

THE MATINS LECTIONARY

*The Complete Readings from the
Traditional Roman Breviary*

Lessons from the Divine Office of
Matins according to the *Breviarium
Romanum* of 1954 in English

Compiled by Samuel McIlheran

TAN Books
Gastonia, North Carolina

The Matins Lectionary: The Complete Readings from the Traditional Roman Breviary © 2026 Samuel McIlheran

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All passages from the Sacred Scriptures are taken from the *Douay-Rheims (Challoner)* version.

All other Lessons are adapted from the Marquess of Bute translation of *The Roman Breviary* (Edinburgh, 1908)

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....v	Sundays & Ferias of November506
Proper of Time	Sanctoral Commons
Advent1	Apostles.....535
Christmastide.....26	Evangelists.....539
Epiphanytide.....55	One Martyr.....542
Septuagesimatide.....112	Martyrs in Paschaltide549
Lent134	Many Martyrs552
Passiontide170	Confessor Bishops557
Holy Week180	Supreme Pontiffs562
Paschaltide198	Confessor Non-Bishops.....564
Ascensiontide258	Abbots.....570
Whitsuntide286	Doctors573
Time after Pentecost.....295	Virgins577
~Sundays after Pentecost~	Non-Virgins.....583
II.....309	Dedication of a Church.....586
III329	BVM.....589
IV348	Saturday BVM592
V.....355	Proper of Saints
VI362	December.....603
VII.....369	January.....633
VIII.....376	February.....658
IX.....382	March685
X.....389	April.....712
XI.....396	May.....736
Sermons for Sun XII–XXIV...405	June.....781
Sundays & Ferias of	July.....824
August.....417	August.....870
Sundays & Ferias of	September923
September443	October.....963
Sundays & Ferias of	November1000
October.....472	
Christ the King496	

Lessons from the Office of Matins for every feast and feria of the liturgical year.

¶ The names of Scriptural books are rendered in their Latinate forms as done in the Vulgate of St. Jerome. Thus, the books of Samuel and Kings are called 1–4 Kings; the book of Sirach is called Ecclesiasticus; the Song of Songs is the Canticle of Canticles; the books of Chronicles are called 1–2 Parapolimenon.

Introduction

For centuries, the ceaseless prayer of the Catholic Church has been the *Opus Dei*: the Divine Office as chanted by monks and priests around the world. Every day, priests and religious worldwide chant or recite Psalms, Hymns, and other prayers in accordance with the rule as laid out by the Psalmist himself in Psalm 118. “Seven times a day I have given praise to thee” [Ps 118:164] and “In the night I have remembered Thy name, O Lord.” [Psalm 118:55] This is the course of the Divine Office with its eight hours of prayer. The seven diurnal hours are Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. The nocturnal hour is called Matins.

The night hour of Matins has always been the longest of the hours, featuring as many as 18 Psalms on Sunday in the Traditional Roman Rite around the time of the Council of Trent. In addition to these Psalms, Matins alone features between three and nine readings (called Lessons) interspersed throughout the Psalms. These lessons are selections from the Sacred Scriptures, hagiographical works, and commentaries by the Church Fathers, selected for each day according to the liturgical calendar, with a certain scriptural and patristic focus for each season and feast day of the liturgical year.

The lessons at Matins are taken from either the temporal cycle—the occurring scripture in the proper of time—or from those appropriate to that day’s feast: the common or proper of saints. While not the whole content of the Bible, the scriptural readings come from every book of the Bible, so one reads through the highlights of the Sacred Scriptures in a way that fits the liturgical calendar for each particular season or day. If there is a feast on a particular day, then there are six more readings after the three scriptural lessons; three are usually the life of the saint of the day or a history of or commentary on the feast, and the last three are a snippet of the day’s Gospel followed by a three-part commentary by one of the Church Fathers on that Gospel passage.

Thus, every day the Church has arranged for every monk, nun, cleric, and layman who so desires to prayerfully reflect on the Scriptures, the lives of the saints, and the wisdom of the Church Fathers. At least, this was the case until 1960.

In 1960, Pope John XXIII radically reformed the Roman Breviary in order to reduce the temporal burden on secular clergy who were bound to pray the full Divine Office every day. As part of his sweeping reforms to the Divine Office, he reduced the lessons at Matins for almost every Sunday and Feast from the traditional nine down to three. Around 60% of the readings were removed: mostly hagiography and Patristic commentary. The Pope himself understood the magnitude of this loss, calling for priests to supplement what would be lost from the office in their own spiritual reading of the Church Fathers. He said in his *motu proprio*: “Furthermore, since the readings from the Fathers have also been somewhat [sic] reduced, We earnestly exhort all clerics

to secure the writings of the Fathers, so rich in wisdom and piety, and to read and meditate on them constantly.”

Yet, just 11 years later, the Divine Office was replaced with the Liturgy of the Hours, reducing the readings to merely two per day and abolishing the hagiographical lessons entirely. These developments have resulted in the near loss of an immense treasure: the Church’s daily spiritual reading.

It wasn’t just clerics who were affected by this loss; the laity, too, had frequent contact with the Divine Office in the past, even going to hear Sunday Matins in addition to the Mass. Some lay Catholics even read the Divine Office themselves, as evidenced by past translations of the Roman Breviary. The most notable of these translations is that done by John, the Marquess of Bute in 1908. The Marquess of Bute Breviary was a complete English translation of the entire Roman Breviary for use in England in 1908. This four-volume work is even to this day an invaluable resource for Catholics who wish to access the spiritual treasures of the Divine Office but lack the necessary proficiency in Latin. Unfortunately, his work is arranged according to the calendar of England in 1908, so it lacks a number of significant feasts in the life of a modern day Catholic (like the Feast of Christ the King) as well as placing some local feasts on the calendar instead of more universal ones. Additionally, the language of his translation can be rather obscure and difficult for modern readers. Finally, his work is in four volumes: rather a lot for someone who would just like to read the lessons at Matins. This singular volume, the Matins Lectionary, aims to remedy that.

The Matins Lectionary is an arrangement of all the lessons from the office of Matins as they would have been in 1954—before the reductions of John XXIII—with some minor additions for the spiritual benefit of the reader. Additions include both the pre-1950 and post-1950 versions of the lessons of the Assumption (August 15th), the addition of a lesson on Our Lady of Guadalupe (December 12th), and more. The Scriptural lessons are taken from the venerable Douay-Rheims version and the hagiographical and Patristic lessons are a revised translation of the Latin originals as based on the prior work of the Marquess of Bute. The selections from ecclesiastical documents, such as encyclicals, are revised translations of the official ones found on the Vatican website.

What was once lost to the faithful by the accidents of history and the decline of Latin literacy is available once more in this volume. It can be used as “the Church’s spiritual reading,” with daily scriptures, hagiography, and Patristic commentary on the Gospel of the day all according to the Traditional calendar with its multitude of saints and octaves. One can now be enriched daily by the Scriptures, the lives of the saints, and the wisdom of the Fathers as arranged in the Roman Breviary, in English.

Readers, both lay and clerical, can benefit from this lost treasure of Catholic Tradition. Each Sunday has nine lessons which, if read in the morning prior to Mass, serve as a spiritual preparation for that day’s Mass: truly a benefit to

all the faithful attached to the Traditional liturgy. What's more, as the calendar used to contain numerous octaves, there is ample opportunity for extended reflection on the great saints and mysteries of the faith. Spend a week meditating on St. Joseph or the Sacred Heart; let St. Thomas Aquinas enflame your love of the Holy Eucharist during the Octave of Corpus Christi. All of this, and more, is contained in this Spiritual Treasury compiled by Holy Mother Church and finally made available in the English language.

JANUARY

- 1: Circumcision of the Lord & Octave of the Nativity, **Duplex II Class**
- 2: Octave of St. Stephen, **Simplex**
- 3: Octave of St. John, **Simplex**
- 4: Octave of the Holy Innocents, **Simplex**
- 5: Vigil of the Epiphany, **Semiduplex**, Com. of St. Telesphorus Pope & Martyr
- 6: Epiphany of the Lord, **Duplex I Class** with privileged Octave of the II rank
- 7–10: Days within Epiph. Oct., **Semiduplex**
- 11: Day 6 within Oct. of Epiph., **Semiduplex**, Com. of St. Hyginus Pope & Martyr
- 12: Day 7 within Epiph. Oct., **Semiduplex**
- 13: Octave of the Epiphany, **Major Duplex**
- 14: St. Hilary Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Felix Priest & Martyr
- 15: St. Paul the first hermit, Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Maurus
- 16: St. Marcellus I Pope & Martyr, **Semiduplex**
- 17: St. Anthony Abbot, **Duplex**
- 18: Chair of St. Peter at Rome, **Major Duplex**, Com. of St. Paul Apostle, & St. Prisca Virgin Martyr
- 19: Ss. Marius, Martha, Audifax, & Abachum Martyrs, **Simplex**, Com. of St. Canute, Martyr
- 20: Ss. Fabian Pope & Sebastian Martyrs, **Duplex**
- 21: St. Agnes, Virgin Martyr, **Duplex**
- 22: Ss. Vincent & Anastasius Martyrs, **Semiduplex**
- 23: St. Raymund of Peñafort Confessor, **Semiduplex**, Com. of St. Emerentiana Virgin Martyr
- 24: St. Timothy Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**
- 25: Conversion of St. Paul, **Major Duplex**, Com. of St. Peter
- 26: St. Polycarp Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**
- 27: St. John Chrysostom Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
- 28: St. Peter Nolasco Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Agnes Virgin Martyr
- 29: St. Francis de Sales Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
- 30: St. Martina Virgin Martyr, **Semiduplex**
- 31: St. John Bosco Confessor, **Duplex**

FEBRUARY

- 1: St. Ignatius Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**
- 2: Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, **Duplex II Class**
- 3: St. Blaise Bishop & Martyr, **Simplex**
- 4: St. Andrew Corsini Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**
- 5: St. Agatha Virgin Martyr, **Duplex**
- 6: St. Titus Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Dorothy Virgin Martyr
- 7: St. Romuald Abbot, **Duplex**
- 8: St. John de Matha Confessor, **Duplex**
- 9: St. Cyril of Alexandria, Confessor Bishop, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Apollonia Virgin Martyr

- 10: St. Scholastica Virgin, **Duplex**
 11: Apparition of the Immaculate BVM at Lourdes, **Major Duplex**
 12: The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order Confessors, **Duplex**
 13: Feria
 14: St. Valentine Priest & Martyr, **Simplex**
 15: Ss. Faustinus & Jovita Martyrs, **Simplex**
 16–17: Ferias
 18: St. Simeon Bishop & Martyr, **Simplex**
 19–21: Ferias
 22: Chair of St. Peter at Antioch, **Major Duplex**, Com. of St. Paul
 23: St. Peter Damian Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of the Vigil
 24: St. Matthias Apostle, **Duplex II Class** [Leap Year: 25 February]
 25–26: Ferias
 27: St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, **Duplex** [Leap Year: 28 February]
 28: Feria

MARCH

- 1–3: Ferias
 4: St. Casimir Confessor, **Semiduplex**, Com. of St. Lucius I Pope & Martyr
 5: Feria
 6: Ss. Perpetua & Felicity Martyrs, **Duplex**
 7: St. Thomas Aquinas Confessor & Doctor, **Duplex**
 8: St. John of God Confessor, **Duplex**
 9: St. Frances of Rome Widow, **Duplex**
 10: The Forty Holy Martyrs, **Semiduplex**
 11: Feria
 12: St. Gregory I Pope, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 13–16: Ferias
 17: St. Patrick Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**
 18: St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Confessor Bishop, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 19: St. Joseph, Spouse of the BVM, Confessor, & Patron of the Church,
Duplex I Class
 20: Feria
 21: St. Benedict Abbot, **Major Duplex**
 22–23: Ferias
 24: St. Gabriel the Archangel, **Major Duplex**
 25: Annunciation of the BVM, **Duplex I Class**
 26: Feria
 27: St. John Damascene Confessor & Doctor, **Duplex**
 28: St. John Capistran Confessor, **Semiduplex**
 29–31: Ferias

APRIL

- 1: Feria
 2: St. Francis of Paula Confessor, **Duplex**

- 3: Feria
 4: St. Isidore Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 5: St. Vincent Ferrer Confessor, **Duplex**
 6–10: Ferias
 11: St. Leo I Pope, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 12: Feria
 13: St. Hermenegild Martyr, **Semiduplex**
 14: St. Justin Martyr, **Duplex**, Com. of Saints Tiburtius, Valerian & Maximus, Martyrs
 15–16: Ferias
 17: St. Anicetus Pope & Martyr, **Simplex**
 18–20: Ferias
 21: St. Anselm Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 22: Ss. Soter & Cajus Popes & Martyrs, **Semiduplex**
 23: St. George Martyr, **Semiduplex**
 24: St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen Martyr, **Duplex**
 25: St. Mark Evangelist, **Duplex II Class**
 26: Ss. Cletus & Marcellinus Popes & Martyrs, **Semiduplex**
 27: St. Peter Canisius Confessor & Doctor, **Duplex**
 28: St. Paul of the Cross Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Vitalis Martyr
 29: St. Peter Martyr, **Duplex**
 30: St. Catherine of Siena Virgin, **Duplex**

MAY

- 1: Ss. Philip & James Apostles, **Duplex II Class**
 2: St. Athanasius, Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 3: Invention of the Holy Cross, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of Ss. Alexander, Pope, Eventius & Theodulus Martyrs, & Juvenal, Confessor Bishop
 4: St. Monica Widow, **Duplex**
 5: St. Pius V Confessor Pope, **Duplex**
 6: St. John before the Latin Gate, **Major Duplex**
 7: St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**
 8: Apparition of St. Michael, **Major Duplex**
 9: St. Gregory Nazianzen Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 10: St. Antoninus Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Gordian and Epimachus Martyrs
 11: Feria
 12: Ss. Nereus, Achilleus, Domitilla Virgin, & Pancras Martyrs, **Semiduplex**
 13: St. Robert Bellarmine Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 14: St. Boniface Martyr, **Simplex**
 15: St. John Baptiste de la Salle Confessor, **Duplex**
 16: St. Ubald Confessor Bishop, **Semiduplex**
 17: St. Paschal Baylon Confessor, **Duplex**
 18: St. Venantius Martyr, **Duplex**
 19: St. Peter Celestine Confessor Pope, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Pudentiana Virgin

- 20: St. Bernardine of Siena Confessor, **Semiduplex**
 21–24: Ferias
 25: St. Gregory VII Confessor Pope, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Urban I Pope & Martyr
 26: St. Philip Neri Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Eleutherius Pope & Martyr
 27: St. Bede the Venerable Confessor & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. John I Pope & Martyr
 28: St. Augustine of Canterbury Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**
 29: St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi Virgin, **Semiduplex**
 30: St. Felix I Pope & Martyr, **Simplex**
 31: Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of St. Petronilla Virgin

JUNE

- 1: St. Angela Merici Virgin, **Duplex**
 2: Ss. Marcellinus, Peter, & Erasmus Bishop, Martyrs, **Simplex**
 3: Feria
 4: St. Francis Caracciolo Confessor, **Duplex**
 5: St. Boniface Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**
 6: St. Norbert Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**
 7–8: Ferias
 9: Ss. Primus & Felician Martyrs, **Simplex**
 10: St. Margaret Queen, Widow, **Semiduplex**
 11: St. Barnabas Apostle, **Major Duplex**
 12: St. John of San Facundo Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Basilides, Cyrinus, Nabor & Nazarius Martyrs
 13: St. Anthony of Padua Confessor & Doctor, **Duplex**
 14: St. Basil the Great Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 15: Ss. Vitus, Modestus, & Crescentia Martyrs, **Simplex**
 16–17: Ferias
 18: St. Ephræm the Syrian Deacon, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Mark & Marcellianus Martyrs
 19: St. Juliana Falconieri Virgin, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Gervase & Protase Martyrs
 20: St. Silverius Pope & Martyr, **Simplex**
 21: St. Aloysius Gonzaga Confessor, **Duplex**
 22: St. Paulinus Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**
 23: Vigil
 24: The Nativity of St. John the Baptist, **Duplex I Class** with common Octave
 25: St. William Abbot, **Duplex**, Com. of Octave
 26: Ss. John & Paul Martyrs, **Duplex**, Com. of Octave
 27: Day 4 within the Octave, **Semiduplex**
 28: St. Irenæus Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**, Com. of Octave and of Vigil
 29: Ss. Peter & Paul Apostles, **Duplex I Class** with common Octave
 30: Commemoration of St. Paul Apostle, **Major Duplex**, Com. of St. Peter Apostle & of the Octave of St. John the Baptist

JULY

- 1: The Most Precious Blood of Our Lord, **Duplex I Class**, Com. of Octave day of St. John the Baptist
- 2: Visitation of the BVM, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of Ss. Processus & Martinian Martyrs
- 3: St. Leo II Confessor Pope, **Semiduplex**, Com. of Octave of Apostles
- 4: Day 4 within the Octave of Apostles, **Semiduplex**
- 5: St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of Octave of Apostles
- 6: Octave of Ss. Peter and Paul Apostles, **Major Duplex**
- 7: Ss. Cyril & Methodius Confessor Bishops, **Duplex**
- 8: St. Elizabeth Queen, Widow, **Semiduplex**
- 9: Feria
- 10: The Seven Holy Brothers Martyrs, **Semiduplex**, & Ss. Rufina & Secunda Virgins & Martyrs
- 11: St. Pius I Pope & Martyr, **Simplex**
- 12: St. John Gualbert Abbot, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Nabor and Felix Martyrs
- 13: St. Anacletus Pope & Martyr, **Semiduplex**
- 14: St. Bonaventure Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
- 15: St. Henry II Emperor, Confessor, **Semiduplex**
- 16: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, **Major Duplex**
- 17: St. Alexius Confessor, **Semiduplex**
- 18: St. Camillus de Lellis Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Symphorosa & her seven Sons Martyrs
- 19: St. Vincent de Paul Confessor, **Duplex**
- 20: St. Jerome Emiliani Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Margaret Virgin Martyr
- 21: St. Praxedes Virgin, **Simplex**
- 22: St. Mary Magdalene Penitent, **Duplex**
- 23: St. Apollinaris Martyr, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Liborius Confessor Bishop
- 24: Vigil, Com. of St. Christina Virgin Martyr
- 25: St. James Apostle, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of St. Christopher Martyr
- 26: St. Anne Mother of the BVM, **Duplex II Class**
- 27: St. Pantaleon Martyr, **Simplex**
- 28: Ss. Nazarius & Celsus Martyrs, Victor I Pope & Martyr, & St. Innocent I Confessor Pope, **Semiduplex**
- 29: St. Martha Virgin, **Semiduplex**, Com. of Ss. Felix II Pope, Simplicius, Faustinus, & Beatrice Martyrs
- 30: Ss. Abdon & Sennen Martyrs, **Simplex**
- 31: St. Ignatius of Loyola Confessor, **Major Duplex**

AUGUST

- 1: St. Peter the Apostle in Chains, **Major Duplex**, Com. of St. Paul & the Holy Machabee Martyrs
- 2: St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Stephen I Pope & Martyr

- 3: Invention of St. Stephen Protomartyr, **Semiduplex**
- 4: St. Dominic Confessor, **Major Duplex**
- 5: Dedication of Our Lady of the Snows, **Major Duplex**
- 6: Transfiguration of Our Lord, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of Ss. Sixtus II Pope, Felicissimus & Agapitus Martyrs
- 7: St. Cajetan Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Donatus Bishop & Martyr
- 8: Ss. Cyriacus, Largus & Smaragdus Martyrs, **Semiduplex**
- 9: St. John Vianney Confessor Priest, **Duplex**, Com. of the Vigil & St. Romanus Martyr
- 10: St. Laurence Martyr, **Duplex II Class** with Simple Octave
- 11: Ss. Tiburtius & Susanna Virgin, Martyrs, **Simplex**
- 12: St. Clare Virgin, **Duplex**
- 13: Ss. Hippolytus & Cassian Martyrs, **Simplex**
- 14: Vigil, Com. of St. Eusebius Confessor
- 15: Assumption of the BVM, **Duplex I Class** with common Octave
- 16: St. Joachim Father of the BVM, Confessor, **Duplex II Class**
- 17: St. Hyacinth Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of the Octave of the Assumption & the Octave Day of St. Laurence
- 18: Day 4 within Octave of the Assumption, **Semiduplex**, Com. of St. Agapitus Martyr
- 19: St. John Eudes Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of the Octave
- 20: St. Bernard Abbot, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of the Octave
- 21: St. Jane Frances Frémiot de Chantal Widow, **Duplex**, Com. of the Octave
- 22: Immaculate Heart of Mary, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of Ss. Timothy, Hippolytus Bishop, & Symphorianus Martyrs
- 23: St. Philip Benizi Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of the Vigil
- 24: St. Bartholomew Apostle, **Duplex II Class**
- 25: St. Louis King, Confessor, **Semiduplex**
- 26: St. Zephyrinus Pope & Martyr, **Simplex**
- 27: St. Joseph Calasanctius Confessor, **Duplex**
- 28: St. Augustine Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Hermes Martyr
- 29: Beheading of St. John the Baptist, **Major Duplex**, Com. of St. Sabina Martyr
- 30: St. Rose of St. Mary Virgin of Lima, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Felix & Adauctus Martyrs
- 31: St. Raymond Nonnatus Confessor, **Duplex**

SEPTEMBER

- 1: St. Giles Abbot, **Simplex**, Com. of the Holy Twelve Brothers Martyrs
- 2: St. Stephen King, Confessor, **Semiduplex**
- 3: St. Pius X Confessor Pope, **Duplex**
- 4: Feria
- 5: St. Laurence Justinian Confessor Bishop, **Semiduplex**
- 6–7: Ferias

-
- 8: Nativity of the BVM, **Duplex II Class** with simple Octave, Com. of St. Adrian Martyr
 - 9: St. Gorgonius Martyr, **Simplex**
 - 10: St. Nicholas of Tolentino Confessor, **Duplex**
 - 11: Ss. Protus & Hyacinth Martyrs, **Simplex**
 - 12: The Most Holy Name of Mary, **Major Duplex**
 - 13: Feria
 - 14: Exaltation of the Holy Cross, **Major Duplex**
 - 15: Seven Sorrows of the BVM, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of St. Nicomedes Martyr
 - 16: St. Cornelius Pope & St. Cyprian Bishop, Martyrs, **Semiduplex**, Com. of Ss. Euphemia Virgin, Lucy & Geminian Martyrs
 - 17: Impression of the Holy Stigmata on St. Francis of Assisi, Confessor, **Duplex**
 - 18: St. Joseph of Cupertino Confessor, **Duplex**
 - 19: St. Januarius Bishop & Companions Martyrs, **Duplex**
 - 20: St. Eustace & Companions Martyrs, **Duplex**, Com. of the Vigil
 - 21: St. Matthew Apostle & Evangelist, **Duplex II Class**
 - 22: St. Thomas of Villanova Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Maurice & Companions Martyrs
 - 23: St. Linus Pope & Martyr, **Semiduplex**, Com. of St. Thecla Virgin Martyr
 - 24: Our Lady of Ransom, **Major Duplex**
 - 25: Feria
 - 26: Ss. Cyprian & Justina Virgin, Martyrs, **Simplex**
 - 27: Ss. Cosmas & Damian Martyrs, **Semiduplex**
 - 28: St. Wenceslaus Duke, Martyr, **Semiduplex**
 - 29: Dedication of St. Michael Archangel, **Duplex I Class**
 - 30: St. Jerome Priest, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**

OCTOBER

- 1: St. Remigius Confessor Bishop, **Simplex**
- 2: The Holy Guardian Angels, **Major Duplex**
- 3: St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus Virgin, **Duplex**
- 4: St. Francis of Assisi Confessor, **Major Duplex**
- 5: St. Placid & companions Martyrs, **Simplex**
- 6: St. Bruno Confessor, **Duplex**
- 7: The Most Holy Rosary of the BVM, **Duplex II Class**, Com. of St. Mark Confessor Pope, & Ss. Sergius, Bacchus, Marcellus & Apuleius Martyrs
- 8: St. Bridget Widow, **Duplex**
- 9: St. John Leonardi Confessor, **Semiduplex**, Com. of Ss. Dionysius Bishop, Rusticus Priest, & Eleutherius Martyrs
- 10: St. Francis Borgia Confessor, **Semiduplex**
- 11: The Maternity of the BVM, **Duplex II Class**
- 12: Feria
- 13: St. Edward King, Confessor, **Semiduplex**

- 14: St. Callistus I Pope & Martyr, **Duplex**
 15: St. Teresa Virgin, **Duplex**
 16: St. Hedwig Widow, **Semiduplex**
 17: St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Virgin, **Duplex**
 18: St. Luke Evangelist, **Duplex II Class**
 19: St. Peter of Alcantara Confessor, **Duplex**
 20: St. John Cantius Confessor, **Duplex**
 21: St. Hilarion Abbot, **Simplex**, Com. of St. Ursula & Companions Virgins
 & Martyrs
 22–23: Ferias
 24: St. Raphael Archangel, **Major Duplex**
 25: Ss. Chrysanthus & Daria Martyrs, **Simplex**
 26: St. Evaristus Pope & Martyr, **Simplex**
 27: Vigil.
 28: Ss. Simon & Jude Apostles, **Duplex II Class**
 29–30: Ferias
 31: Vigil
 Last Sunday in October: Our Lord Jesus Christ the King, **Duplex I Class**, Com.
 of the Sunday

NOVEMBER

- 1: All Saints, **Duplex I Class** with common Octave
 2 (or 3 if 2 is a Sunday): Commemoration of All Faithful Departed, **Duplex**
 3: Day 3 within the Octave of All Saints, **Semiduplex**
 4: St. Charles Borromeo Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**, Com. of the Octave &
 Ss. Vitalis & Agricola Martyrs
 5–7: Days within Octave of All Saints, **Semiduplex**
 8: Octave of All Saints, **Major Duplex**, Com. of the Holy Four Crowned
 Martyrs
 9: Dedication of the Archbasilica of the Most Holy Saviour, **Duplex II Class**,
 Com. of St. Theodore Martyr
 10: St. Andrew Avellino Confessor, **Duplex**, Com. of Ss. Tryphon, Respicus,
 & Nympha Martyrs
 11: St. Martin of Tours Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Mennas
 Martyr
 12: St. Martin I Pope & Martyr, **Semiduplex**
 13: St. Didacus Confessor, **Semiduplex**
 14: St. Josaphat Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**
 15: St. Albert the Great Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**
 16: St. Gertrude Virgin, **Duplex**
 17: St. Gregory Thaumaturgus Confessor Bishop, **Semiduplex**
 18: Dedication of the Basilicas of Ss. Peter and Paul, **Major Duplex**
 19: St. Elisabeth Widow, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Pontianus Pope & Martyr
 20: St. Felix of Valois Confessor, **Duplex**
 21: Presentation of the BVM, **Major Duplex**

- 22: St. Cecilia Virgin Martyr, **Duplex**
 23: St. Clement I Pope & Martyr, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Felicitas Martyr
 24: St. John of the Cross Confessor & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. St. Chrysogonus
 Martyr
 25: St. Catherine Virgin Martyr, **Duplex**
 26: St. Sylvester Abbot, **Duplex**, Com. of St. Peter of Alexandria Bishop &
 Martyr
 27–28: Ferias
 29: Vigil, Commemoration of St. Saturninus
 30: St. Andrew Apostle, **Duplex II Class**

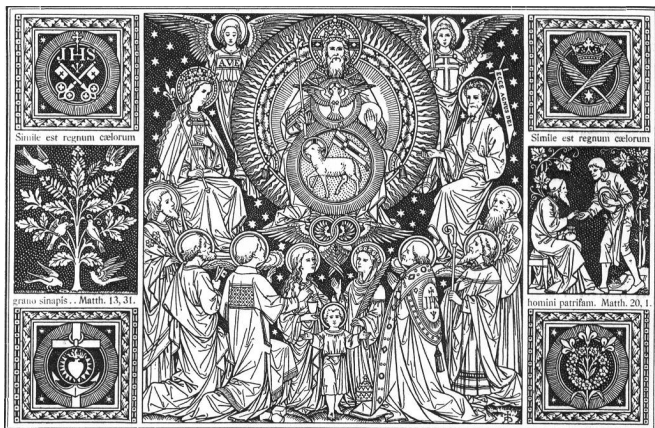
DECEMBER

- 1: Feria
 2: St. Bibiana Virgin Martyr, **Semiduplex**
 3: St. Francis Xavier Confessor, **Major Duplex**
 4: St. Peter Chrysologus Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of
 St. Barbara Virgin Martyr
 5: Com. of St. Sabbas Abbot
 6: St. Nicholas Confessor Bishop, **Duplex**
 7: St. Ambrose Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, **Duplex**, Com. of the Vigil
 8: The Immaculate Conception of the BVM, **Duplex I Class** with common
 Octave
 9: Day 2 within Octave of the Immaculate Conception, **Semiduplex**
 10: Day 3 within Octave, **Semiduplex**, Com. of St. Melchiades Pope &
 Martyr
 11: St. Damasus I Confessor Pope, **Semiduplex**, Com. of the Octave
 12: Day 5 within the Octave, **Semiduplex** (Com. of Our Lady of Guadalupe)
 13: St. Lucy Virgin Martyr, **Duplex**, Com. of the Octave
 14: Day 7 within the Octave, **Semiduplex**
 15: Octave of the Immaculate Conception, **Major Duplex**
 16: St. Eusebius Bishop & Martyr, **Semiduplex**
 17–19: Ferias
 20: Vigil
 21: St. Thomas Apostle, **Duplex II Class**
 22–23: Ferias
 24: Vigil
 25: Nativity of Our Lord, **Duplex I Class** with privileged Octave of the III
 rank
 26: St. Stephen Protomartyr, **Duplex II class** with simple Octave, Com. of the
 Nativity Octave
 27: St. John Apostle & Evangelist, **Duplex II class** with simple Octave, Com.
 of the Nativity Octave
 29: St. Thomas Bishop & Martyr, **Duplex**, Com. of the Nativity Octave
 30: Day 6 within Nativity Octave, **Semiduplex**
 31: St. Sylvester I Confessor Pope, **Duplex**, Com. of the Nativity Octave

The Matins Lectionary

Lessons from the Divine Office of
Matins according to the *Breviarium*
Romanum of 1954 in English

Compiled and Edited by Samuel McIlheran
United States
MMXXIV



PROPER OF TIME

ADVENT

SUNDAY I OF ADVENT

Duplex I Class

Lesson I - Isa 1:1-3

From the book of Isaias

The vision of Isaias the son of Amos, which he saw concerning Juda and Jerusalem in the days of Ozias, Joathan, Achaz, and Ezechias, kings of Juda Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken. I have brought up children, and exalted them: but they have despised me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel hath not known me, and my people hath not understood.

Lesson II - Isa 1:4-6

Woe to the sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a wicked seed, ungracious children: they have

forsaken the Lord, they have blasphemed the Holy One of Israel, they are gone away backwards. For what shall I strike you any more, you that increase transgression? the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is sad. From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head, there is no soundness therein: wounds and bruises and swelling sores: they are not bound up, nor dressed, nor fomented with oil.

Lesson III - Isa 1:7-9

Your land is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire: your country strangers devour before your face, and it shall be desolate as when wasted by enemies. And the daughter of Sion shall be left as a covert in a vineyard, and as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, and as a city that is laid waste. Except the Lord of hosts had left us seed, we had been as Sodom, and we should have been like to Gomorrhah.

Lesson IV

Sermon by St. Leo, Pope

Our Saviour Himself instructed His disciples concerning the times and seasons of the coming of the Kingdom of God and the end of the world, and He hath given the same teaching to the Church by the mouth of His Apostles. In connection with this subject then, Our Lord bids us beware lest we let our hearts grow heavy through excess of meat and drink, and worldly thoughts. Dearly beloved brethren, we know how that this warning applies particularly to us. We know that that day is coming, and though for a season we know not the very hour, yet this we know, that it is near.

Lesson V

Let every man then make himself ready against the coming of the Lord, so that He may not find him making his belly his god, or the world his chief care. Dearly beloved brethren, it is a matter of every day experience that fullness of drink dulls the keenness of the mind, and that excess of eating unnerves the strength of the will. The very stomach protests that gluttony does harm to the bodily health, unless temperance get the better of desire, and the thought of the indigestion afterward check the indulgence of the moment.

Lesson VI

The body without the soul has no desires; its sensibility comes from the same source as its movements. And it is the duty of a man with a

reasonable soul to deny something to his lower nature and to keep back the outer man from things unseemly. Then will his soul, free from fleshly cravings, sit often at leisure in the palace of the mind, dwelling on the wisdom of God. There, when the roar and rattle of earthly cares are stilled, will she feed on holy thoughts and entertain herself with the expectation of the everlasting joy.

Lesson VII

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 21:25–33)

In that time, Jesus said to his disciples: And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations. And so on.

Homily by Pope St. Gregory

Our Lord and Saviour wishes to find us ready at His second coming. Therefore He tells us what will be the evils of the world as it grows old, that He may wean our hearts from worldly affections. Here we read what great convulsions will go before the end, that, if we will not fear God in our prosperity, we may at least be scourged into fearing His judgment when it is at hand.

Lesson VIII

Immediately before the passage which hath just been read from the Gospel, are found the following words of our Lord, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in diverse places, and pestilences and famines. Then, after a few

more verses, comes today's Gospel. There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring. Now some of these things are come to pass already, and we fear the others are not far off.

Lesson IX

In these our days we see nation rise against nation, and their distress over all the earth, more than we read in books has ever come to pass of old time. You know also how often we hear of earthquakes overwhelming countless cities in other parts of the world. As for pestilences, we suffer from them ourselves, with hardly any intermission. As yet we do not see signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; but the changes of seasons and climates warn us that we may look for these also before long.

Monday in Advent I

Lesson I - Isa 1:16-18

From the book of Isaias

Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes: cease to do perversely, Learn to do well: seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, defend the widow. And then come, and accuse me, saith the Lord: if your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool.

Lesson II - Isa 1:19-23

If you be willing, and will hear-ken to me, you shall eat the good

things of the land. But if you will not, and will provoke me to wrath: the sword shall devour you because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. How is the faithful city, that was full of judgment, become a harlot? justice dwelt in it, but now murderers. Thy silver is turned into dross: thy wine is mingled with water. Thy princes are faithless, companions of thieves: they all love bribes, they run after rewards. They judge not for the fatherless: and the widow's comes not in to them.

Lesson III - Isa 1:24-28

Therefore saith the Lord the God of hosts, the mighty one of Israel: Ah! I will comfort myself over my adversaries: and I will be revenged of my enemies. And I will turn my hand to thee, and I will clean purge away thy dross, and I will take away all thy tin. And I will restore thy judges as they were before, and thy counsellors as of old. After this thou shalt be called the city of the just, a faithful city. Sion shall be redeemed in judgment, and they shall bring her back in justice. And he shall destroy the wicked, and the sinners together: and they that have forsaken the Lord, shall be consumed.

Tuesday in Advent I

Lesson I - Isa 2:1-3

From the book of Isaias

The word that Isaias the son of Amos saw, concerning Juda and Jerusalem. And in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted

above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go, and say: Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Lesson II - Isa 2:4-6

And he shall judge the Gentiles, and rebuke many people: and they shall turn their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they be exercised any more to war. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. For thou hast cast off thy people, the house of Jacob: because they are filled as in times past, and have had soothsayers as the Philistines, and have adhered to strange children.

Lesson III - Isa 2:7-9

Their land is filled with silver and gold: and there is no end of their treasures. And their land is filled with horses: and their chariots are innumerable. Their land also is full of idols: they have adored the work of their own hands, which their own fingers have made. And man hath bowed himself down, and man hath been debased: therefore forgive them not.

Wednesday in Advent I

Lesson I - Isa 3:1-4

From the book of Isaiahs

For behold, the sovereign the Lord of hosts shall take away from

Jerusalem, and from Juda the valiant and the strong, the whole strength of bread, and the whole strength of water. The strong man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the cunning man, and the ancient. The captain over fifty, and the honourable in countenance, and the counsellor, and the architect, and the skilful in eloquent speech. And I will give children to be their princes, and the effeminate shall rule over them.

Lesson II - Isa 3:5-7

And the people shall rush one upon another, and every man against his neighbour: the child shall make it tumult against the ancient, and the base against the honourable. For a man shall take hold of his brother, one of the house of his father, saying: Thou hast a garment, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand. In that day he shall answer, saying: I am no healer, and in my house there is no bread, nor clothing: make me not ruler of the people.

Lesson III - Isa 3:8-11

For Jerusalem is ruined, and Juda is fallen: because their tongue, and their devices are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his majesty. The shew of their countenance hath answered them: and they have proclaimed abroad their sin as Sodom, and they have not hid it: woe to their souls, for evils are rendered to them. Say to the just man that it is well, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings. Woe to the wicked unto evil: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

Thursday in Advent I

Lesson I - Isa 4:1-3

From the book of Isaiah

And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, take away our reproach. In that day the bud of the Lord shall be in magnificence and glory, and the fruit of the earth shall be high, and a great joy to them that shall have escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that every one that shall be left in Sion, and that shall remain in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, every one that is written in life in Jerusalem.

Lesson II - Isa 5:1-4

I will sing to my beloved the canticle of my cousin concerning his vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard on a hill in a fruitful place. And he fenced it in, and picked the stones out of it, and planted it with the choicest vines, and built a tower in the midst thereof, and set up a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and ye men of Juda, judge between me and my vineyard. What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it? was it that I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it hath brought forth wild grapes?

Lesson III - Isa 5:5-7

And now I will shew you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take

away the hedge thereof, and it shall be wasted: I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will make it desolate: it shall not be pruned, and it shall not be digged: but briars and thorns shall come up: and I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel: and the man of Juda, his pleasant plant: and I looked that he should do judgment, and behold iniquity: and do justice, and behold a cry.

Friday in Advent I

Lesson I - Isa 6:1-3

From the book of Isaiah

In the year that king Ozias died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated: and his train filled the temple. Upon it stood the seraphims: the one had six wings, and the other had six wings: with two they covered his face, and with two they covered his feet, and with two they flew. And they cried one to another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts, all the earth is full of his glory.

Lesson II - Isa 6:4-7

And the lintels of the doors were moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: Woe is me, because I have held my peace; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people that hath unclean lips, and I have seen with my eyes the King the Lord of hosts. And one of the seraphims flew to me, and in his hand was a live coal,

which he had taken with the tongs off the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said: Behold this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquities shall be taken away, and thy sin shall be cleansed.

Lesson III - Isa 6:8-10

And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send? and who shall go for us? And I said: Lo, here am I, send me. And he said: Go, and thou shalt say to this people: Hearing, hear, and understand not: and see the vision, and know it not. Blind the heart of this people, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted and I heal them.

Saturday in Advent I

Lesson I - Isa 7:1-3

From the book of Isaias

And it came to pass in the days of Achaz the son of Joathan, the son of Ozias, king of Juda, that Basin king of Syria, and Phacee the son of Romelia king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem, to fight against it: but they could not prevail over it. And they told the house of David, saying: Syria hath rested upon Ephraim, and his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the woods are moved with the wind. And the Lord said to Isaias: Go forth to meet Achaz, thou and Jasub thy son that is left, to the conduit in the upper pool, in the way of the fuller's field.

Lesson II - Isa 7:4-6

And thou shalt say to him: See thou be quiet: fear not, and let not thy heart be afraid of the two tails of these fire brands, smoking with the wrath of the fury of Rasin king of Syria, and of the son of Romelia. Because Syria hath taken counsel against thee, unto the evil of Ephraim and the son of Romelia, saying: Let us go up to Juda, and rouse it up, and draw it away to us, and make the son of Tabeel king in the midst thereof.

Lesson III - Isa 7:10-15

And the Lord spoke again to Achaz, saying: Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God either unto the depth of hell, or unto the height above. And Achaz said: I will not ask, and I will not tempt the Lord. And he said: Hear ye therefore, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to be grievous to men, that you are grievous to my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. He shall eat butter and honey, that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good.



SUNDAY II OF ADVENT

Duplex II Class

Lesson I - Isa 11:1-4

From the book of Isaias

And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.

Lesson II - Isa 11:4-7

And he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. And justice shall be the girdle of his loins: and faith the girdle of his reins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb: and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: the calf and the lion, and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. The calf and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall rest together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Lesson III - Isa 11:8-10

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp: and the weaned child shall thrust his hand into the den of the basilisk. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain, for the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who standeth for an ensign of the people, him the Gentiles shall beseech, and his sepulchre shall be glorious.

Lesson IV

From the Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaias made by St. Jerome, Priest

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse. From the beginning of the Book of this Prophet till the thirteenth chapter, where commences the vision, or burden of Babylon, the whole of the vision of Isaias, the son of Amoz, is one continual prophecy of Christ. We must explain it part by part, for if we were to take it all at once, the memory of the reader would be confused. According to the Jewish commentators, the rod and the flower would both relate to the Lord Himself. They take the rod to mean the scepter of His Royal dominion, and the flower the loveliness of His beauty.

Lesson V

We, however, understand that the rod out of the root of Jesse signifies the holy Virgin Mary. She was a clean stem that had as yet put forth no shoot; as we have read above: "Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son." And the flower we believe to mean the Lord our Redeemer, Who has elsewhere compared Himself to a flower: "I am a flower of the plain, and a lily of the valleys."

Lesson VI

The Spirit of the Lord then shall rest upon this flower; this flower which shall come forth from the stem and roots of Jesse by means of the Virgin Mary. And truly the

Spirit of the Lord did rest upon our Redeemer. It is written that In Him dwells all the fulness of the Divinity bodily. The Spirit was not shed on Him by measure, as it is upon the Saints. To Him we may apply the words of the Hebrew Gospel used by the Nazarenes: The whole fountain of the Holy Ghost shall be poured forth upon Him; The Lord is a spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Lesson VII

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (Matt 11:2–10)

In that time, when John had heard in prison the works of Christ: sending two of his disciples he said to him: Art thou he that art to come, or look we for another? And so on.

Homily by Pope St. Gregory

The sight of so many signs and so many mighty works should have been a source of wonder, and not a stumbling-block. And yet the unfaithful found these very works a rock of offense, when they afterwards saw Him Who had worked so many miracles dying on the Cross. Hence Paul says: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Gentiles foolishness." It is indeed folly in the eyes of men to say that the Author of life died for men and thus men put as a stumbling-block, to hinder them from coming to Jesus, the very thing that does oblige them the most unto Him. For the more humbling God has undergone for man's sake, the more worthy is He that man should worship Him.

Lesson VIII

"And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me." Now what is this, but a plain mention of that time, when He afterwards humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross? It is as if He said: I indeed do wonderful works, but the day will come when I shall not refuse to suffer shame and evil treatment. Take heed then, you who now worship Me for the works' sake, that when I come to die, you despise Me not for My death's sake.

Lesson IX

And, as the disciples of John departed, what did Jesus say unto the multitudes concerning this same John? Let us hear. "What went you out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" Here our Lord teaches not by assertion, but by negation. Now a reed is a thing so made that as soon as the wind blows upon it, it bends it over toward the opposite quarter. And the fleshly-minded man is like a human reed. As he is praised or blamed so he bends himself in the one direction or the other.

Monday in Advent II

Lesson I - Isa 13:1–4

From the book of Isaias

The burden of Babylon, which Isaias the son of Amos saw. Upon the dark mountain lift ye up a banner, exalt the voice, lift up the hand, and let the rulers go into the gates. I have commanded my sanctified

ones, and have called my strong ones in my wrath, them that rejoice in my glory. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, as it were of many people, the noise of the sound of kings, of nations gathered together.

Lesson II ~ Isa 13:4-8

The Lord of hosts hath given charge to the troops of war. To them that come from a country afar off, from the end of heaven: the Lord and the instruments of his wrath, to destroy the whole land. Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is near: it shall come as a destruction from the Lord. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every heart of man shall melt, And shall be broken. Gripings and pains shall take hold of them, they shall be in pain as a woman in labour. Every one shall be amazed at his neighbour, their countenances shall be as faces burnt.

Lesson III ~ Isa 13:9-11

Behold, the day of the Lord shall come, a cruel day, and full of indignation, and of wrath, and fury, to lay the land desolate, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven, and their brightness shall not display their light: the sun shall be darkened in his rising, and the moon shall not shine with her light. And I will visit the evils of the world, and against the wicked for their iniquity: and I will make the pride of infidels to cease, and will bring down the arrogancy of the mighty.

Tuesday in Advent II

Lesson I ~ Isa 14:1-2

From the book of Isaias

Her time is near at hand, and her days shall not be prolonged. For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose out of Israel, and will make them rest upon their own ground: and the stranger shall be joined with them, and shall adhere to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them into their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall make them captives that had taken them, and shall subdue their oppressors.

Lesson II ~ Isa 14:3-6

And it shall come to pass in that day, that when God shall give thee rest from thy labour, and from thy vexation, and from the hard bondage, wherewith thou didst serve before, Thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and shalt say: How is the oppressor come to nothing, the tribute hath ceased? The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of the rulers, That struck the people in wrath with an incurable wound, that brought nations under in fury, that persecuted in a cruel manner.

Lesson III ~ Isa 14:12-15

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning? how art thou fallen to the earth, that didst wound the nations? And thou saidst in thy heart: I will

ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the most High. But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit.

Wednesday in Advent II

Lesson I - Isa 16:1-4

From the book of Isaia

Send forth, O Lord, the lamb, the ruler of the earth, from Petra of the desert, to the mount of the daughter of Sion. And it shall come to pass, that as a bird fleeing away, and as young ones flying out of the nest, so shall the daughters of Moab be in the passage of Arnon. Take counsel, gather a council: make thy shadow as the night in the midday: hide them that flee, and betray not them that wander about. My fugitives shall dwell with thee: O Moab, be thou a covert to them from the face of the destroyer.

Lesson II - Isa 16:4-6

For the dust is at an end, the wretch is consumed: he hath failed, that trod the earth under foot. And a throne shall be prepared in mercy, and one shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking judgment and quickly rendering that which is just. We have heard of the pride of Moab, he is exceeding proud: his pride and his arrogancy, and his indignation is more than his strength.

Lesson III - Isa 16:7-8

Therefore shall Moab howl to Moab, every one shall howl: to them that rejoice upon the brick walls, tell ye their stripes. For the suburbs of Hesebon are desolate, and the lords of the nations have destroyed the vineyard of Sabama: the branches thereof have reached even to Jazer: they have wandered in the wilderness, the branches thereof are left, they are gone over the sea.

Thursday in Advent II

Lesson I - Isa 19:1-2

From the book of Isaia

The burden of Egypt. Behold the Lord will ascend upon a swift cloud, and will enter into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst thereof. And I will set the Egyptians to fight against the Egyptians: and they shall fight brother against brother, and friend against friend, city against city, kingdom against kingdom.

Lesson II - Isa 19:3-6

And the spirit of Egypt shall be broken in the bowels thereof, and I will cast down their counsel: and they shall consult their idols, and their diviners, and their wizards, and soothsayers. And I will deliver Egypt into the hand of cruel masters, and a strong king shall rule over them, saith the Lord the God of hosts. And the water of the sea shall be dried up, and the river shall be wasted and dry. And the rivers shall fail: the streams of the banks

shall be diminished, and be dried up. The reed and the bulrush shall wither away.

Lesson III - Isa 19:11-13

The princes of Tanis are become fools, the wise counsellors of Pharaoh have given foolish counsel: how will you say to Pharaoh: I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where are now thy wise men? let them tell thee, and shew what the Lord of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt. The princes of Tanis are become fools, the princes of Memphis are gone astray, they have deceived Egypt, the stay of the people thereof.

Friday in Advent II

Lesson I - Isa 24:1-3

From the book of Isaias

Behold the Lord shall lay waste the earth, and shall strip it, and shall afflict the face thereof, and scatter abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest: and as with the servant, so with his master: as with the handmaid, so with her mistress: as with the buyer, so with the seller: as with the lender, so with the borrower: as with him that calleth for his money, so with him that oweth. With desolation shall the earth be laid waste, and it shall be utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word.

Lesson II - Isa 24:4-6

The earth mourned, and faded away, and is weakened: the world

faded away, the height of the people of the earth is weakened. And the earth is infected by the inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the laws, they have changed the ordinance, they have broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore shall a curse devour the earth, and the inhabitants thereof shall sin: and therefore they that dwell therein shall be mad, and few men shall be left.

Lesson III - Isa 24:7-16

The vintage hath mourned, the vine hath languished away, all the merryhearted have sighed. The mirth of timbrels hath ceased, the noise of them that rejoice is ended, the melody of the harp is silent. They shall not drink wine with a song: the drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of vanity is broken down, every house is shut up, no man comes in. There shall be a crying for wine in the streets: all mirth is forsaken: the joy of the earth is gone away. Desolation is left in the city, and calamity shall oppress the gates. For it shall be thus in the midst of the earth, in the midst of the people, as if a few olives, that remain, should be shaken out of the olive tree: or grapes, when the vintage is ended. These shall lift up their voice, and shall give praise: when the Lord shall be glorified, they shall make a joyful noise from the sea. Therefore glorify ye the Lord in instruction: the name of the Lord God of Israel in the islands of the sea. From the ends of the earth we have heard praises, the glory of the Just one.

Saturday in Advent II

Lesson I - Isa 25:1-4

From the book of Isaiah

O Lord, thou art my God, I will exalt thee, and give glory to thy name: for thou hast done wonderful things, thy designs of old faithful, amen. For thou hast reduced the city to a heap, the strong city to ruin, the house of strangers, to be no city, and to be no more built up for ever. Therefore shall a strong people praise thee, the city of mighty nations shall fear thee. Because thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress: a refuge from the whirlwind, a shadow from the heat.

Lesson II - Isa 25:4-7

For the blast of the mighty is like a whirlwind beating against a wall. Thou shalt bring down the tumult of strangers, as heat in thirst: and as with heat under a burning cloud, thou shalt make the branch of the mighty to wither away. And the Lord of hosts shall make unto all people in this mountain, a feast of fat things, a feast of wine, of fat things full of marrow, of wine purified from the lees. And he shall destroy in this mountain the face of the bond with which all people were tied, and the web that he began over all nations.

Lesson III - Isa 25:8-12

He shall cast death down headlong forever: and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from every face, and the reproach of his people he shall take away from off the whole

earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And they shall say in that day: Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have patiently waited for him, we shall rejoice and be joyful in his salvation. For the hand of the Lord shall rest in this mountain: and Moab shall be trodden down under him, as straw is broken in pieces with the wain. And he shall stretch forth his hands under him, as he that swimmeth stretcheth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down his glory with the dashing of his hands. And the bulwarks of thy high walls shall fall, and be brought low, and shall be pulled down to the ground, even to the dust.



SUNDAY III OF ADVENT

Duplex II Class

Lesson I - Isa 26:1-6

From the book of Isaiah

In that day shall this canticle be sung in the land of Juda. Sion the city of our strength a saviour, a wall and a bulwark shall be set therein. Open ye the gates, and let the just nation, that keepeth the truth, enter in. The old error is passed away: thou wilt keep peace: peace, because we have hoped in thee. You have hoped in the Lord for evermore, in the Lord God mighty for ever. For he shall bring down them that dwell on high, the high city he shall lay low. He shall bring it down even to the ground, he shall pull it down even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.

Lesson II - Isa 26:7-10

The way of the just is right, the path of the just is right to walk in. And in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, we have patiently waited for thee: thy name, and thy remembrance are the desire of the soul. My soul hath desired thee in the night: yea, and with my spirit within me in the morning early I will watch to thee. When thou shalt do thy judgments on the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn justice. Let us have pity on the wicked, but he will not learn justice: in the land of the saints he hath done wicked things, and he shall not see the glory of the Lord.

Lesson III - Isa 26:11-14

Lord, let thy hand be exalted, and let them not see: let the envious people see, and be confounded: and let fire devour thy enemies. Lord, thou wilt give us peace: for thou hast wrought all our works for us. O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, only in thee let us remember thy name. Let not the dead live, let not the giants rise again: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and hast destroyed all their memory.

Lesson IV

Sermon by St. Leo, Pope

Dearly beloved brethren, with the care which becomes us as the shepherd of your souls, we urge upon you the rigid observance of this December Fast. The month of December hath come round again, and with it this devout custom of

the Church. The fruits of the year, which is drawing to a close, are now all gathered in, and we most meetly offer our abstinence to God as a sacrifice of thanksgiving. And what can be more useful than fasting, that exercise by which we draw nigh to God, make a stand against the devil, and overcome the softer enticements of sin?

Lesson V

Fasting has ever been the bread of strength. From abstinence proceed pure thoughts, reasonable desires, and healthy counsels. By voluntary mortifications the flesh dies to lust, and the soul is renewed in might. But since fasting is not the only mean whereby we get health for our souls, let us add to our fasting works of mercy. Let us spend in good deeds what we take from indulgence. Let our fast become the banquet of the poor.

Lesson VI

Let us defend the widow and serve the orphan; let us comfort the afflicted and reconcile the estranged; let us take in the wanderer and succor the oppressed; let us clothe the naked and cherish the sick. And may every one of us that shall offer to the God of all goodness this Advent sacrifice of fasting and alms be by Him fitted to receive an eternal reward in His heavenly kingdom! We fast on Wednesday and Friday; and there is likewise a Vigil on Saturday at the Church of St. Peter, that by his good prayers we may the more effectually obtain what we ask for, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who with the

Father and the Holy Ghost, lives and reigns, God, world without end. Amen.

Lesson VII

From the Holy Gospel according to St. John (John 1:19–28)

In that time were sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to John, to ask him: Who art thou? And so on.

Homily by Pope St. Gregory

Dearly beloved brethren, the first thing which strikes us in today's Gospel is the lowly-mindedness of John. He was so great that it was thought he might be the Christ; yet he soberly chose rather to seem only what he really was, than to let the belief of men invest him with a dignity which did not belong to him; "for he confessed, and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ," at the same time he would not deny what he was in reality; and thus his very truth-speaking made him a member of Him Whose title he would not by falsehood take. In that he arrogated not to himself the name of Christ, he became a member of Christ. While he humbly strove to confess his own weakness, he earned by his simplicity a part in the grandeur of his Master.

Lesson VIII

In considering this subject we find an apparent contradiction between one of John's statements, and the saying of our Redeemer recorded in another part of the Gospel. When His disciples asked our Lord regarding the coming of

Elias, He answered: "Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they liked." And if you will receive it, this that is, John is Elias. But when John was asked if he was Elias, he answered: "I am not." How comes it then, dearly beloved brethren, that we find the Truth Itself asserting what the prophet of the Truth denied? It must evidently be that our Lord meant one thing and John another, when the Lord said, This is, and John, I am not. For how can he be the prophet of truth, if he speak not according to the word of Him Who is the Eternal Truth?

Lesson IX

Let us then more minutely examine these words, and we shall find that there is no real contradiction. When the Angel announced to Zachary the coming birth of John he said He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias. As the old Elias will come again before the Second Advent of the Lord, so did John, as the new Elias, go before the First Advent, in the spirit and power of Elias. As the old Elias will be the Fore-runner of the Judge, so the new Elias was the Forerunner of the Saviour. John then was Elias in spirit, but not in person; and our Lord asserts of the spirit what John denies of the person.

Monday in Advent III

Lesson I - Isa 28:1–3

From the book of Isaias

Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, and to

the fading flower the glory of his joy, who were on the head of the fat valley, staggering with wine. Behold the Lord is mighty and strong, as a storm of hail: a destroying whirlwind, as the violence of many waters overflowing, and sent forth upon a spacious land. The crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under feet.

Lesson II ~ Isa 28:4-7

And the fading flower the glory of his joy, who is on the head of the fat valley, shall be as a hasty fruit before the ripeness of autumn: which when he that seeth it shall behold, as soon as he taketh it in his hand, he will eat it up. In that day the Lord of hosts shall be a crown of glory, and a garland of joy to the residue of his people: And a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and strength to them that return out of the battle to the gate. But these also have been ignorant through wine, and through drunkenness have erred: the priest and the prophet have been ignorant through drunkenness, they are swallowed up with wine, they have gone astray in drunkenness, they have not known him that seeth, they have been ignorant of judgment.

Lesson III ~ Isa 28:16-18

Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will lay a stone in the foundations of Sion, a tried stone, a corner stone, a precious stone, founded in the foundation. He that believeth, let him not hasten. And I will set judgment in weight, and justice in measure: and hail shall

overturn the hope of falsehood: and waters shall overflow its protection. And your league with death shall be abolished, and your covenant with hell shall not stand: when the overflowing scourge shall pass, you shall be trodden down by it.

Tuesday in Advent III

Lesson I ~ Isa 30:18-20

From the book of Isaias

The Lord waiteth that he may have mercy on you: and therefore shall he be exalted sparing you: because the Lord is the God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him. For the people of Sion shall dwell in Jerusalem: weeping thou shalt not weep, he will surely have pity on thee: at the voice of thy cry, as soon as he shall hear, he will answer thee. And the Lord will give you spare bread, and short water: and will not cause thy teacher to flee away from thee any more, and thy eyes shall see thy teacher.

Lesson II ~ Isa 30:22-25

And thou shalt defile the plates of thy graven things of silver, and the garment of thy molten things of gold, and shalt cast them away as the uncleanness of a menstruous woman. Thou shalt say to it: Get thee hence. And rain shall be given to thy seed, wheresoever thou shalt sow in the land: and the bread of the corn of the land shall be most plentiful, and fat. The lamb in that day shall feed at large in thy possession: And thy oxen, and the ass colts that till the ground, shall eat mingled provender as it was winnowed in the

floor. And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every elevated hill rivers of running waters in the day of the slaughter of many, when the tower shall fall.

Lesson III - Isa 30:26–28

And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days: in the day when the Lord shall bind up the wound of his people, and shall heal the stroke of their wound. Behold the name of the Lord comes from afar, his wrath burneth, and is heavy to bear: his lips are filled with indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire. His breath as a torrent overflowing even to the midst of the neck, to destroy the nations unto nothing, and the bridle of error that was in the jaws of the people.

Ember Wednesday in Advent

Lesson I

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 1:26–38)

At that time the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And so on.

Homily by St. Ambrose, Bishop

The mysteries of God are unsearchable, and it is especially declared by a Prophet, that a man can hardly know His counsels. Nevertheless, some things have been revealed to us, and we may gather

from some of the words and works of the Lord our Saviour, that there was a special purpose of God, in the fact that she who was chosen to be the mother of the Lord was espoused to a man. Why did not the power of the Highest overshadow her before she was so espoused? Perhaps it was lest any might blasphemously say that she had conceived in fornication the Holy One.

Lesson II

And the angel came in unto her. Let us learn from this Virgin how to bear ourselves, let us learn her modesty, let us learn by her devout utterance, above all let us learn by the holy mystery enacted. It is the part of a maiden to be timid, to avoid the advances of men, and to shrink from men's addresses. Would that our women would learn from the example of modesty here set before us. She upon whom the stare of men had never been fixed was alone in her chamber, and was found only by an angel. There was neither companion nor witness there, that what passed might not be debased in gossip and the angel saluted her.

Lesson III

The message of God to the Virgin was a mystery, which it was not lawful for the mouth of men, but only of angels, to utter. For the first time on earth the words are spoken "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee." The holy maiden hears, and believes. At length she says "Behold the handmaid of the Lord be it unto me according to thy word." Here is an example of lowliness, here is a

pattern of true devotion. At the very moment that she is told she is chosen to be the mother of the Lord she at once declares herself His handmaid. The knowledge that she was Mother of God caused in the heart of Mary only an act of humility.

Thursday in Advent III

Lesson I - Isa 33:1-2

From the book of Isaiah

Woe to thee that spoilest, shalt not thou thyself also be spoiled? and thou that despisest, shalt not thyself also be despised? when thou shalt have made an end of spoiling, thou shalt be spoiled: when being wearied thou shalt cease to despise, thou shalt be despised. O Lord, have mercy on us: for we have waited for thee: be thou our arm in the morning, and our salvation in the time of trouble.

Lesson II - Isa 33:3-6

At the voice of the angel the people fled, and at the lifting up thyself the nations are scattered. And your spoils shall be gathered together as the locusts are gathered, as when the ditches are full of them. The Lord is magnified, for he hath dwelt on high: he hath filled Sion with judgment and justice. And there shall be faith in thy times: riches of salvation, wisdom and knowledge: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.

Lesson III - Isa 33:14-17

The sinners in Sion are afraid, trembling hath seized upon the hypocrites. Which of you can dwell

with devouring fire? which of you shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh in justices, and speaketh truth, that casteth away avarice by oppression, and shaketh his hands from all bribes, that stoppeth his ears lest he hear blood, and shutteth his eyes that he may see no evil. He shall dwell on high, the fortifications of rocks shall be his highness: bread is given him, his waters are sure. His eyes shall see the king in his beauty, they shall see the land far off.

Ember Friday in Advent

Lesson I

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 1:39-47)

In that time, Mary, rising up, went into the hill country with haste into a city of Juda. And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. And so on.

Homily by St. Ambrose, Bishop

When any one asks another for credence, he is bound to give some reasonable ground. And so the Angel, when he announced to Mary the counsel of God, gave, as a proof, the conception of Elizabeth, then aged and barren, that Mary might perceive, by this example, that with God nothing is impossible. When the holy Virgin had heard it, she arose and went to visit her cousin. She did not go to see if what she had heard was true, because she did not believe God, or because she knew not who the messenger had been, or yet because she doubted the fact adduced in proof. She went joyfully

as one who has received a mercy in answer to his vow goes to pay the same. She went with devotion, as a godly person goes to execute a religious duty. She went into the hill country in joyful haste. And is it not something that she went up into the hills? God was already in her womb, and her feeling bore her continually upward. The grace of the Holy Spirit knows no slow working.

Lesson II

Godly women will learn from the example of the Mother of God to take a tender care of their kinswomen who are with child. In pursuance of this charity, Mary, who had hitherto remained alone at home, was not deterred by her maidenly shyness from entering on a public journey; she faced for this end the hardships of mountain travel; and encountered with a sense of duty the weary length of the way. The Virgin left her home, and went into the hill country with haste, unmindful of the trouble, and remembering only the office to which her cousinly love prompted her, in spite of the delicacy of her sex. Maidens will learn from her not to idle about from house to house, to loiter in the streets, nor to take part in conversations in public. Mary, as she was hasteful to pass through the public roads, so was she slow again to enter on them; she abode with her cousin about three months.

Lesson III

As the modesty of Mary is a pattern for the imitation of all maidens, so also is her humility. She went to

see Elizabeth, like one cousin going to visit another, and as the younger to the elder. Not only did she first go, but she first saluted Elizabeth. Now, the purer a virgin is, the humbler ought she to be. She will know how to submit herself to her elders. She that professes chastity ought to be a very mistress of humility. Lowly-mindedness is at once the very ground in which devotion grows, and the first and principal rule of its teaching. In this act of the Virgin then we see the greater going to visit and to succor the lesser: Mary to Elizabeth, Christ to John.

Ember Saturday in Advent

Lesson I

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 3:1–6)

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea. And so on.

Homily by Pope St. Gregory

The date, at which the Forerunner of our Redeemer entered on his public office of preaching, is indicated to us by the name of the ruler of the Roman Commonwealth, and by those of the princes of Palestine. The time of his preaching is indicated by these names, because he came as the Forerunner of Him Who was to be the Redeemer of some Jews and many Gentiles. Moreover, in the enumeration of these worldly monarchs there is a foreshadowing of the fact that the Gentiles were about to be gathered into one, and the Jews to be scattered abroad in punishment of

their unbelief; in the whole heathen Commonwealth we find the title of one Emperor, but in the small kingdom of Judaea are mentioned four masters.

Lesson II

The blessed voice of the Saviour himself has said, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation." And we may well look for the ruin of the Jewish state when we see it divided among so many rulers. We observe likewise that the names of the reigning priests as well as kings are given. The Evangelist Luke has left on record the chiefs both of the monarchy and of the priesthood who held office when John the Baptist began to preach, because John preached Him Who is at once our Priest and our King.

Lesson III

And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. It is evident from these words that John the Baptist not only preached, but also administered the baptism of repentance, and yet that baptism of repentance which he gave, was not really a baptism for the remission of sins. For there is only one baptism for the remission of sins, and that is our Christian baptism. It is worthy of note here that the words used are, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, for he himself owned that his baptism was not the true baptism that washes away sin. Even as the Eternal Word of God made Flesh was greater than the

preacher that went before Him, so was His holy baptism, by which our sins are washed away, far greater than that baptism of repentance which the Forerunner preached, and which could never wash away sin.



SUNDAY IV OF ADVENT

Duplex II Class

Lesson I - Isa 35:1-7

From the book of Isaias

The land that was desolate and impassable shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice, and shall flourish like the lily. It shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise: the glory of Libanus is given to it: the beauty of Carmel, and Saron, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the beauty of our God. Strengthen ye the feeble hands, and confirm the weak knees. Say to the fainthearted: Take courage, and fear not: behold your God will bring the revenge of recompense: God himself will come and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free: for waters are broken out in the desert, and streams in the wilderness. And that which was dry land, shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.

Lesson II - Isa 35:7-10

In the dens where dragons dwell before, shall rise up the verdure of the reed and the bulrush. And a path

and a way shall be there, and it shall be called the holy way: the unclean shall not pass over it, and this shall be unto you a straight way, so that fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any mischievous beast go up by it, nor be found there: but they shall walk there that shall be delivered. And the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and shall come into Sion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Lesson III - Isa 41:1-4

Let the islands keep silence before me, and the nations take new strength: let them come near, and then speak, let us come near to judgment together. Who hath raised up the just one from the east, hath called him to follow him? he shall give the nations in his sight, and he shall rule over kings: he shall give them as the dust to his sword, as stubble driven by the wind, to his bow. He shall pursue them, he shall pass in peace, no path shall appear after his feet. Who hath wrought and done these things, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, I am the first and the last.

Lesson IV

Sermon by St. Leo, Pope

Dearly beloved brethren, if we study attentively the history of the creation of our race, we shall find that man was made in the image of God, that his ways also might be an imitation of the ways of his Maker.

This is the natural, real, and highest dignity to which we are capable of attaining, that the goodness of the Divine nature should have a reflection in us, as in a glass. As a mean of reaching this dignity, we are daily offered the grace of our Saviour, for as in the first Adam all men are fallen, so in the Second Adam can all men be raised up again.

Lesson V

Our restoration from the consequences of Adam's fall is sheer mercy of God, and nothing else; we should not have loved Him unless He had first loved us, and scattered the darkness of our ignorance by the light of His truth. This the Lord promised by the mouth of Isaias, where He says: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and I will lead them in paths that they have not known I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them." And again: "I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me."

Lesson VI

And we know from the Apostle John how God fulfilled His promise. "We know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him That is True, and be in Him That is True, even in His Son." And again: "Let us therefore love God, because He first loved us." For His great love then wherewith he has loved us, God renews His likeness in us. And, moreover, in order that He may find

in us the reflection of His goodness, He gives us that whereby to work along with Himself (Who works all in all), lighting, as it were, candles in our dark minds, and kindling in us the fire of His love, to make us love not Himself only, but likewise in Him whatsoever He loves.

Lesson VII

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 3:1–6)

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea. And so on.

Homily by Pope St. Gregory

John said unto the multitude, that came forth to be baptized of him: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" The wrath to come in one sense signifies the great vengeance of the Latter Day; the sinner that repents not of his sin now will have no means whereby to flee from punishment then. Let us remark that addressing evil children copying the example of evil parents, the Baptist calls them a generation of vipers in that they were envious at the righteous and persecuted them; that they repaid evil for evil; that they hunted out ways of harming their neighbors, in all these things following the pattern of carnal parents, the prophet likens them to a venomous brood hatched from a venomous stock.

Lesson VIII

We also have sinned, we have fallen into wicked habits. What must we do, if we would flee from

the wrath to come? Let us hear John. "Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance." In which words let us remark that the Friend of the Bridegroom demands not only fruits of repentance, but fruits worthy of repentance. The former are one thing, and the latter another. In considering then what are fruits worthy of repentance, we may remark that if we had done nothing unlawful we might have had free use of things which are lawful, and been able to sanctify ourselves without abstaining from indulgence in the things of the world.

Lesson IX

But if any one, for example, has fallen into fornication, or perhaps, into what is much worse, adultery, he ought to make up for his lawless pleasure by abstaining in some degree from lawful enjoyments. He that has sinned less is not bound to mortify himself as much as he that has sinned more, nor he that is innocent like him that is guilty. Let every one hearing these words bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, proceed to judge himself by his own conscience, and the more he perceives that he has sinned, the greater penance let him do.

Monday in Advent IV

Lesson I - Isa 41:8–10

From the book of Isaias

But thou Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend: In whom I have taken thee from the ends of the earth, and from the remote parts thereof have called thee, and said to

thee: Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and have not cast thee away. Fear not, for I am with thee: turn not aside, for I am thy God: I have strengthened thee, and have helped thee, and the right hand of my just one hath upheld thee.

Lesson II ~ Isa 41:11–13

Behold all that fight against thee shall be confounded and ashamed, they shall be as nothing, and the men shall perish that strive against thee. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find the men that resist thee: they shall be as nothing: and as a thing consumed the men that war against thee. For I am the Lord thy God, who take thee by the hand, and say to thee: Fear not, I have helped thee.

Lesson III ~ Isa 41:14–16

Fear not, thou worm of Jacob, you that are dead of Israel: I have helped thee, saith the Lord: and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel. I have made thee as a new thrashing wain, with teeth like a saw: thou shalt thrash the mountains, and break them in pieces: and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, in the Holy One of Israel thou shalt be joyful.

Tuesday in Advent IV

Lesson I ~ Isa 42:1–4

From the book of Isaia

Behold my servant, I will uphold him: my elect, my soul delighteth

in him: I have given my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor have respect to person, neither shall his voice be heard abroad. The bruised reed he shall not break, and smoking flax he shall not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not be sad, nor troublesome, till he set judgment in the earth: and the islands shall wait for his law.

Lesson II ~ Isa 42:5–7

Thus saith the Lord God that created the heavens, and stretched them out: that established the earth, and the things that spring out of it: that giveth breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them that tread thereon. I the Lord have called thee in justice, and taken thee by the hand, and preserved thee. And I have given thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles: That thou mightest open the eyes of the blind, and bring forth the prisoner out of prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

Lesson III ~ Isa 42:10–13

Sing ye to the Lord a new song, his praise is from the ends of the earth: you that go down to the sea, and all that are therein: ye islands, and ye inhabitants of them. Let the desert and the cities thereof be exalted: Cedar shall dwell in houses: ye inhabitants of Petra, give praise, they shall cry from the top of the mountains. They shall give glory to the Lord, and shall declare his praise in the islands. The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, as a

man of war shall he stir up zeal: he shall shout and cry: he shall prevail against his enemies.

Wednesday in Advent IV

Lesson I - Isa 51:1-3

From the book of Isaias

Give ear to me, you that follow that which is just, and you that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence you are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you are dug out. Look unto Abraham your father, and to Sara that bore you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and multiplied him. The Lord therefore will comfort Sion, and will comfort all the ruins thereof: and he will make her desert as a place of pleasure, and her wilderness as the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of praise.

Lesson II - Isa 51:4-6

Hearken unto me, O my people, and give ear to me, O my tribes: for a law shall go forth from me, and my judgment shall rest to be a light of the nations. My just one is near at hand, my saviour is gone forth, and my arms shall judge the people: the islands shall look for me, and shall patiently wait for my arm. Lift up your eyes to heaven, and look down to the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish like smoke, and the earth shall be worn away like a garment, and the inhabitants thereof shall perish in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my justice shall not fail.

Lesson III - Isa 51:7-8

Hearken to me, you that know what is just, my people who have my law in your heart: fear ye not the reproach of men, and be not afraid of their blasphemies. For the worm shall eat them up as a garment: and the moth shall consume them as wool: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my justice from generation to generation.

Thursday in Advent IV

Lesson I - Isa 64:1-4

From the book of Isaias

That thou wouldst rend the heavens, and wouldst come down: the mountains would melt away at thy presence. They would melt as at the burning of fire, the waters would burn with fire, that thy name might be made known to thy enemies: that the nations might tremble at thy presence. When thou shalt do wonderful things, we shall not bear them: thou didst come down, and at thy presence the mountains melted away. From the beginning of the world they have not heard, nor perceived with the ears: the eye hath not seen, O God, besides thee, what things thou hast prepared for them that wait for thee.

Lesson II - Isa 64:5-7

Thou hast met him that rejoiceth, and doth justice: in thy ways they shall remember thee: behold thou art angry, and we have sinned: in them we have been always, and we shall be saved. And we are all become as one unclean, and all our justices as

the rag of a menstruous woman: and we have all fallen as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. There is none that calleth upon thy name: that riseth up, and taketh hold of thee: thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast crushed us in the hand of our iniquity.

Lesson III - Isa 64:8-11

And now, O Lord, thou art our father, and we are clay: and thou art our maker, and we all are the works of thy hands. Be not very angry, O Lord, and remember no longer our iniquity: behold, see we are all thy people. The city of thy sanctuary is become a desert, Sion is made a desert, Jerusalem is desolate. The house of our holiness, and of our glory, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt with fire, and all our lovely things are turned into ruins.

Friday in Advent IV

Lesson I - Isa 66:5-8

From the book of Isaias

Hear the word of the Lord, you that tremble at his word: Your brethren that hate you, and cast you out for my name's sake, have said: Let the Lord be glorified, and we shall see in your joy: but they shall be confounded. A voice of the people from the city, a voice from the temple, the voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies. Before she was in labour, she brought forth; before her time came to be delivered, she brought forth a man child. Who hath ever heard such a thing? and who hath seen the like to this? shall the earth bring forth in one day?

or shall a nation be brought forth at once, because Sion hath been in labour, and hath brought forth her children?

Lesson II - Isa 66:9-12

Shall not I that make others to bring forth children, myself bring forth, saith the Lord? shall I, that give generation to others, be barren, saith the Lord thy God? Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all you that mourn for her. That you may suck, and be filled with the breasts of her consolations: that you may milk out, and flow with delights, from the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord: Behold I will bring upon her as it were a river of peace, and as an overflowing torrent the glory of the Gentiles, which you shall suck; you shall be carried at the breasts, end upon the knees they shall caress you.

Lesson III - Isa 66:13-18

As one whom the mother caresseth, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. You shall see and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb, and the hand of the Lord shall be known to his servants, and he shall be angry with his enemies. For behold the Lord will come with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind, to render his wrath in indignation, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For the Lord shall judge by fire, and by his sword unto all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many. They that were sanctified, and thought themselves clean in the gardens

behind the gate within, they that did eat swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse: they shall be consumed together, saith the Lord. But I know their works, and their thoughts: I come that I may gather them together with all nations and tongues: and they shall come and shall see my glory.

Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord

Vigil

Lesson I

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (Matt 1:18–21)

When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost. And so on.

Homily by St. Jerome, Priest

Why was the Lord conceived of an espoused virgin rather than of a free one? First, for the sake of the genealogy of Mary, which we have obtained by that of Joseph. Secondly, because she was thus saved from being stoned by the Jews as an adulteress. Thirdly, that Himself and His mother might have a guardian on their journey into Egypt. To these, Ignatius, the martyr of Antioch, has added a fourth reason: namely, that the birth might take

place unknown to the devil, who would naturally suppose that Mary had conceived by Joseph.

Lesson II

“Before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.” She was found, that is, by Joseph, but by no one else. He had already almost a husband's privilege to know all that concerned her. “Before they came together.” This does not imply that they ever did come together; the Scripture merely shows the absolute fact that up to this time they had not done so.

Lesson III

“Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.” If any man be joined to a fornicatress they become one body; and according to the law they that are privy to a crime are thereby guilty. How then can it be that Joseph is described as a just man, at the very time he was compounding the criminality of his espoused? It must have been that he knew her to be pure, and yet understood not the mystery of her pregnancy, but, while he wondered at that which had happened, was willing to hold his peace.

