



# SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

*March 25, 2017*

UNIT OF EUDIST SPIRITUALITY

## PRESENTATION

The Unit of Eudist Spirituality has great joy in joining the entire Eudist Family on this celebration of the Feast of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Many undertakings and apostolic works of Saint John Eudes have begun on March 25.

We therefore wish to recall a few mediations from John Eudes relating to the Incarnation of Christ, one of the major axis in the Eudist spirituality. On this same day, we celebrate the 374th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary (CJM). We will end this presentation with a glance on the beginnings of this «Blessed Congregation\*».

Happy Anniversary to all!

*\*The quotations are taken from the Obras Escogidas as translated from the original texts in French. Therefore, it must be understood that they do not always perfectly reflect the original wording because they come from a Spanish translation. Some specialists may consider there are a few shortcuts and simplifications but we consider they don't change the meaning of the original texts written t by John Eudes.*

## THE INCARNATION

Lord Jesus, I adore you at the moment of your Incarnation. I adore your first thoughts, your first acts of adoration, your offering of love and praise to your Heavenly Father.

O Jesus, may you be forever blessed, loved and adored for the honor and love you have rendered your Father at that moment. In the light of my faith, I contemplate the grand intentions you had on Mary. It is within her that the mystery is accomplished. I adore the effects of the grace, of the light and the holiness that you have produced in your Holy Mother at the moment of your Incarnation.

Rejoice Oh Virgin Mary, for the Almighty has done great wonders within you. You have carried the one the heavens cannot contain. Blessed are you among all women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Oh Jesus, while I am contemplating your Father at the moment of your Incarnation, you are scrutinizing me. You have had a thought for me, you have loved me, you have given yourself to me. When you began living on this Earth, you began living in me.

From this moment on, you have wanted to engrave in me the perfect image of your Incarnation, you have wished to unite me to you while you united yourself to me through the grace of your sacraments, in order to fill me with yourself, to establish yourself within me, to form yourself in me, to live and reign perfectly. Thanks be to you, Jesus, Amen.

(O.C.I, 421)

## PROFESSION OF FAITH AND SOLEMN VOWS FOR THE INCARNATION

It may be said that from the first moment of his Incarnation, Jesus made three solemn vows that he accomplished perfectly during his lifetime and in his death.

At the moment of his Incarnation, obedient to his Father, he professed to never do his own will and this made up his happiness and joy.

He promised to serve His Father. Because his Father made him a Servant by the words of the Prophets: «You are my Servant from whom I will display my splendor. » (Is 49, 3). He took upon himself the condition of a Servant (Filip 2, 7) by way of a humble life, by healing his own creatures until he suffered the cruel and ignominious torture of the cross, by love for us and for the glory of his Father.

He gave himself up as a Host, a consecrated and sacrificed victim to the glory of his Father, from the beginning to the end of his life.

This is what our devotion to Jesus is all about. If our own devotion is his own, it must include all these elements. Therefore, it is essential that we keep close ties with Jesus, that we hold on to him perfectly in all our lifetime, in all that we do and in all our activities.

(Life and Realm of Jesus, Second Part, Christian Virtues, The true Christian devotion).

## **THE FOUNDING OF THE CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY**

In 1643, our beloved Savior and His Holy Mother, through a gift of their bounty, blessed us with the grace of establishing our little Congregation on the 25 of March, on the same day the Son of God was made man and that the Virgin Mary was made Mother of God.

Therefore, we owe to the Holy Trinity, to the humanity of Jesus Christ, to the fertility of the Virgin Mother, eternal praise, honour and glory forever, Amen.

(O.C. XII 112-113).

### **A SHORT HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

The Congregation of Jesus and Mary, known as the Eudists, was established in France by Saint John Eudes in 1643.

John Eudes had received his formation from Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle. He learned from him to love passionately the Word Incarnate and in a special way, the priesthood of Jesus Christ. As a zealous missionary, he traveled through the regions of France. He noticed how the priests urgently required an adequate formation. He suffered from their lack of charity and mercy and witnessed how they needed spiritual, biblical and theological help. This is the context which presided over his wish to establish a congregation of priests who would look over the formation of other priests and of those who oversaw different ministries. He chose the day of March 25, the day the Church celebrates the mystery of the Incarnation. It is his love for The Word Incarnate that made him choose this date.

During his entire lifetime (1601-1680), John Eudes established

six Seminaries in different dioceses of France, from Normandy to Brittany. In those days, the seminaries didn't give academic formation but rather prepared priest to be ordained. They spent time teaching them how to celebrate sacraments and perform pastoral duties.

With the passing years, the Congregation of Jesus and Mary has revived the tradition of preparing to priesthood and has chosen to be as faithful as possible to this goal. Saint John Eudes had warned his Congregation that it mustn't adopt the structures of religious Orders or Congregations. He wanted his disciples to live as close as possible to the way the diocesan clergy did, albeit living together. For this reason, there would be no obligation for the Eudists to pronounce religious vows. In the categories of Canon Law today, the Eudists do not belong to religious congregations but to a category called Societies of Apostolic Life, since they live together without pronouncing vows. The Eudists are linked to the Congregation by a promise of Incorporation which is the equivalent of Incardination to a diocese.

Their wish is to be faithful to the instructions given to them by their Founder: «To serve Christ and the Church wholeheartedly and with great love.»

LONG LIVE JESUS AND MARY!  
Christians with hearts afire!

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**Director:**

*P. Álvaro Duarte Torres CJM*

**Designer and compiler:**

*Hermes Flórez Pérez*

**Translator:**

*Pierre Loiselle*