

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.*

COLLECT

Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

“Console my people, console them”
says your God.
“Speak to the heart of Jerusalem
and call to her
that her time of service is ended,
that her sin is atoned for,
that she has received from the hand of the Lord
double punishment for all her crimes.”

A voice cries, “Prepare in the wilderness
a way for the Lord.
Make a straight highway for our God
across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
let every cliff become a plain,
and the ridges a valley;
then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed
and all mankind shall see it;
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Go up on a high mountain,
joyful messenger to Zion.
Shout with a loud voice,
joyful messenger to Jerusalem.
Shout without fear,
say to the towns of Judah,
“Here is your God.”

Here is the Lord coming with power,
his arm subduing all things to him.
The prize of his victory is with him,
his trophies all go before him.
He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,
gathering lambs in his arms,
holding them against his breast
and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 84

RESPONSE: *Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and give us your saving help.*

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**
2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. **R.**
3. The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. **R.**

SECOND READING 2 Peter 3:8-14

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, “a day” can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,
and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL Mark 1:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;
he will prepare your way.
A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, “Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings,
and, since we have no merits to plead our cause,
come, we pray, to our rescue
with the protection of your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Replenished by the food of spiritual nourishment,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,
that, through our partaking in this mystery,
you may teach us to judge wisely the things of earth
and hold firm to the things of heaven.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.*

COLLECT

O God, who see how your people
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,
enable us, we pray,
to attain the joys of so great a salvation
and to celebrate them always
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

"I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

"For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Luke 1:46-50. 53-54

RESPONSE: *My soul rejoices in my God.*

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **R.**
2. The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. **R.**
3. He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians.

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give
thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in
Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with
contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good
and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may
you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will
not fail you.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
The spirit of the Lord has been given to me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 1:6-8. 19-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

A man came, sent by God.
His name was John.
He came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light,
so that everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light,
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent
priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"
he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, "I am not the
Christ." "Well then," they asked "are you Elijah?" "I am not" he
said. "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to
him, "Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who
sent us. What have you to say about yourself?" So John said, "I
am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord."

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put
this further question to him, "Why are you baptising if you are not
the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?" John replied, "I
baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to
you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his
sandal-strap." This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the
Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray,
be offered to you unceasingly,
to complete what was begun in sacred mystery
and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We implore your mercy, Lord,
that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults
and prepare us for the coming feasts.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Drop down dew from above, you heavens,
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.*

COLLECT

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING 2 Samuel 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16

A reading from the second book of Samuel.

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan: "Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you."

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

"Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 88

RESPONSE: *I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. **R.**
2. "I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages." **R.**
3. He will say to me: "You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me."
I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure. **R.**

SECOND READING Romans 16:25-27

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the handmaid of the Lord;

let what you have said be done to me.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, "Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you." She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, "Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end." Mary said to the angel, "But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?" "The Holy Spirit will come upon you" the angel answered "and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God." "I am the handmaid of the Lord," said Mary "let what you have said be done to me." And the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord,
sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar,
just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin
Mary.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;
and his name will be called Emmanuel.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption,
we pray, almighty God,
that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer,
so we may press forward all the more eagerly
to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

MASS DURING THE NIGHT

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Let us all rejoice in the Lord, for our Saviour has been born in the world.
Today true peace has come down to us from heaven.*

FIRST READING Isaiah 9:1-7

PSALM Psalm 95

RESPONSE: *Today a saviour has been born to us; he is Christ the Lord.*

1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. O sing to the Lord, bless his name. **R.**
2. Proclaim his help day by day, tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples. **R.**
3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad, let the sea and all within it thunder praise, let the land and all it bears rejoice, all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord for he comes, he comes to rule the earth. **R.**
4. With justice he will rule the world, he will judge the peoples with his truth. **R.**

SECOND READING Titus 2:11-14

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
I bring you news of great joy:
today a saviour has been born to us, Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL Luke 2:1-14

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory.

MASS AT DAWN

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Today a light will shine upon us, for the Lord is born for us; and he will be called Wondrous God, Prince of peace, Father of future ages; and his reign will be without end.

FIRST READING Isaiah 62:11-12

PSALM Psalm 96

RESPONSE: *This day new light will shine upon the earth: the Lord is born for us.*

1. The Lord is king, let earth rejoice, the many coastlands be glad. The skies proclaim his justice; all peoples see his glory. **R.**
2. Light shines forth for the just and joy for the upright of heart. Rejoice, you just, in the Lord: give glory to his holy name. **R.**

SECOND READING Titus 3:4-7

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace to men who enjoy his favour.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL Luke 2:15-20

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Rejoice, O Daughter Zion; lift up praise, Daughter Jerusalem: Behold, your King will come, the Holy One and Saviour of the world.

MASS DURING THE DAY

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

FIRST READING Isaiah 52:7-10

PSALM Psalm 97

RESPONSE: *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. **R.**
2. The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. **R.**
3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. **R.**
4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music. With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord. **R.**

SECOND READING Hebrews 1:1-6

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
A hallowed day has dawned upon us.
Come, you nations, worship the Lord,
for today a great light has shone down upon the earth.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL John 1:1-18

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

SOLEMN BLESSING

Bow down for the blessing.
May the God of infinite goodness, who by the Incarnation of his Son has driven darkness from the world and by that glorious Birth has illumined this most holy night (day), drive far from you the darkness of vice and illumine your hearts with the light of virtue. **Amen.**

May God, who willed that the great joy of his Son's saving Birth be announced to shepherds by the Angel, fill your minds with the gladness he gives and make you heralds of his Gospel. **Amen.**

And may God, who by the Incarnation brought together the earthly and heavenly realm, fill you with the gift of his peace and favour and make you sharers with the Church in heaven. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.*

COLLECT

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practising the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, "Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great."

"My Lord," Abram replied "what do you intend to give me? I go childless..." Then Abram said, "See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir". And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, "He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be of your own flesh and blood". Then taking him outside he said, "Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants" he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 104

RESPONSE: *He, the Lord, is our God.*

He remembers his covenant for ever.

1. Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.
O sing to him, sing his praise;
tell all his wonderful works! **R.**
2. Be proud of his holy name,
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.
Consider the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face. **R.**
3. Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, the judgements he spoke.
O children of Abraham, his servant,
O sons of the Jacob he chose. **R.**
4. He remembers his covenant for ever,
his promise for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac. **R.**

SECOND READING Hebrews 11:8. 11-12. 17-19

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going.

It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

*At various times in the past
and in various different ways,
God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets;
but in our own time, the last days,
he has spoken to us through his Son.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL Luke 2:22-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

(for shorter form read between > <)

> When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord < – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

"Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel."

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare."

There was a prophetess also, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

> When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.<

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation, humbly asking that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph,

you may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament, most merciful Father, to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family, so that, after the trials of this world, we may share their company for ever. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.