

The Husband of Mary

THERE IS NOTHING unreal about the marriage of Mary and Joseph. Never, in fact, had earth seen a more perfect union, a love so deep, so glorious. For they loved each other in God.

The Holy Spirit hovered over their loving union, drawing them ever closer into the tender embrace of the Thrice Holy God. He was the foundation of their being. In adoring Him, their souls were joined. He was the seal of their oneness. It was this that made the strength and beauty of their marriage. In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul writes: “For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” That was the secret time-beat which every instant throbbed in the hearts of Mary and Joseph. As divine love is incorruptible, so their love springing from it was invincible, and indeed, far from distracting them from God, it helped to unite them closer to Him. It was so from the time of their first vows. Joseph then thought he could never love Mary more than at that moment, but after the angel’s revelation she became dearer still. The strength of his attachment made him a new man. The Infant-God that she carried increased his reverence, since he looked upon her as a new Ark of the Covenant and a Tabernacle of the Holy of Holies.

As for Mary, she saw in Joseph the representative of Divine Authority, the one chosen to be God’s coadjutor in the mystery of the Incarnation, and always she showed him deference, submission and tender affection. Their vows of

virginity served but to unite them more closely. It was because their love had in it no fleshly desires that it was untroubled by anxiety, doubt, bitterness or disappointment. Virginal love is without spot or wrinkle. They knew nothing of what St. Paul calls “the tribulation of the flesh” (I Cor. 7:28). Holy in mind and body, their affection for each other was capable of constant enrichment and increase: “O holy virginity,” cried Bossuet, “your fires are stronger because they are free; the flames that burn in us can never equal the ardor of the chaste embrace of souls whom love of purity binds together.”

It would be a great mistake, however, to imagine that their spiritual attachment had in it nothing of the senses. There is no reason to think that they were deprived of that tender natural attraction deep in the heart of those who love. Joseph had perhaps the presentiment that Mary, because of her mission, would one day be named by the whole world “cause of our joy.” In any case, now living with him in his home, where until death they would be together, she was and could be the constant cause of his joy.

And Mary? She treasured in her heart all Joseph’s words and acts of delicate thoughtfulness, and she gave him in return the joyous and devoted service of a loyal wife, foreseeing each desire, granting every wish. Their great delight was to see how best each could please the other. “I am a little servant,” said Mary. “No, God Himself appointed me to serve you.” And so it went. And now while Mary spun and hemmed swaddling clothes, Joseph fashioned the cradle wherein very soon the Son of the Most High, the King of Creation, the Savior of the world would lay His infant head.

Commentary from Joseph the Silent by Fr. Henri-Michel Gasnier, O.P. (1899-1964)



Proper Prayers of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form

The Vigil of the Nativity of The Lord

Introit

HÓDIE SCIÉTIS, quia véniet Dóminus, et salvábit nos: et mane vidébitis glóriam ejus. *Ps. 23.1.* Dómini est terra et plenitúdo ejus: orbis terrárum, et univérsi qui hábitant in eo. *Ÿ.* Glória Patri, et Filio, et Spíritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. *Ŕ.* Amen. — Hódie ...

THIS DAY you shall know that the Lord will come, and save us: and in the morning you shall see His glory. *Psalm.* The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof: the world and all they that dwell therein. *Ÿ.* 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. — This day ...

Collect

DEUS, qui nos redemptionis nostræ ánnua expectatióne lætificas: præsta; ut Unigénitum tuum, quem Redemptórem læti suscipimus, veniéntem quoque júdicem secúri videámus, Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum: Qui tecum ...

O GOD, Who dost gladden us by the yearly expectation of our redemption, grant that we, who now joyfully receive Thine only-begotten Son as our redeemer, may also without fear behold Him coming as our Judge, even the same Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son: Who livest and reignest ...

Epistle (Romans 1:1–6)

PAULUS, SERVUS Jesu Christi, vocátus Apóstolus, segregátus in Evangélium Dei, quod ante promiserat per Prophétas suos in Scriptúris sanctis de Filio suo, qui factus est ei ex sémine David secúndum carnem: qui prædestinátus est Fílius Dei in virtúte secúndum spíritum sanctificatiónis ex resurrectione mortuórum Jesu Christi Dó-

PAUL, A SERVANT of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God, which He had promised before by His prophets in the holy Scriptures concerning His Son, who was made to Him of the seed of David according to the flesh: who was predestined the Son of God in power according to the spirit of sanctification by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus

from the dead: by whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations for His Name, among whom are you also the called of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gradual (Exodus 16:6,7)

THIS DAY you shall know that the Lord will come and save us: and in the morning you shall see His glory. (Ps. 79. 2, 3) Give ear, O Thou that rulest Israel: Thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep, Thou that sittest upon the Cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses.

If the Mass is offered on a Sunday, the following is also prayed:

Alleluia, alleluia. Tomorrow shall the iniquity of the earth be abolished: and the Savior of the world shall reign over us. Alleluia.



Gospel (Matthew 1:18–21)

WHEN MARY the mother of Jesus was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Whereupon Joseph her husband, being a just man and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.

mini nostri: per quem accéperimus grátiam, et apostolátum ad obediéndum fidei in ómnibus géntibus pro nómine ejus, in quibus estis et vos vocáti Jesu Christi Dómini nostri.

HÓDIE sciétis, quia véniet Dóminus, et salvábit nos: et mane vidébitis glóriam ejus. *Ÿ.* Qui regis Israél, inténde: qui dedúcis, velut ovem, Joseph: qui sedes super Chérubim, appáre coram Ephraim, Bénjamin, et Manásse.

Allelúia, alleluia. *Ÿ.* Crástina die delébitur iniquitas terræ: et regnábít super nos Salvátor mundi. Allelúia.

CUM ESSET desponsáta mater Jesu María Joseph, ántequam convenirent, invénta est in útero habens de Spíritu Sancto. Joseph autem vir ejus, cum esset justus et nollet eam tradúcere, vóluit occúlte dimittere eam. Hæc autem eo cogitánte, ecce Angelus Dómini appáruit in somnis ei, dicens: Joseph, fili David, noli timére accíperere Mariám cónjugem tuam: quod enim in ea natum est, de Spíritu Sancto est. Páriet autem filium, et vocábis nomen ejus Jesum: ipse enim salvum fáciét pópulum suum a peccátis eórum.

Offertory (Psalm 23:7)

TÓLLITE portas, príncipes, vestras: et elevámini, portæ æternáles, et introíbit Rex glóriæ.

LIFT UP your gates, O ye princes: and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in.

Secret

DA NOBIS, quæsumus, omnípotens Deus: ut, sicut adoránda Filii tui natalítia prævenímus, sic ejus múnera capiámus sempitérna gaudéntes: Qui tecum ...

GRANT, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that as we anticipate the adorable birthday of Thy Son, so we may joyfully receive His eternal gifts: Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost ...

If the Mass is offered on a Sunday, the PREFACE OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY (see red Missal, pp. 28-29) or the PREFACE OF ADVENT is prayed.

On other days, the PREFACE OF ADVENT or the following is prayed:

The Common Preface

VERE DIGNUM et justum est, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubíque grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus: per Christum Dóminum nostrum. Per quem majestátem tuam laudant Ángeli, adórant Dominatiónes, tremunt Potestátes. Cæli, cælorúmque Virtútes ac beáta Séraphim sócia exultatióne concélebrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces, ut admítte júbeas, deprecámur, súpplici confessióne 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, through Christ our Lord: through Whom Angels praise Thy Majesty, Dominations worship, Powers stand in awe. The Heavens and the hosts of heaven with blessed Seraphim unite, exult, and celebrate; and we entreat that Thou wouldst bid our voices too be heard with theirs, singing with lowly praise: — Sanctus.

Communion (Isaias 40:4)

REVELÁBITUR gloria Dómini: et vidébit omnis caro salutáre Dei nostri.

THE GLORY of the Lord shall be revealed: and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

Postcommunion

DA NOBIS, quæsumus, Dómine, unigéniti Filii tui recensíta nativitate respiráre; cujus cælesti mystério páscimur et potámur. Per eúndem Dóminum nostrum ...

WE BESEECH Thee, O Lord, grant us fresh courage, as we celebrate the birthday of Thine only-begotten Son: whose heavenly Mystery is our food and drink. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son ...