



'ORA ET LABORA'

The Meditation

The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity - A.D. 2016

(September 18th)



*"When thou art bidden...sit not down in the highest seat...but go and sit in the lowest place.
For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."*

-St. Luke; Ch. 14, Vss. 8 - 11

Excerpted from the Gospel of the Day: the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke: Ch. 14, Vss. 1 – 11.

The Collect for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

E Lord, we pray thee that thy grace may always be present and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God's Grace is with Us

Today's Collect is a short and lovely prayer asking God for His Grace. Indeed, God's Grace goes with us: in His wisdom and goodness, He has given us a share in His own nature, by the grace He has given to us through Jesus Christ His Son (Ref. *Romans; Ch. 7 Vs. 25*)* Without grace we can do nothing; with it, we can do all, for it will make us '*continually to be given to all good works.*' God's grace is given to us at Baptism, when the soul becomes a temple of the Holy Trinity, a tabernacle for our God.

Jesus has said: "*If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" (*St. John: Ch. 14, Vs. 23*).

God dwells in us, not only by His continual ever-presence, by which He dwells in *all* His creatures, but also in a special and completely interior manner. We become, by grace, partakers of God's nature, in a way that we can't possibly comprehend. We are raised above ourselves, and become capable of living God's own life. The acts we perform, inspired and enlivened by grace, attain their supernatural end, which is the possession and perfect love of Almighty God.

Grace doesn't change nature; instead, it builds upon it. Human nature must work by way of the means that is proper to grace, in that which it becomes agreeable to God by the grace that infuses itself with human nature. It's therefore, *the Grace of God*, that is with us, which enables us to do what is right, what God's love urges us to do. As St. Paul tells us: "*for the love of Christ compelleth us...*" (*II Corinthians; Ch. 5, Vs. 14*) That's why this great Apostle labored day and night, never ceasing to do good to all.

How wonderful it would be, if we, as St. Paul did, were to use all of our power, both natural and supernatural, in the service of our fellow humans in this pilgrimage called *life*. Nothing would be too much, since it is Jesus Christ whom we serve in them. We'd be working for souls, since the final object of all our work is *charity (caritas)*... the glory of God and the salvation of mankind. We, on the final day of our lives, in those last moments, won't regret any moment spent working for our neighbor, but will regret those which we wasted away not serving God for God's sake.

No matter what our occupation(s) may be in this life, we must use every instant of the time granted us for service to our Master. Even when advanced age (God willing), and infirmity puts an end to our physical activity, we can still work for God, thanks to His grace that is within us. Passivity can be, in His eyes, the greatest activity, for we can still pray: for others, the world, and ourselves. Or, we can simply give unending thanks to God for all that He is and gives every day. Our intercessory prayers can be more effective than some of our actions, for we are personally standing before God on behalf of others who cannot, will not, or know not. How powerful such passivity can be!

When little Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897) was beatified, the witnesses of her life declared that during her life in the cloisters of the Carmel of Lisieux, she had converted many souls living

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on the “outside”.

Sr. Maria Gertrude Erzberger (1902-1937), was another Carmelite contemporary who lived in the same monastery as St. Edith Stein. It is written of Sr. Maria, this ‘hidden saint’:

“She was in the constant habit of visiting, morning and evening, the harvest fields of the world, converting souls, visiting the sick, consoling prisoners, assisting the dying, showing the way to those who were seeking the truth, protecting the youth who are so menaced in our time, baptizing heathen babies, etc. Her faith in the Communion of Saints was so great that she was convinced that by prayer and sacrifice, she could do all of these things.”

That is the way God’s grace works in us, as long as we do not hinder it, and as long as our activity is accompanied by prayer for more grace, and more love. Clearly, an on-going work in progress for all! There’s no room for complacency!

The degree of our eternal happiness will depend on the degree of love we have reached at the moment when it pleases Him to call us home. God measures our reward by the efforts we have made to live and work with His grace and to increase that grace in us. There’s no time to lose! Each moment of our lives is a moment that can gain us eternal happiness, and is infinitely precious.

May God’s grace work freely in us all! It is then that we shall attain; *“perfect manhood, that maturity that is proportioned to the perfect growth of Christ.”* (Ephesians; Ch 4, Vs. 13).**

Lord, we give thee thanks for the grace that you give us, Grant us courage and steadfastness in this life, and make us ever zealous to be, *“given to all good works.”*

Mater Maria, ora pro nobis! ... Mother Mary, pray for us! . . . Come to our assistance!



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* “ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God.”
(Romans; Ch. 7, Vs. 25).

** from the Vulgate Translation for clarity.

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
September 18th to September 25th - A.D. 2016
In Trinity tide

Sunday, September 18th Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Monday, September 19th . . . St. Theodore of Canterbury; B. & C., OSB - 6th cent.

Tuesday, September 20th vigil of St. Matthew

Wednesday, September 21st . . . St. Matthew; Ap & Ev. - 1st cent.

Thursday, September 22nd . . . St. Maurice & Companions; Myrs. See Note 1

Friday, September 23rd St. Pio of Pietreclina; C. OFM. 20th cent. See Note 2

**Saturday, September 24th . . . Our Lady of Clemency (Ransom)
or, Our Lady of Walsingham (Roman Calendar) . . . See Note 3**

Sunday, September 25th . . . Eighteenth Sunday After Trinity

Note 1: September 22nd; St. Maurice & Companions (The Theban Legion: *Legio I Maximiana Thedaeorum*), 6000 Egyptian Christian Roman soldier-citizens and Officers for not offering sacrifice to Pagan Gods were executed along with their commander Maurice, an African Tribune in 286 A.D.

Note 2: September 23rd ; St. Pio of Pietreclina; 20th cent. Italy.

Also commemorate: **St. Linus; 2nd Pope & Myr. - 1st cent. Rome.**

Also commemorate: **St. Thecla; V & Myr. - 1st cent. all on this day.**

Note 3: September 24th: **see next page on the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham.**

Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham

September 24th or October 15th



Our Lady of Walsingham (England)

*O England, great cause than hast glad for to be,
Compared to the land of promised Sion
To be called in ev'ry realm and region
The holy Land, our Ladys Dowry
from a 15th cent. poem translated from Middle English*

According to an account written in verse in 1465, the shrine of the *Annunciation at Walsingham* in the English county of Norfolk was founded by an Anglo-Saxon widow named *Racheldis Faverches* in the year 1061. The chapel built on a site of an apparition of the Blessed Mother to Racheldis holds a replica of the *Holy House* Mary lived in at Nazareth, as it appeared in the apparition with the dimensions given. Walsingham became a great place of pilgrimage for the English people as well as European visitors in the Middle Ages. Many miracles were attributed to pilgrimages made to this site. It became the foremost place of pilgrimage on the island, and a small priory of Augustinian canons was erected close by around 1150, so they could keep charge of both the shrine and assist pilgrims and visitors. Walsingham was the third most popular pilgrimage site in Europe by 1500.

All this meant nothing to Henry VIII, and his cronies Cromwell and Latimer, for in 1538, the shrine and priory was closed and suppressed, anything of value was, of course, 'turned over to the state', and the lovely ancient wooden statue of the virgin holding the Christ-Child taken to London and burned.

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In a lament in the latter part of the 16th century are found these words; (*Translated from Middle English*):

*Owls do screech where the sweetest hymns were lately sung,
Toads and serpents hold their dens where the palmers did throng...
Sin is where our Ladye once sat
Heaven turned is to hell;
Satan sits where our lord did sway-
Walsingham, O farewell !*

It was a long farewell as it wouldn't be until the Catholic emancipation in 1829 that such age-old devotions would return to England. The Oxford Movement of the middle 1800's would begin a return of English Catholic heritage and worship within the Church of England. In 1897 a pious Roman Catholic laywoman purchased St. Katherine's Chapel (also called the 'Slipper Chapel'), the last wayside chapel before Walsingham and prepared it for Roman Catholic use. Devotion by both Roman and Anglo-Catholics began to return to Walsingham in the latter part of the 19th and early 20th century. In 1921 Clergy and laity of the Anglican Church restored a shrine of our Lady at Walsingham, and in 1931, St. Katherine's Chapel was given official papal approbation as Marian devotions officially returned. A statue of our Lady of Walsingham, copied from the surviving Walsingham Seal was carefully carved and placed in St. Katherine's.



Many American Service men and women, during the Second World War, made pilgrimages to Walsingham, and this encouraged Britons of many faiths to do likewise. Masses of thanksgiving were offered, after the war ended, at both the Anglican and Roman Catholic shrines, and in 1948, the first actual pilgrimage to Walsingham took place during Holy Week, which began an annual tradition.

In 1982, during Pope John Paul II's visit to England, the statue from the *Slipper Chapel* (St. Katherine's) was brought to Wembley Stadium where a papal Mass was to be held and carried in procession by both the Director of the Roman Catholic Shrine and the Administrator of the Anglican Shrine and placed on the altar where the Pope would celebrate Mass. Pope John Paul II, in 2000, decreed the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham, patroness of England, and in modern times, patron of all English-speaking peoples, would be celebrated on September 24th. It would be a solemnity for all parishes in any part of the world named for our Lady under this title.

The celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham was formerly observed on March 25th, The **Feast of the Annunciation**, or '*Lady Day*' as it is called in England. It was moved to **September 24th** which is the old Feast of **Our Lady of Ransom**, giving the Walsingham feast an 'independent and fully English' identity. Some Anglo-Catholic jurisdictions observe this feast on **October 15th**.

The Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham is a very relevant feast for our time. The feast gives all cause to contemplate the great joy of the Incarnation as reflected in the simple life of the Holy Family in Nazareth. Most relevant indeed, considering how family life and its structure has come under attack in Western Culture. Let us pray.

The Walsingham Prayer

*Alone of all women mother and maiden,
 Mother most happy,
 Virgin most pure,
 Now we, as sinful as we are
 Come to thee who art all pure.
 We salute thee; we honor thee
 as how we may with our humble offerings.
 May thy Son grant us that, imitating thy most holy manners,
 We also by the grace of the Holy Spirit
 May deserve spiritually to conceive the Lord Jesus in our innermost soul,
 And once conceived, never to lose Him. Amen*

Mass Propers for the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham (Sept. 24th or October 16th)

Collect

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast revealed the beauty of thy power by exalting the lowly virgin of Nazareth and made her the Mother of our Saviour.

May the prayers of our Lady of Walsingham bring Jesus to the waiting world and fill the hearts of all thy people with the presence of her Child, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Lesson

Isaiah: Chap. 7, Vss. 10-16

Gospel

St. Luke: Chap. 1, Vss. 26-38

The full Propers for the Mass can be found using the [Feast of our Lady of Clemency \(Our Lady of Ransom in the older liturgy\)](#) in altar or hand-missals.

Animal News from the Priory

OUR 'REDNECK FIREPLACE'



Tassel Top Park, here in Raymond, concluded its season on Sunday after what has been a very long, hot and dry summer. Tassel Top is where Sr. Mary Francis has worked as head park ranger for 11 years. We celebrated with a Bar-B-Que here at the Priory!

Fire-pits are popular out here in the country. To make a proper fire-pit, you need some room, so a good roaring fire can't spread...and some imagination. Many of our friends have lovely hand-laid stone fire-pits. Some have just a hole in the ground in which they dump their wood, sprinkle some 'starter-fluid', throw in a lighted match, and *'let 'er go*. We'd like to think ours is somewhere in the middle. Not too many years ago, Sr. Mary-Francis set out to find just the right location on the property for a fire-pit and a design. Being the practical thoughtful person that she is, she went straight to work, and scrounged up some cinder blocks we had and purchased what we needed and set about building this very functional fire-pit/place! There's nothing haphazard about this design. The open sections provide for needed air flow which assist a fire, and the lower ones serve as drains when the fire is extinguished, allowing the water to slowly escape so the hearth can dry out. The walls keep the fire within bounds, and the screening, left-over metal equipment treading from Fr. Kevin's welding days, serves as a dandy grill which also catches sparks. Some of our more 'countrified' brethren use shopping carts (or parts of them) as grills, but we're not really sure if the electro-plating on those things is healthy for human consumption, so we opted for the good old rust of the metal treading, figuring a little iron is good for the blood!

The little griddle which we use for cooking is of great antiquity...at least to Fr. Kevin! It was used by his father when Kevin was a little boy, and travelled with his family on all of their summer excursions. When the time came, it was passed from father to son, as it will one day to Elliot, Fr. Kevin's son. Ah, the many burgers, steaks, and hot-dogs that have been grilled on that venerable griddle! Gastronomic tradition at its best!

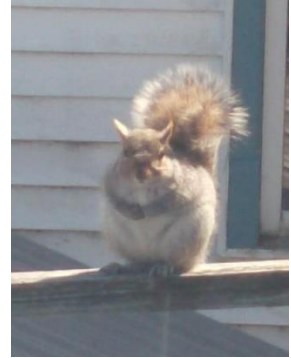
We've noticed that when we have a cook-out, the process isn't lost on our outdoor animal friends, as some of our local hawks circle about or stand patiently in some tree making approving

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noises. The raccoons, unseen in the woods, stand by as clean-up crew for later on. This being the case, we always leave what we don't eat in a nice pile or two for our animal friends...it's all gone by morning!

So there you have it, dear friends, a cook-out on our **RED-NECK GRILL** is a happy event that is shared all around, accompanied by memories and traditions. For us, it's just another wonderful event that unfolds daily in God's lovely world!

Thanks be to God from Whom all blessings flow.....are the burgers ready?!



- *Br. Sylvester Squirrel*

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