



Three Hearts Pilgrimage

Homily delivered
by the Right Reverend Father Dom Jean Pateau
Abbot of Notre-Dame de Fontgombault
(Clear Creek, October 12, 2024)

Eccli 24:9-12 or 14-16
Lk 11:27-28

Right Reverend Father,
Dear Fathers and Brothers,
Dear Brothers and Sisters, pilgrims and friends of Clear Creek,

When I was a child, I loved to hear my mother repeat a little nursery rhyme: "No Saturday without sunshine". Such a thought might seem strange to specialists in meteorology, strange to those who try to predict the weather. Not so for those who live a close heart-to-heart relationship with Mary, on a Saturday dedicated to her. Mary is the sunshine of our lives. And why is that? Because her *fiat* teaches us to say "Yes" to God, to say "Yes" to God's plans.

Providence had long been preparing for the establishment of a Benedictine monastery of the Solesmes Congregation on American soil. It began its work in the hearts of young Americans, students of Professor John Senior and his colleagues. It continued in the hearts of two Benedictine abbots in an abbey hidden in the middle of France, Fontgombault: Father Abbot Jean Roy and Father Abbot Antoine Forgeot. Finally, the same divine Providence completed this preparation in the heart of Bishop Edward J. Slattery, recently called back to the House of the Father, the bishop of a humble diocese in the center of the United States, that of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The result is here before us today: we contemplate the fruit of a generous effort of American and French monks who left Fontgombault in 1999. Over 25 years Clear Creek monastery has grown. The monastic family has been formed amid joys and

trials, living under the gaze of Mary and in the light of the mystery of the Annunciation, learning in the school of the Rule of St. Benedict, and working for the greater glory of God. Many friends have come to help the monks, to contribute to the beauty of God's house. Many vocations have flourished here.

Yes, God does all things well. Bless him and may you be blessed in him.

You yourselves, this morning and for the past two days, have been journeying towards Clear Creek Monastery in the light of the spirituality of the Three Hearts, the hearts of the members of the Holy Family. Mary's response to the angel Gabriel is the origin of the Holy Family. Without Mary's *fiat*, there would be no Holy Family, no family at all. Mary heard God's word. She kept it, preserved it in her heart. She remained faithful to it. Saint Joseph, too, had to pronounce his own *fiat*. He let himself be convinced by the angel's visit during a dream. Disturbed when Mary was with child, he nevertheless took her into his home. Thus, Mary and Joseph became the first cell of the Holy Family. And then Jesus was born. He came to bear witness to the Father's love in time. He came to give his life for his friends.

May God grant us the grace of a heart that listens ever more, ever better, a heart that understands that giving one's life is the greatest proof of love.

The monastic family, the human family, your pilgrimage, are born and grow from the “Yes” of each of their members and from fidelity to the commitments they have made. A first “Yes”, and then yeses repeated again and again, in days of peace as in days of storms... always repeated. Each and every one of us serves his family, he is a servant of their joy, a servant of each other. By our words, by our actions, we can make them grow or weaken them, sometimes even destroy them both materially and spiritually, whereas we are all called to advance on the path toward eternal life. What a grave responsibility!

Pursuing our lives in the light of the spirituality of the Three Hearts means turning our homes, our families, our communities into new Nazareths: homes where God is loved, prayed to and contemplated. Places where it's good to live under God's sunshine, places where we breathe the true peace that is God's gift.

Since the earliest days of mankind, we've been trying to predict tomorrow's weather. I think it's more important to spend a little time choosing, selecting the weather of your own heart. Yes, it's possible. First of all, we have to ask ourselves: "What is the weather of my heart?" If it's stormy, even with tornadoes, often... every day... then it's urgent to consult the doctor of souls, [perhaps the psychologist]. Let's work to obtain a luminous heart. A heart that listens to God's word, that keeps it, becomes a sunny heart. A soul that lives intimately with Mary, a heart that is heart to heart with Mary also lives in joy. "No Saturday without sunshine...", no day, no hour without sunlight for those who choose to live under Mary's gaze, who choose to pray to Mary.

The world and the Church will change as we change our own face. In this, we are the future of the world, the future of the Church. Let us not forget God, and give thanks for so many gifts received from Him.

Amen.