

**125 YEARS ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH INTO HEAVEN  
OF OUR FOUNDER,  
VENERABLE FR GREGORY FIORAVANTI OFM**



*CELEBRATION OF THE TRANSIT  
23 JANUARY 2019*

**Celebration of 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019**  
**125 years anniversary of the birth into Heaven**  
**of our Founder, Venerable Fr Gregory Fioravanti.**

**Introduction**

*GUIDE: The liturgical prayer of the Church introduces us into the communion of the saints, where we can meet our Founder, the Venerable Father Gregory. On the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth to Heaven, we praise and thank God the Father who gave Him to us and who made his heroic virtues shine in the Church so that we may follow him with the same apostolic zeal. He himself reassures us by writing in his letter: "I will pray to the Lord to protect and bless you ... I will implore the good Lord to give you the grace of being entirely His ... with the heart full of love for Him, so that, year by year you may grow and your fervour and love may be renewed more and more".*

**HYMN (A liturgical song)**

**1<sup>st</sup> Ant.** Eagerly we await the fulfillment of our hope,  
the glorious coming of our Savior.

**PSALM 61 Only in God is our peace**

*GUIDE: Psalm 61 recalls the unshakable trust placed by Father Gregory in divine Providence, as the rock of salvation, in all adversities. We are urged by the Psalmist to "pour out our hearts before God", recognizing that only in Him there is hope and salvation.*

In God alone is my soul at rest;  
my help comes from him.  
He alone is my rock, my stronghold,  
my fortress; I stand firm.

How long will you all attack one man  
to break him down,  
as though he were a tottering wall,  
or a tumbling fence?

Their plan is only to destroy;  
they take pleasure in lies.  
With their mouth they utter blessing  
but in their heart they curse.

In God alone be at rest, my soul;  
for my hope comes from him.  
He alone is my rock, my stronghold,  
my fortress; I stand firm.

In God is my safety and glory,  
the rock of my strength.  
Take refuge in God, all you people.  
Trust him at all times.

Pour out your hearts before him  
for God is our refuge.

Common folk are only a breath,  
great men an illusion.  
Placed in the scales, they rise;  
they weigh less than a breath.

Do not put your trust in oppression  
nor vain hopes on plunder.  
Do not set your heart on riches  
even when they increase.

For God has said only one thing;  
only two do I know:  
that to God alone belongs power  
and to you, Lord, love;  
and that you repay each man  
according to his deeds.                      Glory...

**1<sup>st</sup> Ant.** Eagerly we await the fulfillment of our hope,  
the glorious coming of our Savior.

*"I urge you never to lose courage, but trust in God and never in the people of this world. You will see from experience that the more you have confided in Him, the more God will comfort you".*                      (Epistolario 3, letter n. 390)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Ant.** May God turn his radiant face toward us,  
and fill us with his blessings.

## **PSALM 66 May all peoples glorify the Lord**

*GUIDE: May the passion for the Gospel that animated Fr. Gregory, an apostolic missionary, also animate us, while in the words of Psalm 66 we invoke the blessing of the Lord, so that, through us, the joy of salvation may reach all peoples.*

O God, be gracious and bless us  
and let your face shed its light upon us.  
So will your ways be known upon earth  
and all nations learn your saving help.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and exult  
for you rule the world with justice.  
With fairness you rule the peoples,  
you guide the nations on earth.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its fruit  
for God, our God, has blessed us.  
May God still give us his blessing  
till the ends of the earth revere him.

Glory...

**2<sup>nd</sup> Ant.** May God turn his radiant face toward us,  
and fill us with his blessings.

*“May the sisters strive, for the Glory of God, to give witness to the One who dwells in their heart, the Crucified Saviour, ... in such a way that people, who deal with them, have to remain edified and to call them true chosen Daughters of our Crucified father, and so inspired to practice virtue”.*

(Fr. Gregory Scritti Vari p. 50 – F 3, p.41).

3<sup>rd</sup> Ant. Through him all things were made;  
he holds all creation together in himself.

**CANTICLE Col 1: 3. 12-20**

GUIDE: *The Canticle is a solemn hymn of thanksgiving to Christ, the center of the universe and the heart of the world. Our Founder, Fr Gregory exhorts us : "do not ... place your affections in any other person or thing in the world except in God and for God ... and your heart will remain in peace, because you are intimately united to Jesus Christ ".*

Let us give thanks to the Father  
for having made you worthy  
to share the lot of the saints  
in light.

He rescued us from the power of darkness  
and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son.  
Through him we have redemption,  
the forgiveness of our sins.

He is the image of the invisible God,  
the first-born of all creatures.  
In him everything in heaven and on earth was created,  
things visible and invisible.

All were created through him;  
all were created for him.  
He is before all else that is.  
In him everything continues in being.

It is he who is head of the body, the church;  
he who is the beginning,  
the first-born of the dead,  
so that primacy may be his in everything.

It pleased God to make absolute fullness reside in him  
and, by means of him, to reconcile everything in his person,  
both on earth and in the heavens,  
making peace through the blood of his cross.                      Glory...

**3<sup>rd</sup> Ant.** Through him all things were made;  
he holds all creation together in himself.

*“...that your gratitude may be not only in words, but make it shining with your zeal to consecrate to God all the days of your life, doing with love what He asks of you”. (Fr. Gregory Scritti Vari p. 116... F.2 p. 78)*

## **GOSPEL READING**

**From the Gospel of Matthew**

**Mt. 5:1-16**

When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden.

Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house.

Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

*The Word of the Lord*

GUIDE: *With filial devotion, let us now remember the blessed transit of Father Gregory, when, conformed to Christ Crucified whom he so intensely loved here on earth, he deserved to contemplate Him in the fullness of glory in Heaven.*

**From the chronicle, from the announcement of the death communicated to the brothers and sisters of that time and from “THE HEROIC FRANCISCAN”**

“The bell of the chapel of St. Mary of the Angels that morning, Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> January was late to announce the Holy Mass. Fr. Gregory was preparing for the last time to climb that altar which he had ascended for thirty-three years with Franciscan piety and most devout faith.

He entered the presbytery with slow step and with a face marked by traces of a night in which he had not rested.

He was about to place on the paten his whole life consumed in love between fatigue and sufferings.

At the end of the Holy Sacrifice, at the last Oremus, his voice was heard weaker. He turned painfully and said: “Go, the Mass is ended”.

It was as to say: “Even my sacrifice is completed”!

At the last Gospel, he was seen to sway slowly.

The lay brother, who assisted him at the altar, held him up and brought him into the sacristy.

He had been attacked by paralysis. Undressed from the sacred vestments, he was accompanied to the Hospice. The confessor and the doctor hastened, they persuaded him to go to bed.

The following day, believing to be better, he wanted to get up and wished to recite the Hours in the company of Fr. Bernard.

Then he descended into the little dining room, but he was unable to eat. Later he wanted to be led to his bedroom. It was no longer possible. A bed was arranged in the same room.

In the evening about 9 pm all the comforts of our holy religion were administered to him.

Holy viaticum was given in the presence of the entire community, all the sisters with lighted candles, except the sick, could see again the good father for the last time.

Asked by Fr. Bernard to bless the Institute and all the sisters, present and absent he replied: "Yes, all!"

After midnight, he entered into a long agony, which lasted until the morning. In the early morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> January, Fr. Bernard celebrated the community Holy Mass in the monastery. Then he hastened to the bed of the holy dying one and renewed the comforts of the Church and of the Order.

He recommended to him again the Institute, begging him to assist it always from heaven.

Fr Gregory breathed his last breath, calmly and serenely giving back his soul to God.

He died at the age of 71 years and eight months. He had spent almost half of his life for the Congregation.

The Founder and the saviour of the Institute of the Tertiary Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, died. No one, if not He from on High, could have consoled them for such a loss. "Crushed as we all are, it is almost impossible to think of it even in our mind", writes Sr. M. Delfina in the sorrowful announcement circulated in the Institute.

The gates of Heaven opened to the good and faithful servant and invited him to the joy of his Lord.

But on the earth, how much sadness covered the convent of St. Mary of the Angels in Gemoni!

The father has been passed away.

They saw him there peaceful, serene in the humble Franciscan habit girded by the white cord, in a sleep of repose and of peace, while the daughters made there a crown in tears and prayers.

The sisters watched over the venerated mortal remains for two days, then they accompanied him to the cemetery in the midst of a numerous crowd of priests and of people.

To the daughters who seek him with piety and love, the Angel of the Resurrection says, as it was said to the holy women at the Sepulcher of Jesus:

"He is not here! Seek him in his heroism, because he was truly the heroic father. Seek him in heaven, because from earth to heaven his flight was rapid and secure".



## SHORT RESPONSORY

- R. The Lord is just, he loves justice.  
The Lord is just, he loves justice.
- V. He looks the just with love  
He loves justice.
- R. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.  
The Lord is just, he loves justice

**Magnificat antiphon:** You have left everything to follow me:  
You will have hundred fold more and the eternal life.

## INTERCESSIONS

**GUIDE:** *With the trust and faith of our Founder Father Gregory, who exhorted to “open our hearts wide to the deepest feelings of gratitude to God for the graces we received from him”, let us thank God our Father and pray together:*

***Renew, O God, the wonders of your love.***

1. We thank you, Lord for the gift of our Founder, Venerable Father Gregory, who had so much to heart the spirit of fraternity, the unity of the Franciscan Family and of the Church;  
- grant that we strive to follow his example, to ‘edify one another with humility and maturity’, making grow the communion among us and with those who come to us.  
Let us pray.
2. We praise you, Lord, because you have given your Venerable servant Father Gregory the grace to contemplate and experience the mystery of your Son Jesus, Crucified for love of us;  
- help each sister of our religious Family to be the voice of the voiceless, to be everywhere instrument of peace and hope especially for the poor and marginalized so as to shine in her life and mission, the ardent love of the Heart of your Son for all people.  
Let us pray.

3. We bless you, Lord, because you wanted that your Venerable servant Father Gregory follow in the footsteps of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, instilling in our first sisters the spirit of minority and poverty;
  - help us to rekindle the grace of the origins and to witness with clear joy the gratuitousness of love and the beauty of the evangelical life, in the variety of cultures we share in the world. Let us pray.
4. We glorify you, Lord, for having guided our religious Family in the steps of the Divine Providence;
  - draw to You many more young people; help them to discover your call to love, to be a mission in this earth and so to share the Charism given by our Founders, Laura Leroux and Father Gregory. Let us pray.
5. Merciful Father, you willed that Father Gregory would be near to a great number of our sisters, in their sickness and in extreme moments of their life and they would experience the soothing power of his faith;
  - be present with the tenderness of your love to the sick, the elderly, those who suffer in body and spirit and give to the sisters who have preceded us in your Kingdom, the fullness of joy in the contemplation of your face.  
Let us pray.

### **Our Father**

### **Let us pray**

O God, you who enlighten the Church through the example of your saints and you have given the grace to your venerable servant Father Gregory to follow till the end the poor and humble Christ, grant us to revive the fidelity to the vocation and to the congregational charism, to reach the perfect charity of your Son Jesus. He is God and He lives and reigns with you in unity of the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

### **The Blessing of St. Francis of Assisi**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

May He show His face to you and have mercy.

May He turn His countenance to you and give you peace.

The Lord bless you! Amen.

## **Canto: GLORIFICA IL TUO SERVO, GREGORIO!**

***Rit. Glorifica, glorifica, o Dio, il servo tuo, Gregorio,  
glorifica, glorifica la francescana vera santità!***

1. Nascere frammenti dell'amore,  
figli di una casa ricca solo di bontà,  
poveri, ma pieni di una fede,  
che ti dona vie di santità.  
  
Era lui un frammento dell'amore,  
figlio di una casa ricca solo di bontà,  
pieni della grazia e della fede,  
che propone vie di santità.                      Rit.

2. Vive nel battesimo di Cristo,  
e lo veglia lei, la Madre grande di Gesù.  
Sente che lo chiama il suo Signore,  
sacerdote lo consacrerà.  
  
Figlio di Francesco e della strada,  
Cristo lo fa servo nella vera libertà.  
Dal suo cuore nasce una famiglia:  
tante figlie Dio gli donerà.                      Rit.

3. Oggi lui cammina per il mondo,  
e il suo carisma missionario incontrerà,  
tanta gente immersa nel dolore:  
oh, con le figlie sue la salverà.  
  
Noi, padre Gregorio, ti preghiamo,  
fondaci su Cristo, verità,  
donaci entusiasmo nel servire  
questa quotidiana umanità.

