

COLLECT

Almighty God,
whose only Son has opened for us
a new and living way into your
presence:
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills
to worship you in spirit and in truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Either **Deuteronomy 4:1-2. 6-9**
*A reading from the book of
Deuteronomy.*

Moses spoke to the people; he said: So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you. You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

Or **Song of Solomon 2:8-13**

PSALM Psalm 15

R *Those who do what is right
will dwell in the presence of the
Lord.*

Lord, who may dwell in your
tabernacle?
who may abide upon your holy hill?
Whoever leads a blameless life and
does what is right,
who speaks the truth from his heart. **R**

There is no guile upon his tongue;
he does no evil to his friend;
he does not heap contempt upon his
neighbour.

In his sight the wicked are rejected,
but he honours those who fear the
Lord. **R**

He has sworn to do no wrong
and does not take back his word.
He does not give his money in hope
of gain,
nor does he take a bribe against the
innocent.

Whoever does these things
shall never be overthrown. **R**

SECOND READING James 1:17-end

A reading from the letter of James.

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act – they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

GOSPEL

Mark 7:1-8. 14-15. 21-23

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus
Christ according to Mark.*

When the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" Jesus said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.' You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition." Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile. For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

POST COMMUNION

Lord God, the source of truth and love,
keep us faithful to the apostles'
teaching and fellowship,
united in prayer and the breaking of
bread,
and one in joy and simplicity of heart,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Additional Text and Prayers

Call to worship

Purify our hearts, O God,
and fit us for your company.
Call us to worship you,
**that we may be cleansed by your light,
healed by your love,
and filled by your spirit.**

Confession

What God has prepared
for those who love him,
he has revealed to us through the Spirit;
for the Spirit searches everything.
Therefore, let us in penitence
open our hearts to the Lord,
who has prepared good things
for those who love him.

God be gracious to us and bless us,
and make your face shine upon us:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May your ways be known on the earth,
your saving power among the nations:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

You, Lord, have made known your salvation,
and reveal your justice in the sight of the
nations:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Silence is kept and an absolution is given

Blessing

The love of the Lord Jesus
draw you to himself,
the power of the Lord Jesus
strengthen you in his service,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your hearts;
and the blessing ...

Dismissal

Surround one another
in the warmth of love.
Enfold one another
in the strength of prayer.
Encourage one another
in the journey of faith.
Surprise one another
in the wonder of life,
and so bless one another
as God blesses you.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

COLLECT

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Either **Isaiah 35:4-7a**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

Or **Proverbs 22:1-2. 8-9. 22-23**

PSALM Psalm 146

R *You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs.*

Alleluia!
Praise the Lord, O my soul!
I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. **R**

Put not your trust in rulers,
nor in any child of earth,
for there is no help in them.
When they breathe their last, they return to earth,
and in that day their thoughts perish. **R**

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob
for their help!
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
Who made heaven and earth, the seas,
and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise for ever;
Who gives justice to those who are oppressed,
and food to those who hunger. **R**

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

The Lord loves the righteous;
the Lord cares for the stranger;
he sustains the orphan and widow,
but frustrates the way of the wicked. **R**

The Lord shall reign for ever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Alleluia! **R**

SECOND READING

James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17

A reading from the letter of James.

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favouritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? You do well if you really fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. [For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgement will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgement.] What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs,

what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

GOSPEL Mark 7:24-end

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Jesus set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go – the demon has left your daughter." So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone. Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

POST COMMUNION

Keep, O Lord, your Church, with your perpetual mercy;
and, because without you our human frailty cannot but fall,
keep us ever by your help from all things hurtful,
and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Additional Text and Prayers

Call to worship

Come, strangers and friends,
to worship the Lord.

We come in joy!

Come to sit
at the feet of your teacher and master.

We come to sing his praises!

Come and bear witness
to God's goodness and love.

**We come to be filled, inspired and
challenged!**

Know how close God is, now and always.

Closer than our closest friend.

Alleluia!

Introduction to confession

Wise and loving God, source of our being,
answer to all our neediness: we come before
you as people who do not live as we might,
people who fall short of your glory.
As we confess our sins, may we know and
experience our forgiveness
through your love, and live our lives in the light
of your knowledge and truth.

*We use the words of confession in the orders of
service.*

Blessing

Go now in the love of God,
to love God and one another.
Go with open hearts and hands and minds,
in his name and for his sake.
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
be with you and all his people everywhere,
now and always.

Amen.

COLLECT

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Either **Isaiah 50:4-9a**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The servant of the Lord said: The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens – awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

Or **Proverbs 1:20-33**

PSALM Psalm 116:1-8

R *I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.*

I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him. The cords of death entangled me; the grip of the grave took hold of me; I came to grief and sorrow. **R**

Then I called upon the name of the Lord:

“O Lord, I pray you, save my life.” Gracious is the Lord and righteous; our God is full of compassion. **R**

The Lord watches over the innocent; I was brought very low and he helped me.

Turn again to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has treated you well. **R**

For you have rescued my life from death, my eyes from tears and my feet from stumbling. I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living. **R**

SECOND READING James 3:1-12

A reading from the letter of James.

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue – a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

GOSPEL Mark 8:27-end

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” Jesus asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

POST COMMUNION

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law: grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Additional Text and Prayers

The Gathering

In the name of God the Creator,
God the Redeemer
and God the Sanctifier
Amen.

Opening Responses

Thanks be to you, O God, that we have risen
this day,

to the rising of this life itself.

We bring our joys,
challenges and hopes with us this day:

we bring them to you, O Lord,

Help us to bring
our whole selves to worship God,
**we come, in the name of the three-fold
God.**

O God, who brought us
to the bright light of this new day,
bring us all to the guiding light of eternity.

Come with hope or hesitation;
come with joy or yearning;
all who hunger, all who thirst
for life in all its fullness.

**Generous God and generous Saviour,
touch us through your Spirit.**

Before the Dismissal:

Closing Prayer

Loving God,
as we leave this time of worship,
we remember you are with us in our pain.
We remember you are with us
in our struggle to bring goodness.
We remember you are with us
in the fun we have.
We remember that nothing
in all of creation
can separate us from your love.
Amen.

Psalm 119:73–88

73 THY hands have made me and fashioned me : O give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

74 They that fear thee will be glad when they see me : because I have put my trust in thy word.

75 I know, O Lord, that thy judgements are right: and that thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.

76 O let thy merciful kindness be my comfort : according to thy word unto thy servant.

77 O let thy loving mercies come unto me, that I may live : for thy law is my delight.

78 Let the proud be confounded, for they go wickedly about to destroy me : but I will be occupied in thy commandments.

79 Let such as fear thee, and have known thy testimonies : be turned unto me.

80 O let my heart be sound in thy statutes : that I be not ashamed.

81 MY soul hath longed for thy salvation : and I have a good hope because of thy word.

82 Mine eyes long sore for thy word : saying, O when wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke : yet do I not forget thy statutes.

84 How many are the days of thy servant : when wilt thou be avenged of them that persecute me?

85 The proud have digged pits for me : which are not after thy law.

86 All thy commandments are true : they persecute me falsely; O be thou my help.

87 They had almost made an end of me upon earth : but I forsook not thy commandments.

88 O quicken me after thy loving-

kindness : and so shall I keep the testimonies of thy mouth.

Glory be to the Father...

First Lesson**Exodus 18.13–26**

¹³ The next day Moses sat as judge for the people, while the people stood around him from morning until evening. ¹⁴When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, 'What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, while all the people stand around you from morning until evening?' ¹⁵Moses said to his father-in-law, 'Because the people come to me to inquire of God. ¹⁶When they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make known to them the statutes and instructions of God.' ¹⁷Moses' father-in-law said to him, 'What you are doing is not good. ¹⁸You will surely wear yourself out, both you and these people with you. For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. ¹⁹Now listen to me. I will give you counsel, and God be with you! You should represent the people before God, and you should bring their cases before God; ²⁰teach them the statutes and instructions and make known to them the way they are to go and the things they are to do. ²¹You should also look for able men among all the people, men who fear God, are trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain; set such men over them as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. ²²Let them sit as judges for the people at all times; let them bring every important case to you, but decide every minor case themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. ²³If you do this, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people will go to their home in peace.'

²⁴ So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. ²⁵Moses chose able men from

all Israel and appointed them as heads over the people, as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. ²⁶And they judged the people at all times; hard cases they brought to Moses, but any minor case they decided themselves.

Second Lesson**Matthew 7.1–14**

'Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ²For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³Why do you see the speck in your neighbour's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your neighbour, "Let me take the speck out of your eye", while the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbour's eye.

⁶ 'Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you.

⁷ 'Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? ¹⁰Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? ¹¹If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

¹² 'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

13 'Enter through the narrow gate;
for the gate is wide and the road is
easy that leads to destruction, and
there are many who take it. ¹⁴For
the gate is narrow and the road is
hard that leads to life, and there
are few who find it.

Collect of the Day

O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy
continual pity cleanse and defend
thy Church; and, because it cannot
continue in safety without thy
succour, preserve it evermore by
thy help and goodness; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COLLECT

Almighty God,
you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless till they
find their rest in you:
pour your love into our hearts and
draw us to yourself,
and so bring us at last to your
heavenly city
where we shall see you face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Either **Wisdom of Solomon**

1:16 – 2:1. 12-22

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The ungodly by their words and deeds summoned death; considering him a friend, they pined away and made a covenant with him, because they are fit to belong to his company. For they reasoned unsoundly, saying to themselves, "Short and sorrowful is our life, and there is no remedy when a life comes to its end, and no one has been known to return from Hades. Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions; he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training. He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord. He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his manner of life is unlike that of others, and his ways are strange. We are considered by him as something base, and he avoids our ways as unclean; he calls the last end of the righteous happy, and boasts that God is his father. Let us see if his words are true, and let us test what will happen at the end of his life; for if the righteous man is God's child, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries. Let us test him with insult and torture, so that we may find out how gentle he is, and make trial of his forbearance. Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to what he says, he will be protected." Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray, for their wickedness blinded them, and they did not know the secret purposes of God, nor hoped for the wages of holiness, nor

discerned the prize for blameless souls.

Or **Jeremiah 11:18-20**

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

It was the LORD who made it known to me, and I knew; then you showed me their evil deeds. But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. And I did not know it was against me that they devised schemes, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered!" But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously, who try the heart and the mind, let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

Or **Proverbs 31:10-end**

PSALM Psalm 54

R *The Lord sustains my life.*

Save me, O God, by your name;
in your might, defend my cause.
Hear my prayer, O God;
give ear to the words of my mouth. **R**

For the arrogant have risen up against me,
and the ruthless have sought my life,
those who have no regard for God.
Behold, God is my helper;
it is the Lord who sustains my life. **R**

Render evil to those who spy on me;
in your faithfulness, destroy them.
I will offer you a freewill sacrifice
and praise your name, O Lord, for it is
good.
For you have rescued me from every
trouble,
and my eye has seen the ruin of my
foes. **R**

SECOND READING

James 3:13 – 4:3. 7-8a

A reading from the letter of James.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness

of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace. Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

GOSPEL Mark 9:30-37

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

After leaving the mountain Jesus and his disciples went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

POST COMMUNION

Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Call to worship

Let us worship God.

We come as we are to meet God here.

God's arms are open wide in welcome.

Our hearts are open wide to receive him.

God's Spirit draws us closer now to him and to one another.

May we, together, worship in Spirit and in truth.

A prayer of welcome

Holy Spirit, source of heavenly wisdom, pure, peaceful, gentle and compassionate:

we welcome you.

Loving Lord Jesus, who came as a servant, humble and obedient to your Father's will:

we welcome you.

Gracious heavenly Father, drawing near to all who draw near to you:

we welcome you.

All who come here in sincere humility, little children in the eyes of God:

we welcome you

in the name of Christ. Amen.

Confession

Forgive us, God, it's just the way we are.

We are fooled by fancy appearance and miss you, the simple soul by our side. We are dazzled by the dramatic entrance and ignore you, the constant child by our side. We are bewitched by the powerful presentation and abandon you, the faithful friend by our side.

Open our eyes; clear our thinking; help us to learn wisdom and in humble honesty to be glad you are by our side.

Amen.

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

All Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

An absolution is given..

Blessing

May God keep you in all your days.

May Christ shield you in all your ways.

May the Spirit bring you healing and peace.

May God the Holy Trinity

drive all darkness from you

and pour upon you blessing and light.

And the blessing...

Dismissal

Go now, knowing you are one.

We are one in the Spirit.

Go now as Christ's body in this community and world.

We go in his peace and strength.

Amen.

COLLECT

Everlasting God,
you have ordained and constituted
the ministries of angels and mortals
in a wonderful order:
grant that as your holy angels always
serve you in heaven,
so, at your command,
they may help and defend us on
earth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our
Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Either **Genesis 28:10-17**

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place – and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

Or **Revelation 12:7-12**

A reading from the book of Revelation.

War broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels

fought back, but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world – he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death. Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

PSALM Psalm 103:19-end

R *Bless the Lord, you angels of his.*

The Lord has set his throne in heaven, and his kingship has dominion over all.

Bless the Lord, you angels of his, you mighty ones who do his bidding, and hearken to the voice of his word. **R**

Bless the Lord, all you his hosts, you ministers of his who do his will. Bless the Lord, all you works of his, in all places of his dominion; bless the Lord, O my soul. **R**

SECOND READING

Either **Hebrews 1:5-end**

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

To which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever, and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre

of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." And, "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end." But to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Or **Revelation 12:7-12**

GOSPEL John 1:47-end

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael asked him, "Where did you come to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

POST COMMUNION

Lord of heaven,
in this eucharist you have brought us
near to an innumerable company of
angels
and to the spirits of the saints made
perfect:
as in this food of our earthly
pilgrimage we have shared their
fellowship,
so may we come to share their joy in
heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

