



'ORA ET LABORA'

The Meditation

The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity - A.D. 2016

(August 14th)



The Cleansing of the Ten Lepers
from the Codex Aureus Epternacensis
An Illuminated Gospel Book (1030 – 1050)
The German Museum, Nuremburg, Germany

The Collect for the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

A *l*mighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than we desire or deserve: Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

Pray with Gratitude

One of the chief virtues of a child of God must be *gratitude* to the Father. What do we have that we have not received? It's not enough for us to make a formal act of thanksgiving from time to time. Our lives should be centered in gratitude...not ourselves.

Holy Mother Church, in her magnificent liturgies, comes to our assistance. How often during Mass do we repeat: *Deo gratias!* ... **Thanks be to God!** We sing (or say), at the *Preface of the Mass*, "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God."

Truly, indeed, we are bound to give God thanks for everything, everywhere and at all times!

"We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee, because by thy Holy Cross thou hast redeemed the world!"

It is by faith that we know what benefits God has showered upon us. The stronger our faith is, the deeper our gratitude will be.

God's gifts are as varied as they are innumerable, and He never ceases to add to them. We receive graces of all kinds; the Sacraments, the liturgy, God's Providence, His patience and mercy with us. So, how can we thank Him? First, by *uniting ourselves* as closely as we can to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; Christ's great Thank-Offering to His Father.

There lies a great treasury of acts of thanksgiving within the *Breviary* and in the *Psalter of the Prayer Book*. Many of the Psalms, in fact, are wholly acts of thanksgiving. A couple of examples are...

"Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his Name." (Psalm 29; Vss. 1 & 2).

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good : because his mercy endureth forever." (Psalm 118; Vs. 1).

"I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation." (Psalm 118; Vs. 21).

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." (Psalm 33; Vs. 12).

It is so right and just that we would thank the *greatest* of our benefactors, Whose goodness brings us fresh proof every moment of the day. Don't we expect to receive even just an appreciative glance from our fellow-human beings whenever we've rendered them some slight kindness or service?

3.

Our lives are a series of graces sent to each and every one of us by God. We exist only by the power of our Creator: He gives us an immortal soul, and bodies endowed with amazing faculties. The Son of God saved us by His Passion and death. He taught us His Doctrine while He lived on earth, and having returned to heaven, His Church has preserved it for us throughout the ages, along with His Seven Sacraments, *most especially* the Blessed Eucharist.* All are free gifts given to us from His infinite goodness.

It would be proper knowing these truths, that we should be content with what we have been given and with where we are in life, for in a blink of an eye, it (*and we*), can be gone. We should be happy with what we have and have been given and acknowledge that this *is* what God wants for us...and not look beyond our own yards, or worse yet, into the yards of our neighbors. It is easy to become discontent, and in turn, *ungrateful*. We don't, and never will know God's Mind and to presume to do so is folly.

We, as Christians, were made a member of Christ's mystical Body in Baptism, with a share in His life of grace. He adds the grace of Vocation to all. Vocation in the way of a calling is to be who and what He desires us to be: doctor, farmer, lawyer, truck driver, cleric, ditch-digger, ... caring human being that loves God's creatures and God Himself! We should join with the Psalmist who rejoiced: "*Bless the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.*" (*Psalm 103; Vss. 1 & 2*).

It is our honor to be able to praise and give thanks to God! He, the great God of heaven and earth, not only merits reception of our thanks, but He desires it. Jesus Himself tells us this when only one leper returned to thank Him when ten had been healed. Sadly, our Lord asks the one: "*Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger?*" - (*St. Luke; Ch. 17; Vss. 17 & 18*).

So, what should constitute our thanksgiving? The great theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas says it should consist of three things: *knowledge of the benefit received, gratitude for that benefit, and its use according to the will of the benefactor*. Therefore, we should meditate on the gifts given to us by the Almighty, offer Christ's sacrifice of thanksgiving in union with him, since by it we render to the Father more than He has given to us, and use his graces for *His* honor and glory.

We should ask ourselves every day if we truly have a grateful heart . . . if the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is indeed a sacrifice of praise *and* thanksgiving for us... if every "*Gloria*"**, if every "*Deo gratias*" that we pray is an offering of thanks made to God? Then, as St. Paul bids us, we shall: "*in everything give thanks.*" - (*I Thessalonians; Ch. 5, Vs. 18*).

4.

We would do well, to remember in our daily living, that God, Who is infinitely good, imparts graces and blessings upon us...oftentimes unseen. We would do very well indeed, to ask God to forgive our past ingratitude, and in doing so, close our day out echoing the praises of the Blessed Virgin Mary when she proclaimed: *My soul doth magnify the Lord!*

Not my will . . . but THY will, be done . . .

Thanks be to God!

**“The sacraments of the Church were instituted for a twofold purpose; namely, to perfect man in things pertaining to the worship of God according to the religion of the Christian life, and to be a remedy against the defects caused by sin. And in either way it is becoming that there should be seven sacraments.” -St.Thomas Aquinas.*

*** Gloria Patri – “ the Great Doxology; “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son...”
Gloria in Excelsis Deo - “Glory be to God on High...”*

Words of the Fathers and Spiritual Writers

Fr. Ronald Knox; Priest, scholar, & writer: 1888 - 1956

“Each day then, begins with a birth and ends in a death; each day is a life in miniature. And the very condition of our existence takes away from us that excuse which is man’s favorite excuse when he wants to shirk action and to neglect his salvation – that we do not know when to start . . . ‘Today!’ says the Holy Spirit, ‘if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.’ Yesterday and the day before you neglected it; but today is a fresh day, with a separate existence from the others, with the same duties, cares, temptations as the others. ‘Deign, O Lord, to keep us, just for this one day without sin.’ The day’s evil is sufficient for it; if you will only preserve us from sin today, we can leave tomorrow to look after itself. Or we may think of it as the last of a series; one today will be the last of all of our days; and it may be *this* one. If today is to be the last, how are we to bear the thought of all our wasted yesterdays? Listen to our Lord speaking from His Cross! Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise. It is never too late, for the Penitent Thief, or for you or for me.”

-Fr. Ronald Knox; from: A Retreat for Lay People, pp. 22 & 23.

The Meditation is an online apostolate of **Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory** in Raymond, Maine, USA. We are an Anglican-Catholic Benedictine contemplative community that follows the Holy Rule of St. Benedict, the 5th-century Father of Western Monasticism. We are affiliated within the Diocese of the Northeast (DNE), of the Anglican Church in America (ACA), a member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC).

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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 regularly receive visitors.

Priory Kalendar
For the week of
August 14th to August 21st - A.D. 2016
In Trinity tide

Sunday, August 14th . . . Twelfth Sunday After Trinity

Monday, August 15th . . . The Assumption (Dormition) of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Tuesday, August 16th . . . St. Joachim (*Father of the BVM*) is celebrated in some places today.

Wednesday, August 17th . . . *Feria in Trinity-Tide*in the Octave of the *Dormition*.

Thursday, August 18th . . . St. Helena; *Q & Wid. 4th cent.* - (Mother of Constantine the Great)

Friday, August 19th . . . St. Bernard of Citeaux ; *Ab., Doct., & founder...* (*Anticipated today.*)

Saturday, August 20th . . . St. Oswin of Diera; *K. & Myr. 7th cent. England* . . . see Note 1.

Sunday, August 21st . . . Thirteenth Sunday After Trinity see Note 2.

Note 1: August 20th – St. Oswin of Diera; King & Martyr. Today is normally the Feast of St. Bernard, but his day was anticipated at the Priory yesterday. He cannot have precedence over Trinity XIII (A Sunday). St. Oswin is one of the patrons of our Priory Chapel, and as such his feast is a Patronal Feast, but, in this case trumps St. Bernard, who is also held in great esteem by us!

Note 2: Today we commemorate St. Jane Francis de Chantal; Widow in the Mass and Offices.



The Carthusian Horse was exclusively bred in a Spanish Carthusian Monastery dating back to 1400

Animal News from the Priory Jack's World

Jack the cat has made a big impression on all of us here at the Priory. Since the day he appeared at our back door on a cold winter evening, skinny and hungry, he has fit himself into our little community in a BIG way. Like most cats who 'come in from the cold' . . . or perhaps we should say 'the wild', Jack had his period of adapting to the routine around here, but once he did, how this little black cat did fit in! He's our resident greeter and varmint control officer, but he doesn't kill for just the sport of it. He seems to have understood that there is a balance here, and although the number of pests has declined, small critters still roam free. Jack likes to snooze in many places around the property, and he's been seen napping in one of the flower gardens...with a little chipmunk frolicking not ten feet away! This past week, Fr. Kevin was coming out of the garage, and looking out in the driveway, saw Jack reclining on the ground holding court with about a dozen turkeys of all sizes in the driveway! We have quite a proliferation of these birds here, and they are fun to watch as they herd their little ones around. Evidently, so does Jack.

Jack likes the horses. He's discovered that all big creatures don't mean him harm. He's frequently wandering around in the pasture and visits with the horses during his rounds. For the most part, Jack doesn't wander away. He's staked out his 'kingdom' and overlooks it like a Medieval lord checking things out every day. He's quite spry and quick, and his life in the wild has made him very alert and 'woods smart' (as opposed to street smart!).



We've also discovered, that just because we don't see him, doesn't mean Jack's not nearby! Time and time again, Fr. Kevin will be performing some chore on the property, and Jack seems to emerge from nowhere to check things out and keep company. He's always welcome. Regular readers will recall that Jack stood by and in his own way assisted Fr. Kevin when he laid little *Bindi Su* * to rest in the animal cemetery last summer.

Due to Sr. Mary-Francis' working schedule, grocery trips must be made in the evenings, sometimes late, and Jack's always waiting near the back porch to greet and keep watch as the groceries are brought from the truck to the house.

7.

We've learned a few things from Jack. Mostly about *gratitude*. He was led to us out of a basic need to survive. His needs were and still are very simple, and they have been more than met. In turn, he helps out where he can, hoping it will in some small measure repay the kindnesses given and will add to the overall betterment and mission of our little Priory of love, honor, praise, and thanks to Almighty God . . . from Whom all blessings flow. Truly a most beautiful cycle to behold!



Like a Medieval lord surveying his kingdom...all's well.

* ***Bindi Su** was the little Australian Shepherd puppy who lived with us for a short time last Summer. She was born with a severe heart murmur which led to heart failure and she passed away after only being with us for less than two months.*

PÄX

