

Memorial of the Incarnation

Antiphon. Lo! Mary hath brought forth the Savior of Whom, when John saw Him, he said, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

Call. Thou art fairer than the children of men.

Response. *Full of grace are thy lips.*

We beseech Thee, O Lord, pour Thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the Incarnation of Thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by His cross and passion we may be brought to the glory of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Memorial of the Blessed Virgin

Antiphon. I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

Call. Full of grace are thy lips.

Response. *Because God hath blessed thee for ever.*

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, that we Thy servants may rejoice in perpetual health of mind and body, and that, by the intercession of Blessed Mary, ever a virgin, we may be assisted, so as to escape present sadness, and enjoy eternal gladness. *Amen.*

From Sabine Baring-Gould's

The Golden Gate

Fr. Baring-Gould is most famous for his hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers".

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Our Father

and...

Our Mother?

By Rev. Baring-Gould

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"Onward Christian Soldiers"

The Lord's Prayer

This is the very best of all prayers. It was taught the Church by our Lord Jesus Christ.¹ “Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”²

We call God *Our* Father, because we pray, not as separate individuals, but “as members one of another.” But we say, “I believe,” because profession of faith is an individual act. We can pray for, and with others, but we cannot believe for others. As in a well-ordered family when one brother earns any money, it goes for the common fund, so when one prays in the Church the whole society profits thereby.

We call God our *Father*, because He is our Father by the right of creation, and also by the right of adoption. This name by which He taught us to call on Him, gives us great confidence, for if “ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.”³ By Baptism “we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”⁴ This name by which He has taught us to call

on Him should excite in us a consideration of the greatness of our calling;⁵ it should also prove a warning to us against degeneracy. “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham,” said Christ to the Jews, and if we be the sons of God we should walk as children of light, for God is light.

The Angelic Salutation

Hail, Mary, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

The Angelic Salutation, like the Lord’s Prayer, is taken from the Holy Gospel. The Angel Gabriel with these words addressed the Blessed Virgin Mary,⁶ and Elizabeth, “full of the Holy Ghost,” concluded them with the last paragraph.⁷ That such a salutation should be used in all ages of the Church, Mary herself implies when she exclaims, “All generations shall call me blessed.”⁸ And well does she merit to be called blessed, for as Eve, the first mother, disobeyed and brought mankind into bondage, so Mary, the second mother, by her obedience restored man to liberty. The first mother listened to the evil angel, and disobeyed God; the second mother listened

to the good Archangel, and obeyed in implicit faith. The Angelic Salutation is a memorial of the Incarnation, a confession that Christ came in the flesh, was born of a virgin, and dwelt among us, that the doctrine of the Incarnation is the basis of Christian faith, Christian hope, and Christian charity.

2. The form in use in the Eastern Church is this: “Hail! Virgin Mary, Mother of God! Thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, which gave birth to the Savior of our souls.” The Roman Church, in the sixteenth century, added the words: “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and in the hour of our death. Amen.” The ancient form, being strictly Scriptural, is preferable to either, if used at all.

¹ Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2

² Deuteronomy 11:18, 19

³ Luke 11:13

⁴ Romans 8:15

⁵ 1 John 3:1-3

⁶ Luke 1:28

⁷ Luke 1:42

⁸ Luke 1:48