

JANUARY CONTEMPLATION

Opening Hymn

Eucharistic Exposition

Leader:

May this time of prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament be a precious opportunity to grow in awareness of the incomparable treasure which Christ has entrusted to his Church. May it encourage a more lively and fervent celebration of the Eucharist, leading to a Christian life transformed by love. May all of us rediscover the gift of the Eucharist as light and strength for our daily lives in the world in the exercise of our respective professions. We pray in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Silent Reflection

Let us keep silent within ourselves that our hearts and ears may be open.

Prayer Before Reading Scripture

Leader: *Let us pray.*

All: Jesus Christ, our Master, You are the Way and the Truth and the life. Grant that we may learn the sublime knowledge of Your charity in the Spirit of St. Paul the Apostle and of the Catholic Church. Send Your Holy Spirit to teach us and remind us of what You have preached. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture Reading: (*Acts 13:24-33*)

Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel. As John was completing his work, he said: "Who do you think I am? I am not that one. No, but he is coming after me, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead, and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people. We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (*Psalm 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11*)

Response: You are my inheritance, O Lord.

Lord, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing. You guard all that is mine.

The land you have given me is a pleasant land. What a wonderful inheritance! **R/.**

I will bless the Lord who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me.

I know the Lord is always with me.

I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.

No wonder my heart is glad, and I rejoice. My body rests in safety. **R/.**

For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave.

You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence
and the pleasures of living with you forever. **R/.**

Glory be to the Father...

Reflection: * *Aperuit Illis* #4

The return of the people of Israel to their homeland after the Babylonian exile was marked by the public reading of the book of the Law. In the book of Nehemiah, the Bible gives us a moving description of that moment. The people assembled in Jerusalem, in the square before the Water Gate, to listen to the Law. They had been scattered in exile, but now they found themselves gathered “as one” around the sacred Scripture (*Neh* 8:1). The people lent “attentive ears” (*Neh* 8:3) to the reading of the sacred book, realizing that in its words they would discover the meaning of their lived experience. The reaction to the proclamation of was one of great emotion and tears: “[The Levites] read from the book, from the law of God, clearly; and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, ‘This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep’. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, ‘Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength’” (*Neh* 8:8-10).

These words contain a great teaching. The Bible cannot be just the heritage of some, much less a collection of books for the benefit of a privileged few. It belongs above all to those called to hear its message and to recognize themselves in its words. At times, there can be a tendency to monopolize the sacred text by restricting it to certain circles or to select groups. It cannot be that way. The Bible is the book of the Lord’s people, who, in listening to it, move from dispersion and division towards unity. The word of God unites believers and makes them one people.

Silent Reflection

Prayer for Christian Unity

Lord Jesus, in the Eucharist You make your dwelling among us and become our traveling companion; sustain our Christian communities so that they may be ever more open to listening and accepting your Word. May they draw from the Eucharist a renewed commitment to spreading in society, by the proclamation of your Gospel, the signs and deeds of an attentive and active charity. We ask this in Jesus’ name.

Meditation from *Lumen Gentium*

When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth (cf. Jn. 17:4) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that he might continually sanctify the Church, and that, consequently, those who believe might have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father (cf. Eph. 2:18). He is the Spirit of life, the fountain of water springing up to eternal life (cf. Jn. 4:47; 7:38-39). To men, dead in sin, the Father gives life through him, until the day when, in Christ, he raises to life their mortal bodies (cf. Rom. 8:10-11). The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple (cf. 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19). In them he prays and bears witness to their adoptive sonship (cf. Gal. 4:6) Guiding the Church in the way of all truth (cf. Jn.16 :13) and unifying her in communion and in the works of ministry, he bestows upon her varied hierarchic and charismatic gifts, and in this way directs her; and he adorns her with his fruits (cf. Eph. 4:11-12) . By the power of the Gospel he permits the Church to keep the freshness of youth. Constantly he renews her and leads her to perfect union with her Spouse. (St. Irenaeus) For the Spirit and the Bride both say to Jesus, the Lord: "Come!" (cf. Apoc. 22:17). Hence the universal Church is seen to be "a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." (St. Cyprian)

Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Nov. 21, 1964, Chapter 1, *The Mystery of the Church*, #4.

Intentions

Leader:

Let us pray together the Daily Offering with the intention of the Holy Father and our personal intentions:

All:

Eternal Father, we offer you in union with Mary, Mother of the Redeemer of humankind, the Blood Jesus shed with love in his passion and every day is offered on the altar. In union with the Victim offered for the salvation of the world, we offer today's actions in expiation for our sins, for the conversion of sinners, for the souls in purgatory, for the needs of the holy Church, and especially:

For the Holy Father's intention: that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world, we pray. *R/.*

Our response will be: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

That our country more fully embrace the culture of life, recognizing in each person the image of God Himself, we pray. *R/.*

Lord, You have promised to be with your Church always, may the Holy Spirit inspire many more vocations to the priesthood and religious life, we pray. *R/.*

For our family, friends and benefactors, for those who've asked the help of our prayers, for those who have no one to pray for them, and for the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray. *R/.*

Our Father...

Silent Reflection

Closing Prayer

Leader: *Let us pray:*

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Benediction and Reposition

Closing Hymn

* This year the *Reflections* will be taken from *Aperuit Illis (Instituting the Sunday of the Word of God)* the Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis to "enable the Church to experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world." (#2)