

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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Station at the Twelve Holy Apostles.

A Roman tradition attributed the compilation of the Gregorian Antiphony to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Consequently this work was deemed to be intangible, so no alterations nor additions could be permitted. Hence the chants of today's Mass were borrowed from other preceding Masses, so that the Fourth Sunday of Advent possesses nothing peculiar to itself save the Offertory, the Epistle, and the three Prayers.

The Offertory is from St. Luke and repeats the gracious salutation of the Angel to Mary, interwoven with the blessings addressed to her by Elizabeth. The history of the prayer *Ave Maria*, so dear to the piety of the faithful, and grown so familiar to us especially through the rosary, begins with this splendid Gregorian Offertory, which gives us the text of the *Ave* in its original form as it was used throughout the Middle Ages. (The "Holy Mary..." has been added at a later time out of that Christian piety of the time of the first Franciscans - distinguished by its tender love for the Blessed Virgin.)

INTROIT Isaiah 45: 8

Rorate cæli desuper, et nubes pluant justum: aperiatur terra, et germinet Salvatorem. (Ps. 18: 2) Cæli enarrant glóriam Dei: et opera mánuum ejus annúntiat firmaméntum. Glória Patri et Fílio et Spirítui Sancto, sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen. Rorate cæli desuper, et nubes pluant justum: aperiatur terra, et germinet Salvatorem.

COLLECT

Excíta, quæsumus, Dómine, poténtiam tuam, et veni: et magna nobis virtúte succurre; et per auxiliúm grátiae tuæ, quod nostra peccáta præpédiunt, indulgéntia tuæ propitiatiónis accéleret: Qui vivis et regnas, cum Deo Patre in unitáte Spirítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

EPISTLE I Corinthians 4: 1-5

Fratres: Sic nos existimet homo ut ministros Christi, et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei. Hic jam quaeritur inter dispensatores, ut fidelis quis inveniatur. Mihi autem pro minimo est, ut a vobis iudicer aut ab humano die: sed neque meipsum iudico. Nihil enim mihi conscius sum: sed non in hoc justificatus sum: qui autem iudicat me, Dominus est. Itaque nolite ante tempus iudicare, quoadusque veniat Dominus: qui et illuminabit abscondita tenebrarum, et manifestabit consilia cordium: et tunc laus erit unicuique a Deo.

GRADUAL Psalms 144: 18, 21

Prope est Dominus omnibus invocantibus eum: omnibus qui invocant eum in veritate. Laudem Domini loquetur os meum: et benedicat omnis caro nomen sanctum ejus.

LESSER ALLELUIA

Alleluia, alleluia. Veni, Domine, et noli tardare: relaxa facinora plebis tuae Israel. Alleluia.

GOSPEL Luke 3: 1-6

Anno quintodécimo impèrii Tiberii Cæsaris, procurante Póntio Piláto Judæam, tetrarcha autem Galilææ Heróde, Philíppo autem fratre ejus tetrarcha Iturææ et Trachonítidis regiónis, et Lysánia Abilínæ tetrarcha, sub principibus sacerdotum Anna et Cáípha: factum est verbum Domini super Joánnem, Zachariæ filium, in deserto. Et venit in omnem regionem Jordánis, prædicans baptísmum poenitentiæ in remissionem peccatorum, sicut scriptum est in libro sermónum Isaíæ prophète: Vox clamantis in deserto: Parate viam Domini: rectas facite semitas ejus: omnis vallis implébitur: et omnis mons et collis humiliabitur: et erunt prava in directa, et áspera in vias planas: et vidébit omnis caro salutare Dei.

OFFERTORY Luke 1: 28, 42

Ave María, grátia plena: Dominus tecum: benedicta tu in mulieribus et benedictus fructus ventris tui.

SECRET

Sacrificiis præsentibus, quæsumus, Domine, placatus inténde: ut et devotióni nostræ proficiant et salúti. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spirítus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

PREFACE OF ADVENT

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper, et ubique grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnipotens, ætérne Deus: per Christum Dóminum nostrum. Quem pérdito hóminum géneri Salvatorem miséricors et fidélis promisiósti: cuius véritas instrúeret íncios, sáncctitas justificáret ímpios, virtus adjuváret infirmos. Dum ergo prope est ut véniat quem missurus es, et dies affúlget liberatiónis nostræ, in hac promissionum tuarum fide, piis gaudiis exsultámus. Et ideo cum Angelis et Archángelis, cum Thronis et Dominationibus, cumque omni militia cælestis exercitus, hymnum glóriæ tuæ cánimus, sine fine dicentes:

COMMUNION Isaiah 7: 14

Ecce virgo concipiet et pariet filium: et vocabitur nomen ejus Emmánuel.

POSTCOMMUNION

Sumptis munéribus, quæsumus, Domine: ut cum frequentatióne mystérii, crescat nostræ salutis effectus. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spirítus 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 declares the work of His hands. 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. Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just: let the earth be opened and bud forth a Savior.

O Lord, we beseech Thee, stir up Thy power, and come, and with great might succor us: that by the help of Thy grace that which is hindered by our sins may be hastened by Thy merciful forgiveness. Who lives and reigns with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Brethren, Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. Here now it is required among the dispensers that a man be found faithful. But to me it is a very small thing to be judged by you or by man's day: but neither do I judge my own self. For I am not conscious to myself of anything: yet am I not hereby justified, but He that judges me is the Lord. Therefore judge not before the time, until the Lord come: Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise from God.

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.

Alleluia, alleluia. Come, O Lord, and tarry not: forgive the sins of Thy people Israel. Alleluia.

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina, under the high priests Annas and Caiphas: the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins, as it was written in the book of the sayings of the Isaias the prophet: A voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths: every valley shall be filled: and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain: and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Hail Mary, full of grace: the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

O Lord, we beseech Thee, look down favorably upon these present Sacrifices: that they may profit us both unto devotion and salvation. 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 to 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.

Having received Thy gifts, we beseech Thee, O Lord: that as we frequent this Mystery, so the world of our salvation may advance. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.