

Laetare Sunday

SAINT OF THE DAY

19_03_2023



Unlike usual, today the liturgy of the Catholic Church does not celebrate the solemnity of [Saint Joseph](#), which is postponed to tomorrow, Monday 20th March, due to the coincidence with the fourth Sunday of Lent, known as Laetare Sunday.

But why this name? It is linked to the entrance antiphon and, in particular, to its first word in Latin: «*Lætare Jerusalem: et conventum facite omnes qui diligitis eam: gaudete cum lætitia, qui in tristitia fuistis: ut exsultetis, et satiemini ab uberibus consolationis vestræ*».

In English: «Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast» (cf. Isaiah 66:10-11).

A peculiarity of this Sunday is that it is allowed to use pink vestments, instead of the purple ones normally used in Lent. Furthermore, according to the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, on Laetare Sunday (as well as on solemnities and feasts) it is possible, unlike the rest of the time of Lent, to decorate the altar with flowers (GIRM n. 305) and it can be used the organ also not in function of supporting the singing (GIRM n. 313).

The reason for these exceptions was already well explained by the Servant of God Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875): «By manifesting her joy in the liturgy today, the Church wishes to cheer up herself for the zeal of her children; having already gone through half of Holy Lent, it wants to stimulate their ardor to continue until the end» (*The Liturgical Year*).