Breaking Open The Word

REDEMPTORIST Daily Devotional 2027

Daily Mass Readings and Reflections with a note on the Saint of the Day and Prayers

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Message

With hearts filled with thanksgiving to God, we are pleased to present the Third Edition of the Redemptorist Mass Companion. Inspired by the Redemptorist vocation to proclaim the Gospel ever anew and to make it relevant to the people of our time, this edition is the fruit of continued pastoral commitment and spiritual reflection.

This revised edition has been prepared with the desire to accompany the faithful - individuals, families, and communities - in their daily walk with the Lord, helping them to reflect more deeply on the Word of God, to live the Gospel with conviction and joy, and to draw closer to God through active and meaningful participation in the Church's liturgy. As the faithful use this resource during liturgical and paraliturgical celebrations, it is our sincere prayer that this Mass Companion, its reflections and liturgical insights will help them enter more consciously into the mystery of God's redeeming love and continue to inspire devotion, deepen faith, and foster a closer union with Christ among all who use it.

I gratefully acknowledge the dedicated efforts of the Redemptorist Publications India team, along with the writers, editors, and collaborators whose hard work, spiritual insight, and commitment have contributed to the publication of this Third Edition. Their generous service reflects a deep dedication to the Redemptorist mission of evangelization and to the spiritual growth of God's people.

May Mary, Mother of the Redeemer and Perpetual Help, lovingly intercede for us. Through her guidance and through our prayerful participation in the Eucharist, may we be transformed ever more fully into faithful disciples and joyful witnesses of God's boundless love and mercy.

May this Redemptorist Mass Companion continue to be a source of grace, inspiration, and spiritual renewal for all.

Fr. Edward Joseph C.Ss.R.

Fr. George Puthenpura, C.Ss.R.
Editor
Redemptorist Publications India
Bangalore, India

Editorial

During the time of St. Alphonsus Liguori, due to the growing influence of Enlightenment in Europe, many rationalists and anti-religious thinkers including Voltaire dismissed Christian preaching as unnecessary or useless. St. Alphonsus opposed this and insisted that preaching was essential for the salvation and renewal of souls. He emphasised the importance of simple and heartfelt preaching directed especially to ordinary people and the poor.

We Redemptorists, continue his ministry of the proclamation of the Word of God. The world has changed drastically during the past decades. Artificial Intelligence and the advances in information technology have made the print media and spoken word almost obsolete. Yet we the Redemptorists have strived to preach the Word of God ever anew. Breaking the Word- Daily Mass Companion is in response to the overwhelming reception and appreciation that we have received from various sources.

Pope Leo XIV during his inaugural Mass of the Petrine Ministry addressed the clergy of Rome and said that the church must continue the mission of preaching the Gospel to today's world. To give a true homily is to share faith and artificial intelligence will never be able to share faith. People want to see your faith, your experience of having known and loved Jesus Christ. St. Alphonsus believed that the most fundamental quality of a minister of the Word is an ardent love for Jesus and his flock.

The reflections in this issue are prepared by Redemptorists from various cultural, linguistic, national, and professional backgrounds. What binds us together in our diversity though is our pastoral focus, coming from each one's particular personal background. We are always faithful to the Redemptorist style and think with the mind of the church. We always keep in mind all who have a thirst for the Word of God and its correct meaning and interpretation for our times. We wish and pray that this volume also will find a place in your house and in your hearts.

Fr. George Puthenpura, C.Ss.R.

Rev. Thomas M. Santa, C.Ss.R.
President and Publisher
Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer
Liguori Publication, USA

Message

Friends of our Redeemer,

There is a richness in these pages that I understand as "unexpected blessing."

When I use this Companion as my daily helper I expect to be blessed by the Word of God in the sacred scriptures. I expect to be blessed by the psalms and inspired words that are collected in this daily Companion for spiritual growth. And, of course, I expect to be blessed when I open this daily Companion during the time of sacred liturgy or private prayer. It leads and guides me to a deeper awareness of the Lord's life and love that is always within me, calling me to something bigger than self. These are examples of "expected blessings." What is unexpected, and that which has blessed me in a way that surprises me, is the power of the discerned and reflected word that the daily reflections offer.

Redemptorist missionaries and preachers, from different corners of the world, have been invited to reflect on their experience of God that speaks to them in the scripture of the day and to offer it to the reader for their reflection. It is a simple dynamic, but it is also profound. It is simple because all humans, even those who seemingly are disconnected from the lived experience that surrounds them, at one time or another, find themselves with at least a basic question that cannot be answered without reflection. It takes effort, concentration, and some level of discipline, to reflect and not just act. At the same time, it is profound because the Spirit of God is not restrained by boundaries, borders, oceans, or mountains and speaks to all people, in all times, and in all places. That rich and profound experience is somehow an unexpected blessing that can be found in these pages. It is a manifestation of God's grace, the abundant and fullness of grace, that the Spirit of God showers upon us, sometimes even without our awareness. It is true that "we live and move" because of the gifts of the Spirit of God.

Open yourself to the blessings that come to you this day, both the expected and unexpected that are essential for life and love. Rub up against the Spirit of God and permit yourself to be loved, formed, and guided this day.

In the Redeeming Christ,

Rev. Thomas M. Santa, C.Ss.R.

Fr. Charles Vijay Kumar, C.Ss.R.
Director and Publisher
Redemptorist Publications India,
Holy Redeemer Foundation

Message

Dear Friends in the Most Holy Redeemer,

With hearts filled with gratitude and hope, we are delighted to present to you the 2027 edition of Breaking the Word – Redemptorist Mass Companion, our third issue. What began as a humble effort to accompany the faithful in prayer and reflection has now grown into a cherished spiritual companion for thousands in different parts of the world.

The 2027 edition comes to you with renewed dedication, enriched reflections, and a wider spirit of collaboration. Rooted in the Redemptorist charism of proclaiming the Gospel ever anew, especially to the most abandoned, this companion seeks not only to explain the Word of God but also to help readers live it with conviction, courage, and compassion. Through daily reflections, prayers, insights from the saints, and practical spiritual guidance, we hope this volume will continue to nourish hearts throughout the liturgical year.

This year's edition is also a beautiful sign of international collaboration within the Redemptorist family. Thirty-three Redemptorists from across the globe - from India, USA, Italy, Poland, South Africa, Singapore, Malaysia - have contributed to the daily reflections for this edition. This growing spirit of unity reminds us that the Gospel transcends borders and cultures, calling all of us into deeper communion and shared mission.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our editorial team, Fr. George Puthenpura, C.Ss.R., Fr. Assisi Saldanha, C.Ss.R., and Fr. Juventius Andrade, C.Ss.R., who continue to shape this publication with wisdom and clarity. We are also grateful for the additional editorial assistance offered by Fr. Anthony Frank, C.Ss.R., Fr. Rakesh Mathias, C.Ss.R., and Fr. Raja Vijayanand, C.Ss.R.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to the Core Team who carried forward this mission with remarkable dedication and commitment: Fr. Ginu Cletus, C.Ss.R., Rohit Singh Deo, and Felicia Joseph, together with Fr. Sandeep Menezes, Sreya Urs, Roshini Mathew, Sindhu Joseph, Reene Joseph, Sapna Joseph, and Ande Bhavan Deep. We are grateful to our graphic designing team - Prince Vijayan, Anabelle Pinto & Rose Wilson - and all others who were a great support behind the scenes. Your silent and tireless efforts have helped bring this companion into the hands of countless faithful.

We also remain deeply thankful to Fr. Edward Joseph, C.Ss.R., our Provincial, and to the Provincial Council for their continued encouragement, trust, and unwavering support for this ministry of evangelization through the media apostolate and publications.

Together, as pilgrims of hope, may we continue to break open the Word, live the Gospel with joy, and become instruments of God's redeeming love for the life of the world.

Fr. Charles Vijay Kumar, C.Ss.R.

BASIC CATHOLIC PRAYERS

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,(...) who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. **Amen.**

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. **Amen.**

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. **Amen.**

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of Grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. **Amen.**

The Angelus

L : The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary:

R : And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary ...

L : Behold the handmaid of the Lord:

R : Be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary ...

L : And the Word was made Flesh:

R : And dwelt among us. Hail Mary ...

L : Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God:

R : That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Regina Coeli (O Queen of Heaven)

V : Queen of Heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.

R : For He, whom you did merit to bear, Alleluia.

V : Has risen as He said. Alleluia.

R : Pray for us to God. Alleluia.

V : Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary. Alleluia.

R : For the Lord is truly risen, Alleluia.

Let us pray

O God, Who by the Resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, has mercifully given joy to the world, grant we beseech You, that through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful.O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. **Amen.**

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God, in three Divine Persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit; I believe that your Divine Son became man, died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches because you who have revealed them, can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Act of Hope

O My God, relying on your infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Lord, grant me to be with You forever.

Act of Charity

O my God! I love you, above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because you are all good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbour as myself, for the love of you. I forgive all who have offended me and I ask pardon of all whom I have offended. Lord, grant that I may love you more and more.

Come Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.O God, who illumine the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may seek what is true, love what is good and ever-rejoice in His consolation, Through Christ Our Lord. **Amen.**

Breathe in Me, Holy Spirit

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. **Amen.**

Prayer to the Guardian Angel

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide. **Amen.**

Prayer Before Meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these, your gifts, which we are about to receive from your kindness, through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer After Meals

We give you thanks, almighty God, for all your benefits, which we have received from your kindness through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer Before Works or Study

Guide, we beseech you O Lord, our actions by Your holy inspirations, and help us to carry them on with Your gracious assistance, that every prayer, work and study of ours may always begin from You, and through You be happily ended. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer On a Birthday

O God, I thank You for giving me another year of life. I thank You for all the people who have remembered me today, and who have sent me cards, and letters and good wishes and presents. I thank You for everything which I have been enabled by You to do and to be in the past year. I thank You for all the experiences of the past years; for times of success which will always be happy memories, for times of failure which remind me of my own weakness and of my need of You; for times of joy when the sun was shining; for times of sorrow which drove me to You. **Amen.**

Prayer for One's Vocation

Lord Jesus Christ, You know that I must decide on my vocation in life. You also know what that vocation should be. Help me to choose that path which suits my tastes and my talents and Your plan for me. Guide me and give me strength to follow Your guidance; help me to choose not what is selfish, but what is generous. Grant me faith in myself and the gifts You have bestowed on me. Above all grant me supreme faith in You. May I always say with St. Paul, "I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me. **Amen.**

Prayer for People in Stress (Serenity Prayer)

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change...
Courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Prayer of Teenagers

Dear Jesus, You once lived through these puzzling teenage years like us. Teach us how to guide our actions that each day may prove that You are one with us. We teenagers are anxious to be pure and upright youth. Knowing of your love and kindness, we now pray that all may see a lack of love is the chief reason for much of our crime and misery. Grant us patience, love and understanding shown and shared, from day to day, and peace and happiness will harvest all along our "teenage" way! Help our parents, guide our teachers from Your heavenly home. Let us grasp Your hand in friendship, draw us closely to Your side. Courage, strength in faith deep rooted will be ours, with You as guide.

Prayer of the Youth

Lord Jesus, redeemer, brother and friend, I believe that You are alive and that You want me to be alive! You were yourself young, You showed great love for the young, and the Gospels are filled with Your encounters with the young. You touched and transformed the lives of the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Nain, the rich young man, the young apostle John and so many other young women and men disciples. Touch and transform my life by Your Holy Spirit. Guide me through my growing and formative years to embrace what is good and shun what is evil. Teach me to live with meaning and purpose. Grant me the gift of purity of mind and body. Guard me from all temptations of lust, of pride, of discouragement and despair. Make a beacon of hope to this wounded world. Help me to be a joyful witness to Your redeeming presence to the young and the old. Help me to honour my parents and elders with a love that is grateful and sincere. Fill my life with virtuous friendships so that, together with my friends, we may grow in faith and strength of character. Grant me wisdom, prudence and discernment in matters of money and relationships, vocation and career. Above all, dear Jesus, grant that I may love You with every beat of my heart and, with every breath that I take, may I treasure Your friendship above all else. **Amen.**

Prayer for Those in Temptation

Let me not deceive myself.
I know what I am considering is wrong.
Let me not be swept away by its immediate attraction.
God the Father, watch over me.
Christ our Lord, strengthen me.
The Holy Spirit, live in me. **Amen.**

Prayer for Students

Father of Light and Wisdom, thank You for giving me a mind that can know and a heart that can love. Help me to keep learning every day of my life - no matter what the subject may be. Let me be convinced that all knowledge leads to You and let me know how to find You and love You in all things You have made. Encourage me when the studies are difficult and when I am tempted to give up. Enlighten me when my brain is slow and help me to grasp the truth held out to me. Grant me the grace to put my knowledge to use in building the kingdom of God on earth so that I may enter the Kingdom of God in Heaven.

A Prayer for the Pope

Father of Providence, look with love on our Pope, Your appointed successor to Saint Peter on whom You built Your Church. May he be the visible center and foundation of our unity in faith and love. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Prayer for the Sick

Dear Jesus, Divine Physician and Healer of the sick, we turn to You in this time of illness. O dearest comforter of the troubled, alleviate our worry and sorrow with Your gentle love, and grant us the grace and strength to accept this burden. Dear God, we place our worries in Your hands. We place our sick under Your care and humbly ask that You restore Your servant to health again. Above all, grant us the grace to acknowledge Your holy will and know that whatsoever You do, You do for the love of us. **Amen.**

Prayer for Married Couples

Almighty and eternal God, You blessed the union of married couples so that they might reflect the union of Christ with his Church: look with kindness on them. May every married man and woman build their home into a genuine school of love and a vibrant sanctuary of life. Renew their marriage covenant, fill their hearts with your love through the Holy Spirit, and strengthen their bond of peace so that, with their children, they may always rejoice in the gift of your blessing. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer for Families

God, Our Father, loving and merciful, from whom every family takes its name, who sent Your Son, Jesus, to become part of a human family, bring together and keep all families in perfect unity in the Holy Spirit. We ask You, Lord, to protect and watch over all families, so that in the strength of Your grace we may enjoy lasting prosperity, and possess the priceless gift of Your peace.

Keep quarrels and bitterness far away from us. May we love one another as You love each one. Teach us to see Jesus in every member of the family, especially in those who are most in need. And for our occasional failures may we forgive one another just as You always forgive us. Help us to pray together and to stay together through our joys and sorrows. May the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus make our hearts humble and empower us to carry out our family duties with holy dedication. May the faith, mutual love and fidelity of parents set a good example. May they care for each child with genuine love and respect. Instill in each child a sense of filial gratitude and honour towards their parents. Fill them with an awareness of their own dignity and worth, so that they may grow to defend and respect that same dignity in others.

Help each member of our families to grow in mature interdependence and joyful service to the Church and society. May the love, joy, peace and hospitality of our families be a sign of Your presence both here and in the hereafter, and a witness to the Church alive in every home. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. **Amen.**

Prayer for the Dying

Most Merciful Jesus, lover of souls, I pray You, by the agony of Your most Sacred Heart, and by the sorrows of Your Immaculate Mother, to wash in Your Most Precious Blood the sinners of the world who are now in their agony, and who will die today. Heart of Jesus, once in agony, have mercy on the dying. **Amen.**

Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory

O gentle Heart of Jesus, ever present in the Blessed Sacrament, ever consumed with burning love for the poor captive souls in Purgatory, have mercy on them. Be not severe in Your judgements, but let some drops of Your precious Blood fall upon the devouring flames. And, Merciful Saviour, send Your angels to conduct them to a place of refreshment, light and peace. **Amen.**

How to Pray the Rosary

Make the Sign of the Cross and pray the Apostles' Creed
Pray the Our Father
Pray three Hail Mary's for Faith, Hope, and Charity
Pray the Glory Be
Announce the First Mystery and then pray the "Our Father" and 10 "Hail Mary's" while meditating on the Mystery
Pray the "Glory Be" and pray the "O My Jesus" prayer requested by Mary at Fatima. (Announce the next mystery and repeat this for all 4 mysteries)
Pray the closing prayers: the "Hail Holy Queen" and "Final Prayer" Make the "Sign of the Cross"
Sing a Hymn to Mary.

PRAY THE ROSARY WITH THE REDEMPTORISTS

SCAN ME	SCAN ME	SCAN ME	SCAN ME
Joyful Mysteries	Sorrowful Mysteries	Glorious Mysteries	Luminous Mysteries

The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Joyful Mysteries (Mon & Sat)

1. **The Annunciation of Our Lord:** And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David. **(Luke 1:31-32)**
2. **The Visitation:** And she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." **(Luke 1:42 & 45)**
3. **The Nativity of Jesus:** And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. **(Luke 2: 6-7)**
4. **The Presentation in the Temple:** And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. **(Luke 2: 22)**
5. **The Finding of Jesus in the Temple**: After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. **(Luke 2: 46-47)**

The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tue & Fri)

1. **The Agony in the Garden:** Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and He said to His disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." And going a little farther He fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." **(Matt 26: 36 & 39)**

POPULAR REDEMPTORIST PRAYERS

Prayer to the Holy Spirit by St. Alphonsus

Most Holy Spirit, the divine Helper, Father of the poor, comforter of the afflicted, light of hearts, sanctifier of souls; behold me prostrate in your presence. I adore You with profound homage: I bless You a thousand times, and with the angels who stand before Your throne, I also say: “Holy, holy, holy”. I firmly believe that You are eternal, of one substance with the Father and the divine Son. I hope in Your goodness that You will deign to save and sanctify my soul. I love You, O divine Love, with all my affections above all the things of this world, because You are infinite goodness, alone worthy of all love.

And since in my ingratitude and blindness to Your holy inspirations, I have so often offended You by sins, with tears in my eyes I beg Your pardon more for having offended you, the supreme good, than for any other evil.

I offer You this most cold heart of mine, and I pray You to pierce it with a ray of Your light, and with a spark of Your fire, which shall melt the hard ice of my iniquities.

You who filled the soul of the most holy Mary with immense graces, and inflamed the hearts of the apostles with holy zeal, inflame, I beseech You, my heart also with Your love.

You are the divine Spirit; give me courage against all evil spirits.

You are fire; enkindle me with Your love.

You are light; enlighten my mind with the knowledge of eternal things.

You are the dove; give me innocence of life.

You are the gentle breeze; disperse the storms of my passions.

You are the tongue; teach me how to bless You always.

You are the Cloud; shelter me under the shadow of Your protection.

And lastly, You are the giver of all heavenly gifts; animate me, I beseech You, with Your grace; sanctify me with Your love; enlighten me with Your wisdom; adopt me by Your goodness as Your child and save me in Your infinite mercy; so that I may ever bless You, praise You, and love You first during this life on earth, and then in heaven for all eternity. **Amen.**

Prayer for Five Graces by St. Alphonsus

Eternal Father, Your Son has promised that You would grant all the graces we ask of You in His name. Trusting in this promise, and in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, I ask of You for the following graces:

First, I ask pardon for all offenses I have committed, for which I am sorry with all my heart, because I have offended Your infinite goodness.

Second, I ask for Your divine light, which will enable me to see the things of earth as You see them, and also to see in them Your infinite greatness and goodness.

Third, I ask for a share in Your love, so that I can detach myself from all creatures, especially from myself, and love only Your holy will.

Fourth, grant me the grace to have confidence in the merits of Jesus Christ and in the intercession of Mary.

Fifth, I ask for the grace of perseverance knowing that whenever I call on You for assistance, You will answer my call and come to my aid; I fear only that I will neglect to turn to You in time of need, and thus bring myself to ruin.

Grant me the grace to pray always, O Eternal Father, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Visit to the Blessed Scrament by St. A;phonsus

My Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you are really here in this sacrament. Night and day you remain here compassionate and loving. You call, you wait for, you welcome, everyone who comes to visit you.

Unimportant though I am, I adore you. I thank you for all the wonderful graces you have given me. But I thank you especially for having given me yourself in this sacrament, for having asked your own Mother to mother me, for having called me here to talk to you.
I am here before you today to do three things: to thank you for these precious gifts, to make up for all the disrespect that you receive in this sacrament from those who offend you, to adore you everywhere in the world where you are present in this living bread but are left abandoned and unloved.
My Jesus, I love you with all my heart. I know I have displeased you often in the past - I am sorry. With your help I promise never to do it again. I am only a miserable sinner, but I consecrate myself to you completely. I give you my will, my love, my desires, everything I own. From now on do what you please with me. All I ask is that you love me, that you keep me faithful to the end of my life. I ask for the grace to do your will exactly as you want it done. I pray for the souls in purgatory - especially for those who were close to you in this sacrament and close to your Mother Mary. I pray for every soul hardened in sin. My Saviour, I unite my love to the love of your divine heart, and I offer them both together to your Father. I beg him to accept this offering in your name. **Amen.**

Prayer for Redemptorist Vocations

God, we thank You for the blessings You have given us in Christ our Redeemer. Let Your Spirit overshadow Your people, making Your gentle invitation heard in many hearts. Lord Jesus Christ, You have shaped St. Alphonsus in the spirit of apostolic love and made him, in Your Church, a shepherd of poor people and people in need of spiritual help. We ask You, through his intercession raise in our homeland numerous vocations to priestly, religious and missionary life. Endow the Redemptorist Congregation that he founded with many good vocations that today, and in the future, they may bring Your abundant redemption to the poor and abandoned. You who live and reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

Prayer before the Holy Eucharist

I draw near, loving Lord Jesus Christ, to the table of Your most delightful banquet in fear and trembling, a sinner, presuming not upon my own merits, but trusting rather in Your goodness and mercy. I have a heart and body defiled by many offences, a mind and tongue over which I have kept no good watch. Therefore, O loving God, O awesome Majesty, I turn in my misery, caught in snares, to You the fountain of mercy, hastening to You for healing, flying to You for protection; and while I do not look forward to having You as Judge, I long to have you as Saviour. To You, O Lord, I display my wounds, to you I uncover my shame. I am aware of my many and great sins, for which I fear, but I hope in Your mercies, which are without number. Look upon me, then, with eyes of mercy, Lord Jesus Christ, eternal King, God and Man, crucified for mankind. Listen to me, as I place my hope in You, have pity on me, full of miseries and sins, You, who will never cease to let the fountain of compassion flow. Hail, O Saving Victim, offered for me and for the whole human race on the wood of the cross. Hail, O noble and precious Blood, flowing from the wounds of Jesus Christ, my crucified Lord, and washing away the sins of all the world. Remember, Lord, Your creature, whom You redeemed by Your Blood. I am repentant of my sins; I desire to put right what I have done. Take from me, therefore, most merciful Father, all my iniquities and sins, so that, purified in mind and body, I may worthily taste the Holy of Holies. And grant that this sacred foretaste of Your Body and Blood which I, though unworthy, intend to receive may be the remission of my sins, the perfect cleansing of my faults, the banishment of shameful thoughts, and the rebirth of right sentiments; and may it encourage a wholesome and effective performance of deeds pleasing to You and be a most firm defense of body and soul against the snares of the enemies. **Amen.**

01 FRIDAY JANUARY

Mary, the Holy Mother Of God

Numbers 6:22–27

"They shall put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

Psalm 67:2–3, 5, 6, 8

R. O God, be gracious and bless us.

O God, be gracious and bless us and let your face shed its light upon us. So will your ways be known upon earth and all nations learn your salvation. R.

Let the nations be glad and shout for joy, with uprightness you rule the peoples; you guide the nations on earth. R.

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. May God still give us his blessing that all the ends of the earth may revere him. R.

Galatians 4:4–7

"God sent forth his Son, born of woman."

Brethren: When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Acclamation: Hebrews 1:1–2

Alleluia. Alleluia. At many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son. Alleluia.

Gospel: Luke 2:16-21

"They found Mary and Joseph, and the baby…and at the end of eight days, he was called Jesus."

At that time: The shepherds went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Reflection

Why do we call Mary, the "Mother of God?" Can we not just simply refer to her as the "Mother of Jesus?" What is the difference between the two titles? If we could go back in time, we would see that there was much debate in the early centuries of the Church about how we should address this humble servant of the Lord.

Mary was and is Jesus' first and closest disciple. All she wishes to do is to draw others closer to her Son. This desire is how to

correctly understand her Son's true identity. For this reason, the Church has often used Mary as a way of explaining who Jesus is. She has used Mary, in other words, as a way of clarifying the true nature of Jesus' personhood.

Such was the case in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, when Nestorius (c. 386-c. 451), the Archbishop of Constantinople, claimed that Mary had given birth to Jesus' human but not His divine nature. He preferred to say that Mary was the Mother of Christ (Christotokos) but not the Mother of God (Theotokos).

The problem with Nestorius's position is that it tends to give Jesus a split rather than a uniquely integrated personhood and denigrates the mystery of the Incarnation in the process. The only way we can make sense of his claim is by saying that Jesus was either adopted by God after His birth or had two separated identities: one human and another divine.

The controversy went on for decades and was finally resolved at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D.) when Mary was declared to be the Mother of God (Theotokos). That is, she gave birth to the Word of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. This definition concurs with the insight of the author of the Letter to the Hebrews centuries earlier that Jesus was like us in all things but sin (Heb 4:15).

Some of us may be thinking that this definition is nothing but an obscure theological subtlety with no direct bearing on the lives of ordinary Christians. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth! A century before the Council of Ephesus, St. Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296-373) coined the memorable phrase, "God became human so humanity might become divine." The point of this saying is that our divinization, our participation in Jesus' resurrected and glorified humanity, totally depends on God having become fully human in every sense of the word; not on some watered-down theological compromise that might satisfy the mind in some respects but does not do justice to the mystery of the Incarnation itself. Jesus was either fully God and fully human, or He was not. Giving Mary the title, "Mother of God" safeguards the full divinity and humanity of Christ and thus assures us in our hope to one day participate fully in Jesus' divinized humanity.

What does this mean for us? Well, it encourages us to stand in awe of the mystery of the Incarnation. Think about it. The God of the universe decided to enter His creation and engage it in such a way that we sinful human beings could relate to His divinity in and through His humanity. It also highlights the important role played by Mary in God's redemptive plan for humanity. By giving birth to God in the fulness of time, she is now revered the fairest of her race and most blessed among women. What is more, because she is Mother of God, she is also Mother of the Church, as well as your Mother and my Mother. What more can we say? Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

Saint of the Day — ***Mary, the Holy Mother of God***

The title of Theotokos or Mother of God was attributed to Mary at the Council of Ephesus in AD 431. It acknowledges her obedience to God's will and her full consent to God's plan for her role in the salvation of mankind. Mary is paradigmatic of how God chooses the weak and the lowly to fulfil His plans for us. During this feast, we honour Mary as the Mother of God and worship her son our Lord Jesus who is fully divine, the Son of God, and fully human as the son of Mary.

Quote

"Mary's greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify GOD, not herself."
- Pope Benedict XVI

Who's who In the Bible

SCAN ME

02 SATURDAY JANUARY

Weekday of Christmas Time

1 John 2:22–28

"What you heard from the beginning abides in you."

Beloved: Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life. I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie— just as it has taught you, abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4

R. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. R.

The Lord has made known his salvation, has shown his deliverance to the nations. He has remembered his merciful love and his truth for the house of Israel. R.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song, and sing out your praise. R.

Acclamation: Hebrews 1:1–2

Alleluia. Alleluia. At many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son. Alleluia.

Gospel: John 1:19–28

"He who comes after me."

This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord', as the prophet Isaiah said." (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Reflection

Anyone who familiar with law courts and court proceedings will be aware that what is valued there are the law, witnesses and evidence. The court doesn't pay much attention to feelings and sympathies. Perhaps that is why, it is said, "The Law is blind."

The Gospel of John focuses, from the beginning to the end, on the testimonies and witnesses about Jesus so that the people may come to believe in Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah. The words 'witness', 'testify' and 'bear witness' appear about 47 times in John's Gospel. Today's Gospel passage is the testimony of John the Baptist concerning himself and Jesus. The Baptist identifies himself with 'the voice in the wilderness, exhorting the people to prepare the way for the Lord, who is Jesus, the true Messiah of the world. This faith in Jesus would bring eternal life to us. The first reading speaks about the 'antichrist'- people who are against Jesus and His teaching. They conveniently distort the authentic message, to suit one's own ideas and conveniences. 'Sensus fidelium'- fidelity to 'the faith of the Fathers' is of utmost importance in understanding the correct and true faith.

It was the late, saintly, Pope, John Paul II who said, 'Today the world listens more to witnesses than to teachers; if they listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.' How authentic are we as witnesses of Jesus and His Gospel- in our homes, in our parishes, in society and places of our work? It is easy to teach and preach, but hard to practice. Are we credible witnesses of the Lord whose words are substantiated by our deeds and a witness of life? If we fail to practice what we preach, our preaching and testimonies will be rejected by the world as 'fake news'.

Saint of the Day

St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen

Born in 340 AD, St. Basil is called the Father of Eastern Monasticism. He was responsible for the famous Rule of St. Basil, namely manual labour, study, and prayer which are considered as guidelines for monastic living. He lived in ascetic austerity. He is counted among the three great ecumenical doctors along with St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory Nazianzen. His outstanding treatise on the Holy Spirit remains unrivalled.

St. Gregory Nazianzen was a friend of St. Basil the Great. He is known for his treatise on priestly office and his theological discourses on the Holy Trinity.

Quote

"Grace is given not to them who speak [their faith] but to those who live their faith."

- St. Gregory Nazianzen

Who's who In the Bible

SCAN ME