



26 JANUARY

**COMMEMORATION OF THE TRANSFER OF THE RELICS
OF SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE FROM BELGIUM TO ROME
(1937)**

*Generalale: Solemnity
Institute: Memoria ad libitum*

John Baptist de La Salle was buried in the chapel of St. Suzanne in the parish church of Saint Sever in Rouen on Holy Saturday, 8 April 1719, the day after his death. On 16 July 1734 the bones of the saint were solemnly transferred to the recently-built chapel at Saint Yon. Brother Timothy, the Superior General, invited the Brother Directors from all over France, most of whom had known the Founder, to be present for the occasion, after which the delegates remained for the fifth General Chapter.

The tomb was vandalized during the French Revolution but the relics survived to be hidden in a recess in the cellar. It was not until 1835 that they were rediscovered, exhumed, identified, and placed under the seal of the Archbishop of Rouen.

In 1841, the superiors obtained papal approval to have the relics moved to the Generalate, which was then in Paris, but the project was never carried out. In 1875 the relics were moved from the school on the Rue St. Lo in Rouen to the spacious basilica built to house them that was attached to the newly-opened school on the Rue St. Gervais.

After the Brothers were expelled from France in 1904, the reliquary and its precious contents were taken from Rouen to Lembecq-lez-Hal in Belgium. From there, in 1937 they were transported with great ceremony to Rome where they arrived on 26 January, the anniversary of the promulgation in 1725 of the Bull of Approbation of the Institute. The relics are venerated in the church of Saint John Baptist de La Salle at the Generalate in Rome.

MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Mt 5: 19

Whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

OPENING PRAYER (COLLECT)

Almighty and eternal God,
you created in the person of Saint John Baptist de La Salle
an admirable educator of youth.
Grant that in celebrating the transfer of his earthly remains,
we find strength in his heavenly help and inspiration in his example as our Founder.
Through Christ our Lord.

FIRST READING

The doctrine of the just man will shine forth.

A reading from the book of Sirach

Sirach 39:6-10

His care is to seek the Lord, his Maker,
to petition the Most High,
To open his lips in prayer,
to ask pardon for his sins.
Then, if it pleases the Lord Almighty,
he will be filled with the spirit of understanding;
He will pour forth his words of wisdom
and in prayer give thanks to the Lord,
Who will direct his knowledge and his counsel,
as he meditates upon his mysteries.
He will show the wisdom of what he has learned
and glory in the law of the Lord's covenant.
Many will praise his understanding;
his fame can never be effaced;
Unfading will be his memory,
through all generations his name will live;
Peoples will speak of his wisdom,
and in assembly sing his praises.
The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalms 1

R) The man who serves the Lord is a fruitful tree.

Blessed is the man who does not walk
in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the way of sinners,
nor sit in company with scoffers.
Rather, the law of the Lord is his joy;
and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree

planted near streams of water,
that yields its fruit in season;
Its leaves never wither;
whatever he does prospers.

But not so are the wicked, not so!
They are like chaff driven by the wind.
Because the Lord knows the way of the just,
but the way of the wicked leads to ruin.

SECOND READING

Eph 4: 1-7.11-13

Grace was given to each of us.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all

But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mk 10: 15

Alleluia, Alleluia.

Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Mk 9: 33-37

Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me.

A reading from the gospel according to Mark

They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, he began to ask them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they remained silent. They had been discussing among themselves on the way who was the greatest. Then he sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all." Taking a child he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it he said to them, "Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me."

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Brothers and sisters, while celebrating with joy in the Spirit the solemnity of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, we raise our humble prayers to God that he will grant us to imitate in our lives the admirable example of this saint. Let us pray to the Lord:

R) Lord, hear our prayer.

Intentions...

Almighty God, hear the prayers which we ask our Founder to entrust to you. Lead us to imitate him, as he himself imitated your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever and ever.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Accept with kindness, O Lord, the gifts we offer you on the feast of the transfer of the relics of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, so that following in his footsteps and loving you above all things, we may work constantly to procure your glory. Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Lk 12: 42

“Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute [the] food allowance at the proper time?”

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O Lord, may our communion with the Body and Blood of your Son renew our spirit, and may the example of Saint John Baptist de La Salle help us always to walk in the way of salvation. Through Christ our Lord.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

As at the feast of Saint John Baptist de La Salle

OFFICE OF READINGS

SECOND READING

The honor we must pay to the relics of the saints.

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

Med. 184: The Day of transfer of Holy Relics

God invites us to practice this devotion by the infinite number of miracles he has performed through the holy relics of his servants. We see this at the tombs of the martyrs and the holy confessors, which are, as the councils say, fountains of salvation that Jesus Christ has left us, from which flow all sorts of relief for the sick and where we can find a source of healing to cure illnesses and disperse evil sadness and temptations through the power of Jesus Christ, which remains in them. We see this happen at the transfer of the relics of Saint Stephen, the first martyr, and of various other saints, so that we cannot doubt that God, according to his word, does indeed honor the ashes and bones of his servants,¹ who were living members and active temples of his Holy Spirit.² For this same reason, he even sent his angels to bury the body of Saint Catherine and revealed the presence of saints' bodies by miraculous lights, so that they might not remain unknown in a common or undignified burial place and we might learn to venerate them for the welfare of our own body and soul.

If God's goodness does so much for our welfare in return for the slight service that we render to these lifeless relics, what grace he has in store for those who try to become imitators of these great souls!

The veneration of holy relics was practiced in antiquity. It was approved by the councils and by the practice of the holiest people in recent centuries. The example of the great Saint Charles Borromeo is noteworthy in this regard, as we can see in the history of his life. The saints in glory rightly desire this honor, because in heaven they are the protectors of the living. We see this in the case of Saint Denis, the Apostle of France, of Saint Sebastian, of Saint Maurice, and of others who merited honorable burial. Finally, this is an excellent means to win their intercession for us. Because they have reached the state of perfect charity, they abundantly reward the services we do them.

When we honor their relics, they increase our own devotion by their prayers. They present our prayers to God³ and invite us to be, like them, living holocausts before the face of the Lord.

Adore God, who is so admirable in his saints. Be humbled at the feet of his divine majesty, and learn to be

sanctified. Woe to anyone who still allows himself thoughts of vanity after witnessing so many examples of piety!

From our veneration of holy relics, we ought to draw the following benefits. First, we entertain special esteem and profound sentiments of piety and respect toward all holy relics, especially those whose transfer we celebrate today. This ought to give us great confidence in the intercession of the saints whose relics we are happy to have near us.

Second, we become piously ambitious, considering the honors that God pays to his servants. Be assured that people who do not strive to become great friends of God by fidelity to his grace and by constantly seeking only his glory and the salvation of their souls do not deserve to bear the name of Christians, much less that of religious and of people consecrated to God. What blindness it is to wish to be honored with the saints in the next life when we do not live like the saints now, when we entertain none but earthly thoughts, are unable to distinguish what is precious from what is vile, and seek the pleasures and honors of this world. Would this not be something deserving at once of astonishment and pity for us, who wish to share in the happy lot of the saints?

Let us not act in this way. Let us lift our thoughts up to heaven, and may the sight of the holy relics become for us a motive to increase and enlighten in us the spirit of martyrdom, contempt for the world, and ardent love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

RESPONSORY

1 Thes 2: 8; Gal 4: 19

R/. With such affection for you, we were determined to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our very selves as well; * so dearly beloved had you become to us.

V/. My children, for whom I am again in labor until Christ be formed in you!:

*so dearly beloved had you become to us.

HYMN «TE DEUM»

It ends with the acclamation:

Let us praise the Lord.

R/. And give him thanks.

PRAYER

God, who chose Saint John Baptist de La Salle for the Christian education of youth, inspire teachers for your Church who are dedicated to serve the new generation, in school and throughout life. Through Christ Our Lord.

MORNING PRAYER

As at the feast of Saint John Baptist de La Salle

Ant. Ben. Only one who loves can educate and guide as a parent does. **(T.P. Alleluia)**

CANTICLE OF ZACHARY

Lk 1: 68-79

The Messiah and his forerunner

INTERCESSIONS

In this liturgy of praise, we give you thanks, Lord and merciful Father, for St John-Baptist De La Salle. In him we celebrate the wonders of your love. You filled him with gifts of nature and of grace and you gave him to your Church as a father to the young and a teacher of holiness. Grant that we may make him present in our time, through our fidelity and service to the young and in the generosity of your love.

R) Lord, make us generous labourers in the building of your kingdom.

Intercessions...

Our Father.

PRAYER

God, who chose Saint John Baptist de La Salle for the Christian education of youth, inspire teachers for your Church who are dedicated to serve the new generation, in school and throughout life. Through Christ Our Lord

EVENING PRAYER

As at the feast of Saint John Baptist de La Salle

Ant. Magn. Let the children come to me, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. **(T. P. Alleluia).**

CANTICLE OF MARY

Lk 1: 46-55

Rejoicing in the spirit of the Lord

INTERCESSIONS

Let us raise our prayers to God the Father, fount of all grace, that he may fill us with the same untiring zeal which inspired St John-Baptist De La Salle, father and teacher to young people, so that we may live as signs of happiness through constant faith.

R) Make us holy, Lord, because you are holy.

Intercessions...

PRAYER

God, who chose Saint John Baptist de La Salle for the Christian education of youth, inspire teachers for your Church who are dedicated to serve the new generation, in school and throughout life. Through Christ Our Lord.