ST. JOSEPH ADVENT RETREAT

LAUDATO SI’

“BIRTHING THE HOLY”

IN THE CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME AND OUR DOMESTIC CHURCH

SESSION 4 – “CHRIST OUR LIGHT!”

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The Sacraments are a privileged way in which nature is taken up by God to become a means of mediating supernatural life.

Through our worship of God, we are invited to embrace the world on a different plane. Water, oil, fire and colors are taken up in all their symbolic power and incorporated in our act of praise.

LS, n. 235
Catholics live in an enchanted world, a world of statues and holy water, stained glass and votive candles, saints and religious medals, rosary beads and holy pictures.

But these Catholic paraphernalia are mere hints of a deeper and more pervasive religious sensibility which inclines Catholics to see the Holy lurking in creation.

As Catholics, we find our houses and our world haunted by a sense that the objects, events, and persons of daily life are revelations of grace.

Andrew Greeley, *Catholic Imagination*, 1
E = mc²

Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs" (n.1)
In the beginning was the Word:
the Word was with God
and the Word was God….

What has come into being in him was life,
life that was the light of all;
and the light shines in darkness,
and darkness could not overpower it.
The Word was real light
that gives light to everyone; …

The Word became flesh,
and lived among us.

John 1
You are the light for the world.
A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden.
No one lights a lamp to put it under a basket;
They put it on a lampstand where it shines for everyone in the house.
In the same way, your light must shine.
Matt. 5: 14-16.
DEVELOPING A LITURGICAL PIETY

Christianity starts in northern hemisphere
Advent – winter solstice
Christmas – “darkest time”
• Magi follow a star (Matt 2)
“Lent” – lencten
Date of Easter is: “first Sunday after the first full moon of the spring equinox”

Liturgy of Light (“Lucernarium”):
Blessing of the Paschal Candle
Christ our Light!
Thanks be to God!
“O holy Father, accept this candle, a solemn offering, the work of bees and of your servants’ hands, an evening sacrifice of praise…”

Liturgical principle: 
\( \text{lex orandi, lex credendi} \)

Blessings, blessings, blessings…

- Bees
- Bees wax
- Candle blessing
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Tortugas, NM

100-year-old feast, that is a cultural mix of Native American (Piro, Manso and Tiwa ancestry) and Hispanic customs and traditions

Key aspects:

1. Procession with image from chapel to community house
2. Velero (“wake”) held throughout the night, including rosary
3. Procession to top of Tortugas Mountain for Mass
4. Quiotes (walking sticks) and Coronas (head bands) for return trip at sunset
5. Feast Day Mass, followed by tribal dances
6. Festal dinner at community hall, includes “Guadalupe cookies”
Tavola di S. Giuseppe (March 19)

• Tradition in Sicily of intercession by S. Giuseppe to end famine; fava bean crops saved
• Wealthy of community host large buffet for poor, infirmed, and homeless
• Local villagers chosen as “holy family” and sit at head of table
• Today a “St. Joseph’s Table” has three tiers to represent Trinity, with variety of foods, usually some with fava beans; and traditional dessert (zeppole)
Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it, LS, n. 19.

[On] Ember Days the Church is accustomed to entreat the Lord for the various needs of humanity, especially for the fruits of the earth and for human labor, and to give thanks to him publicly.

Norms on the Liturgical Year, n. 455

Book of Blessings: blessings of seeds, flocks, harvest
In what might be regarded as the domestic Church, parents by word and example, are the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children."

*Lumen Gentium, n. 11.*

The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason too it can and should be called "the domestic Church.

"All members of the family, each according to his or her own gift, have the grace and responsibility of building, day by day, the communion of persons, making the family "a school of deeper humanity."

*St. John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio, n. 21.*
Developing a Liturgical Piety at Home

• Regular and ongoing experiences of beauty, e.g. walks in nature, camping, trips to museums, symphony, etc.

• Domestic prayer rituals which include sacred art, e.g. icons, holy cards, statutes which are culturally relevant

• **Home-based** education in Catholic culture

• Feast day celebrations for/by community, e.g. O.L. Guadalupe in Tortugas, NM

Remember, the goal...
...the Divine and the human meet in the slightest detail in the seamless garment of creation, in the last speck of dust of our planet

Patriarch Bartholomew