

St John Leonardi (1541–1609) was founder of the Clerks Regular of the Mother of God of Lucca. He was born in the City-state of Lucca, Tuscany. He was ordained as a priest in 1572. He first dedicated himself to the Christian formation of young people in his parish. He worked hard to spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, devotion to the Forty Hours, and frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist. He is the patron of pharmacists.



First Reading: (Joel 3:12-21) The Lord says this, “Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the nations round about. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Go in, tread, for the wine press is full. The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And the Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shake. But the Lord is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel. “So you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who dwell in Zion, my holy mountain. And Jerusalem shall be holy and strangers shall never again pass through it. “And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and

the hills shall flow with milk, and all the stream beds of Judah shall flow with water; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord and water the valley of Shittim. “Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the people of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land. But Judah shall be inhabited for ever, and Jerusalem to all generations. I will avenge their blood, and I will not clear the guilty, for the Lord dwells in Zion.”

Ps 96:1-2, 5-6, 10-12

R./ Rejoice, you just, in the Lord

Gospel: (Lk 11:27-28) As Jesus was speaking, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!” But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

REFLECTION

In this perhaps the shortest gospel reading of the liturgical year there is an important statement about our faith. In the family of Jesus the priority is not to familial relationships or relationships according to race or clan or nationality. **What is important is that we live as children of the one Father, listening to his word and living according to it.** One who hears God’s word, meditates on it and makes it the standard for his life, will witness to Christ not only with his lips but with his life. The one who did this perfectly was Mary and the woman’s praise of her was really fitting.