



DOMINICA SEPTUAGESIMA

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

ASPÉRGES

Aspérges me. Dómine, hyssópo, et mundábor: lavábis me, et super nivem dealbábor.

Miserére mei, Deus, secúndum magnam misericórdiam tuam. P. Glória Patri, et Fílio, et Spirítui Sancto. S. Sicut erat in princípio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen.

Aspérges me. Dómine, hyssópo, et mundábor: lavábis me, et super nivem dealbábor.

P. Osténde nobis, Dómine, misericórdiam tuam.

S. Et salutáre tuum da nobis.

P. Dómine, exáudi oratióem meam.

S. Et clamor meus ad te véniat.

P. Dóminus vobíscum.

S. Et cum spírítu tuo.

P. Orémus. Exáudi nos, Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, et míttre dignéris sanctum Angelum tuum de cælis, qui custódiat, fóveat, próteget, vísitet, atque deféndat omnes habitántes in hoc habitáculo. Per Christum Dóminum nostrum. S. Amen

INTROIT *Psalm 17. 5, 6, 7*

Circumdedérunt me gémitus mortis, dolóres inférni circumdedérunt me: et in tribulatióne mea invocávi Dóminum, et exaudivit de templo sancto suo vocem meam. *Ps. 17. 2, 3* Díligam te, Dómine, fortitúdo mea: Dóminus firmaméntum meum, et refúgium meum, et liberátor meus. V. Glória Patri. Circumdedérunt..

COLLECT

Preces pópuli tui, quaésumus, Dómine, cleménte exáudi: ut, qui juste pro peccátis nostris affligimur, pro tui nóminis glória misericórditer liberémur. Per Dóminum.

Iwiwisik mo ako, O Panginoon, ng hisopo, at ako ay malilinis; Huhugasan mo ako, at ako ay magiging mas maputi kaysa sa niyebe.

Maawa ka sa akin, O Diyos, ayon sa Iyong dakilang awa. P. Luwalhati sa Ama, at sa Anak, at sa Espiritu Santo. Gaya noong una, ngayon, at kailanman, sanlibutang walang katapusan. Amen. Iwiwisik mo ako, O Panginoon, ng hisopo, at ako ay malilinis; Huhugasan mo ako, at ako ay magiging mas maputi kaysa sa niyebe.

P. Ipakita mo sa amin, O Panginoon, ang Iyong awa.

S. At ipagkaloob Mo sa amin ang Iyong pagliligtas.

P. O Panginoon, dinggin mo ang aking panalangin.

S. At dumating nawa sa Iyo ang aking daing.

P. Sumainyo ang Panginoon.

S. At sa iyong espiritu.

P. Manalangin tayo. Dinggin mo kami, O banal na Panginoon, makapangyarihang Ama, walang hanggang Diyos, at tiyak na ipadala ang Iyong banal na Anghel mula sa langit, upang bantayan, pahalagahan, protektahan, dalawin at ipagtanggol ang lahat ng nagtitipon sa lugar na ito: Sa pamamagitan ni Kristo na aming Panginoon. S. Amen

Mga Awit 18:5, 6 Nakapaligid sa akin ang panganib ng kamatayan, nakaumang sa akin ang bitag ng libingan. Kaya't si Yahweh ay aking tinawag; sa aking paghihirap, humingi ng habag. Mula sa kanyang Templo, tinig ko ay narinig, pinakinggan niya ang aking paghibik. Ps. 18:2 Si Yahweh ang aking batong tanggulan, ang aking Tagapagligtas, Diyos at kanlungan, tagapag-ingat ko at aking sanggalang. 3 Kay Yahweh ako'y tumatawag, sa aking mga kaaway ako'y inililigtas. Karapat-dapat purihin si Yahweh! V. Glory be.

Magiliw na dinggin, isinasamo namin sa Iyo, O Panginoon, ang mga panalangin ng Iyong mga tao, na kami, na makatarungang pinahihirapan para sa aming mga kasalanan, ay nawa'y maawa sa kaluwalhatian ng Iyong pangalan. Sa pamamagitan ng ating Panginoon.

EPISTLE 1 Corinthians 9. 24-27; 10. 1-5

Fratres: Nescítis quod ii qui in stádio currunt, omnes quidem currunt, sed unus áccipit bravíum? Sic cúrrite, ut comprehendátis. Omnis autem qui in agóne conténdit, ab ómnibus se ábstinet: et illi quidem ut corruptíbilem corónam accípiant: nos autem incorrúptam. Ego ígitur sic curro, non quasi in incértum: sic pugno, non quasi áerem vérberans: sed castígo corpus meum, et in servitútem rédigo: ne forte cum áliis prædicáverim, ipse réprobus effíciar. Nolo enim vos ignoráre, fratres, quóniam patres nostri omnes sub nube fuérunt, et omnes mare transiérunt, et omnes in Móyse baptizáti sunt in nube, et in mari: et omnes eámdem escam spiritálem manducáverunt, et omnes eúmdem potum spiritálem bibérunt: (bibébant autem de spiritáli, consequénte eos, petra: petra autem erat Christus): sed non in plúribus eórum beneplácitum est Deo.

GRADUAL Psalm 9. 10, 11, 19, 20

Adjútor in opportunitátibus, in tribulatióne: sperent in te, qui novérunt te: quóniam non derelínquis quæréntes te, Dómine. V. Quóniam non in finem oblívio erit páuperis: patiéntia páuperum non períbit in ætérnum: exsúrge, Dómine, non præváleat homo.

TRACT Psalm 129. 1-4

De profúndis clamávi ad te, Dómine: Dómine, exáudi vocem meam. V. Fiant aures tuæ intendétes in oratióne servi tui. V. Si iniquitátes observáveris, Dómine: Dómine, quis sustinébit? V. Quia apud te propitiátio est, et propter legem tuam sustínui te, Dómine.

GOSPEL St. Matthew 20. 1-16

In illo témpore: Dixit Jesus discíplulis suis parábolam hanc: Símile est regnum cælórum hómíni patrifamílias, qui éxiit primo mane condúcere operários in víneam suam. Conventióne autem facta cum operáriis ex denário diúrno, misit eos in víneam suam. Et egréssus circa horam tértiam, vidit álios stantes in foro otiósos, et dixit illis: Ite et vos in víneam meam, et quod justum fúerit, dabo vobis. Illi autem abiérunt. Íterum autem éxiit circa sextam et nonam horam: et fecit simíliter. Circa undécimam vero éxiit, et invénit álios stantes, et dicit illis: Quid hic statis tota die otiósi? Dicunt

Mga kapatid, Alam ninyong ang mga kalahok sa paligsahan ay tumatakpong lahat, ngunit iisa lamang ang nagkakamit ng gantimpala! Kaya't pagbutihin ninyo ang pagtakbo upang kamtan ninyo ang gantimpala. Lahat ng manlalarong nagsasanay ay may disiplina sa lahat ng bagay upang magkamit ng isang gantimpalang panandalian lamang. Ngunit ang gantimpalang hinahangad natin ay panghabang panahon. Hindi ako tumatakbo nang walang patutunguhan at hindi ako sumusuntok sa hangin. Subalit pinahihirapan ko ang aking katawan at sinusupil ito, upang sa gayo'y hindi ako maalis sa paligsahan pagkatapos kong mangaral sa iba. Mga kapatid, nais kong malaman ninyo ang nangyari sa ating mga ninuno noong panahon ni Moises. Silang lahat ay naliliman ng ulap sa kanilang paglalakbay at sa pagtawid sa Dagat na Pula. Sa gayon, nabautismuhan silang lahat[a] sa ulap at sa dagat bilang mga tagasunod ni Moises. Kumain silang lahat ng iisang pagkaing espirituwal, at uminom din ng iisang inuming espirituwal, sapagkat uminom sila sa batong espirituwal na sumubaybay sa kanila, at ang batong iyon ay si Cristo. Gayunman, hindi kinalugdan ng Diyos ang marami sa kanila, kaya't nagkalat ang kanilang mga bangkay sa ilang.

GRADUAL: Isang katulong sa takdang panahon sa kapighatian: magtiwala sila sa Iyo na nakakakilala sa Iyo: sapagka't hindi mo pinabayaan ang nagsisihanap sa Iyo, Oh Panginoon. V. Sapagka't ang dukha ay hindi malilimutan hanggang sa wakas: ang pagtitiis ng dukha ay hindi mawawala magpakailan man: bumangon ka, Oh Panginoon, huwag manaig ang tao.

TRACT Mula sa kalaliman ay dumaing ako sa Iyo, Oh Panginoon: Panginoon, dinggin mo ang aking tinig. V. Maging matulungin ang Iyong mga tainga sa panalangin ng Iyong lingkod. V. Kung ikaw, O Panginoon, ay magtatanda ng mga kasamaan: Panginoon, sino ang tatayo? V. Sapagka't sa Iyo ay may mahabaging pagpapatawad, at dahil sa Iyong kautusan ay naghintay ako sa Iyo, Oh Panginoon.

Ang kaharian ng langit ay maitutulad sa isang taong lumabas nang maagang-maaga upang kumuha ng manggagawa para sa kanyang ubasan. Nang magkasundo na sila sa upa na isang salaping pilak[a] sa maghapon, ang mga manggagawa ay pinapunta niya sa kanyang ubasan. Lumabas siyang muli nang mag-aalas nuwebe ng umaga at nakakita siya ng iba pang tatayu-tayo lamang sa palengke. Sinabi niya sa kanila, 'Pumunta rin kayo at magtrabaho sa aking ubasan, at bibigyan ko kayo ng karampatang upa.' At pumunta nga sila. Lumabas na naman siya nang mag-aalas dose ng tanghali at nang mag-aalas tres ng hapon, at ganoon din ang ginawa niya. Nang mag-aalas singko na ng hapon, siya'y lumabas muli at nakakita pa ng mga ibang wala ring ginagawa. Sinabi niya sa kanila, 'Bakit tatayu-tayo lang kayo dito sa buong maghapon?'

ei: Quia nemo nos condúxit. Dicit illis: Ite et vos in víneam meam. Cum sero autem factum esset, dicit dóminus víneæ procuratóri suo: Voca operários, et redde illis mercédem, incípiens a novíssimis usque ad primos. Cum veníssent ergo qui circa undécimam horam vénerant, accepérunt síngulos denários. Veniéntes autem et primi, arbitráti sunt quod plus essent acceptúri: accepérunt autem et ipsi síngulos denários. Et accipiéntes murmurábant advérsus patremfamílias, dicéntes: Hi novíssimi una hora fecérunt, et pares illos nobis fecísti, qui portávimus pondus diéi et æstus. At ille respóndens uni eórum, dixit: Amíce, non fácio tibi injúriam: nonne ex denário convenísti mecum? Tolle quod tuum est, et vade: volo autem et huic novíssimo dare sicut et tibi. Aut non licet mihi quod volo fácere? an óculus tuus nequam est, quia ego bonus sum? Sic erunt novíssimi primi, et primi novíssimi. Multi enim sunt vocáti, pauci vero elécti.

OFFERTORY Psalm 91. 2

Bonum est confitéri Dómino, et psállere nómini tuo, Altíssime.

SECRET

Munéribus nostris, quaésumus, Dómine, precibúsq; suscéptis: et cæléstibus nos munda mystériis, et cleménter exáudi. Per Dóminum.

PREFACE OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

Vere dignum et justum est, aéquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper et ubíque grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus. Qui cum unigénito Fílio tuo, et Spíritu Sancto, unus es Deus, unus es Dóminus: non in uníus singularitáte persónæ, sed in uníus Trinitáte substántiæ. Quod enim de tua glória, revelánte te, crédimus, hoc de Fílio tuo, hoc de Spíritu Sancto, sine differéntia discretiónis sentímus. Ut in confessióne veræ sempiternaéque Deitátis, et in persónis proprietas, et in esséntia únitas, et in majestáte adorétur æquálitas. Quam laudant Ángeli, atque Archángeli, Chérubim quoque ac Séraphim: qui non cessant clamáre quotídie, una voce dicéntes:

COMMUNION ANTIPHON Psalm 30. 17, 18 Lumíwanag ang Iyong mukha sa Iyong lingkod, at Illúmina fáciem tuam super servum tuum, et *iligtas mo ako sa Iyong kagandahang-loob: huwag akong mapahiya, Oh Panginoon, sapagka't ako'y tumawag sa Iyo.*

'Wala po kasing magbigay sa amin ng trabaho,' sagot nila. Kaya't sinabi niya, 'Kung gayon, pumunta rin kayo sa aking ubasan.' "Nang gumagabi na, sinabi ng may-ari ng ubasan sa kanyang katiwala, 'Tawagin mo na ang mga manggagawa at bayaran mo sila magmula sa huli hanggang sa unang nagtrabaho.' Ang mga nagsimula nang mag-aalas singko ng hapon ay tumanggap ng tig-iisang salaping pilak. Nang lumapit ang mga nauna, inakala nilang tatanggap sila nang higit doon; ngunit ang bawat isa'y binayaran din ng tig-iisang salaping pilak. Nang magkagayo'y nagreklamo sila sa may-ari ng ubasan. Sinabi nila, 'Isang oras lamang nagtrabaho ang mga ito na huling dumating, samantalang maghapon kaming nagtrabaho at nagtiis sa nakakapasong init ng araw. Bakit naman pinagparepareho ninyo ang aming upa?' Sumagot ang may-ari ng ubasan sa isa sa kanila, 'Kaibigan, hindi kita dinadaya. Hindi ba't pumayag ka sa isang salaping pilak? Kunin mo ang para sa iyo at umalis ka na. Ano sa iyo kung ibig kong bayaran ang nahuli nang tulad ng ibinayad ko sa iyo? Wala ba akong karapatang gawin sa ari-arian ko ang aking maibigan? Kayo ba'y naiinggit dahil ako'y nagmagandang-loob sa iba?' At sinabi ni Jesus, "Ang nahúhulí ay mauuna, at ang nauuna ay mahuhuli.

Mabuti ang magbigay ng papuri sa Panginoon, at umawit sa Iyong pangalan, O Kataas-taasan.

Tanggapin ang aming mga handog at panalangin, kami ay nagsusumamo sa Iyo, O Panginoon, at pareho kaming linisin sa pamamagitan ng makalangit na mga misteryong ito, at magiliw na dinggin kami. Sa pamamagitan ng ating Panginoon.

Tunay na nararapat at makatarungan, tama at para sa ating kaligtasan, na sa lahat ng panahon, at sa lahat ng lugar, ay dapat kaming magpasalamat sa Iyo, O banal na Panginoon, Amang makapangyarihan sa lahat, walang hanggang Diyos. Na, kasama ng Iyong bugtong na Anak, at ng Espiritu Santo, ay isang Diyos, isang Panginoon: hindi sa kaisahan ng iisang Persona, kundi sa Trinidad ng isang Substansya. Sapagkat kung ano ang aming pinaniniwalaan sa pamamagitan ng Iyong paghahayag ng Iyong kaluwalhatian, gayon din ang aming pinaniniwalaan sa Iyong Anak, na siya ring ng Espiritu Santo, nang walang pagkakaiba o paghihiwalay. Upang sa pag-amin ng totoo at walang hanggang pagka-Diyos, ang pagkakaiba sa mga tao, pagkakaisa sa diwa, at pagkakapantay-pantay sa kamahalan. Na pinupuri ng mga anghel at mga arkanghel, gayon din ng mga kerubin, at mga serapin: na hindi humihinto araw-araw na sumisigaw, na may isang tinig na nagsasabi:

POSTCOMMUNION COLLECT

Fidèles tui, Deus, per tua dona firméntur: ut éadem et percipiéndó requírant, et quæréndó sine fine percípiant. Per Dóminum.

Nawa ang Iyong tapat na mga tao, O Diyos, ay palakasin ng Iyong mga kaloob; upang sa pagtanggap sa kanila, ay higit nilang hanapin sila, at sa paghahanap sa kanila, ay tanggapin sila magpakailanman. Sa pamamagitan ng ating Panginoon.

TODAY'S REFLECTIONS

Why is this Sunday called "Septuagesima"?

Because in accordance with the words of the First Council of Orleans, some pious Christian congregations in the earliest ages of the Church, especially the clergy, began to fast seventy days before Easter, on this Sunday, which was therefore called Septuagesima" - the seventieth day. The same is the case with the Sundays following, which are called Sexagesima, Quinquagesima, Quadragesima, because some Christians commenced to fast sixty days, others fifty, others forty days before Easter, until finally, to make it properly uniform, Popes Gregory and Gelasius arranged that all Christians should fast forty days before Easter, commencing with Ash-Wednesday.

Why, from this day until Easter, does the Church omit in her service all joyful canticles, alleluia's, and the Gloria in excelsis etc?

Gradually to prepare the minds of the faithful for the serious time of penance and sorrow; to remind the sinner of the grievousness of his errors, and to exhort him to penance. So the priest appears at the altar in violet, the color of penance, and the front of the altar is covered with a violet curtain. To arouse our sorrow for our sins, and show the need of repentance, the Church in the name of all mankind at the Introit cries with David: The groans of death surrounded me, the sorrows of hell encompassed me: and in my affliction I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice from his holy temple. (Ps. XVII, 5-7.) I will love thee, O Lord, my strength; the Lord is my firmament, and my refuge, and my deliverer. (Fs. XVII. 2-3.) Glory be to the Father, etc.

The Introit describes the fears of death, wherewith Adam and his whole posterity are tormented, in consequence of sin. But, in the midst of all this misery, there is heard a cry of hope, for man is still permitted to ask mercy from his God. God gave man a promise, on the very day of his condemnation:- the sinner needs but to confess his miseries, and the very Lord, against whom he sinned, will become his Deliverer.

In the Collect, the Church acknowledges that her children justly suffer the chastisements, which are the consequences of sin; but she beseeches her divine Lord to send them that Mercy, which delivers from misery.

THE EPISTLE: *“These stirring words of the Apostle deepen the sentiments already produced in us by the sad recollections of which we are this day reminded. He tells us, that this world is a race, wherein all must run but that they alone win the prize, who run well. Let us, therefore, rid ourselves of everything that could impede us, and make us lose our crown. Let us not deceive ourselves: we are never sure, until we reach the goal. Is our conversion more solid than was St. Paul's? Are our good works better done, or more meritorious, than were his? Yet, he assures us, that he was not without the fear that he might perhaps be lost; for which cause, he chastises his body, and keeps it in subjection to the spirit. Man, in his present state, has not the same will for all that is right and just, which Adam had before he sinned, and which, notwithstanding, he abused to his own ruin. We have a bias which inclines us to evil; so that our only means of keeping our*

ground is by sacrificing the flesh to the spirit. To many this is very harsh doctrine; hence, they are sure to fail, - they never can win the prize. Like the Israelites spoken of by our Apostle, they will be left behind to die in the desert, and so lose the Promised Land. Yet, they saw the same miracles that Josue and Caleb saw! So true is it that nothing can make a salutary impression on a heart, which is obstinately bent on fixing all its happiness in the things of this present life; and though it is forced, each day, to own that they are vain, yet each day it returns to them, vainly but determinedly loving them.

The heart, on the contrary, that puts its trust in God, and mans itself to energy by the thought of the divine assistance being abundantly given to him that asks it, - will not flag or faint in the race, and will win the heavenly prize. God's eye is unceasingly on all them that toil and suffer. These are the truths expressed in the Gradual." Dom Guranger OSB

Having exhorted us to penance in the Introit of the Mass, the Church desires to indicate to us, by reading this epistle, the effort we should make to reach the kingdom of heaven by the narrow path (Matt. VII. 13.) of penance and mortification. This St. Paul illustrates by three different examples. By the example of those who in a race run to one point, or in a prize-fight practice and prepare themselves for the victor's reward by the strongest exercise, and by the strictest abstinence from everything that might weaken the physical powers. If to win a laurel-crown that passes away, these will subject themselves to the severest trials and deprivations, how much more should we, for the sake of the heavenly crown of eternal happiness, abstain from those improper desires, by which the soul is weakened, and practice those holy virtues, such as prayer, love of God and our neighbor, patience, to which the crown is promised! Next, by his own example, bringing himself before them as one running a race, and fighting for an eternal crown, but not as one running blindly not knowing whither, or fighting as one who strikes not his antagonist, but the air; on the contrary, with his eyes firmly fixed on the eternal crown, certain to be his who lives by the precepts of the gospel, who chastises his spirit and his body as a valiant champion, with a strong hand, that is, by severest mortification, by fasting and prayer. If St. Paul, notwithstanding the extraordinary graces which he received, thought it necessary to chastise his body that he might not be cast away, how does the sinner expect to be saved, living an effeminate and luxurious life without penance and mortification? St. Paul's third example is that of the Jews who all perished on their journey to the Promised Land, even though God had granted them so many graces; He shielded them from their enemies by a cloud which served as a light to them at night, and a cooling shade by day; He divided the waters of the sea, thus preparing for them a dry passage; He caused manna to fall from heaven to be their food, and water to gush from the rock for their drink. These temporal benefits which God bestowed upon the Jews in the wilderness had a spiritual meaning; the cloud and the sea was a figure of baptism which enlightens the soul, tames the concupiscence of the flesh, and purifies from sin; the manna was a type of the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, the soul's true bread from heaven; the water from the rock, the blood flowing from Christ's wound in the side; and yet with all these temporal benefits which God bestowed upon them, and with all the spiritual graces they were to receive by faith from the coming Redeemer, of the six hundred thousand men who left Egypt only two, Joshua and Caleb, entered the Promised Land. Why? Because they were fickle, murmured so, often against God, and desired the pleasures of the flesh. How much, then, have we need to fear lest we be excluded from the true, happy land, Heaven, if we do not continuously struggle for it, by penance and mortification!

The Tract sends forth our cry to God, and thee cry is from the very depths of our misery. Man is humbled exceedingly by the Fall; but he knows, that God is full of mercy, and that, in his goodness, he punishes our iniquities less than they deserve: were it not so, none of us could hope for pardon.

THE GOSPEL: *“It is of importance, that we should well understand this Parable of the Gospel, and why the Church inserts it in to-day’s Liturgy. Firstly, then, let us recall to mind on what occasion our Saviour spoke this Parable, and what instruction he intended to convey by it to the Jews. He wishes to warn them of the fast approach of the day when their Law is to give way to the Christian Law; and he would prepare their minds against the jealousy and prejudice which might arise in them, at the thought that God was about to form a Covenant with the Gentiles. The Vineyard is the Church in its several periods, from the beginning of the world to the time of God himself coming to dwell among men, and form all true believers into one visible and permanent society. The Morning is the time, from Adam to Noah; the Third Hour begins with Noah and ends with Abraham; the Sixth Hour includes the period which elapsed between Abraham and Moses; and lastly, the Ninth Hour opens with the age of the Prophets, and closes with the Birth of the Saviour. The Messiah came at the Eleventh Hour, when the world seemed to be at the decline of its day. Mercies unprecedented were reserved for this last period, during which, Salvation was to be given to the Gentiles by the preaching of the Apostles. It is by this mystery of Mercy that our Saviour rebukes the Jewish pride. By the selfish murmurings made against the Master of the House by the early Labourers, our Lord signifies the indignation which the Scribes and Pharisees would show at the Gentiles being adopted as God’s children. Then, he shows them how their jealousy would be chastised: Israel, that had laboured before us, shall be rejected for their obduracy of heart, and we Gentiles, the last comers, shall be made first, for we shall be made members of that Catholic Church, which is the Spouse of the Son of God.*”

This is the interpretation of our Parable given by St. Augustine and St. Gregory the Great, and by the generality of the Holy Fathers. But it conveys a second instruction, as we are assured by the two Holy Doctors just named. It signifies the calling given by God to each of us individually, pressing us to labour, during this life, for the Kingdom prepared for us. The Morning is our childhood. The Third Hour, according to time division used by the ancients in counting their day, is sun-rise; it is our youth. The Sixth Hour, by which name they called our mid-day, is manhood. The Eleventh Hour, which immediately preceded sun-set, is old age. The Master of the House calls his Labourers at all these various Hours. They must go that very hour. They that are called in the Morning may not put off their starting for the Vineyard, under pretext of going afterwards, when the Master shall call them later on. Who has told them that they shall live to the Eleventh Hour? They are called at the Third Hour; they may be dead at the Sixth. God will call to the labours of the last hour such as shall be living when that hour comes; but, if we should die at mid-day, that last call will not avail us. Besides, God has not promised us a second call, if we excuse ourselves from the first.” Dom Guranger OSB

In this parable, what is to be understood by the householder, the vineyard, laborers, and the penny?

The householder represents God, who in different ages of the world, in the days of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and finally, in the days of Christ and the apostles, has sought to call men as workmen into His vineyard, the true Church, that they might labor there industriously, and receive the penny of eternal glory.

How and when does God call people?

By inward inspiration, by preachers, confessors, spiritual books, and conversations, etc., in flourishing youth and in advanced age, which periods of life may be understood by the different hours of the day.

What is meant by working in the vineyard?

It means laboring, fighting, suffering for God and His honor, for our own and the salvation of others. As in a vineyard we spade, dig, root out weeds, cut off all that is useless and noxious, manure, plant, and bind up, so in the spiritual vineyard of our soul we must, by frequent meditation on death and hell, by examination of conscience dig up the evil inclinations by their roots, and by true repentance eradicate the weeds of vice, and by mortification, especially by prayer and fasting cut away concupiscence; by the recollection of our sins we must humble ourselves, and amend our life; in place of the bad habits we must plant the opposite virtues and bind our unsteady will to the trellis of the fear of God and of His judgment, that we may continue firm.

How is a vice or bad habit to be rooted up?

A great hatred of sin must be aroused; a fervent desire of destroying sin must be produced in our hearts; the grace of God must be implored without which nothing can be accomplished. It is useful also to read some spiritual book which speaks against the vice. The Sacraments of Penance and of holy Communion should often be received, and some saint who in life had committed the same sin, and afterwards by the grace of God conquered it, should be honored, as Mary Magdalen and St. Augustine who each had the habit of impurity, but with the help of God resisted and destroyed it in themselves; there should be fasting, alms-deeds, or other good works, performed for the same object, and it is of great importance, even necessary, that the conscience should be carefully examined in this regard.

Who are standing idle in the market place?

In the market-place, that is the world, they are standing idle who, however much business they attend to, do not work for God and for their own salvation; for the only necessary employment is the service of God and the working out of our salvation. There are three ways of being idle: doing nothing whatever; doing evil; doing other things than the duties of our position in life and its office require, or if this work is done without a good intention, or not from the love of God. This threefold idleness deprives us of our salvation, as the servant loses his wages if he works not at all, or not according to the will of his master. We are all servants of God, and none of us can say with the laborers in the Vineyard that no man has employed us; for God, when He created us, hired us at great wages, and we must serve Him always as He cares for us at all times; and if, in the gospel, the householder reproaches the workmen, whom no man had hired, for their idleness, what will God one day say to those Christians whom He has placed to work in His Vineyard, the Church, if they have remained idle?

Why do the last comers receive as much as those who worked all day?

Because God rewards not the time or length of the work, but the industry and diligence with which it has been performed. It may indeed happen, that many a one who has served God but for a short time, excels in merits another who has lived long but has not labored as diligently. (Wisd. IV. 8-13.)

What is signified by the murmers of the first workmen when the wages were paid?

As the Jews were the first who were called by God, Christ intended to show that the Gentiles, who were called last, should one day receive the heavenly reward, and that the Jews have no reason to

murmur because God acted not unjustly in fulfilling His promises "to them, and at the same time calling others to the eternal reward. In heaven envy, malevolence and murmuring will find no place. On the contrary, the saints who have long served God wonder at His goodness in converting sinners and those who have served Him but a short time, for these also there will be the same penny, that is, the vision, the enjoyment, and possession of God and His kingdom. Only in the heavenly glory there will be a difference because the divine lips have assured us that each one shall be rewarded according to his works. The murmurs of the workmen and the answer of the householder serve to teach us, that we should not murmur against the merciful proceedings of God towards our neighbor, nor envy him; for envy and jealousy are abominable, devilish vices, hated by God. By the envy of the devil, death came into the world. (Wisd. II. 24.) The envious therefore, imitate Lucifer, but they hurt only themselves, because they are consumed by their envy. "Envy," says St. Basil "is an institution of the serpent, an invention of the devils, an obstacle to piety, a road to hell, the depriver of the heavenly kingdom."

What is meant by: The first. shall be last, and the last shall be first?

This again is properly to be understood of the Jews; for they were the first called, but will be the last in order, as in time, because they responded not to Christ's invitation, received not His doctrine, and will enter the Church only at the end of the world; while, on the contrary, the Gentiles who were not called until after the Jews, will be the first in number as in merit, because the greater part responded and are still responding to the call. Christ, indeed, called all the Jews, but few of them answered, therefore few were chosen. Would that this might not. also come true with regard to Christians whom God has also called, and whom He wishes to save. (I. Tim. II. 4.) Alas! very few live in accordance with their vocation of working in the vineyard of the Lord, and, consequently, do not receive the penny of eternal bliss.

At the Offertory, the Church invites us to celebrate the praises of God. God has mercifully granted us, that the hymns we sing to the glory of his name, should be our consolation in this vale of tears.

In the Communion-Antiphon, the Church prays that man, having now been regenerated by the Bread of heaven, may regain that likeness to his God which Adam received at his creation. The greater our misery, the stronger should be our hope in Him, who descended to us that we might ascend to him.

