

Prayer

Almighty God, reward of the saints
and glory of the humble,
You have inspired Blessed Jeanne Jugan
to serve you in the aged poor
with the humility of a hidden life;
Grant that by her intercession
we may joyfully reach eternal life
along the arduous way, in fraternal love.
We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ,
Your Son who lives and reigns with you,
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing

Salve Regina



Vigil for the Feast of Blessed Jeanne Jugan

Canticle of Simeon

Refrain: Lord, pro - tect us — as we stay a - wake.

Watch — o - ver us — while we sleep. That a -

wake we may keep watch with Christ our on - ly

Love, and a - sleep we may rest in his peace.

[Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.]

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace;
your word has been fulfilled:

my own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared in the sight of every people:

a light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

Responsory

In - to your hands, I com - mend my spi - rit, Lord.

[Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.]

You have re - deemed us, O Christ, my on - ly love.

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son,

and to the Spi - rit of love.

Opening Refrain

At the end of her life she could say in all truth,
 "I NO LONGER SEE ANYTHING BUT GOD" p.s.d.p.

REFRAIN

I have walked with God a - long the roads of life. I've gazed on his
 face and listened to his voice. He has been my refuge in
 sorrow and in joy. I no longer see anything but God.

(Readings are taken from *The Desert and the Rose*. They are meant to be done by various people, between the verses, with appropriate pauses throughout.)

As she traveled through the Breton countryside towards the solitude of La Tour at St Pern, Jeanne was in no way tempted to rebel, to protest and claim what was hers by right.

Jeanne had never set much store by her own person, or titles, or fame. She carried her treasure within her. Her will for good and her capacity for love were her great strengths, her treasure. The rest mattered little. In any case, her collecting rounds for the elderly had taught her to stamp on her own pride.... Such was the road along which the Lord had led her towards greater selflessness. He had helped her to discover true value and greatness in the capacity for love, in the inexhaustible will for good he had placed in her heart as a sharing in divine generosity itself. Jeanne had built her life on this inner abundance, which no one could take away from her, and compared with which everything else paled into insignificance.

Repeat refrain above.

There lay the secret of the peace and serenity she retained at the very moment when everything was unjustly taken away from her.... When Jeanne arrived at La Tour, the place of her great solitude, in April 1856, the words she had said to her mother long before “God wants me for himself, for a work as yet unknown” took on a new meaning, a truly overwhelming meaning. Yes, God wanted her for himself, more than ever; and more than ever “for a work as yet unknown.” This unknown work would be Jeanne herself. It was no longer for her a matter of accomplishing work, but of consenting to become God’s work herself.

Being *over there*, forgotten by all, would be a long road of silence, faith and love. Day after day, for years on end, alone with God, Jeanne would learn what can be called divine humility. The woman who had collected bread for the poor would become God’s collector, God’s beggar. By way of this light-filled shadow, she would come into the fullness of God. Then being *over there* would be splendor.

Refrain

COME TO ME

Weston Priory

Refrain

Come to me, all who la-bor and are heav-y bur - dened, and
I shall give you rest. Take up my yoke and learn from
me, for I am meek and hum - ble of heart,
and you'll find rest for your souls. Yes, my
yoke is eas - y and my bur - den is
light.

Psalmody

Antiphon

Refrain

Like a child rests in its moth-er's arms, so will I rest in
you. Like a so will I rest in you.

Psalm 131 (sung to a psalm tone)

O Lord, my heart is not proud
nor haughty my eyes.
I have not gone after things too great
nor marvels beyond me.

Truly I have set my soul
in silence and peace.

As a child has rest in its mother’s arms,
even so my soul.

O Israel, hope in the Lord
both now and for ever.

Reading

1 Pt 5:6-7, 10

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your cares upon him because he cares for you. The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ Jesus will himself restore, confirm, strengthen and establish you after you have suffered a little.

Night Prayer

Examination of Conscience

Introduction

Hymn

COME UNTO ME

Bob Hurd

Refrain

Come, come un-to me; I will make you a jew - el.
Pre-cious and rare the glo-ry you'll bear in the crown of

Verses

God. 1. There are deeds you a-lone must do; there are
2. From the dawn of cre - a - tion, from the

1. words on-ly you can say. Trust in me, and do not trem -
2. tree on — Cal - va - ry, I chose you and gave my life —

to Refrain

1. ble, for I go with you to show you the way.
2. — to be my own, — to be my de-light.

Text based on Isaiah 62 and Matthew 11:28-30. Text and music © 1984, Bob Hurd.
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Every day, with her rosary in one hand and a stick in the other, Jeanne wandered through the meadows and the woods. She immediately took to this rural setting.... Sometimes she was seen stopping to marvel at the flowers in the grounds. A rose drew her eye. A simple rose, without a name. The rose never speaks its name. It does not introduce itself. It is not concerned to know if it is being looked at or admired. It simply flowers, pure reflection of a Beauty which is beyond any name. Its brilliance is ecstasy, its silence, praise. Attentive, Jeanne seemed to be listening to the silence of the rose.... Its silence is that of eternal Beauty, which is beyond any name. It is seen by God. That is enough....

When Jeanne walked past the little rose in the grounds, she looked at it. Only the rose is silent enough to tell the secret of Beauty which is beyond any name.... In the yard at the novitiate there were wild roses. Jeanne once said to a novice: "You see these rose bushes. They are a little wild. You too are a little wild, but if you let yourself be shaped, you will become a beautiful rose, shaped by God's love. But you must let yourself be humiliated. Instead of turning in on yourself, reach up to God."

The way outlined by Jeanne to this novice for becoming a beautiful rose of charity was also her own. It was the path on which the Lord had set her. You did not turn in or close in on yourself, but you reached up ever higher. You let yourself be carried by the swell of your heart....

Refrain

Little, very little —, be very little before God —.

Little, very little —, be very little before God —. God —.

In the alleys at La Tour, by the ponds or in her room, alone and silent before God, Jeanne rediscovered the soul of her childhood very small, yet so great. She opened herself to the wind from the high seas. She let herself be carried ever higher by the swell of her heart. Her silence was a growing of her whole being....

Jeanne, without even realizing it, opened herself ever wider to God's great purpose. She joined "Yahweh's Poor," those "worshippers unknown to the world and to the prophets themselves," this "small remnant of the humble and the poor for whom God is their only riches" (Zeph 3:12)....

Like Francis of Assisi, and following in the steps of many others, Jeanne takes her place among those men and women who do not seek to be ranked first and do not push themselves to the front of the world stage. These "unknown worshippers" know themselves to be small and frail, sinners even. Yet even in their distress they are open to a "visitation from above." In "vessels of clay" they carry a ray of the Glory. Their precious treasure nestles at the heart of their poverty and frailty. In their poverty their hearts grow in proportion to this infinite treasure.

Refrain

EARTHEN VESSELS

John Foley, S.J.

Refrain

We hold a trea-sure, not made of gold, in earth-en
ves-sels, wealth un-told; one trea-sure on - ly: the
Lord, the Christ, in earth-en ves - sels.

The door had just opened wide before her. This was not the door of the Council of the Congregation or of the General Chapter. It was the door of the Kingdom of light and peace, promised to the little ones and the forgotten. Jeanne was singing the Te Deum amidst all those little ones and forgotten ones, on whom were shining the glory and the joy of God.....

Two days later, Father Le Pailleur wrote a circular letter to all the houses of the Congregation. He thanked the Little Sisters and their elderly charges for the good wishes they had sent him on the occasion of the feast of St Augustine. The death of Jeanne, humble Foundress, did not get a mention in the letter. Forgotten in life, she was also to be forgotten in death. No one was to talk of her. No one was to remember her.

Let us wager that at dawn that day, in the grounds of La Tour, at the quiet hour of dew-fall, a teardrop formed on a small rose. No one noticed it. Only the angels saw it. The small rose was weeping, but it was a tear of joy. Jeanne was in the light. The shadow of the world could no longer reach her.

Refrain

Ref. My soul pro - claims the greatness of the Lord; my
spirit finds joy in God who has saved me! Blessed be
God! Gl-ary be to God! Thank You, my God!

The Foundress, the first Little Sister, aged eighty-six, was waiting like the least of the novices at the door of the Chapter which was deciding on the future of the Congregation; she too was waiting for the door to open so she could sing the Te Deum. Jeanne laughed it off, without attempting to explain the situation to the young ones. She was now far above, like a lark in the sky, and looked down on the earth where she had suffered so much. Nothing could now disturb the peace in her heart. She was free. And she was waiting for another door to open, ready to sing another Te Deum.

Refrain: repeat I No Conger See

Before she went through that ultimate door, she was granted a great joy. On March 1, 1879, Pope Leo XIII approved the Constitutions of the Little Sisters for a period of seven years. The Congregation then numbered 2,400 members. Jeanne's joy was complete, and she continued in ceaseless thanksgiving.

When summer came, Jeanne was clearly weakening. On August 27th, she made her confession for the last time. The next morning, after Mass, she was taken ill. She was put to bed. After regaining consciousness, she received the sacrament of the sick. She was praying softly: "Eternal Father, open your door today to the most wretched of your daughters." She added: "O Mary, my dear mother, come to me; you know I love you and how I long to see you." Those were her last words. She passed away very peacefully.

Refrain

Do not be a-fraid, I am with you. I have called you each by
 name. Come and fol-low me, I will bring you home; I
 love you and you are mine. (4. 1)

It is not enough to say "yes" once. Nor even for a year, or ten or twenty. You have to say it throughout your life, to the end and in spite of everything. Day after day. On foggy days as well as sunny ones; in illness as in full health....

Jeanne spoke little about her health, but in 1873 she fell ill and was confined to bed for several weeks. She recovered, but without regaining her full vigor. She was eighty-one years old.... As days went by, her movements became more and more difficult. She rarely left the infirmary room. She was still quite lucid and present. Being nearly blind, she could no longer read or sew. She spent her time praying and meditating, her rosary in hand....

Refrain

my Jesus, I have only you —, only you —,
 my Jesus, I have only you —, and you know all so come to my
 aid —, come to my
 aid —, come to my aid —,
 aid —.
 come to my aid —.

(Her) serenity came from the depths of her being. More than ever, Jeanne lived by her faith. What reassured her before God was not the work to which she had given herself and which was now developing beyond all expectation, without her. That work, she knew, was not her own. It was God's work. Jeanne had delivered all of it into God's hands. In truth, what reassured her before God and gave her total trust, a child's trust, was knowing herself to be very little and very poor. Yes, God was, and that was enough. One day, she had confided in a novice: "When you are old, you will no longer see anything. As for me, I no longer see anything but God ... He sees me, that is enough."

Spoken towards the close of a long life of dispossession, those simple words have the density and brilliance of gold. They are the gold of sunset. Some sunsets are brighter, more triumphant than the dawn....

Refrain

At the end of her life she could say in all truth,

"I NO LONGER SEE ANYTHING BUT GOD" p.s.d.p.

REFRAIN

I have walked with God a- long the roads of life. I've gazed on his face and listened to his voice. He has been my refuge in sorrow and in joy. I no longer see anything but God.

It is the peace of evening, the evening of life. Jeanne sometimes remembers the little rose in the grounds. She can no longer see it, but she contemplated it so much that the little rose has finally flowered within her.

At La Tour, when they saw her serenity, the novices realized something strong and luminous was happening within her. They loved

her, and secretly venerated her. For them, she was like the evening sun that spreads its light in profusion as it goes down....

The serenity and joy that increasingly flooded Jeanne's heart left room only for praise. Everything became cause for praise. The small events of the day, or the memory of what she had once contemplated during her walks in the grounds and the countryside: the flowers, the light, the fields, the woods everything echoed in her with a song of praise to God.

One winter morning, she discovered from the window of her room the snow that had fallen during the night and had covered the buildings, trees and yard with its immaculate whiteness. "Look," she exclaimed in wonder, "it's so beautiful!" And she added: "My Bridegroom did this." Jeanne lived at the heart of the Covenant. Everything beautiful was in her eyes the work of the One she loved and who loved her.... The long silence of a whole life was flowering into endless praise. Jeanne was going to God with the whole of creation....

Refrain

Ref. My soul pro - claims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit finds joy in God who has saved me! Blessed be God! Gl-ry be to God! Thank You, my God!

In July 1878, one year before her death, the General Chapter of the Congregation was held at La Tour.... Outside the door of the great hall where the election was taking place stood the group of novices especially trained in Gregorian chant. They were waiting for the door to open, ready to enter and sing the Te Deum, in thanksgiving for the election which was giving the Congregation a new Superior General....