

## The Meditation

### Sexagesima Sunday -A.D. 2016



**The Presentation of Christ in the Temple - (c. 1500-01)**  
**By Hans Holbein the Elder ( 1460-1524)**  
German Late Gothic painter

## The Collect for Sexagesima Sunday

**O** Lord God, who seest that we put not our trust in anything that we do; Mercifully grant by thy power we may be defended against all adversity ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

People today are being bombarded from all sides about how important one's 'self-worth' is. To be 'assertive' is becoming ranked as some sort of virtue. Arrogance is being veiled under the cover of being 'honest'. It would seem that the 'moralists' of today are working hard at fine-tuning and making selfish aggressiveness an accepted trait within society, such as it is.

Pride and arrogant self-complacency lead to a fall. It's an ageless axiom that still applies to today and will forever. *Lowliness, humility, and mistrust of our selves need God's help*, however, Jesus Himself tells us point blank: "*for whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased : and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*" (St. Luke; Ch. 14, Vs. 11). St. Peter offers us this: "*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt in due time.*" (I St. Peter; Ch. 5, Vs. 6).

St. Paul doesn't deny his natural and supernatural gifts, but he admits his incapacity for good: "*But by the grace of God, I am what I am.*" (I Corinthians; Ch. 15, Vs. 10). That's honesty.

Humility and mistrust of one's self, both hold a very important place in Christ's doctrines and those of His apostles. Jesus insists, on practically every page of the Gospels, on the necessity of *truth* and *humility* as a foundation of virtue and a condition of union with God. He shows little pity when He condemns the Pharisee, the hypocrite who in his pride of his own excellence and the outward correctness in which he lives his life, closes the door of his heart against the grace of God. \*

Any disciple of Christ must be converted and become just like a little child, if they desire to enter the kingdom of His love. He says clearly: "*Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*" (St. Matthew; Ch. 18, Vss. 3 & 4).

The Apostles confirmed the Master's doctrine by word and deed. St. Paul writes to the Colossians: "*Put on therefore, as the elect of God. . . kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.*" (Col.; Ch. 3, Vs. 12). St. James tells all Christians: "*Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*" (James; Ch. 4, Vs. 10)

A person who realizes the greatness and absolute sovereignty of God also knows that in comparison to God's sovereignty, they are nothing without Him. They are 'nothing' that is entirely at God's disposal. If, at the same time they examine their conscience, they are forced to admit with St. Paul: "*I am a thing of flesh and blood, sold into the slavery of sin . . . What I do is not what I wish to do, but something which I hate ...*" "*It is the result of the sinful principle that dwells in me.*" (Romans; Ch. 7, Vss 14 – 17: from the Latin Vulgate translation for clarity. )

St. Francis of Assisi called himself the greatest of sinners; if so, what must we think of ourselves? We haven't traveled very far down the road to perfection if we haven't gotten rid of vain self-complacency. We have still so much to learn from the great apostle who, although he does not deny the gifts of God, he never forgets and "*what hast thou that thou didst not*

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receive?" {e.g. *What powers hast thou, that did not come to thee by gift*" - from the Latin Vulgate translation} ( *I Cor. Ch. 4, Vs. 7*), or the answer to St. Paul's own prayer for help: "*My grace is sufficient for thee : for my strength is made perfect in weakness. (II Cor. , Ch. 12, Vs. 9)*

God demands hearts that are empty of self, of self-praise, and self-will, in which He can live His Divine life and work for His own honor and glory. Humility is the home of grace, the foundation of virtue, the root of all holiness, the summary of evangelical perfection. The deeper that foundation is, the higher we can raise the structure that is our perfection, and the firmer and stronger it will be. Every good carpenter knows that a strong house begins with a straight and firm foundation!

Let's, for a moment take a look at a flower in the terms of what is being written today. The beautiful blossoms we see are *virtue*. The root is *humility*. Now, at some point the blossoms lose their beauty. The root lies underground, it's not very pretty, and gets trampled underfoot. The root, however is the origin of the flower, it's the source of its life and in much the same way, *humility* hides itself, and does nothing for itself, and is just glad to be counted for nothing, being unnoticed and overlooked by all. Those for whom God is the supreme "planter" can join with St. Francis praying: "*Thou, Lord, art the highest Good, the eternal Good, from whom all good comes and without whom nothing good can exist.*"

Our own powers of body and soul, our talents, intellect, and abilities, whether they are interior or exterior, are God's gifts to us : the little good that we do with them can't be credited to either our virtue nor our merits, but wholly and solely to *God's grace*. Holy Scripture did well to remind the Hebrews of Old: "*And thou say in thine heart, my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers as it is this day.*" ( *Deut.: Ch. 8, Vss. 17 & 18*).

The motives of all our actions need continuous watching and purifying from all that is unworthy, such as self-love, conceit, human respect, and the desire of obtaining praise and recognition of others. These acts take many forms and it requires a bit of wisdom to discern whether we are acting accordingly. We can easily fool ourselves into thinking that it's not us, but *the other guy!* \*

Our humility must be apparent in our way of speaking, our attitude, our looks, and our patience in our relations with others. St. Augustine tells us that humility does not consist in wearing plain clothing, and walking about with eyes cast down, *but* in our patience with others. How patient are we with our relatives, friends, neighbors, and even strangers? When we view it that way, suddenly it becomes a tall order to fill.

Let us ask our Lord, as we approach ever closer to the start of Lent, to help us realize that as members of such a body of which He is Head, that it is not fitting for us to be pretentious, or imagine ourselves better than others. Let us ask Him as we seek greater humility, to save us from becoming vain, proud, and impatient with the failings of others. We view all these things from our perspectives relative to our individual journeys in Faith. Jesus sees all from the point of full divine perfection. His perfection sees us as we *really* are. Shouldn't we then, ask daily for

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His help to obtain humility, which will in turn open the doors so we may love our brethren in a more perfect way. . . and thus fulfilling His Law?

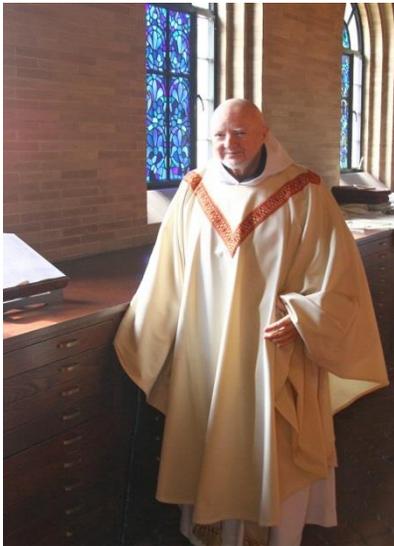
*“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians; Ch. 6, Vs. 2)*

*\*The parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. See St. Luke; Chap. 18; Vss. 9-14*

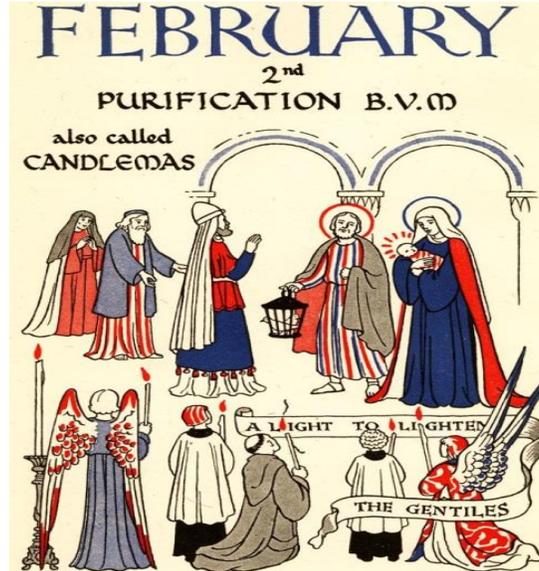
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### Requiescat in Pace

**Fr. Robert Moorehouse, O.C.S.O.**



Father Robert Moorehouse, O.C.S.O., a priest and monk of St. Joseph’s Abbey in Spencer, MA, passed away on Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Fr. Robert had been a member of the community for 61 years. Fr. Robert was a true “lover of the place”, to quote St. Bernard. He served in many capacities during his long life at the Abbey. He worked in the Holy Rood Guild, assisting in its modernization in the 1970’s and he later served as forest manager and farm manager for the Abbey. He also tended a flock of sheep that resided at the Abbey. His latest position was as director of Trappist Preserves, the Abbey’s well known jelly making facility. Fr. Robert was also a very popular and respected Retreat Master in the Abbey Guest House. His conferences were always deeply spiritual and challenging. He was a friend to our own Fr. Kevin, and patiently and with a ready smile answered Fr. Kevin’s many questions on monastic life and spirituality. Of your charity, please pray for the peaceful repose of Fr. Robert’s soul and for the good brothers at St. Joseph’s Abbey who he leaves here on Earth.



The Meditation is an on-line apostolate of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory in Raymond, Maine. We are Anglo-Catholic Benedictine contemplative community that follows the Holy Rule of St. Benedict, the Father of Western monasticism. We are affiliated within the Diocese of the Northeast of the Anglican Church in America (ACA), a member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion.

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**In respect to our contemplative vocation and the animals in our rescue and rehab center, we do not have guest facilities and do not receive visitors during the winter months.**

Fr. Prior Kevin is available to hear confessions by appointment.

## Priory Kalendar

For the week of January 31<sup>st</sup> to February 7<sup>th</sup> - A.D. 2016  
In Septuagesima-Tide

Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup> . . . Sexagesima Sunday - *Comm. St. John Bosco; founder of Salesian Order 19<sup>th</sup> cent.*

Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup> . . . St. Ignatius of Antioch; *B. & Myr. 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. Syria.*

Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> . . . Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Candlemas).

Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> . . . St. Blaise; *B. & Myr. 9<sup>th</sup> cent. Armenia.* **See Note 1**

Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> . . . St. Gilbert of Sempringham; *Founder of Gilbertine Order, 11<sup>th</sup> cent. England.*

Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup> . . . . St. Agatha; *V. & Myr. 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. Sicily.*

Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup> . . . St. Titus; *Bp. 1<sup>st</sup> cent. Crete...comm. Ina; K. & later monk OSB 6<sup>th</sup> cent. Eng.*

Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> . . . Quinquagesima Sunday... *comm. St. Romauld, founder of Camaldolese Order, 10<sup>th</sup> cent. Italy.*

**Note: 1. February 3<sup>rd</sup>, Feast of St. Blaise:** *Today, In many parish churches and monasteries, The Blessing of throats by a priest takes place after the Mass for this saint. This is an annual, ancient, and very worthwhile tradition in which to observe in every parish for all to participate.*

## CALENDAR KEY

Ab. = Abbot, Abs. = Abbess, Abp. = Archbishop, Anc. = Anchorite, Ancs. = anchoress, Ap. = Apostle, Bl. = Blessed, Br. = Brother, Bp. = Bishop, Card. = Cardinal, C. or Conf. = Confessor, Comm. = Commemoration, Dcn. = Deacon, Doct. = Doctor of the Church, Ev. = Evangelist, H. = Hermit, LBr. = Laybrother, LSr. = Laysister, K. = King, Mat. = Matron, M. = Monk, **M.M. = Month's Mind ( 30 day requiem for the recently departed )**, Myr. = Martyr, N. – Nun, Obl. = Oblate, P. = Priest, P. or Po. = Pope, Pr. = Prior, Prs. = Prioress, R. = Recluse, **RM = Requiem Mortorum, ( monthly requiem of the departed )**, Q. = Queen, Ven. = Venerable, Vir. = Virgin, W. = Widow.

**FASTING Key:** ..... A = Abstinence, F = Fast, F & A = Fast and Abstinence\_

**RELIGIOUS ORDERS:** C.O. = Congregation of the Oratory –Oratorians, C.P = Congregation of the Passion – Passionists, C.S.J. = Congregation of the Society of Jesus – Jesuits, Er. Cam. = Camaldolese Hermits, F.P.O. = Franciscans of the Primitive Observance, O. Car. = Carmelite Order, O. Cart. = Carthusian Order, O.C.D. = Order of Discalced Friars = Carmelites, O.F.A. = Augustinian Order, O.F.M. = Order of Friars Minor – Franciscans, O.F.M. Cap. = Capuchins, O.P. = Order of Preachers = Dominicans (Blackfriars), O. Praem. = Order of Canons Regular – Norbertines ( White Monks), OS.B. = Order of St. Benedict – Benedictines, O.S.U = Ursulines, O.C.O. = Order of the Cistercian Observance – Trappists, O.C.S.O. = Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance = Trappists.

## Animal News from the Priory



*“ From the rising of the sun to its setting, the Name of the Lord is to be praised”*  
Opening Verse for Vespers – Cistercian Office.



If Br. Chip sees his shadow on February 2<sup>nd</sup> ... does it count?!

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