

The Season of Septuagesima

THE SEASON of Septuagesima comprises the three weeks immediately preceding Lent. It forms one of the principal divisions of the liturgical year, and is itself divided into three parts, each part corresponding to a week: the first is called *Septuagesima*; the second, *Sexagesima*; the third, *Quinquagesima*.

All three are named from their numerical reference to Lent, which, in the language of the Church, is called *Quadragesima*, that is, Forty, because the great feast of Easter is prepared for by the holy exercises of forty days. The words *Quinquagesima*, *Sexagesima*, and *Septuagesima*,

tell us of the same great solemnity as looming in the distance, and as being the great object towards which the Church would have us now begin to turn all our thoughts, and desires, and devotion.

Now, the feast of Easter must be prepared for by forty days of recollectedness and penance. Those forty days are one of the principal seasons of the liturgical year, and one of the most powerful means employed by the Church for exciting in the hearts of her children the spirit of their Christian vocation. It is of the utmost importance that such a season of grace should produce its work in our souls—the renovation of the whole spiritual life. The Church, therefore, has instituted a preparation for the holy time of Lent. She gives us the three weeks of Septuagesima, during which she withdraws us, as much as may be, from the noisy

distractedness of the world, in order that our hearts may be more readily impressed by the solemn warning she is to give us at the commencement of Lent by marking our foreheads with ashes.

This prelude to the holy season of Lent was not known in the early ages of Christianity: its institution would seem to have originated in the Greek Church. Besides the six Sundays of Lent, on which by universal custom the faithful never fasted, the practice of this Church prohibited fasting on the Saturdays likewise; consequently their Lent was short by twelve days of the forty spent by our

Savior doing penance in the desert. To make up for the deficiency, they were obliged to begin their Lent so many days earlier.

The Church of Rome had no such motive for anticipating the season of those privations which belong to Lent; for, from the earliest antiquity, she kept the Saturdays in Lent (and as often during the rest of the year as circumstances might require) as fasting days. At the close of the sixth century, St. Gregory the Great alludes, in one of his homilies, to the fast of Lent being less than forty days, owing to the Sundays which come during that holy season. "There are," he says, "from this day (the first Sunday of Lent) to the joyous feast of Easter, six weeks, that is, forty-two days. As we do not fast on the six Sundays, there are but thirty-six fasting days ... which we offer to God as the tithe of our year."



Commentary from The Liturgical Year by Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875).

Proper Prayers of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form Sexagesima Sunday



But that on the good ground, are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.

INTROIT (Psalm 43. 23-26)

EXSÜRGE, quare obdormis, Dómine? exsúrge, et ne repéllas in finem. Quare fáciem tuam avértis, oblivísceris tribulatió-em nostram? adhæsit in terra venter noster: exsúrge, Dómine, ádjuva nos, et libera nos. *Psalm.* Deus, áuribus nostris audívimus: patres nostri annuntiavérunt nobis. V. Glória Patri, et Filio, et Spíritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. R. Amen. — Exsúrge ...

ARISE, why sleepest Thou, O Lord? arise, and cast us not off to the end. Why turnest Thou Thy face away, and forgettest our trouble? our belly hath cleaved to the earth: arise, O Lord, help us and deliver us. *Ps. ibid.* 2. We have heard, O God, with our ears: our fathers have declared to us. V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. — Arise ...

COLLECT

DEUS, qui cónspicis, quia ex nulla nostra actióne confidimus: concéde propítius; ut contra advérsa ómnia, Doctóris géntium protectióne muniámur. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

O GOD, who seest that we put not our trust in any thing that we do: mercifully grant, that by the protection of the Doctor of the Gentiles we may be defended against all adversities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end.

EPISTLE

From the Second Letter of Blessed Paul
the Apostle to the Corinthians, 11. 19-33; 12. 1-9.

BRETHREN: You gladly suffer the foolish: whereas yourselves are wise. For you suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take from you, if a man be lifted up, if a man strike you on the face. I speak according to dishonor, as if we had been weak in this part. Wherein if any man dare (I speak foolishly), I dare also. They are Hebrews, so am I. They are Israelites, so am I. They are the seed of Abraham, so am I. They are the ministers of Christ (I speak as one less wise), I am more: in many more labors, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea: in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren: in labor and painfulness, in much watching, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; besides those things which are without: my daily instance, the solicitude for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my infirmity. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for ever, knoweth that I lie not. At Damascus, the governor of the nation under Aretas the king, guarded the city of the Damascenes, to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so escaped his hands. If I must glory (it is not expedient indeed) but I will come to visions

FRATRES: Libenter suffertis insipientes: cum sitis ipsi sapientes. Sustinetis enim si quis vos in servitutem redigit, si quis devorat, si quis accipit, si quis extollitur, si quis in faciem vos caedit. Secundum ignobilitatem dico, quasi nos infirmi fuerimus in hac parte. In quo quis audet (in insipientia dico) audeo et ego. Hebraei sunt, et ego: Israeliti sunt, et ego: Semen Abrahæ sunt, et ego: Ministri Christi sunt (ut minus sapiens dico) plus ego: in laboribus plurimis, in carceribus abundantius, in plagis supra modum, in mortibus frequenter. A Judaëis quinque quadragenas, una minus, accépi. Ter virgis caesus sum, semel lapidatus sum, ter naufragium feci, nocte et die in profundo maris fui: in itineribus sæpe, periculis fluminum, periculis latronum, periculis ex genere, periculis ex gentibus, periculis in civitate, periculis in solitudine, periculis in mari, periculis in falsis fratribus: in labore et ærumna, in vigiliis multis, in fame et siti, in jejuniis multis, in frigore et nuditate: præter illa quæ extrinsecus sunt, instantia mea quotidiana, sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum. Quis infirmatur, et ego non infirmor? quis scandalizatur, et ego non uror? Si gloriari oportet: quæ infirmitatis meæ sunt, gloriabor. Deus et Pater Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui est benedictus in sæcula, scit quod non mentior. Damasci præpositus gentis Aræte regis, custodiēbat civitatem Damascenorum, ut me comprehēderet: et per fenestram in sporta dimissus sum per murum, et sic effugi manus ejus. Si gloriari oportet

OFFERTORY (Ps. 16. 5-7)

PÉRFIGE gressus meos in sémitis tuis, ut non moveántur vestigia mea: inclina aurem tuam, et exáudi verba mea: mirífica misericórdias tuas, qui salvos facis sperántes in te Dómine.

PERFECT Thou my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps be not moved: incline Thine ear, and hear my words: show forth Thy wonderful mercies, Thou who savest them that trust in Thee, O Lord.

SECRET

OBLÁTUM tibi, Dómine, sacrificium, vivificet nos semper, et múniat. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum...

MAY the Sacrifice offered to Thee, O Lord, ever quicken us and protect us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son ...

PREFACE OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

VERE dignum et justum est, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubique grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnipotens, ætérne Deus. Qui cum unigénito Filio tuo, et Spíritu Sancto, unus es Deus, unus es Dóminus: non in unius singularitate persónæ, sed in unius Trinitate substántiæ. Quod enim de tua glória revelánte te, crédimus, hoc de Filio tuo, hoc de Spíritu Sancto, sine differentia discretiónis sentimus. Ut in confessióne veræ sempiternæque Deitátis, et in persónis proprietas, et in esséntia unitas, et in majestáte adorétur æqualitas. Quam laudant Ángeli, atque Archángeli, Chérubim quoque ac Séraphim: qui non cessant clamáre quotidie, una voce dicéntes: — *Sanctus*.

IT is truly meet and just, right and for our salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God: Who, together with Thine only-begotten Son and the Holy Ghost, art one God, one Lord: not in the Oneness of a single Person, but in the Trinity of one Substance. For what by Thy revelation we believe of Thy glory, the same do we believe of Thy Son, the same of the Holy Ghost, without difference or separation; so that in confessing the true and eternal Godhead, in It we should adore distinction in Persons, unity in Essence, and equality in Majesty: in praise of which Angels and Archangels, Cherubim also and Seraphim, day by day exclaim, without end and with one voice, saying: — *Sanctus*.

COMMUNION (Ps. 42. 4)

INTROÍBO ad altáre Dei, ad Deum qui lætificat juventutem meam.

I WILL go unto the altar of God, to God who giveth joy to my youth.

POSTCOMMUNION

SÚPLICES te rogámus, omnipotens Deus: ut quos tuis réficis sacraméntis, tibi étiam plácitis móribus dignánter deservire concédas. Per Dóminum nostrum ...

WE humbly beseech Thee, Almighty God, to grant that they whom Thou dost refresh with Thy Sacraments, may worthily serve Thee by lives well-pleasing to Thee. Through our Lord ...

GOSPEL

Continuation of the holy Gospel according to St. Luke, 8. 4-15.

AT THAT TIME, when a very great multitude was gathered together and hastened out of the cities unto Jesus, He spoke by a similitude: The sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And other some fell upon a rock: and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other some fell among thorns, and the thorns, growing up with it, choked it. And other some fell upon good ground: and being sprung up, yielded fruit a hundredfold. Saying these things, He cried out: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And His disciples asked Him what this parable might be. To whom He said: To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables: that seeing they may not see, and hearing may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And they by the wayside are they that hear: then the devil cometh, and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. Now they upon the rock, are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no roots: for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation they fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they who have heard, and going their way, are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. But that on the good ground, are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience. — *Creed.*

IN ILLO TEMPORE: Cum turba plurima convenirent, et de civitatibus properarent ad Jesum, dixit per similitudinem: Exiit, qui seminat, seminare semen suum: et dum seminat, aliud cecidit secus viam, et conculcatum est, et volucres caeli comederunt illud. Et aliud cecidit supra petram: et natum aruit, quia non habebat humorem. Et aliud cecidit inter spinas, et simul exortae spinae suffocaverunt illud. Et aliud cecidit in terram bonam: et ortum fecit fructum centuplum. Haec dicens, clamabat: Qui habet aures audiendi, audiat. Interrogabant autem eum discipuli ejus, quae esset haec parabola. Quibus ipse dixit: Vobis datum est nosse mysterium regni Dei, ceteris autem in parabolis: ut videntes non videant, et audientes non intelligant. Est autem haec parabola: Semen est verbum Dei. Qui autem secus viam hi sunt qui audiunt: deinde venit diabolus, et tollit verbum de corde eorum, ne credentes salvi fiant. Nam qui supra petram: qui cum audierint, cum gaudio suscipiunt verbum: et hi radices non habent: qui ad tempus credunt, et in tempore tentationis recedunt. Quod autem in spinas cecidit: hi sunt, qui audierunt, et a sollicitudinibus, et divitiis, et voluptatibus vitae euntes, suffocantur, et non referunt fructum. Quod autem in bonam terram: hi sunt, qui in corde bono et optimo audientes verbum retinent, et fructum afferunt in patientia. — *Credo.*

(non expedit quidem), veniam autem ad visiones, et revelationes Domini. Scio hominem in Christo ante annos quatuordecim, sive in corpore nescio, sive extra corpus nescio, Deus scit, raptum hujusmodi usque ad tertium caelum. Et scio hujusmodi hominem, sive in corpore, sive extra corpus nescio, Deus scit: quoniam raptus est in paradysum, et audivit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui. Pro hujusmodi gloriabor: pro me autem nihil gloriabor, nisi in infirmitatibus meis. Nam, et si voluero gloriari, non ero insipiens: veritatem enim dicam: parco autem, ne quis me existimet supra id quod videt in me, aut aliquid audit ex me. Et ne magnitudo revelationum extollat me, datus est mihi stimulus carnis meae, angelus satanae, qui me colaphizet. Propter quod ter Dominum rogavi, ut discederet a me: et dixit mihi: Sufficit tibi gratia mea: nam virtus in infirmitate perficitur. Libenter igitur gloriabor in infirmitatibus meis, ut inhabitent in me virtus Christi.

and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body I know not, or out of the body I know not, God knoweth, such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man, whether in the body or out of the body I know not, God knoweth: that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter. For such a one I will glory: but for myself I will glory nothing but in my infirmities. For, though I should have a mind to glory, I shall not be foolish: for I will say the truth: but I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or anything he heareth from me. And lest the greatness of the revelations should exalt me, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me. For which thing, thrice I besought the Lord that it might depart from me. And He said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee, for power is made perfect in infirmity. Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.



GRADUAL (Ps. 82. 19, 14)

SCIANT gentes, quoniam nomen tibi Deus: tu solus Altissimus super omnem terram. V. Deus meus, pone illos ut rotam, et sicut stipulam ante faciem venti.

LET the Gentiles know that God is Thy Name: Thou alone art the Most High over all the earth. O my God, make them like a wheel, and as stubble before the wind.

TRACT (Ps. 59. 4, 6)

COMMUVISTI, Domine, terram, et conturbasti eam. V. Sana contritiones ejus, quia mota est. V. Ut fugiant a facie arcus: ut liberentur electi tui.

THOU hast moved the earth, O Lord, and hast troubled it. Heal Thou the breaches thereof, for it has been moved. That they may flee from before the bow: that Thine elect may be delivered.

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