

SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST
HOLY MASS FOR THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF
CONSECRATION OF VIRGINITY LIVED IN THE WORLD
OF MAGALIS AGUILERA
CHAPEL OF BLESSED JOHN PAUL II, SAINT PETER'S BASILICA
JUNE 24, 2011
Homily of His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke

Is 49:1-6

Ps 139:1b-3, 13-14ab, 14c-15

Acts 13:22-26

Lk 1:57-66, 80

HOMILY

Praised be Jesus Christ now and forever.

It is very rare in the Church to celebrate the birth of a saint. In fact, the only births we celebrate in the Church Year are the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Himself, the birthday of the Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the birth of Saint John the Baptist. This feast signifies, in a very particular way, the important and irreplaceable role of Saint John the Baptist as the last of the prophets of the Old Testament, and as the one to announce the coming of the Redeemer, God the Son in our human flesh, to save us from our sins, an office, a service, to which he gave himself with all his heart, to the very outpouring of his blood in witness and fidelity to the truth, the truth of God's law, the truth of the coming of the Savior.

For us, this feast is a time to reflect on the mystery of our vocation in Christ, and so, very fittingly, this celebration, which honors 25 years completed of consecrated virginity lived in the world of Magalis Aguilera, falls on the birthday of Saint John the Baptist. For today, in a special way, as we celebrate with Magalis, giving thanks to Almighty God for the vocation which she received from Him, the life of consecrated virginity lived in the world, we are helped very much in our thanksgiving by reflecting upon the life of Saint John the Baptist.

It is true, in fact, that God has a plan for each one of us from the moment of our coming to life in Christ in Baptism, and we rejoice today in the plan which He had for Magalis, that she should be espoused forever to His only-begotten Son as His bride, that she should offer to God the gift of her virginity, so that God might espouse her, through His Holy Church, to His only-begotten Son forever in the life of consecrated virginity. We see in the life of Saint John the

Baptist that, as the Scriptures tell us, from his very conception in the womb of his mother he was destined to fulfill a most particular vocation, that is, to be the herald of the Savior at His coming. So, too, we rejoice today that Magalis, from the moment of her conception, her coming to life in Christ in Baptism, was called by God to give herself faithfully and totally to Christ as His bride through the consecration of virgins living in the world.

There are two points which we could very fruitfully draw from the readings from the Holy Scripture today for meditation on the vocation of Saint John the Baptist and meditation on the vocation of Magalis Aguilera to consecrated virginity lived in the world. The first is that, even as the vocation of Saint John Baptist was exclusively to point to Our Lord Jesus Christ, to be for Him, to draw others to Him, so, also, in each of our vocations, be it the married life, the dedicated single life, the consecrated life, specifically consecrated virginity lived in the world, or the priesthood, we are to be for Christ and to draw others to Christ through the fidelity with which we answer His call. The consecrated virgin, in a very particular way, is set aside, through the prayer of consecration, as a sacred person in the Church, to point all of us to Christ. Even as Christ is, for the consecrated virgin, her all, her everything, so we understand, too, that Christ must be our all. In fulfilling the duties of our vocation and our everyday duties in life, it must all be offered to Christ, to the greater honor and glory of God the Father.

The second meditation for us is the finality of our vocation. In the Scriptures, we hear about how the person who is called by God and responds to the call can, at some times, be tempted to think that it has all been useless, because of the failures and the difficulties which come along the way, because of misunderstandings, incomprehension—all of those many effects of Original Sin which plague us throughout our life here on this earth. But in our vocation, we come to understand that, through those trials and through those difficulties, the doubts, the fears, and through the sufferings that inevitably come in any life, there is the assurance of the victory of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our recompense, and our reward is with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven.

In this life, on this earthly pilgrimage, we have only one thing to worry about, and that is that we give faithfully, every day, the witness of our love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Then, we need not worry about the difficulties we face. We need not worry about the incomprehension which we endure, the sufferings which come to us or those who are near to us. We place all of this in the hands of God, His Providence, and we trust and are confident that He will not fail to

be our recompense. He will bring all into His victory of eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven, if only we remain faithful, if we strive, each day, to give ourselves completely and totally to Him. This is a particular witness which is given by the consecrated virgin living in the world. She is, as the Rite of Consecrations reminds us, a sign of the eternal destiny of each of our lives, to be with Christ in the company of the Father and the Holy Spirit, in the company of all the saints and angels, in the Kingdom of Heaven. By her espousal to Our Lord Jesus Christ, by her living faithfully and totally for Him as a sacred person in the Church, she is, for us, a sign of that ultimate victory which Christ has won for each us by His Passion, Death and Resurrection.

There is one further meditation which we should make today, because today is not the actual anniversary. It is the 25th year, 25 years, in fact, already completed. Magalis has entered into the 26th year of her consecration. She was consecrated on February 22, 1986. And, as all of you know, that is the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter. How appropriate to celebrate 25 years of her consecration in the Basilica of Saint Peter the Apostle, built over the very place of his burial, the Basilica in which his chair is, in a special way, honored by a particular altar behind the main altar and under the window of the Holy Spirit.

We want simply to recall to mind, as I am sure Magalis understood by the choice of that day for her consecration, and as every consecrated virgin understands, in a particular way, that, because of her espousal to Our Lord Jesus Christ, she bound, by a very particular devotion and love, to the Successor of Saint Peter, the Roman Pontiff, and to the Bishops in communion with him, especially her own Diocesan Bishop.

Today, as we celebrate the Mass in this Basilica, we pray, in a very particular way, for Our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI, who is about to celebrate 60 years of his priesthood on this coming June 29th. We ask that as Magalis, by her life, has given a sign of devotion to the Supreme Pastor of the Church, the Successor of Saint Peter, so our Holy Father might be comforted and strengthened by the devotion and love of the many faithful who thank God for his priesthood and, in particular, for his call to the See of Peter.

Let us now lift up our hearts to the Glorious Pierced Heart of Jesus in this Eucharistic Sacrifice. That Heart, pierced by the spear of the Roman soldier, from which flowed blood and water is the sign of the immeasurable and unceasing outpouring of His love for us in the Church, in a particular way, in the call to consecrated virginity. As we lift up our hearts to place them, through the Eucharistic Sacrifice, into His Glorious Pierced Heart, let us ask Him for the grace to

be purified of all of our sins. Let us ask Him for the strength of the Holy Spirit, which never ceases to flow from His open Heart, so that we, each in our own vocation in life, and, in a most special way, that Magalis in the call to consecrated virginity, may love as Christ loves, may love God the Father, may love all her brothers and sisters, with purity and selflessness, the purity and selflessness of Our Lord Jesus Christ, her Bridegroom.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.