

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*When a profound silence covered all things
and night was in the middle of its course,
your all-powerful Word, O Lord,
bounded from heaven's royal throne.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
splendour of faithful souls,
graciously be pleased to fill the world with your glory,
and show yourself to all peoples by the radiance of your light.
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 Ecclesiasticus 24:1-2. 8-12

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus.

Wisdom speaks her own praises,
in the midst of her people she glories in herself.
She opens her mouth in the assembly of the Most High,
she glories in herself in the presence of the Mighty One;

“Then the creator of all things instructed me,
and he who created me fixed a place for my tent.
He said, ‘Pitch your tent in Jacob,
make Israel your inheritance.’
From eternity, in the beginning, he created me,
and for eternity I shall remain.
I ministered before him in the holy tabernacle,
and thus was I established on Zion.
In the beloved city he has given me rest,
and in Jerusalem I wield my authority.
I have taken root in a privileged people,
in the Lord's property, in his inheritance.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 147

RESPONSE: *The Word was made flesh,
and lived among us.*

Or *Alleluia!*

1. O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!
Zion, praise your God!
He has strengthened the bars of your gates,
he has blessed the children within you. **R.**
2. He established peace on your borders,
he feeds you with finest wheat.
He sends out his word to the earth
and swiftly runs his command. **R.**
3. He makes his word known to Jacob,
to Israel his laws and decrees.
He has not dealt thus with other nations;
he had not taught them his decrees. **R.**

SECOND READING Ephesians 1:3-6. 15-18

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

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has
blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ.
Before the world was made, he chose us, chose us in Christ,
to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence,
determining that we should become his adopted sons, through
Jesus Christ, for his own kind purposes, to make us praise the
glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved.

That will explain why I, having once heard about your faith in the
Lord Jesus, and the love that you show towards all the saints, have
never failed to remember you in my prayers and to thank God for
you. May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,
give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to
bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of
your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you,
what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Glory be to you, O Christ, proclaimed to the pagans;
Glory be to you, O Christ, believed in by the world.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL John 1:1-5. 9-14

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

The Word was the true light
that enlightens all men;
and he was coming into the world.
He was in the world
that had its being through him,
and the world did not know him.
He came to his own domain
and his own people did not accept him.
But to all who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God,
to all who believe in the name of him
who was born not out of human stock
or urge of the flesh
or will of man
but of God himself.
The Word was made flesh,
he lived among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father,
full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Sanctify, O Lord, the offerings we make
on the Nativity of your Only Begotten Son,
for by it you show us the way of truth
and promise the life of the heavenly Kingdom.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*To all who would accept him,
he gave the power to become children of God.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God, we humbly ask you,
that, through the working of this mystery,
our offences may be cleansed
and our just desires fulfilled.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come;
and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.*

COLLECT

O God, who on this day
revealed your Only Begotten Son to the nations
by the guidance of a star,
grant in your mercy
that we, who know you already by faith,
may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory.
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 60:1-6

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Arise, shine out Jerusalem, for your light has come,
the glory of the Lord is rising on you,
though night still covers the earth
and darkness the peoples.

Above you the Lord now rises
and above you his glory appears.
The nations come to your light
and kings to your dawning brightness.

Lift up your eyes and look round:
all are assembling and coming towards you,
your sons from far away
and daughters being tenderly carried.

At this sight you will grow radiant,
your heart throbbing and full;
since the riches of the sea will flow to you;
the wealth of the nations come to you;

camels in throngs will cover you,
and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
everyone in Sheba will come,
bringing gold and incense
and singing the praise of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks to be God.

PSALM Psalm 71

RESPONSE: *All nations shall fall prostrate before you,
O Lord.*

- O God, give your judgement to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgement. **R.**
- In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds. **R.**
- The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him. **R.**
- For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor. **R.**

SECOND READING Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

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

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks to be God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

*We saw his star as it rose
and have come to do the Lord homage.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. "Where is the infant king of the Jews?" they asked. "We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage." When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. "At Bethlehem in Judaea," they told him "for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
for out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. "Go and find out all about the child," he said "and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage." Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look with favour, Lord, we pray,
on these gifts of your Church,
in which are offered now not gold or frankincense or myrrh,
but he who by them is proclaimed,
sacrificed and received, Jesus Christ.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*We have seen his star in the East,
and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Go before us with heavenly light, O Lord,
always and everywhere,
that we may perceive with clear sight
and revere with true affection
the mystery in which you have willed us to participate.
Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*After the Lord was baptised, the heavens were opened,
and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove,
and the voice of the Father thundered:
This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who, when Christ had been baptised in the River Jordan
and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him,
solemnly declared him your beloved Son,
grant that your children by adoption,
reborn of water and the Holy Spirit,
may always be well pleasing to you...

Or

O God, whose Only Begotten Son
has appeared in our very flesh,
grant, we pray, that we may be inwardly transformed
through him whom we recognise as outwardly like ourselves...

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 103

RESPONSE: *Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are.*

1. Lord God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and glory,
wrapped in light as in a robe!
You stretch out the heavens like a tent. **R.**
2. Above the rains you build your dwelling.
You make the clouds your chariot,
you walk on the wings of the wind,
you make the winds your messengers
and flashing fire your servants. **R.**
3. How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.

The earth is full of your riches.
There is the sea, vast and wide,
with its moving swarms past counting,
living things great and small. **R.**

4. All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up:
you open your hand, they have their fill. **R.**
5. You take back your spirit, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth. **R.**

SECOND READING Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus.

God’s grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible
for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is
to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly
ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious
lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for
the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our
great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in
order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so
that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except
to do good.

When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind
were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any
righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no
reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means
of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy
Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus
Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his
grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Someone is coming, said John, someone greater than I.
He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.*

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 3:15-16. 21-22

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were
beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared
before them all, “I baptise you with water, but someone is coming,
someone who is more powerful than I am and I am not fit to undo
the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit
and fire.”

Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after
his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit
descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came
from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, the offerings
we have brought to honour the revealing of your beloved Son,
so that the oblation of your faithful
may be transformed into the sacrifice of him
who willed in his compassion
to wash away the sins of the world... **Amen.**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Behold the One of whom John said:

I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished with these sacred gifts,
we humbly entreat your mercy, O Lord,
that, faithfully listening to your Only Begotten Son,
we may be your children in name and in truth... **Amen.**

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*All the earth shall bow down before you, O God,
and shall sing to you,
shall sing to your name, O Most High!*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who govern all things,
both in heaven and on earth,
mercifully hear the pleading of your people
and bestow your peace on our times.
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 62:1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.
About Zion I will not be silent,
about Jerusalem I will not grow weary,
until her integrity shines out like the dawn
and her salvation flames like a torch.
The nations then will see your integrity,
all the kings your glory,
and you will be called by a new name,
one which the mouth of the Lord will confer.
You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand of the Lord,
a princely diadem in the hand of your God;
no longer are you to be named "Forsaken",
nor your land "Abandoned",
but you shall be called "My Delight"
and your land "The Wedded";
for the Lord takes delight in you
and your land will have its wedding.
Like a young man marrying a virgin,
so will the one who built you wed you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride,
so will your God rejoice in you.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 95

RESPONSE: *Proclaim the wonders of the Lord
among all the peoples.*

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. Give the Lord, you families of peoples,
give the Lord glory and power,
give the Lord the glory of his name. **R.**
4. Worship the Lord in his temple.
O earth, tremble before him.
Proclaim to the nations: "God is king."
He will judge the peoples in fairness. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.
There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all
sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working
in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God
who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit
is given to each person is for a good purpose. One may have
the gift of preaching with wisdom given him by the Spirit; another

may have the gift of preaching instruction given him by the same Spirit; and another the gift of faith given by the same Spirit; another again the gift of healing, through this one Spirit; one, the power of miracles; another, prophecy; another the gift of recognising spirits; another the gift of tongues and another the ability to interpret them. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, who distributes different gifts to different people just as he chooses.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
Your words are spirit, Lord,
and they are life:
you have the message of eternal life.
Alleluia!*

Or

*Alleluia, alleluia!
Through the Good News God called us
to share the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL John 2:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." Jesus said, "Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not come yet." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews; each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. "Draw some out now", he told them, "and take it to the steward." They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from – only the servants who had drawn the water knew – the steward called the bridegroom and said, "People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now."

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.

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

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant us, O Lord, we pray,
that we may participate worthily in these mysteries,
for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated
the work of our redemption is accomplished.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*You have prepared a table before me,
and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.*

Or

*We have come to know and to believe
in the love that God has for us.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Pour on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love,
and in your kindness
make those you have nourished
by this one heavenly Bread
one in mind and heart.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*O sing a new song to the Lord;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
In his presence are majesty and splendour,
strength and honour in his holy place.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
direct our actions according to your good pleasure,
that in the name of your beloved Son
we may abound in good works... **Amen.**

FIRST READING Nehemiah 8:2-6. 8-10

A reading from the book of Nehemiah.

Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, consisting of men, women, and children old enough to understand. This was the first day of the seventh month. On the square before the Water Gate, in the presence of the men and women, and children old enough to understand, he read from the book from early morning till noon; all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden dais erected for the purpose. In full view of all the people – since he stood higher than all the people – Ezra opened the book; and when he opened it all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people raised their hands and answered, “Amen! Amen!”; then they bowed down and, face to the ground, prostrated themselves before the Lord. And Ezra read from the Law of God, translating and giving the sense, so that the people understood what was read.

Then Nehemiah – His Excellency – and Ezra, priest and scribe (and the Levites who were instructing the people) said to all the people, “This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not be mournful, do not weep.” For the people were all in tears as they listened to the words of the Law.

He then said, “Go, eat the fat, drink the sweet wine, and send a portion to the man who has nothing prepared ready. For this day is sacred to our Lord. Do not be sad: the joy of the Lord is your stronghold.”

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 18

RESPONSE: *Your words are spirit, Lord,
and they are life.*

1. The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.
The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
it gives wisdom to the simple. **R.**
2. The precepts of the Lord are right,
they gladden the heart.
The command of the Lord is clear,
it gives light to the eyes. **R.**
3. The fear of the Lord is holy,
abiding for ever.
The decrees of the Lord are truth
and all of them just. **R.**
4. May the spoken words of my mouth,
the thoughts of my heart,
win favour in your sight, O Lord,
my rescuer, my rock! **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 12:12-30

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

(For shorter form read between > <)

> Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

Nor is the body to be identified with any one of its many parts. < If the foot were to say, “I am not a hand and so I do not belong to the body,” would that mean that it stopped being part of the body? If the ear were to say, “I am not an eye, and so I do not belong to the body,” would that mean it was not a part of the body? If your whole body was just one eye, how would you hear anything? If it was just one ear, how would you smell anything?

Instead of that, God put all the separate parts into the body on purpose. If all the parts were the same, how could it be a body? As it is, the parts are many but the body is one. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I do not need you,” nor can the head say to the feet, “I do not need you.”

What is more, it is precisely the parts of the body that seem to be the weakest which are the indispensable ones; and it is the least honourable parts of the body that we clothe with the greatest care. So our more improper parts get decorated in a way that our more proper parts do not need. God has arranged the body so that more dignity is given to the parts which are without it, and so that there may not be disagreements inside the body, but that each part may be equally concerned for all the others. If one part is hurt, all parts are hurt with it. If one part is given special honour, all parts enjoy it.

> Now you together are Christ’s body; but each of you is a different part of it. < In the Church, God has given the first place to apostles, the second to prophets, the third to teachers; after them, miracles, and after them the gift of healing; helpers, good leaders, those with many languages. Are all of them apostles, or all of them prophets, or all of them teachers? Do they all have the gift of miracles, or all have the gift of healing? Do all speak strange languages, and all interpret them?

> The word of the Lord. <
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
The Lord has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,
to proclaim liberty to captives.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Seeing that many others have undertaken to draw up accounts of the events that have taken place among us, exactly as these were handed down to us by those who from the outset were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, I in my turn, after carefully going over the whole story from the beginning, have decided to write an ordered account for you, Theophilus, so that your Excellency may learn how well founded the teaching is that you have received.

Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in him, returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside. He taught in their synagogues and everyone praised him.

He came to Nazara, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll he found the place where it is written:

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,
to proclaim liberty to captives
and to the blind new sight,
to set the downtrodden free,
to proclaim the Lord’s year of favour.

He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down. And all eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak to them, “This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.”

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

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept our offerings, O Lord, we pray,
and in sanctifying them
grant that they may profit us for salvation... **Amen.**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Look toward the Lord and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.*

Or

*I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, receiving the grace
by which you bring us to new life,
we may always glory in your gift... **Amen.**

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Save us, O Lord our God!
And gather us from the nations,
to give thanks to your holy name,
and make it our glory to praise you.*

COLLECT

Grant us, Lord our God,
that we may honour you with all our mind,
and love everyone in truth of heart.
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 Jeremiah 1:4-5. 17-19

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah.

In the days of Josiah, the word of the Lord was addressed to me, saying,

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;
before you came to birth I consecrated you;
I have appointed you as prophet to the nations.
So now brace yourself for action.
Stand up and tell them
all I command you.

Do not be dismayed at their presence,
or in their presence I will make you dismayed.
I, for my part, today will make you
into a fortified city,
a pillar of iron,
and a wall of bronze
to confront all this land:
the kings of Judah, its princes,
its priests and the country people.
They will fight against you
but shall not overcome you,
for I am with you to deliver you –
it is the Lord who speaks.”

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 70

RESPONSE: My lips will tell of your help.

- In you, O Lord, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
In your justice rescue me, free me:
pay heed to me and save me. **R.**
- Be a rock where I can take refuge,
a mighty stronghold to save me;
for you are my rock, my stronghold.
Free me from the hand of the wicked. **R.**
- It is you, O Lord, who are my hope,
my trust, O Lord, since my youth.
On you I have leaned from my birth,
from my mother’s womb you have been my help. **R.**
- My lips will tell of your justice
and day by day of your help.
O God, you have taught me from my youth
and I proclaim your wonders still. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 12:31 – 13:13

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.
(For shorter form read between > <)

Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them.

If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fulness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

> Love is always patient and kind: it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people’s

sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

Love does not come to an end. But if there are gifts of prophecy, the time will come when they must fail; or the gift of languages, it will not continue for ever; and knowledge – for this, too, the time will come when it must fail. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophesying is imperfect; but once perfection comes, all imperfect things will disappear. When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, and think like a child, and argue like a child, but now I am a man, all childish ways are put behind me. Now we are seeing a dim reflection in a mirror; but then we shall be seeing face to face. The knowledge that I have now is imperfect; but then I shall know as fully as I am known.

In short, there are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.

The word of the Lord. <
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, says the Lord;
no one can come to the Father except through me.
Alleluia!*

Or

*Alleluia, alleluia!
The Lord has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,
to proclaim liberty to captives.
Alleluia!*

GOSPEL Luke 4:21-30

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus began to speak in the synagogue, “This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.” And he won the approval of all, and they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips.

They said, “This is Joseph’s son, surely?” But he replied, “No doubt you will quote me the saying, ‘Physician, heal yourself’ and tell me, ‘We have heard all that happened in Capernaum, do the same here in your own countryside.’” And he went on, “I tell you solemnly, no prophet is ever accepted in his own country.

“There were many widows in Israel, I can assure you, in Elijah’s day, when heaven remained shut for three years and six months and a great famine raged throughout the land, but Elijah was not sent to any one of these: he was sent to a widow at Zarephath, a Sidonian town. And in the prophet Elisha’s time there were many lepers in Israel, but none of these was cured, except the Syrian, Naaman.”

When they heard this everyone in the synagogue was enraged. They sprang to their feet and hustled him out of the town; and they took him up to the brow of the hill their town was built on, intending to throw him down the cliff, but he slipped through the crowd and walked away.

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

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord, we bring to your altar
these offerings of our service:
be pleased to receive them, we pray,
and transform them
into the Sacrament of our redemption.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Let your face shine on your servant.
Save me in your merciful love.
O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.*

Or

*Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by these redeeming gifts,
we pray, O Lord,
that through this help to eternal salvation
true faith may ever increase.
Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*