

**CELEBRATING THE YEAR OF FAITH
THROUGH THE TEACHING OF VATICAN II**

*Holy Hour for March 2013
Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity
Ad Gentes Divinitus, 7 December 1965*



May the Kingdom of God be proclaimed and renewed throughout the world.

As the Blessed Sacrament is exposed during this series of Holy Hours to mark the YEAR OF FAITH let us sing each time the hymn that bears these words from St Paul 'We Walk By Faith And Not By Sight'

'WE WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT'
Celebration For Everyone No 789/ Laudate No 284

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God, by whose untold mercy the apostles preached the good news of the unfathomable riches of Christ and led the peoples of the world from darkness to light grant that through their intercession we may grow in faith and remain steadfast in our prayer that you send workers to gather the harvest, that the Gospel may be preached to all creation and that your people, gathered by the Word of life and sustained by the power of the Sacraments, may advance in the path of salvation and love.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **AMEN**

Reader 1:

'In the present state of things which gives rise to a new situation for mankind, the Church, the salt of the earth and the light of the world (cf. Mt. 5:13-14), is even more urgently called upon to save and renew every creature, so that all things might be restored in Christ, and so that in him mankind might form one family and one people of God. And so the sacred Synod, while it thanks God for the outstanding work done through the generous labour of the whole Church, proposes to outline the principles of missionary activity. It wishes to unite the efforts of all the faithful, so that the people of God, following the narrow way of the cross, might everywhere spread the kingdom of Christ, the Lord and beholder of ages (cf. Eccl. 36:19) and prepare the way for his coming.'

(from the Documents of the II Vatican Council.

Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (Ad Gentes Divinitus) No 1)

A PAUSE FOR QUIET REFLECTION

Reader 2

FIRST READING

JONAH 3:10-4:11 (*Lectionary III, pg 532*)
'AM I NOT TO FEEL SORRY FOR NINEVEH?'

12 MINUTE SILENT ADORATION

To conclude this time of adoration and reflection we sing:

HOW LOVELY ON THE MOUNTAINS

Celebration For Everyone No 268/ Liturgical Hymns Old & New No 346/ Laudate No 768

Other suitable hymns may be used highlighting the spread of the gospel.

Reader 1:

'Although the Church possesses in itself the totality and fullness of the means of salvation, it does not always, in fact cannot, use every one of them immediately, but it has to make beginnings and work by slow stages to give effect to God's plan. Sometimes after a successful start it has cause to mourn a setback, or it may linger in a state of semi-fulfilment and insufficiency. With regard to peoples, classes and humanity it is only by degrees that it touches and penetrates them and so raises them to a catholic perfection. In each situation and circumstance a proper line of action and effective means should be adopted...Various stages, which are sometimes intermingled, are to be found in this missionary activity of the Church; first there is the beginning or planting and then a time of freshness and youthfulness. Nor does the Church's missionary activity cease once the point has been passed; the obligation to carry on the work devolves on the particular churches already constituted, an obligation to preach the Gospel to all who are still outside.'

(from the Documents of the II Vatican Council.

Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (Ad Gentes Divinitus) No 6)

A PAUSE FOR QUIET REFLECTION

Reader 2

SECOND READING Acts of the Apostles 11:19-26 (*Lectionary III, pg 536*)

'THEY STARTED PREACHING TO THE GREEKS, PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF THE LORD JESUS.'

12 MINUTE SILENT ADORATION

To conclude this time of adoration and reflection we sing:

O THE WORD OF MY LORD

Celebration For Everyone No 572/ Liturgical Hymns Old & New No 558/ Laudate No 979

Other suitable hymns may be used highlighting the theme of the spread of the gospel.

Reader 1:

'The Church...is aware that for her a tremendous missionary work still remains to be done. There are two billion people – and their number is increasing day by day - who have never, or barely, heard the gospel message; they constitute large and distinct groups...The Church must be present to these groups through those of its members who live among them or who have been sent to them...(so that by example and witness) others, seeing their good works, might glorify the Father (Mt.5:16). Those who have received from God the gift of faith in Christ, through the Church, should be admitted with liturgical rites to the Catechumenate which is not a mere exposition of dogmatic truths and norms of morality, but a period of formation in the whole Christian life, an apprenticeship of sufficient duration, during which the disciples will be joined to Christ their teacher...when the Holy Spirit...brings those who believe in Christ to a new life through the womb of the baptismal font, he gathers them into one people of God which is a "chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1 Pet.2:19). Therefore, missionaries, the fellow workers of God, should raise up communities of the faithful, so that...they might carry out the priestly, prophetic and royal offices entrusted to them by God.'

(from the Documents of the II Vatican Council.

Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (Ad Gentes Divinitus) Nos 10,11,14,15)

A PAUSE FOR QUIET REFLECTION

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 28:16-20 (*Lectionary III, pg 540*)

'GO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS.'

12 MINUTE SILENT ADORATION

To conclude this time of adoration and reflection we sing:

I WILL BE WITH YOU

Celebration For Everyone No 289/ Liturgical Hymns Old & New No 379/ Laudate No 866

Other suitable hymns may be used highlighting the theme of spreading the gospel.

Leader:

In humility of heart, let us pray to God who cares for everyone.

Response to each prayer: Lord, strengthen the faith of your people

Reader 2:

- Keep alive in your Church the strength of faith and the joy of believing. We pray to the Lord
- Guide your Church and help her to remain always free to continue the mission you entrusted to her to bring the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth. We pray to the Lord
- Strengthen Pope Benedict, Archbishop Patrick and all those involved in leadership within the Church, may their witness to Christ be a light that shines in the darkened corners of the world. We pray to the Lord
- Grant to us your faithful people a missionary heart so that in the circumstances of our daily lives we may be your witnesses so that by our example others may come to know and praise you their one true God and Father of all. We pray to the Lord
- Give to all missionaries, especially those who have left their family and homeland, the comfort of many ears that are open to hear your word through them and many hearts waiting to receive and respond with faith to the good news of Christ. We pray to the Lord
- Grant to the dead eternal life. We pray to the Lord

BENEDICTION PRAYERS AND HYMNS NOW FOLLOW

UNLESS A GRAIN OF WHEAT SHALL FALL

Celebration For Everyone No 754/ Liturgical Hymns Old & New No 697/ Laudate No 748