

## LAY CISTERCIANS OF GETHSEMANI ABBEY

### VIGILS READINGS

First Week in Advent

November 29-December 5, 2020

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2020**

**A Commentary on the Gospel of Mark by St. Augustine [<sup>1</sup>](#)**

*Our God will come openly; our God will come and will not keep silent.*

The first coming of Christ the Lord, God's Son and our God, was in obscurity; the second will be in the sight of the whole world. When he came in obscurity no one recognized him but his own servants; when he comes openly he will be known by both good people and bad. When he came in obscurity, it was to be judged; when he comes openly it will be to judge. He was silent at his trial, as the prophet foretold: *He was loike a sheep led to the slaughter, like a lamb before his shearers. He did not open his mouth.* But, *Our God will come openly; our God will come and will not keep silence.* Silent when accused, he will not be silent as judge. And he is not silent now. By no means; when people today recognize his voice and despise him, Scripture assures us that he will not be silent, he will not hold his hand. Nowadays when the divine commands are spoken of, some people begin to jeer. They are not at present shown what God promises, they do not see what he threatens – so they laugh at his commands. After all, good people and bad enjoy this world's so-called happiness; good people and bad suffer from what are deemed this world's misfortunes. Those whose lives are geared to the present rather than the future are impressed by the fact that this world's blessings and sufferings fall to the lot of good and bad without distinction. If wealth is their ambition, they see it being enjoyed not only by decent folk, but also by people of the worst kind. If they are in dread of poverty and all the other miseries of this world, they also see that the good and the bad both suffer from them. Therefore they say to themselves, “God does not care about human affairs, he exercises no control over them. On the contrary, he has sent us into the abyss of this world, and simply abandoned us to its sufferings. He shows no sign of providence.” Consequently, seeing no evidence of anyone being called to account, such people hold God's commands in derision.

Nevertheless, each person would do well to take thought even now, because when he wills to do so, God looks, and he judges; he will not tolerate an hour's delay. When he wills to do so, he waits. Why does He do this? Surely if he never passed judgment in this present life, some people would think that he does not exist. But if he always gave sentence here and now, there would be nothing reserved for the Day of Judgment. That is why much is kept for that day; but in order to put the fear of God into those whose cases are deferred, and so convert them, some judgments are made here and now.

For it is clear that God takes no pleasure in condemning. His desire is to save, and bears patiently with evil people in order to make them good. Yet we have the Apostle's warning: *The wrath of God will be revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and God will reward each one according to his deeds.* The Apostle takes scoffers to task by asking them: *Do you think lightly of God's abundant goodness and his forbearance?* Do you despise him and think his judgment a matter of no account because he is good to you, because he is long-suffering and bears with you patiently, because he delays the day of reckoning and does not destroy you out of hand? *Do you not know that the patience of God is meant to lead you to repentance? By the hardness of your heart you are storing up wrath against yourself on the Day of Retribution,* when the righteous judgment of God will be revealed and he will give every one the reward his or her deeds deserve.

[1](#)Journey with the Fathers – Year B – New City Press – NY – pg. 10

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2020

### **ST ANDREW'S UNIQUE ROLE AMONG THE APOSTLES, from a Sermon by St John Henry Newman<sup>1</sup>**

---

St. John the Evangelist, [introduces St Andrew in his gospel] under circumstances which show that, little as is known of this Apostle now, he was, in fact, very high in the favour and confidence of his Lord. In his twelfth chapter he describes Andrew as bringing to Christ certain Greeks who came up to Jerusalem to worship and who were desirous of seeing Him. And, what is remarkable, these strangers had first applied to St. Philip, who, though an Apostle himself, instead of taking

---

<sup>1</sup>PAROCHIAL & PLAIN SERMONS II, London 1898, 3-4&5.

upon him to introduce them had recourse to his fellow townsman St. Andrew, as if, whether from age or intimacy with Christ, a more suitable channel for furthering their petition. "Philip comes, and tells Andrew; and again, Andrew and Philip tell Jesus."

These two Apostles are also mentioned together in the sixth chapter of the same Gospel, at the consultation which preceded the miracle of the loaves and fishes; and there again Andrew is engaged, as before in the office of introducing strangers to Christ. "There is a lad here," he says to his Lord, a lad who perhaps, had not courage to come forward of himself, "who has five barley loaves and two small fishes."

The information afforded by these passages, of St. Andrew's especial acceptableness to Christ among the apostles, is confirmed by the only place in the other Gospels, beside the catalogue, in which his name occurs. After our Lord had predicted the ruin of the Temple, "Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately: 'Tell us when shall these things be?'" and it was to these four that our Saviour revealed the signs of his coming, and of the end of the world (Mk 13:3). Here St. Andrew is represented as in the especial confidence of Christ; and associated too with those Apostles whom he is known to have selected from the Twelve, on various occasions, by tokens of his peculiar Favour.

Little is known of St. Andrew in addition to these inspired notices of him. He is said to have preached the Gospel in Scythia; and he was at length martyred in Achaia. His death was by crucifixion; that kind of cross being used, according to the tradition, which still goes by his name.

Yet, little as Scripture tells us concerning him, it affords us enough for a lesson, and that an important one. These are the facts before us. St. Andrew was the first convert among the Apostles; he was especially in our Lord's confidence; thrice is he described as introducing others to him; lastly, he is little known in history, while the place of dignity and the name of highest renown have been allotted to his brother Simon, whom he was the means of bringing to the knowledge of his Saviour.

Our lesson then is this; that those persons are not necessarily the most useful in their generation, nor the most favored by God, who make the most noise in the world, and who seem to be principals in the great changes and events recorded in history; on the contrary, that even when we are able to point to a certain number of persons as the real instruments of any great blessings vouchsafed to humankind, our relative estimate of them, one with another, is often very erroneous: so that, on the whole, if we would trace truly the hand of God in human affairs, and pursue his bounty as displayed in the world to its original sources, we must unlearn our admiration of the powerful and distinguished, our reliance on the opinion of society, our respect for the decisions of the learned or the multitude, and turn our eyes to private life, watching in all we read or witness for the true sign of God's presence, the graces of personal holiness manifested in his elect; which, weak as they may seem to humankind, are mighty through God, and have an influence upon the course of his Providence, and bring about great events in the world at large, when the wisdom and strength of the natural man are of no avail.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2020

### **A Reading from a Sermon by Blessed Gueric of Igny<sup>2</sup>**

We are waiting for the Savior. Such waiting is truly a joy to the righteous, who are waiting for the hope of blessedness, the glorious coming of our great

---

<sup>2</sup>Liturgical Sermons - Gueric of Igny - Cistercian Fathers - vol 8 - pg.1

God and Savior Jesus Christ. What am I waiting for, "a righteous person may ask, Abut the Lord?" "I know," he says, turning towards him, that you will not disappoint me after such a wait as mine. Already my being is with you; for our nature, taken from amongst us and offered on our behalf, is glorified with you. This gives us hope; for all flesh will come to you, the members following their Head, so that the holocaust may be complete.

But a person can wait for the Lord the more trustfully if their conscience is so at rest as to let one say: "Every smallest possession of mine, Lord, is entirely yours, for I have treasured up in heaven all my powers, either by giving them to you or by renouncing them for you. At your feet I have laid down all that is mine, knowing that you will be able not just to keep it safe, but to restore it to me multiplied a hundredfold and to add to it eternal life." How blessed are you, poor in spirit, who in accordance with the advice of the Wonderful Counsellor, lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, lest your hearts become corrupt by remaining on earth with your treasure. "For," he says, "where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Let your hearts go then, let them go after their treasures; let your attention be fixed on high and your expectancy hang upon the Lord, so that you can justly say with the apostle: "Our abiding place is in heaven, from where we are expecting the Savior to come."

O hope of all peoples, everyone who waits for you shall not be disappointed. Our ancestors waited for you - all the righteous from the beginning of the world hoped in you - and they have not been disappointed. For they have now received your mercy in the midst of your temple and make joyful choir to praise you, singing::Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; trustfully have I waited for the Lord and he has turned towards me. They recognize the divine majesty humbled in the flesh and say: "Look, this is our God; we have been waiting for his coming and he will save us. This is the Lord; we have been relying on him and we shall be joyful and happy in the salvation he will grant us."

For just as the Church awaited in the holy ones of old the first coming, so in us she is expecting the second. Just as she steadfastly hoped in the first for the price of her redemption, so she hopes in the second for the reward of her earnings. This looking forward in hope raises her above earthly concerns; her eyes are fixed with joyous longing upon those of heaven. There are some, impatient to find happiness in the affairs of this present life, who neglect the Lord's advice and make every effort to snatch the prizes this world offers. But blessed is the one whose whole hope rests in the Lord's name and who takes no notice of spurious and empty foolishness. Such a one will shrink from the contamination of their ways, knowing that it is better to become humble with the meek than to share out ill-gotten gains with the proud. He will find comfort in saying to himself: "The Lord is my share, so I will wait for him. The Lord is good to everyone who trusts in him, to a soul that seeks him. It is good to stand by quietly, ready to greet the Lord. Though, true enough, my soul has longed for your salvation, Lord, still I trust in your word. As it says in Scripture: "Hope long delayed grieves the soul and desire unfulfilled brings it weariness," still your promise is there to strengthen it. In this the soul does not have just a bare hope; it overflows with hope, hope mounting upon hope as trial comes upon trial, delay upon delay. I am absolutely sure that in the end he will appear and will prove not to have deceived me; so in spite of the delay he imposes I shall go on waiting for him confidently, because he certainly will come and will not be later than the most timely day.

When will this day be? When the full number of all these brethren of ours has been reached and the time of mercy set aside for penance is completed. Listen to Isaiah, who often gained entry to the heavenly council chamber; he tells us with what design the Lord puts off the judgment for a time: "The Lord delays so that he can be merciful towards you, and thus he will be honored for having spared you. The Lord is a God of judgment; blessed is everyone who waits for him."

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2020**

**A Reading from the Second Sermon of Blessed Gueric of Igny for Advent<sup>3</sup>**

---

<sup>3</sup> *Liturgical Sermons - Gueric of Igny - Cistercian Fathers vol. 8 - pg. 7 - Cistercian Publications*

“Behold the King is coming, let us hasten to meet our Savior.” Solomon put it very well when he said: “As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.” He certainly brings good news who announces the coming of the Savior, the reconciliation of the world and the good things of the world to come. How welcome the feet of them that preach peace and bring good tidings. There are many of them, not one. Many, I say, but with one mind. In a long succession from the beginning of time messengers have come to us with one message, one word: “He comes, yes, he is coming.” “Where have these messengers come from?” you ask. Scripture tells us: “from a far country.” because they come from the “land of the living” and there is a great distance between that and this land of the dying; between ourselves and them, there is still a great chasm. From there then the prophets were sent to us and angels too. For if they went about here in the body they were caught up there by the Spirit when they were to be sent so that they might hear and see what they were to announce here. Such messengers are waters of refreshment and a drought of saving wisdom to a soul athirst for God. For such a soul the herald of the coming and of the other mysteries of the Savior draws and proffers water with joy from the springs of the Savior. And the soul is heard to reply to the messenger, be it Isaiah or any of the other prophets, in the words of Elizabeth. It has drunk of the same spirit as she has and says: “Whence is this that my Lord should come to me? Behold as soon as your salutation sounded in my ears the Spirit in my heart leapt for joy, earnestly desiring to hurry off to meet God its Savior.

And really, brethren, we should go to meet the coming Christ with joy in our heart. Even at this very moment he should be saluted from afar, or at least we should return his greeting who orders deliverance for Jacob. “You shall not be ashamed to salute a friend”, says Wisdom. How much more ought you to return a greeting? O salvation of my face and my God, what an honor that you should have saluted your servants. How much the greater that you should have saved them. Our salvation would not have been whole and entire had you only ordered deliverance and had not really given it. But you have given it not only by greeting with the kiss of peace in your Incarnation those you had previously saluted with words of peace, but, more, by effecting their salvation through your death on the Cross. Let us therefore rise up with joyful eagerness and hasten to welcome our Savior. Let us adore him and salute him at a distance, crying out to him:

“Deliverance, Lord, deliverance; Lord, grant us days of prosperity. Blessed are you who will be coming in the name of the Lord. Welcome to you who come to deliver us: blessed be you who come to better our lot. Grant us days of prosperity then, Lord, you who come so favorable and beneficent to the human race; set out, proceed prosperously and reign. May the Father, God of our salvation, make your journey a prosperous one”. “He shall prosper in the things for which I sent him,” says the Father, but not in accord with the prayers of the carnally-minded, nor with the desire of Peter who did not want him to suffer. And whatsoever he shall do shall prosper, not to satisfy the rash wishes of mortals but for their true salvation. Vain is the deliverance of mortals, but salvation is of God who has effected our salvation in his own blood, pouring it out in payment, offering it  
Come then, Lord, save me and I shall be saved. Come and smile upon us and we shall find deliverance. We have waited for you, be our stronghold, our deliverer in time of trouble. In this fashion did the prophets and holy men, with great desire and longing, run to greet the Christ who was to come, hoping if possible to see with their eyes what they foresaw in their hearts. Hence the words of the Lord to his disciples: “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see; I tell you there have been many prophets and holy men who longed to see what you see and never saw it, to hear what you hear and never heard it.” Abraham, our father, was full of joy to see the day of Christ. He saw it - but in the lower regions - and rejoiced. In that day the coldness and hardness of our hearts will be greatly punished I mean if we do not look forward with joy of spirit to the anniversary of Christ’s birth which, we are promised, we shall, God willing, see very soon. In fact the Holy Scripture seems to insist we have such joy so that our spirit, lifted out of itself, may run to meet the arrival of Christ in transports of joy, and straining forward impatient of delay, may strive to pierce the future even now.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020**

**St. Francis Xavier – from Butler’s Lives of the Saints 4**



Francis Xavier was born in Spanish Navarre at the castle of Xavier, near Pamplona, in 1506, the youngest of a large family. He entered the college of St, Barbara and in 1528 gained the degree of licentiate. It was here that he met Ignatius Loyola, and later joined with him in the first band of seven who vowed themselves to the service of God at Montmartre in 1534. With them he received the priesthood at Venice three years later and in 1540 Ignatius appointed him to join Fr. Simon Rodriguez on the first missionary expedition the Society sent out to the East Indies.

They arrived at Lisbon about the end of June and together lodged in a hospital in order to attend and instruct the sick. They made this place their ordinary dwelling, but catechized and instructed in the town. Sundays and holidays were taken up in hearing confessions at the court, for the king, John III, had a high regard for these religious; so much so that Rodriguez was eventually retained by him at Lisbon. Before he at last sailed, on his thirty-fifth birthday in 1541, the king delivered briefs from the Pope in which Francis Xavier was constituted Apostolic Nuncio in the East.

They arrived at Goa, India on May 6, 1542, after a voyage of thirteen months. Francis opened the mission with the Christians of Goa, instructing them in the principles of religion and forming the young to the practice of virtue. He walked through the streets ringing a bell to summon the children and slaves to catechism. He offered Mass with lepers each Sunday. For the instruction of the very ignorant or simple he versified the truths of religion to fit popular tunes, and this was so successful that the practice spread till these songs were being sung everywhere, in the streets and fields and workshops.

After five months Francis was told that on the Pearl Fishery coast, there were people called Paravas who had been baptized by the Portugese, but for want of instruction still retained their superstitions and vices. Xavier went to help these people. Then he preached to those Paravas to whom the name of Christ was still unknown and had great success in this. The Paravas were a low caste people and Francis had a much more difficult time among the Brahmans.

In the spring of 1545 Francis set out for Malacca, on the Malay peninsula, where he spent four months. He was received with great reverence and cordiality, and his efforts at reform met with some success. From there he departed for India again. But before he left he heard about Japan for the first time from Portuguese merchants. The next fifteen months were spent in endless traveling between Goa, Ceylon and Cape Comorin, consolidating his work and preparing for an attempt on that Japan into which no European had yet penetrated. In April 1549 Francis set out, accompanied by a Jesuit priest and lay-brother and three Japanese converts. On the feast of the Assumption they landed in Japan, at Kagoshima on Kyushu.

Francis set himself to learn Japanese. A translation was made of a simple account of Christian teaching, and recited to all who would listen. The fruit of twelve months labor was a hundred converts, but then the authorities began to get suspicious and forbade further preaching. So, leaving one of the Japanese converts in charge of the neophytes, Francis pressed further with his companions and went by sea to Hirado, north of Nagasaki. Before leaving Kagoshima he visited the fortress of Ichiku, where the baron's wife, her steward and others accepted Christianity. Xavier left the rest in the care of the steward, and twelve years later the Jesuit lay-brother, Luis de Almeida, found these isolated converts still retaining their first fervor and faithfulness.

At Hirado the missionaries were well received by the ruler and they had more success in a few weeks than they had had at Kagoshima in a year. Xavier's objective was Miyako (Kyoto), then the chief city of Japan. In due time he was able to be received by the authorities, who gave him permission to preach and provided an empty Buddhist monastery for a residence. He preached with such fruit that he baptized many in that city.

Francis decided to revisit his charge in India, from whence he hoped to extend his mission to China. After dealing with matters in India, Xavier set sail for China. In August 1552 the convoy reached the desolate island of Shang-chwan, half-a-dozen miles off the coast and a hundred miles south-west of Hong Kong. Here Xavier fell sick with a fever and died on December 3. He was buried on the island, but his body which was found to be

incorrupt, was later moved to Goa. He was canonized in 1622 at the same time as Ignatius of Loyola.

## **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2020**

### **Continuing a Reading from the Second Sermon of Bl. Gueric of Igny on Advent<sup>5</sup>**

I believe that when we are admonished in many places in Scripture to meet the coming of Christ it is not only the second coming that is referred to but the first also. In what way, you ask. Because just as in the second coming we shall go to meet him, our bodies rising up in exultation, so we must greet his first coming with hearts straining with desire and leaping with joy. For you know that in the resurrection, when we have put on new bodies, as the Apostle says, we shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. So too there are not lacking clouds which will raise up our spirits to higher things provided our hearts are not too lazy and tied to earth, and so we shall be with the Lord if only for half an hour. Unless I am mistaken you know from experience what I say. For when the clouds sent out a sound, that is to say, when the voices of prophets or apostles sounded in the Church, your minds and hearts have been borne aloft as on a cloud to sublime things and on occasion carried beyond even these, so that they have merited to behold, in however small a degree, the glory of God. Then, I doubt not, you recognized the truth of the word the Lord rains down from that cloud he daily sets as a means of ascent for us: "The sacrifice of praise shall glorify me; and there is the way by which I will show him the salvation of God."

In this fashion it may happen that before his actual coming the Lord may come to us, and before he arrives for the world in general he may pay us a friendly visit. "I will not leave you orphans," he says, "I will come to you." And indeed, be it for a person's merit or ardent striving, that coming of the Lord to the individual is frequent in this middle time between his first coming and his final coming, conforming us to the first, preparing us for the last. He comes to us now of course so that his first coming will not have

---

5 Liturgical Sermons - Gueric of Igny - Cistercian Fathers - vol.8 - pg. 10-  
Cistercian Publications

been in vain nor his last in anger against us. In this coming he is intent to reform our spirit of pride, making it conform to his humility which he manifested in his first coming, so that he might also refashion our lowly body, making it like to his glorious body which he will manifest when he comes again the second time. Without any doubt that intimate visitation which imparts to us the grace of the first coming and pledges the glory of the second is to be desired with all longing and sought after with every care. For "God loves mercy and truth; the Lord will give grace and glory," granting grace through his mercy, conferring glory through his truth.

And just as in the order of time, so too in the degree of its likeness this spiritual coming is midway between the two corporeal comings, like a mediator it participates in both. The first coming was hidden and lowly; the last will be public and glorious; this one is certainly hidden and lowly but no less wonderful. I say hidden not because it is unknown to the one visited but because he comes to him secretly. This is why the soul filled with glory exults, saying to itself: "My secret is my own, my secret is my own." But not even the one to whom he comes can see him before he enters into full possession of him. As holy Job says of himself: "If he comes to me I will not see him; if he departs I will not understand." Coming he is not seen, departing he is not understood; he who while he is present and only while he is present is light to the soul and mind. In that light, invisible he is seen, inconceivable he is understood. On the other hand, how wonderful this coming of the Lord even though it is hidden.

Since then the first coming brought grace and the last will bring glory; for in it, through the consolation of grace. We are given a foretaste of future glory. In the first the God of majesty is seen as one despised; in the last he will be seen in awe-inspiring might. In this one he is wonderful and lovable. Of the first coming Isaiah wrote: "We have seen him and there is no sightlines that we should be desirous of him". Concerning his final coming, even the just man was in dread: "And who shall stand to see him?" But the apostle writes of this one: "But we all, beholding the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord."

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2020

## **A Reading from the Third Sermon of Bl. Gueric of Igny on Advent <sup>6</sup>**

“Be prepared now Israel to meet the Lord, for he is coming”. And you too, my dear brethren, be prepared as well; for the Son of Man will come when you least expect him. He is coming, nothing is more certain than that; but when he will arrive - nothing is less certain. Right up to the last moment we will not know the actual time the Father in his almighty power has appointed. Even the angels who stand before him have not been given the privilege of knowing that day or hour. Our last day most certainly must come to us; but it is very uncertain when it will come, where we will be or whence it will come. All we can say is that it is knocking at the door for the old, and lies in wait for the young. O that they would keep careful watch over themselves who see death so ready to enter, nay rather who see it entering. For has it not already entered, at least to some extent, a body grown senile and decrepit? Yet in many who are already half-dead one can see worldly desires still alive. The limbs are growing cold and the fire of avarice still burns within; life is coming to its end and ambition still strains ahead. Because our youth or health perhaps appear to promise some more years ahead of us death is not often before our eyes, but this is the very reason why, if we are wise, it should be in our thoughts, lest that day come like a thief in the night and find us unprepared and unready. It is lying in wait for us and we should fear it all the more for its being hidden, for we can neither see it nor get warning of it. There is therefore only one thing that makes us safe: never to think that we are safe. For fear makes a careful man always prepared until at length fear can give way to security and not security to fear. The wise man says: “I shall keep myself from my iniquity, seeing that I am powerless in respect to my death.” He knows that the just man, if he is surprised by death, will be at rest. In fact that one triumphs over death who was not overcome by iniquity during his life.

Brethren, how beautiful and blessed it is not only to be without fear of death but with the assurance of a good conscience to triumph over it; in the spirit and words of St. Martin, to rebuke the foul beast if he dares to present himself. to open joyfully to the Judge when he comes and knocks. At that hour you will see unfortunates like me tremble, begging for a truce

---

<sup>6</sup>Gueric of Igny - Liturgical Sermons - vol I - CF #8 - Cistercian Publications - Spencer, MA - 1970 pg. 14

and having it denied them; wanting to buy the oil of penance for a sorrowing conscience and not having enough time; desirous of turning aside those ghostly specters and not being able to do so; anxious to hide away in the body from angry wrath and being forced to go forth. He will go forth, his spirit shall go forth and the sinner shall return into his earth whence he was drawn. "In that day all their thoughts shall perish". It is only human, I know, to be distressed about the moment of our passage from the earth. Even the perfect wish not to be stripped but rather to be further clothed. And although their conscience does not in fact reproach them, yet since that is not where their justification lies, they must of necessity fear the unknown judgment. But whether it be attachment to this life, or lack of holiness, or fear of the judgment that troubles the soul, the just man says: "You, O Lord, will remember mercy, and you will send your mercy and your truth and will deliver my soul from the midst of the young lions, and I who was up till now sore distressed, in peace in the selfsame I will sleep and will rest."

When you invite Jesus in, take care that you do not invite the God of majesty into an unclean and unworthy dwelling. For his place is in peace and nowhere else. "Right and justice are the pillars of his throne". Do not plead that it is a lavish dwelling you have to prepare for so great and so powerful a guest and that it is beyond the limits of your poverty. You have the means at hand. I speak in human terms because of the infirmity of your flesh, or rather because of the narrowness of your mind. Make a perfect confession of your past life, have a good will in respect to all else (for there is peace to men of good will), and in this way you will have prepared with right and justice a throne for the Most High.

However he who after such confession is present, sometimes even before he is called on, at other times waits for you to invite him. And in order to increase your merits he often dissimulates for a long time so that by being more attentive at the psalmody and more instant in prayer you may in your gentle violence compel him to enter. If you do not, the prophet laments that the cities of the south are shut up, with none to enter them. When therefore you can say: "My heart is ready, O God:", because it is emptied of evil, "my heart is ready", because it is full of holy desires, then busy yourself with what follows: "I will sing and recite a psalm". And whatever may be your voice, singing or reciting, let this intention be in your mind: "Arise, my Glory, arise at my coming, for as far as in me lies I have gone to meet you".

O good Jesus, how swift and prompt, how full of joy and gladness are you in running to greet such devotion as this. How cheerful do you show yourself in these ways. As Isaiah says: "You have met him that rejoices and does justice: in your ways they shall remember you." For if you sing wisely in the way of integrity, coming he will come and will bring to light what is hidden from you so that you may understand the mysteries of the Scriptures you do not at present know. Then it will be as you say: "I will sing and I will understand in the unspotted way when you come to me." Stir up, Lord, your power, which at your coming stirs up our sluggishness, and come to save us, O Savior of the world, who lives and reigns God for ever and ever. Amen.

**END OF READINGS**