

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

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Station at St. Lawrence-without-the-Walls.

The Eastern usage regarded Saturday and Sunday as festival days, and therefore as exempt from the Lenten fast; so, in order to complete the forty days of Lent, the Greeks anticipated the penitential season by some weeks, and from this Sunday onward abstained from the use of meat. Among the Latins four days had to be supplied making Lent begin on Ash Wednesday; the piety of the more devout wished for something more. St. Gregory therefore instituted, or at least gave definite form to, a cycle of three weeks' preparation for Lent, with three solemn stations at the patriarchal Basilicas of St. Lawrence, St. Paul, and St. Peter, as though to begin the Easter fast under the auspices of the three great patrons of the Eternal City.

From this Sunday until Maundy Thursday the *Gloria in excelsis* is omitted in Masses of the season. The Collect, which immediately follows the litany (at present the *Kyrie*) on days of fasting and penance, truly represents, therefore, the ordinary and normal form of the litany as used in the ancient liturgy of the Mass and of the Divine Office.

The fruit of today's meditation on the Epistle of St. Paul and on the parable of the vineyard is the uncertainty of eternal salvation. It is not enough for us to have been baptized or called to a holy state; it is necessary to labor diligently and imitate the chosen few, that is, the saints and martyrs.

INTROIT Psalms 17: 5-7

Circumdedérunt me gémitus mortis, dolóres inférni circumdedérunt me: et in tribulatióne mea invocávi Dóminum, et exaudivit de templo sancto suo vocem meam. (Ps 17: 2-3) Díligam te, Dómine, fortitúdo mea: Dóminus firmaméntum meum, et refúgium meum, et liberátor meus. Glória Patri et Fílio et Spirítui Sancto, sicut erat in princípío, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen. Circumdedérunt me gémitus mortis, dolóres inférni circumdedérunt me: et in tribulatióne mea invocávi Dóminum, et exaudivit de templo sancto suo vocem meam.

COLLECT

Preces pópuli tui, quæsumus, Dómine, cleménter exáudi: ut, qui juste pro peccátis nostris affligimur, pro tui nóminis glória misericórditer liberémur. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

EPISTLE

1 Corinthians 9: 24-27; 10: 1-5

Fratres: Nescítis, quod ii, qui in stádio currunt, omnes quidem currunt, sed unus áccipit bravíum? Sic cúrrite, ut comprehendátis. Omnis autem, qui in agóne conténdit, ab ómnibus se ábstinet: et illi quidem ut corruptibilem coronam accípiant; nos autem incorruptam. Ego ígitur sic curro, non quasi in incértum: sic pugno, non quasi áerem vérberans: sed castígo corpus meum, et in servitútem redígo: ne forte cum áliis prædicáverim, ipse réprobus efficiar. Nolo enim vos ignoráre, fratres, quóniam patres nostri omnes sub nube fuérunt, et omnes mare baptizáti sunt in nube, et in mari: et omnes eámdem escam spiritalém manducáverunt, et omnes eúndem potum spiritalém bibérunt (bibébant autem de spiritali, consequénte eos, petra: petra autem erat Christus:) sed non in plúribus eórum beneplácitum est Deo.

GRADUAL Psalms 9: 10,11,19, 20

Adjútor in opportunitátibus, in tribulatióne: sperent in te, qui novérunt te: quóniam non derelínquis quæréntes te, Dómine. Quóniam non in finem oblvio erit páuperis: paciéntia páuperum non períbit in ætérnum: exsúrge, Dómine, non præváleat homo.

TRACT Psalms 129: 1-4

De profúndis clamávi ad te, Dómine: Dómine, exáudi vocem meam. Fiant aures tuæ intendéntes in oratióne servi tui. Si iniquitátes observáveris, Dómine: Dómine, quis sustinébít? Quia apud te propitiátio est, et propter legem tuam sustínui te, Dómine.

GOSPEL Matthew 20: 1-16

In illo témpore: Dixit Jesus discíplulis suis parábola hanc: Simile est regnum cælórum hómini patrifamílias, qui éxiit primo mane conducere operários in vineam suam. Conventióne autem facta cum operáriis ex denário diúrno, misit eos in vineam suam. Et egréssus circa horam tértiam, vidit álios stantes in foro otíosos, et dixit illis: Ite et vos in vineam meam, et quod justum fúerit, dabo vobis. Illi autem abiérunt. Iterum autem éxiit circa sextam et nonam horam: et fecit simíliter. Circa undécimam vero éxiit, et invénit álios stantes, et dicit illis: Quid hic statis tota die otíosi? Dicunt ei: Quia nemo nos condúxit. Dicit illis: Ite et vos in vineam meam. Cum sero autem factum esset, dicit dóminus vineæ procuratóri suo: Voca operários, et redde illis mercédem, incípiens a novíssimis usque ad primos. Cum veníssent ergo qui circa undécimam horam vénerant, accepérunt síngulos denários. Veniéntes autem et primi, arbitráti sunt quod plus essent acceptúri: accepérunt autem et ipsi síngulos denários. Et accipiéntes murmurábant advérsus patremfamílias, dicéntes: Hi novíssimi una hora fecérunt, et pares illos nobis fecísti, qui portávimus pondus diéi et æstus. At ille respóndens uni eórum, dixit: Amíce, non fácio tibi injúriam: nonne ex denário convenísti mecum? Tolle quod tuum est, et vade: volo autem et huic novíssimo dare sicut et tibi. Aut non licet mihi, quod volo, fácere? an óculus tuus nequam est, quia ego bonus sum? Sic erunt novíssimi primi, et primi novíssimi. Multi enim sunt vocáti, pauci vero elécti.

OFFERTORY Psalms 91: 2

Bonum est confitéri Dómino, et psállere nómini tuo, Altíssime.

SECRET

Munéribus nostris, quæsumus, Dómine, precibúsqe suscéptis: et cæléstibus nos munda mystériis, et cleménter exáudi. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

COMMUNION Psalms 30: 17-18

Illúmina faciém tuam super servum tuum, et salvum me fac in tua misericórdia: Dómine, non confúndar, quóniam invocávi te.

POSTCOMMUNION

Fidéles tui, Deus, per tua dona firmántur: ut éadem et percipiéndo requírant, et quæréndo sine fine percípiant. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

The sorrows of death surrounded me, the sorrow of hell encompassed me: and in my affliction I called upon the Lord, and He heard my voice from His holy Temple. (Ps. 17: 2-3) I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength: the Lord is my firmament, my refuge, and my deliverer. 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. The sorrows of death surrounded me, the sorrow of hell encompassed me: and in my affliction I called upon the Lord, and He heard my voice from His holy Temple.

Graciously hear, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the prayers of Thy people, that we who are justly afflicted for our sins, may be mercifully delivered by Thy goodness, for the glory of Thy name. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Brethren: Know you not that they that run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain. And everyone that striveth for the mastery refraineth himself from all things: and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible one. I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty; I so fight, not as one beating the air; but I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway. For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all in Moses were baptized, in the cloud and in the sea: and did all eat the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink: (and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ). But with most of them God was not well pleased.

A helper in due time in tribulation: let them trust in Thee who know Thee; for Thou has not forsaken them that seek Thee, O Lord. For the poor man shall not be forgotten to the end: the patience of the poor shall not perish for ever: arise, O Lord, let no man prevail.

Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. Let Thine ears be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant. If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: O Lord, who shall abide it? For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness, and by reason of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord.

At that time Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven is like to an householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the market place idle, and he said to them: Go you also into my vineyard, and I will give you what shall be just. And they went their way. And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour: and did in like manner. But about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and he said to them: Why stand you here all the day idle? They say to him: Because no man has hired us. He said to them: Go you also into my vineyard. And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward: Call the laborers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first. When therefore they were come that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first also came, they thought that they should receive more: and they also received every man a penny. And receiving it they murmured against the master of the house, saying: These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us that have borne the burden of the day and the heats. But he answering said to one of them: Friend, I do thee no wrong: did thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine and go thy way: I will also give to this last even as to thee. Or, is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good? So shall the last be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.

It is good to give praise to the Lord, and to sing to Thy name, O most High.

Having received our offerings and prayers, we beseech Thee, O Lord, cleanse us by these heavenly mysteries, and graciously hear 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.

Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant, and save me in Thy mercy: let me not be confounded, O Lord, for I have called upon Thee.

May Thy faithful people, O Lord, be strengthened by Thy gifts: that by partaking of them, they may continue to seek after them, and by seeking them, they may partake of them without end. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.