lex, et verbum Dómini de Jérusalem. Et judicábit gentes, et árguet pópulos multos: et conflábunt gládios suos in vómeres, et lanceas suas in falces. Non levábit gens contra gentem gládium: nec exercebúntur ultra ad prælium. Domus Jacob veníte, et ambulémus in lúmine Dómini Dei nostri.

GRADUAL Psalms 23: 7, 3, 4

Tollíte portas, príncipes, vestras: et elevámini portæ ætérnáles: et introíbit Rex glóriæ. Quis ascéndet in montem Dómini? aut quis stabit in loco sancto ejus? Innocens mánibus et mundo corde.

Dóminus vobíscum.
Et cum spiritu tuo.

COLLECT

Festína, quæsumus, Dómine, ne tardáveris, et auxiliúm nobis supérnæ virtútis impénde: ut advéntus tui consolatióibus sublevéntur, qui in tua pietáte confidunt: Qui vivis et regnas, cum Deo Patre in unitáte Spíritui Sancti, Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

For St. Eusebius

Deus, qui nos beáti Eusépii Mártyris tui atque Pontíficis ánnua solemnitáte lætíficas: concéde propítius; ut, cujus natalítia cólimus, de ejúsdem étiam protectiõe gaudeámus. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

LESSON Isaiah 7: 10-15

In diébus illis: Locútus est Dóminus ad Achaz, dicens: Pete tibi signum a Dómino Deo tuo in profúndum inférni, sive in excélsu supra. Et dixit Achaz: Non petam, et non tentábo Dóminum. Et dixit: Audíte ergo domus David: Numquid parum vobis est, moléstos esse homínibus, quia molésti estis et Deo me? Propter hoc dabit Dóminus ipse vobis signum. Ecce virgo concípiet, et páriet fílium, et vocábitur nomen ejus Emmánuel. Butýrum et mel cómedet, ut sciat reprobaré malum, et eligere bonum.

GRADUAL Psalms 144: 18, 21

Prope est Dóminus ómnibus invocántibus eum: ómnibus qui invocant eum in verítate. Laudem Dómini loquétur os meum: et benedícat omnis, caro nomen sanctum ejus.

GOSPEL Luke 1: 26-38

In illo témpore: Missus est Ángelus Gábriél Deo in civitátem Galilææ, cui nomen Nazareth, ad Virginem desponsátam viro, cui nomen erat Joseph, de domo David, et nomen Virgínis María. Et ingressus Ángelus ad eam, dixit: Ave, grátia plena: Dóminus tecum: benedícta tu in muliéribus. Quæ cum audisset, turbáta est in sermóne ejus: et cogitábat qualis esset ista salutátio. Et ait Ángelus ei: Ne timeas María, invenísti enim grátiam apud Deum: ecce concípies in útero, et paries fílium, et vocabis nomen ejus Jesum. Hic erit magnus, et Fílius Altíssimi vocábitur, et dabit illi Dóminus Deus sedem David patris ejus: et regnábit in domo Jacob in ætérnum, et regni ejus non erit finis. Dixit autem María ad Ángelum: Quómódo fiet istud, quóniam virum non cognóscó? Et respondens Ángelus, dixit ei: Spíritus Sanctus supervéniet in te, et virtus Altíssimi obumbrábit tibi. Ideóque et quod nascétur ex te Sanctum, vocábitur Fílius Dei. Et ecce Elisabeth cognáta tua, et ipsa concépit fílium in senectúte sua: et hic mensis sextus est illi, quæ vocátur stérilis: quia non erit impossibile apud Deum omne verbum. Dixit autem María: Ecce ancílla Dómine, fiat mihi secúndum verbum tuum.

OFFERTORY Isaiah 35: 4

Confortámini, et jam nolite timére: ecce enim Deus noster retribuet júdicium: ipse véniet, et salvos nos faciét.

SECRET

Accépta tibi sint, quæsumus, Dómine, nostra jetúnia: quæ et expiánd nos tua grátia dignos efficiat, et ad sempitérna promissa perdúcant. Per Dóminum nostrum Iesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

For St. Eusebius

Múnere tibi, Dómine, dicáta sanctífica: et, intercedénte beáto Eusébio Mártyre tuo atque Pontífice, per éadem nos placátus inténde. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

PREFACE OF ADVENT

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubíque grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus: per Christum Dóminum nostrum. Quem pèrdito hómínu generi Salvatórem miséricordis et fidélsis promisiásti: cuius justificáret ímpios, virtus adjuváret infirmos. Dum ergo prope est ut véniat quem missúrus es, et dies affúget liberatiónis nostræ, in hac promissiónum tuárum fide, piis gáudiis exultámus. Et ídeo cum Ángelis et Domínatióibus, cumque omni militia cæléstis exércitus, hymnum glóriæ tuæ cánimus, sine fine dicétes:

COMMUNION Isaiah 7: 14

Ecce Virgo concípiet, ét páriet fílium: et vocábitur nomen ejus Emmánuel.

POSTCOMMUNION

Salutáris tui, Dómine, múnere satiáti, súpplicis deprecámur: ut, cujus lætámur gustu, renovémur effectú. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

For St. Eusebius

Hæc nos commúno, Dómine, purget a crímíne: et intercedénte beáto Eusébio, Mártyre tuo et Pontífice, cæléstis remédii faciát esse consórtes. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just: let the earth be opened and bud forth a Savior. (Ps. 18: 2) The heavens show forth the glory of God: and the firmament declareth the work of His hands. Glory 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. Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just: let the earth be opened and bud forth a Savior.

Let us pray.
Let us kneel.
Arise.

Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that the coming solemnity of our redemption may both confer upon us assistance in this present life and bestow the rewards of everlasting blessedness. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

In those days, the prophet Isaías said: In the last days the mountain of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go, and say: Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge the Gentiles and rebuke many people: and they shall turn their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation: neither shall they be exercised any more to war. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord our God.

Lift up your gates, O ye princes: and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of glory shall enter in. Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? The innocent in hands and clean of heart.

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Hasten, we beseech Thee, O Lord, tarry not: and grant us the help of Thy heavenly power, that they who trust in Thy loving kindness may be relieved by the consolations of Thy coming. Who lives and reigns, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

O God, Who dost gladden us by the annual feast of blessed Eusebius, Thy Martyr and Bishop: mercifully grant that we who celebrate his heavenly birthday, may also rejoice in his protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

In those days the Lord spoke to Achaz, saying: Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, either unto the depth of hell, or unto the height above. And Achaz said: I will not ask, and I will not tempt the Lord. And He said: Hear ye therefore, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to be grievous to men, that you are grievous to my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign. Behold 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 Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord: and let all flesh bless His holy Name.

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 shall 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 Spirit 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 work shall be impossible with God. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.

Take courage, and now fear not: for behold our God will bring judgment: He Himself will come and will save us.

May our fasts, we beseech Thee, O Lord, be acceptable unto Thee, and by expiating our sins, make us worthy of Thy grace, and bring us to Thine everlasting promises. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Sanctify, O Lord, the gifts dedicated to Thee, and through them, by the intercession of blessed Eusebius, Thy Martyr and Bishop, graciously regard us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, 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 places give thanks unto Thee, O holy Lord, almighty Father, eternal God, through Christ our Lord; for in Thy mercy and fidelity Thou hast promised Him as Savior for the lost race of men, to instruct the ignorant with His truth, justify the wicked with His holiness, and help the weak by His power. Now that the time draweth nigh that He Whom Thou art to send should come, and the day of our liberation should dawn, with faith in Thy promises, we rejoice with holy exultation. And therefore with the Angels and Archangels, with the Thrones and Dominations, and with all the hosts of the heavenly army, we sing a hymn of Thy glory, evermore saying:

Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son: and His name shall be called Emmanuel.

O Lord, we humbly beseech Thee, that being filled with the gift of Thy salvation, we may be renewed by the effect of that which we taste with joy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who lives with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

May this Communion, O Lord, cleanse us from guilt: and through the intercession of blessed Eusebius, Thy Martyr and Bishop, may it make us sharers of the heavenly healing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.