

December 8, 2020

Good Morning All,

The Mass schedule for Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is as follows (Holy Day of Obligation):

Tuesday - December 8th - 8:30 AM

Tuesday - December 8th - 5:30 PM

The church office is closed today for Holy Day of Obligation.

Recommendation from a parishioner - "Highly recommend this book. I wish I could get more of this Saint's writings but apparently none have been translated yet. The name of the book is *The Bishop of the Abandoned Tabernacle*. St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia. A very small book. Easy but powerful reading". If you have scheduled some quiet time during Advent you may want to pick up this book. I have attached an article about St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia.

1. Today's Readings: [bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/120820.cfm](http://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/120820.cfm)

2. ***The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus***: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Today we celebrate our patronal feast in the United States, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. Our country is dedicated to Our Lady under this title. Because of this, it is important to have a good understanding of why we celebrate this solemnity and why it is always a holy day of obligation. Attached is an explanation of this feast.

In Washington D.C., there is the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. If you click on the following link, you can take a virtual tour of the Shrine. <https://www.nationalshrine.org/virtual-tour/>

3. Advent Calendar Quote of the Day: Let the sky rain down justice and the earth bud forth a savior. Isaiah 45:8

Another quick note of explanation: our envelope company did not include our Christmas envelope in the standard packing. They have mailed just one envelope, Christmas, to each envelope parishioner. You may have received yours last night as I did or they may be showing up in your box this week. If you have any other questions, please call the office.

Parish Office Communication

Blessings to all today. Pray to Mother Mary for your needs along with prayers to her



Son, Jesus Christ.

[www.bing.com/videos/search?q=hail+mary+gentle+woman+youtube&view=detail&mid=D0605F52B77D0AD7213AD0605F52B77D0AD7213A&FORM=VIRE0&ru=%2fsearch%3fq%3dhail%2bmary%2bgentle%2bwoman%2byoutube%26FORM%3dQSRE3](http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=hail+mary+gentle+woman+youtube&view=detail&mid=D0605F52B77D0AD7213AD0605F52B77D0AD7213A&FORM=VIRE0&ru=%2fsearch%3fq%3dhail%2bmary%2bgentle%2bwoman%2byoutube%26FORM%3dQSRE3)

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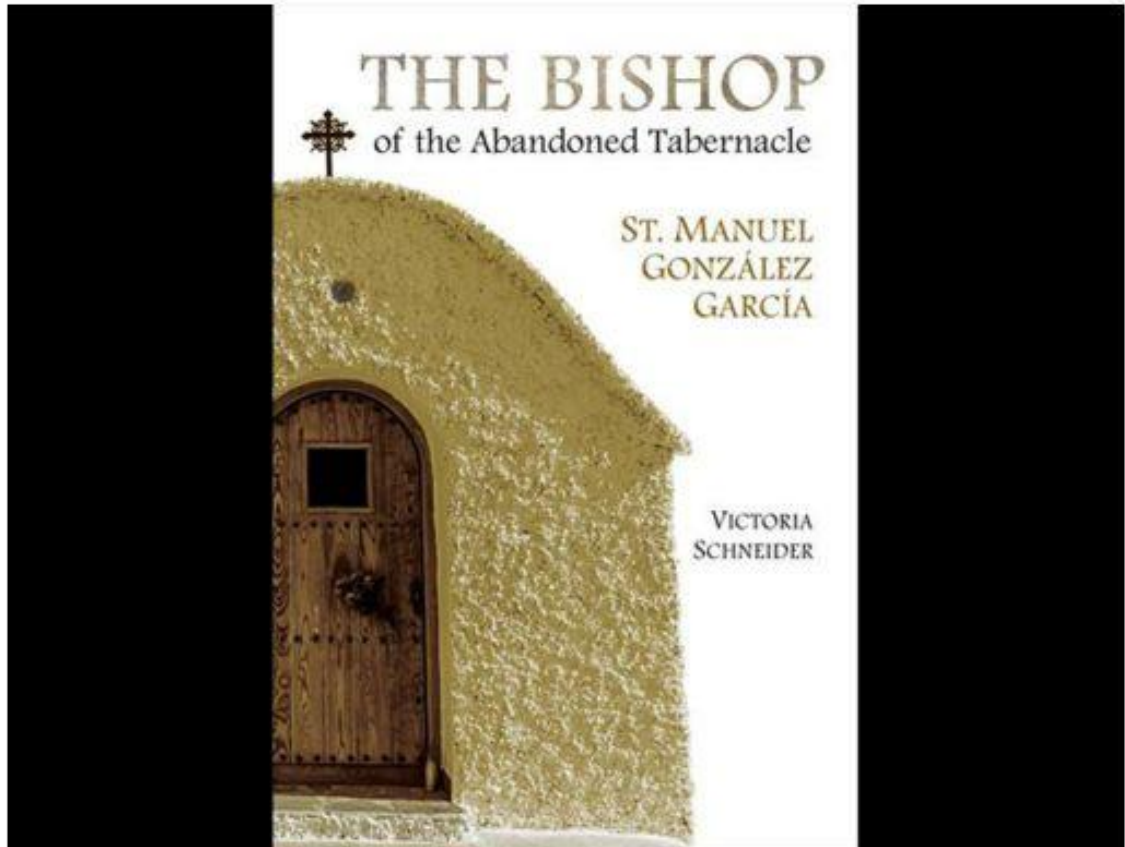
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## St. Manuel González García Bishop of the Abandoned Tabernacle

When we leave Our Lord alone, we are cheating ourselves of his presence and gaze



(photo: Register Files)

Like all of us, St. Manuel González García didn't start out to be a saint; he set out to be pastor of a parish of Palomares del Rio.

He dreamed of how welcoming and communal the experience would be, "of having a Church full of souls eager to listen to his sermons, of people fervently praying the Rosary with him each day, and of organizing a beautiful procession in the streets. He pictured crowds hastening to Sunday Mass."

The reality when he arrived, was a Church poorly attended, where only those getting married or baptizing their children came, and a population that was not a community, but a cluster of human beings who worked side by side, and never invested in the Church or each other. The building itself was dirty, almost abandoned, and the altar cloths torn and burnt. The neglect included the tabernacle covered in dust and cobwebs. He considered begging for a different assignment, fleeing. He wondered how he could fulfil a mission, any mission in such a place, but kneeling before the tabernacle, pondering how impossible the task before him, he felt someone looking at him "in desperate need of a friend."

His words: "My faith was looking at Jesus through the door of that tabernacle, so silent, so patient, so good, gazing right back at me...His gaze was telling me much and asking me for more. It was a gaze in which all the sadness of the Gospels was reflected; the sadness of 'no room in the Inn'; the sadness of those words, "Do you also want to leave me?"; the sadness of poor Lazarus begging for crumbs from the rich man's table; the sadness of the betrayal of Judas, the denial of Peter, of the soldier's slap, of the spittle of the Praetorium, and the abandonment of all."

Despite being canonized by Pope Francis on Oct. 16, 2016, much of the English-speaking world does not know about this bishop from Spain. Victoria Schneider, a tiny woman with tremendous faith and fluency in both English and Spanish, was introduced to him by her spiritual director. Fifteen years ago, she made a pilgrimage to Spain and happened upon the bishop's museum. The Order of Sisters there, gave a tour of the whole place with what are now, first class relics. She told me there are three volumes of writing by Saint Manuel González García, and only 1 percent as of now, has been translated into English. She'd written reflections for Eucharistic Adoration for her parish, translating some of his writings as part of it. God always starts with the two loaves and five fishes we offer, and does the multiplying.

When the parish invited the Missionaries of the Most Holy Eucharist to come as part of a Parish mission on the Eucharist, she gave two of her essays to the visiting priest. After reading the reflections she'd made from the saint's writings, he begged her to consider translating more of his words, so that the saint's wisdom might "touch the world." She reordered her schedule and started doing the work. It took time. She and the priest became friends as they worked through the many

letters and essays of the Saint. Victoria had to ask people in Spain to verify her own work, and became friends with the vice postulator just months before the canonization as a result of the constant emails and examinations of his writings.

The results of her work, is the book, *The Bishop of the Abandoned Tabernacle*. Victoria's discussion of his writings and his life reveal both her and the saint's ardent faith and devotion to the Eucharist. In every chapter, I found something which honestly compelled me to run to the local adoration chapel to spend time; gems like "The Heart of Jesus in the tabernacle looks at me. He looks at me always. He looks at me everywhere. He looks at me as if he doesn't have anyone else to look at but me."

The one thing made very clear from the whole of his writings, is how much we leave Christ alone in the tabernacle of our hearts and our lives, how much we are cheating ourselves of Christ's presence and gaze. Saint Manuel González García's writings are a means of discovering Who we adore, as well as reminding us constantly, why we ought to seek to always be adoring. This is not a book to devour, but to explore and revisit, to bring with one to adoration, so as to practice being at the foot of Jesus, rather than anxious about many things. "This is the real heart of Jesus." She said, "and the saint helps us understand what he does from the tabernacle."

*Source: ncregister.com ~ Sherry Antonetti*

## Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the solemn dogma defined by Blessed Pope Pius IX in 1854. As Our Lady Immaculately Conceived is the patroness of the United States of America, this is a holy day of obligation in the United States.

Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, "full of grace" through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Blessed Pope Pius IX proclaimed on December 8, 1854: "The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin." — *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Hail Mary, full of grace". For thousands of centuries, millions of times per day the Virgin Mary is greeted by the faithful with the greeting of the Archangel, that we hear resonating anew in today's Gospel. The sons of the Church learn from the words of the Archangel Gabriel that the fullness of the mystery of God's grace was realized in Holy Mary. St Paul the Apostle teaches us that the Father made all fullness dwell in His Incarnate Son (c.f. Col 1:12-20), which overflows from Christ's head and spills out on His Mystical Body that is the Church. Before descending in Body, Christ's fullness was spread in a unique and unrepeatable way on Mary, predestined from eternity to be the Mother of God.

Significantly in the first reading, the liturgy recalls the figure of Eve, the mother of all the living. The Fathers of the Church saw in Mary, the new Eve that unties the knot bound by the first woman. The knot of disobedience tied by Eve, was untied by the obedience of Mary. As Eve was created in purity and integrity, also the new Eve was miraculously preserved from the contamination of original sin because she had to give humanity the Word, who was incarnated for our ransom.

Saint Irenaeus compares the virginity of the pure earth from which Adam was drawn to the virginity of the immaculate humanity of Mary from which the Second Adam was drawn. 'And as the protoplast himself, Adam, had his substance from untilled and as yet virgin soil (for God had not yet sent rain, and man had not tilled the ground (Genesis 2:5)) so did He who is the Word, recapitulating Adam in Himself, rightly receive a birth, enabling Him to gather up Adam [into Himself], from Mary, who was as yet a virgin' (*Adversus hereses* III, 21:10).

Blessed Pope Pius IX on the 8th of December 1854 proclaimed the Dogma of the faith revealed by God that the Blessed Virgin Mary *"in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin"* (Denz.-Schonm, 2083). If the official proclamation of the dogma is relatively recent, the profession of faith by Christians and the liturgy is very ancient in this regard. Furthermore, four years later the same Virgin Mary, appearing in Lourdes to St Bernadette, confirmed the truth of the doctrine by presenting herself with the title 'I am the Immaculate Conception'.



Mary's predestination to this singular grace—consistent with the suspension of the universal decree by which every man, from the moment of his conception is contaminated with original sin—leads us to ponder in the deepest depths the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity's salvific plan. God, One and Triune, had foreseen from the very beginning the future incarnation of the Word culminating in the redemption of human nature that had fallen into sin. He therefore predestined pure Mary, so that He could draw from her uncontaminated humanity, which the Son could adopt in order to re-establish in Himself the original purity of creation and reorientate it to eternal glory.

For this reason, in the second reading of today's liturgy, St Paul reminds us that God wants to see us holy and immaculate before Him. The purity of our origins seemed to be irredeemably lost. However, in Immaculate Mary, God found the perfect solution to reverse the disaster made from the misuse of our liberty, and returned humanity to the original purity that seemed hopelessly lost.

Mary's Immaculate Conception is a direct consequence of her Divine Maternity. St Anselm of Aosta wrote: 'Assuredly, it was fitting that the Virgin be beautified with a purity than which a greater cannot be conceived, except for God's. For, toward her, God the Father was so disposed to give His only Son who was naturally one and the same common Son of God the Father and of the Virgin.' (*De conceptu virginali et originali peccato*, XVIII)



This link between the privilege of Divine Maternity and Mary's Immaculate Conception results also in her superiority with respect to us. She is a perfect image of the Church in heaven, the new triumphant Jerusalem, that won't have any marks nor will there be pain and death. This is why today's preface recites: '...she was to be a worthy mother of your Son, your sign of favour to the church at its beginning, and the promise of its perfection as the bride of Christ, radiant in beauty'. Also in heaven Mary is not and will never be only a disciple, but her Son's most exalted. She is and will always be the Mother of God, the Mother of the Church, the Queen of the Angels and Saints. Therefore, the preface of the Mass adds: '...You chose her from all creatures to be our advocate with you and our pattern of holiness.'

Mary was Immaculate because she had to be the Mother of God. She, herself has received the original grace of purity and the final state of the blessed life that we also, by collaborating with Divine Grace, hope one day to receive.

Immaculate Mary is full of grace. She is not only Christ's disciple, who with the help of grace has overcome the chains of sin, but she is *totius Trinitatis nobile triclinium*, the noble resting place of the Holy Trinity (St Thomas Aquinas, *Exposito Salutationis Angelicae*, I). The Immaculate, full of grace, will always be Mother and Queen for that elect part of the Church that we hope one day to join, that will one day joyfully sing before the Almighty.

**Patron:** United States.

**Symbols:** crown and monogram; lily; enclosed garden; crown of stars; glass (symbol of purity) lily often placed in a vase of transparent glass; lily of the valley.

*Source: Catholicculture.org*