EMBER WEDNESDAY IN SEPTEMBER

Ember Wednesday

The Liturgy of the Ember Day fasts possessed originally a distinctly festive quality, and was partly a festival of thanksgiving for the harvesting of the fruits of the season. These rustic feasts originated at Rome. The liturgy of this week has kept to a great extent unchanged its early festive character, which recalls so vividly the rural feasts of ancient Rome at the close of the vintage. The idea of a special preparation for the solemn Ordinations represents a later addition, which, however, dates from the time of Gelasius I.

The station on Ember Wednesday is, as a rule, at St. Mary Major, and the three Lessons in the Mass are a survival of the ancient Roman liturgical use, which recalls those very early times when, to the two Lessons from the Law and the Prophets, customary in the synagogues of the Dispersion, the Apostles added a third lesson taken from the Gospel. The passage from the Gospel of St. Mark (9:16-28) teaches that humble prayer and fasting, spiritualize our nature, which is thus raised to a supernatural state, and render it invulnerable to the fatal blows of Satan.

INTROIT Psalms 80: 2-5

Exsultáte Deo, adjutóri nostro: jubiláte Deo Jacob: súmite psalmum cúndum cum cíthara: cánite in initio mensis tuba, quia præcéptum in Israël est, et judícium Deo Jacob. (Ps. 80: 6) Testimónium in Joseph pósuit illud, cum exíret in terra Ægypti: linguam, quam non nóverat, audívit. Glória Patri et Fílio et Spirítui Sancto, sicut erat in princípio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen. Exsultáte Deo, adjutóri nostro: jubiláte Deo Jacob: súmite psalmum cúndum cum cíthara: cánite in initio mensis tuba, quia præcéptum in Israël est, et judícium Deo Jacob.

Rejoice to God our helper: sing aloud to the God of Jacob: take a pleasant psalm with the harp; blow the trumpet in the beginning of the month, for it is a commandment in Israel, and a judgment to the God of Jacob. (Ps. 80: 6) He ordained it for a testimony in Joseph, when he came out of Egypt: he heard a tongue which he knew not. 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. Rejoice to God our helper: sing aloud to the God of Jacob: take a pleasant psalm with the harp; blow the trumpet in the beginning of the month, for it is a commandment in Israel, and a judgment to the God of Jacob.

Flectámus génua.
R. Leváte.

Let us kneel.
R. Arise.

COLLECT

Misercórdiæ tuæ remédiis, quæsumus, Dómine, fragílitas nostra subsístat: ut, quæ sua conditióne attéritur, tua dementía reparétur. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, that our weakness may be upheld by Thy healing mercy, so that what of itself is falling into ruin may be restored by Thy clemency. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

LESSON Amos 9: 13-15

Hæc dicit Dóminus Deus: Ecce, dies véniunt: et comprehéndet arátor messórem, et calcátor uvæ mitténtem semen: et stillábunt montes dulcédinem, et omnes colles culti erunt. Et convértam captivitátem pópuli mei Israël: et ædificábunt civitátes desértas et inhabitábunt: et plantábunt vineas et bibent vinum eárum: et fácient hortos et cómedent fructus eórum. Et plantábo eos super humum suam: et non evéllam eos ultra de terra sua, quam dedi eis: dicit Dóminus, Deus tuus.

Thus saith the Lord God: Behold the days come, when the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and he that treades of grapes him that soweth seeds, and the mountains shall drop sweetness, and every hill shall be tilled. And I will bring back the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall build the abandoned cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine of them; and shall make gardens, and eat the fruits of them: and I will plant them upon their own land: and I will no more pluck them out of the their land which I have given them; saith the Lord thy God.

GRADUAL Psalms 112: 5-7

Quis sicut Dóminus Deus noster, qui in altis hábitat, et humília réspicit in cælo et in terra? Súscitans a terra inopem et de stércore érigens páuperem.

Who is as the Lord our God, Who dwelleth on high, and looketh down on the low thing in heaven and in earth? Raised up the needy from the earth, and lifting up the poor out of the dunghill.

Dóminus vobíscum
R. Et cum spíritu tuo.

The Lord be with you.
R. And with your spirit.

COLLECT

Præsta, quæsumus, Dómine, famíliæ tuæ supplicánti: ut, dum a cibis corporálibus se abstinet, a vítiis quoque mente jeiúnet. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.
(Commemoration of St. Thomas of Villanova)

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to Thy suppliant household, that while they abstain from food for the body, they may likewise refrain from sin in their minds. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

COLLECT

Deus, qui beátum Thomam Pontificem insígnis in páupere misericórdiæ vitæ decorásti: quæsumus; ut, ejus intercessióne, in ómnibus, qui le deprecántur, divítias misericórdiæ tuæ benígnus effúndas. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

O God, Who didst adorn blessed Thomas, Thy bishop, with the virtue of a consuming charity for the poor, we beseech Thee that, through his intercession, Thou graciously pour forth the riches of Thy mercy upon all who pray to Thee. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

LESSON 2 Esdras 8: 1-10

In diébus illis: Congregátus est omnis pópulus quasi vir unus ad platéam, quæ est ante portam aquárum: et dixérunt Esdræ scribæ, ut afférret librum legis Moysi, quam præcéperat Dóminus Israël. Attúlit ergo Esdras sacérdos librum legem coram multitúdine virórum et mulíerum, cunctísque qui poterant intellégere, in die prima mensis septími. Et legit in eo aperte in platéa, quæ erat ante portam aquárum, de mane usque ad médiam diem, in conspéctu virórum et mulíerum et sapiéntium: et aures omnis pópuli erant érectæ ad librum. Stetit autem Esdras scriba supra gradum lignéum, quem fécerat ad loquendum. Et apéruit librum coram omni pópulo: super univérsum quippe pópulum eminébat. Et cum aperuísset eum, stetit omnis pópulus. Et benedíxit Esdras Dómino, Deo magno: et respóndit omnis pópulus: Amen, Amen: élevans manus suas: et incurváti sunt et adoravérunt Deum: proni in terram. Porro levíte docébant fáciébant in pópulo ad audiéndam legem: pópulus autem stabat in gradu suo. Et legérunt in libro legis Dei distincte et aperte ad intellegéndum: et intellexérunt, cum legerétur. Dixit autem Nehemías, et Esdras sacérdos et scriba, et levítæ interpretántes univérsio pópulo: Dies sanctificátus est Dómino, Deo nostro, nolíte lugére et nolíte fléte. Et dixit eis: Ite, comédite pinguia et bíbite mulsum, et mittíte partes his, qui non præparavérunt sibi: quia sanctus est Dómini est, et nolíte contristári: gáudium étenim Dómini est fortitúdo nostra.

In those days all the people were gathered together as one man, to the street which is before the water gate, and they spoke to Esdras the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. Then Esdras the priest brought the law before the multitude of men and women, and all those that could understand, on the first day of the seventh month. And he read it plainly in the street that was before the water gate, from the morning until mid-day, before the men and women, and all those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book. And Esdras the scribe stood upon a step of wood, which he made to speak upon. And he opened the book: and Esdras blessed the Lord the great God, and all the people answered: Amen, Amen, lifting up their hands: and they bowed down, and adored God, with their faces to the ground. Now the levites made silence among the people to hear the law; and the people stood in their place: and they read in the book of the law of God distinctly and plainly to be understood; and they understood when it was read. And Nehemias, and Esdras priest and scribe, and the levites who interpreted to all the people said: This is a holy day to the Lord our God, mourn not, nor weep. And he said to them. Go eat fat meats and drink sweet wines, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves; because it is the holy day of the Lord, and be not sad, for the joy of the Lord is our strength.

GRADUAL Psalms 32: 12, 6

Beáta gens, cujus est Dóminus Deus eórum: pópulus, quem elégit Dóminus in hereditátem sibi. Verbo Dómini cæli firmáti sunt: et spíritu oris ejus omnis virtus eórum.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: the people whom the Lord hath chosen for His inheritance. By the word of the Lord the heavens were established: and all the power of them by the spirit of His mouth.

GOSPEL Mark 9: 16-28

In illo témpore: Respóndens unus de turba, dixit ad Jesum: Magíster, áttuli fílium meum ad te, habéntem spíritum mutum: qui, ubicúmque eum apprehénderit, allídit illum, et spumat et stridet déntibus et árescit: et dixi discípulis tuis, ut ejícerent illum, et non potuérunt. Qui respóndens eis, dixit: O generátio incrédula, quámdiu apud vos ero? quámdiu vos sústinebo? Áffere illum ad me. Et attulérunt eum. Et cum vidísset eum, statim spíritus conturbávit illum: et allátus in terram, volutabátur spumans. Et interrogávit patrem eius: Quantum témporis est, ex quo ei hoc accidit? At ille ait: Ab infántia: et frequénter eum in ignem et in aquas misit, ut eum períderet. Sed si quid potes, ádjuva nos, miséricors nobis. Jesus autem ait illi: Si potes credere, ómnia possíbilia sunt credénti. Et cóntinuo exclámans puer, cum lacrímis aiébat: Credo, Dómine: ádjuva incredulitátem meam. Et cum vidéret Jesus concurrere turbam, increpávit cum spíritui immundo, dicens illi: Surde et mute spíritus, ego præcípio tibi, exi ab eo, et ámplius ne intróbias in eum. Et exclámans et multum discérpens eum, éxiit ab eo, et factus est sicut mórtuus, ita ut multi dicerent: Quia mórtuus est. Jesus autem tenens manum ejus, elevávit eum, et surrexit. Et cum introísset in domum, discípuli eius secréto interrogábant eum: Quare nos non potúimus ejícere eum? Et dixit illis: Hoc genus in nullo potest exíre nisi in oratióne et jejúnio.

At the time, one of the multitude answering said to Jesus: Master, I have brought my son to thee, having a dumb spirit. Who, wheresoever he taketh him, dasheth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with the teeth, and pineth away: and I spoke to thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not. Who answering them, said: O incredulous generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him. And when he had seen him, immediately the spirit troubled him; and being thrown down upon the ground, he rolled about foaming. And he asked his father: How long time is it since this hath happened unto him? But he said: From his infancy. And sometimes hath he cast him into the fire and into waters to destroy him. But if thou canst do any thing, help us, having compassion on us. And Jesus saith to him: If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And presently the father of the boy crying out, with tears said: I do believe, Lord: help my unbelief. And when Jesus saw the multitude running together, he threatened the unclean spirit, saying to him: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, go out of him; and enter not any more into him. And crying out, and greatly tearing him, he went out of him, and he became as dead, so that many said: He is dead. But Jesus taking him by the hand, lifted him up: and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples secretly asked him: Why could not we cast him out? And he said to them: This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

OFFERTORY Psalms 118: 47,48

Levábo in mandátis tuis, quæ dilexi valde: et levábo manus meas ad mandáta tua, quæ dilexi.

I will meditate on Thy commandments, which I will love exceedingly and lift up my hands to Thy commandments, which I have loved.

SECRET

Hæc hóstia, Dómine, quæsumus, emúndet nostra delicta: et ad sacrifícium celebrándum, subditórum tibi córpora mentésque sanctíficet. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.
(Commemoration of St. Thomas of Villanova)

May this sacrifice, we beseech Thee, O Lord, cleanse our sins away, and sanctify the bodies and minds of them that serve Thee unto celebrating the sacrifice. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

COMMON PREFACE

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubique grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus: per Christum Dóminum nostrum. Per quem majestátem tuam laudant Angeli, adórant Dominatiónes, tremunt Potestátes. Cæli cælorúmque Virtútes, ac beáta Séraphim, sócia exsultatióne concélebrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces, ut admítti júbeas deprecámur, súppli confessióne dicéntes:

And may the perpetual fervour of blessed Thomas, Thy Confessor and Bishop, be beseech Thee, O Lord, render us pleasing to Your loving kindness, so that this service of sacred propitiation may be a blessed reparation for him and secure for us the gifts of Thy grace. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

It is truly fitting and just, proper and beneficial, that we should always and everywhere, give thanks unto Thee, Holy Lord, Father almighty, everlasting God, through Christ our Lord. Through whom the Angels praise Thy majesty, the Dominations adore, the Powers tremble. The heavens and the hosts of heaven, and the blessed Seraphim, together celebrate in exultation. With whom, we pray Thee, command that our voices of supplication also be admitted in confessing Thee saying:

COMMUNION 2 Esdras 8: 10

Comédite pinguia et bíbite mulsum, et mittíte partes his, qui non præparavérunt sibi: sanctus enim dies Dómini est, nolíte contristári: gáudium étenim Dómini est fortitúdo nostra.

Eat fat meats, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves; because it is the holy day of the Lord; for the joy of the Lord is our strength.

POSTCOMMUNION

Sumptæ, Dómine, dona cæléstia, suppliciter deprecámur: ut, quæ sédula servítute, dónante te, gérimus, dignis sénsibus tuo múnere capiámus Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

As we receive Thy heavenly gift, O Lord, we humbly pray: that what of Thy bounty we dutifully hold, of Thy bounty too may we worthily keep. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

(Commemoration of St. Thomas of Villanova)

Deus, fidélium remunerátor animárum: præsta; ut beáti Thomæ Confessóris tui atque Pontíficis, cujus venerándam celebrámus festivitátem, précibus indulgéntiam consequámur, Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

O God, Who rewards faithful souls, grant that, through the prayers of blessed Thomas, Thy Confessor and Bishop, whose hallowed feast we are keeping, we may obtain pardon for our sins. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.