

Laetare Sunday

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is called Laetare Sunday. It is when the Church takes a bit of breather from Lenten practice and opens Mass with the Entrance Antiphon, “Rejoice, Jerusalem ... Be joyful, all who were in mourning!” – taken from Isaiah chapter 66.



Latin: Lætare Jerusalem: et conventum facite omnes qui diligitis eam: gaudete cum lætitia, qui in tristitia fuistis: ut exsultetis, et satiemini ab uberibus consolationis vestræ.

English: Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

Dom Prosper Gueranger’s beautiful blessing found in his work, *Liturgical Year*, brings together spiritual themes and highlights the joy that is to come in the Heavenly Jerusalem:

O God, by whose word and power all things were created, and by whose will they are all governed. O Thou that art the joy and gladness of all Thy faithful people, we beseech Thy divine Majesty that Thou vouchsafe to bless and sanctify this rose, so lovely in its beauty and fragrance.

We are to bear it this day in our hands as a symbol of spiritual joy, that thus the people that is devoted to Thy service, being set free from the captivity of Babylon by the grace of Thine only begotten Son, who is the glory and the joy of Israel, may show forth with a sincere heart the joys of that Jerusalem, which is above and is our mother. And whereas Thy Church, seeing this symbol, exults with joy for the glory of Thy Name; Do Thou O Lord give her true and perfect happiness.

Accept her devotion, forgive us our sins, increase our faith, heal us by Thy word, protect us by Thy mercy, remove all obstacles, grant us all blessings that thus this same Thy Church may offer unto Thee, the fruit of good works and walking in the odor of the fragrance of that Flower, which sprang from the root of Jesse and is called the Flower of the field, and the Lily of the valley, may she deserve to enjoy an endless joy in the bosom of heavenly glory in the society of all the saints together with that divine Flower who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost world without end.

Amen