

May 5
Saint Angelus of Sicily
Priest and Martyr

From the common of one martyr, except the following.
Hymns are translated from the Latin Proper of the Carmelite breviary.

Office of Readings

HYMN

Hac die laetus meruit supernae

Hail, happy Angelus of blest renown!
Hail, in the beauty of thy martyr's crown!
Rejoice, O Carmel, at his heavenly birth,
Rejoice to greet thy favored child, O Earth!

At Mary's word the light of faith doth shine,
His parents rise to greet the ray divine;
And though the mother waxeth far in years,
A double joy her childless bosom cheers.

This chosen son, as presage of his fame,
Hears from the Virgin's lips his angel name,
Sweet pledge and token Heaven doth bestow,
His kinship with the Blessed to foreshow.

The yoke of Christ how early hath he borne!
His infant lips were from the breast withdrawn,
By humble self-denial to enchain
Unruly Nature and her thirst restrain.

He feared the banners of the foe unfurled,
And fled the follies of a perished world,
To find in peace of Carmel's cloistered shade
His ardent thirst for solitude allayed.

In spotless mantle shining fair and white,
Of modesty a mirror chaste and bright,
Abiding poor in spirit, he hath known
No pleasure save the guiding will alone.

Sing glory to the Father and the Son
And to the Holy Spirit, Three in one!
Then haste to join the glad angelic lay,
And praise our glorious Mother on this day.

Or

HYMN

Angelorum gaudent chori (c.1312)

Deeds of Angelus, the angels
Gladden, heav'm his portion due,
And his martyr's death so noble
Makes him like to Jesus too.

God's own people, dear and pleasing,
Sing of Angelus the praise;
Carmel, earth, and Sicily's isle
All their happy voices raise.

Noble thoughts on high ascending,
Vices lessen, virtue flowers;
Angelus with deepest feeling
Earth contemns and all its powers.

Often dwells his mind on heaven
And on paradise's joy;
Unto Carmel's fold he hastens,
Called by Christ while yet a boy.

Truths of faith he taught with power,
Virtue's sum in him resides;
Pure and chaste, of peace the dwelling,
Angelus in heav'n abides.

To the Father praise and triumph,
Due acclaim unto his Son;
Honor, power, benediction
To the Spirit with them one.

Second Reading

From The Flaming Arrow by Nicholas of France, prior general

Your first sons on Carmel, O holiest of Orders my Mother, were like stones mortared together in unfeigned charity, who held aloof from the least violation of what they had vowed when they made profession; while yet they strove, at home in their cells, to "ponder God's law" and "watch at their prayers," not because they were compelled to, but happily, moved by joy of spirit.

Remember, beloved Order, your worthiness in the days when you never failed to regale your hermits, our saintly forefathers, with spiritual sustenance of the richest, in pasturage unequalled, and to lead them forth to waters of unparalleled refreshment.

I tell you, my brothers, it is from Carmel that the brethren must climb to the Mountain - all those who deserve to be called "Carmelites," in other words, who, on account of the excellence of their vices, will go from strength to strength in a steady ascent from the Mount of the Circumcision of Vices until they reach, as they surely will, the Mountain which is Christ.

In the desert all the elements conspire to favor us. The heavens, resplendent with the stars and planets in their amazing order, bear witness by their beauty to mysteries higher still. The birds seem to assume the nature of angels, and tenderly console us with their gentle carolling. The mountains too, as Isaiah prophesied, "drop down sweetness" incomparable upon us, and the friendly hills "flow with milk and honey" such as is never tasted by the foolish lovers of this world. When we sing the praises of our Creator, the mountains about us, our brother conventionals, resound with corresponding hymns of praise to the Lord echoing back our voices and filling the air with strains of harmony as though accompanying our song upon stringed instruments. The roots in their growth, the grass in its greenness, the leafy boughs and trees - I make merry in their own ways as they echo our praise; and the flowers in their loveliness, as they pour out their delicious fragrance, smile their best for the consolation of us solitaries. The sunbeams, though tongueless, speak saving messages to us. The shady bushes rejoice to give us shelter. In short, every creature we see or hear in the desert gives us friendly refreshment and comfort; indeed, for all their silence they tell forth wonders, and they move the interior man to give praise to the Creator - so much more wonderful than themselves.

Isaiah writes in figure of this joy that is to be found in solitude or in the desert: "The wilderness shall rejoice and shall flourish like the lily, it shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise." And we find in the psalms: "The beautiful places of the wilderness shall grow lush, and the hills shall be girded with joy."

Each wise solitary, resolute in his flight from the dangers of the world, longs to be so indissolubly united to Christ, the cornerstone, that he might say effectively with the Prophet: "It is good for me to adhere to my God, to put my hope in the Lord."

Responsory

R/. How goodly, sweet Jesus, is Your inebriating chalice, none so happy as those who can say in good conscience: * "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup" (alleluia).

V/. It is You who will restore my inheritance to me. * "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup" (alleluia).

Morning Prayer

HYMN

Abditos quaerit nemorum recessus

How deep the stillness of the wood,
Where Angelus in solitude
Doth now in peace abide,
Afar from haunts of men, unknown,
And, save from Eye of God alone,
His favored soul to hide.

But God his worth to manifest,
Hath marvels wrought at his behest,

Suspending nature's sway;
For massive iron in the fount
The yielding tide doth gently mount,
His bidding to obey.

As swift the Surging waters roll,
They bend beneath his strong control,
And lo! from shore to shore
The swelling Waves their course divide,
While safely to the farther side
Dry shod, he crosseth o'er.

The leper riseth from his doom,
The sleeping dead forsake the tomb,
The sick are gladly healed,
The mighty prophets known of yore
In this their son revive once more,
Their deeds of power revealed.

O holy Father, praise to Thee,
To Thy dear Son eternally,
And to the Holy Ghost!
While we with full triumphant strain
Extol our glorious Mother's reign
With all the heavenly host.

Benedictus Antiphon

Angelus, you left Carmel in order to prepare the way of the Lord. By your witness strengthen your brethren in holiness and justice all the days of our life (alleluia).

Evening Prayer

HYMN

Dum sub obscuris meditatur umbris

Mid shadow of the forest deep and still,
Behold! 'tis Angelus in raptured prayer,
By spirits nurtured with celestial fare
But Christ doth call, and at his Master's will
He leaveth all, a mission new to fill.

Within his bosom burns a double fire,
The twofold spirit of Elias' zeal.
Foreknowledge of his death God doth reveal,
And generous is the flame of his desire,
The honor of his Maker to inspire.

Their fallen souls from Satan to regain,
He nobly censureth a guilty pair;
But blind and furious, heedless of his prayer,
The wretch hath pierced him and he falleth slain,
As cruel dagger doth his life blood drain.

Triumphantly he mounted to the skies,
Victor at length, with triple laurels bound,
Virgin and Martyr, Doctor, he is crowned.
A glorious conqueror he doth arise,
Laden with trophies, for the eternal prize.

Revere with joy the Father and the Son,
With equal love the Holy Spirit praise,
Unto our Mother tuneful anthems raise,
And oh, may earth by Heaven be not outdone,
In glory to the endless Three in One.

Magnificat Antiphon

Angelus, you once were a glorious companion on our pilgrimage. Now you have reached the eternal shores while we remain in our time of trial. Be for us a sure guide, and pray that we too share heaven's delights (alleluia).