



26 APRIL

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

Memoria

Though legend traces this beautiful painting of the Madonna and Child to thirteenth century Albania, from whence during an Ottoman invasion it came miraculously to the Augustinian church at Genazzano near Rome, scholars are now of the opinion that it is probably a fifteenth century fresco painted by Gentile de Fabriano. Nevertheless, countless favors have been granted over the centuries to the faithful who have honored Mary under this title. The nineteenth century Popes Pius IX and Leo XIII encouraged the spread of this devotion, and copies of the painting were distributed to Brothers' schools and communities throughout the world. Pope Leo granted to the Brothers in 1898 the privilege of celebrating the feast with a proper liturgy.

Our Lady of Good Counsel is appropriately invoked by directors and administrators, as well as by spiritual directors and counselors. The retreat that opened the Thirty-ninth General Chapter in 1966 concluded with a pilgrimage of the delegates to the shrine at Genazzano.

MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Wis 7:7b.13

I pleaded and the spirit of Wisdom came to me; sincerely I learned about her, and ungrudgingly do I share her riches I do not hide away.

OPENING PRAYER (COLLECT)

O Lord, you know the uncertainty and timidity of the thoughts of mortals;
through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Good Counsel,
in whom your Son was incarnated,
grant us the gift of your counsel,
that we may know your will and be guided in our actions.
Through Christ our Lord.

FIRST READING

Sir 24: 17-22

Mary, source of all wisdom.

A reading from the Book of Sirach

I bud forth delights like a vine; my blossoms are glorious and rich fruit. Come to me, all who desire me, and be filled with my fruits. You will remember me as sweeter than honey, better to have than the honeycomb. Those who eat of me will hunger still, those who drink of me will thirst for more. Whoever obeys me will not be put to shame, and those who serve me will never go astray.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Sir 14: 20-27

R/. Blessed is he who meditates on wisdom day and night.

Happy those who meditate on Wisdom,
and fix their gaze on knowledge;
Who ponder her ways in their heart,
and understand her paths;

Who pursue her like a scout,
and watch at her entry way;
Who peep through her windows,
and listen at her doors;

Who encamp near her house
and fasten their tent pegs next to her walls;
Who pitch their tent beside her,
and dwell in a good place;

Who build their nest in her leaves,
and lodge in her branches;
Who take refuge from the heat in her shade
and dwell in her home.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Prov 8: 14

Alleluia, Alleluia.

Mine are counsel and advice; mine is strength; I am understanding.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Jn 2: 1-11

Do whatever he tells you

A reading from the gospel according to John

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." [And] Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Brothers and sisters, let us pray to God through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Good Counsel:

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

Intercessions...

Watch over with goodness, O Lord, this family of yours that is honored to have the Blessed Virgin Mary as its Mother. Grant through her intercession that we act in accord with our vocation and participate in the fullness of your grace. Through Christ our Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Father, as we celebrate the memory of the Virgin Mary, we offer you our gifts and prayers. Sustain us by the love of Christ, who offered himself as a perfect sacrifice on the cross, and is Lord forever and ever.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jn 2: 5

His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, may this sacrament strengthen the faith in our hearts. May Mary's Son, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaim to be God and man, bring us to eternal life by the saving power of his resurrection, for he is Lord forever and ever.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary

INVITATORY

We recite the Invitatory Psalm at the beginning of the Hours: it comes before the Office of Readings or the Morning Office (Lauds) depending on whether you begin with one or the other.

V/. Lord, open my lips,

R/. And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

Ant. Celebrating the Virgin Mary, Mother of Good Counsel, let us acclaim her Son, Christ the Lord.
(**T.P.** Alleluia).

INVITATORY PSALM

PSALM 95

Encourage yourselves daily while it is still "today"

Heb 3: 13)

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord;
cry out to the rock of our salvation.
Let us greet him with a song of praise,
joyfully sing out our psalms.

For the Lord is the great God,
the great king over all gods,
Whose hand holds the depths of the earth;
who owns the tops of the mountains.

The sea and dry land belong to God,
who made them, formed them by hand.
Enter, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the Lord who made us.

For this is our God,
whose people we are,
God's well-tended flock.

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:
Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah,
as on the day of Massah in the desert.

There your ancestors tested me;
they tried me though they had seen my works.

Forty years I loathed that generation;
I said: "This people's heart goes astray;
they do not know my ways."

Therefore I swore in my anger:
"They shall never enter my rest."

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

OFFICE OF READINGS

SECOND READING

Devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin

From the "Meditations" of St. John Baptist de La Salle, priest.

Med. 151: Our Lady of the Snow

We are not in a position to offer temporal gifts to the Most Blessed Virgin, for we have renounced the world and left all to consecrate ourselves to the service of God.¹ All she asks of us, the reason why the Church seems to have instituted this feast today to honor the holy Mother of God, is to encourage us to have a very special devotion to her and to procure it for those whose guidance God has entrusted to us. The Church calls your attention to the great grace she gave on this day to these two people who were so eager to promote her honor, which was that she willed that they be remembered in the Church and that what they did to honor her, and what she did in their favor, be proclaimed until the end of time by all the faithful.

Let us be convinced that everything we do to honor the Most Blessed Virgin or to cause her to be honored will be very richly rewarded by God through her. Let us always acknowledge her as our good Mother, for Jesus Christ gave her as such to all those who would be devoted to her. He did this in the person of Saint John, when, at the point of death, he said to him, My Son, behold your Mother.

What must oblige us most especially to have a great devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin is the fact that she is so highly honored by the Eternal Father. He has given her a position above all pure creatures because she bore in her womb the One who is equal to him and who is one in nature with him. She is exalted above all creatures because of the abundance of grace bestowed on her, which surpasses that given to anyone else, and because of the purity of her life, which no one has equaled. This led Saint Anselm to declare that it was only right that Mary be clothed in great glory and lifted high above all creation, because, after God, no one is superior to her.

Is it not to be incomparably raised above all creatures to have become the temple of the living God when she conceived the Son of God? For this reason, we apply to her the words of Psalm 132: God has chosen her to make his dwelling in her,³ and these other words from Psalm 65: Your temple is holy.⁴ Abbot Rupert goes even farther; he says that once the Holy Spirit had visited the Most Blessed Virgin to make her conceive the Son of God, she became totally beautiful with a divine beauty. This made Saint Bernard say that we ought to honor the Most Blessed Virgin with the tenderest of devotions because God placed the fullness of all good in her when he enclosed the divine Word in her womb.

But what ought to encourage us most especially to cultivate such a devotion is the great good that we will receive from it. The same saint says, Let us have a great veneration and a most tender devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin, because it is through her that we receive the benefits that God wishes us to have. Entering into detail concerning these benefits, he explains as follows: The Holy Spirit distributes all his gifts, graces, and virtues to whomsoever he pleases, when he pleases, and in the manner and the amount he judges proper, through the ministry of the Most Blessed Virgin. Saint Anselm, to stir up our trust in her, adds that when someone invokes the name of the Mother of God, even if the one who has recourse to her does not deserve to be heard, the merits of this most holy Mother of God still suffice to win from God's goodness whatever that person asks. Let us, then, have confidence, as Saint Bernard

continues, that if we have true devotion for the Most Blessed Virgin, nothing we need for our salvation will be lacking.

It would be of little use to us to be persuaded of our obligation to have a special devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin if we did not know what this devotion includes, if we did not possess it effectively, and if we did not show it on the appropriate occasions. Because she is superior to all creatures, we must have a greater devotion to her than to all other saints, whoever they may be. We show our devotion to the saints at certain times and on certain days of the year, but the devotion we ought to have for the Most Blessed Virgin must be continual.

This is why it is of Rule in our Institute (1) not to let a single day go by without reciting the rosary and to say it while walking in the streets; (2) to celebrate all her feasts with great solemnity; (3) to uncover our heads and bow every time we hear her name or pass in front of her image, as this devotion requires; (4) considering her as the principal patroness of our Society, we place ourselves daily under her protection at the end of our prayer in the morning and in the evening and after each exercise; we have recourse to her, placing in her, after God, our entire confidence; (5) we invoke her in our most pressing needs as our primary advocate, after Jesus Christ, before God.

Are we faithful to all these practices of devotion toward the Most Blessed Virgin? How well do we perform them? Is it in the spirit we have proposed above? Let us not fail in this if we wish to receive a great abundance of grace through the merits of the Most Blessed Virgin.

RESPONSORY

R/. Blessed are you, O Virgin Mary, worthy of all praise: * from you is born the sun of justice, Christ the Savior. Alleluia.

V/. We celebrate with joy your feast, o Virgin Mary:

R/. from you is born the sun of justice, Christ our Savior. Alleluia.

PRAYER

O Lord, you know the uncertainty and timidity of the thoughts of mortals; through the intercession of Mary, in whom your Son was incarnated, grant us the gift of your counsel, that we may know your will and be guided in our actions. Through Christ our Lord.

MORNING PRAYER

Ant. Ben. Virgin Mary, radiant dawn of our salvation, the Sun of Justice, the light form on high, rose from you, (**T.P.**Alleluia)

INTERCESSIONS

We turn in confident prayer to God our Father, who has promised to live in the hearts of those who keep his words as Mary did.

R) Through the intercession of Mary, hear our prayer.

Lord God, you made the Virgin Mary an example of those who welcome your word and put it into practice.

Intercessions...

Our Father.

PRAYER

O Lord, you know the uncertainty and timidity of the thoughts of mortals; through the intercession of Mary, in whom your Son was incarnated, grant us the gift of your counsel, that we may know your will and be guided in our actions. Through Christ our Lord.

EVENING PRAYER

Ant. Magn. Blessed are you O Mary, you have believed; in you the word of the Lord is fulfilled.
(T.P. Alleluia)

INTERCESSIONS

United in our prayer of praise, together we turn our prayer to God who, in giving us his Son through the Virgin Mary, has enriched us with every blessing.

R) Mary, full of grace, intercede for us.

Intercessions...

Our Father.

PRAYER

O Lord, you know the uncertainty and timidity of the thoughts of mortals; through the intercession of Mary, in whom your Son was incarnated, grant us the gift of your counsel, that we may know your will and be guided in our actions. Through Christ our Lord.