Liturgy of the Hours

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Office of Readings

December 31, 2026

{ Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas }

Liturgy of the Hours
EBREVIARY

Stand and make sign of cross

God, come to my assistance.

— Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

Hymn

Loving, eternal
splendor of the Godhead,
Life, Light, and Mercy,
Christ you come among us,
Healer of illness
and all human weakness,
Gate of Salvation.

Angels in chorus
to the earth are singing
tidings from heaven,
telling of new ages:
praise to the Father,
to our human fam'ly
joy, peace, and gladness.

Infant so lowly,
Lord of all creation,
born of the Virgin,
holy, pure, and sinless,
rule all the world now,
Jesus Christ, our Master,
ever beloved.

Born to give heaven,
our eternal homeland,
our flesh assuming,
joined to us for ever;
draw hearts that seek you,

mind and soul renewing;
by your love bind us.

Lord, see us gathered,
filled with exultation,
joined to the angels,
singing hymns of gladness;
joyous we praise you,
one with God the Father,
and Love, your equal. Amen.

Metrical hymn, melody: Herr, Deinen Zorn, 11 11 11 5; later form of melody by Johann Crüger, 1599–1662

Plainsong, mode I, melody 22; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983, Text: Candor æternæ Deitatis alme, Anselmo Lentini, O.S.B., 1901–1989*

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Sit or stand

Psalmody

Antiphon 1

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad in the presence of the Lord, for he has come.

Psalm 96

The Lord, king and judge of the world

A new theme now inspires their praise of God; they belong to the Lamb (see Revelation 14:3).

O síng a new sóng to the Lórd, †
síng to the Lórd, all the éarth. *
O síng to the Lórd, bless his náme.

Procláim his hélp day by dáy, †
téll among the nátions his glóry *

and his wónders amóng all the péoples.

The Lord is gréat and wórthy of práise, †
to be féared abóve all góds; *
the góds of the héathens are náught.

It was the Lórd who máde the héavens, †
his are májesty and státe and pówer *
and spléndor in his hóly pláce.

Give the Lórd, you fámilies of péoples, †
give the Lórd glóry and pówer, *
give the Lórd the glóry of his náme.

Bring an óffering and énter his cóurts, †
wórship the Lórd in his témple. *
O éarth, trémble befóre him.

Procláim to the nátions: "God is kíng." †
The wórld he made fírm in its pláce; *
he will júdge the péoples in fáirness.

Let the héavens rejóice and earth be glád, *
let the séa and all withín it thunder práise,
let the lánd and all it béars rejóice, *
all the trées of the wóod shout for jóy

at the présence of the Lórd for he cómes, *
he cómes to rúle the éarth.
With jústice he will rúle the wórld, *
he will júdge the péoples with his trúth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, *
and will be for ever. Amen.

Antiphon

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad in the presence of the Lord, for he has come.

Antiphon 2

A light has dawned for the just; joy has come to the upright of

heart, alleluia.

Psalm 97

The glory of the Lord in his decrees for the world

This psalm foretells a world-wide salvation and that peoples of all nations will believe in Christ (St. Athanasius).

The Lord is kíng, let éarth rejóice, *
let áll the cóastlands be glád.
Clóud and dárkness are his ráiment; *
his thróne, jústice and ríght.

A fíre prepáres his páth; *
it búrns up his fóes on every síde.
His líghtnings líght up the wórld, *
the éarth trémbles at the síght.

The móuntains mélt like wáx *
before the Lórd of áll the éarth.
The skíes procláim his jústice; *
all péoples sée his glóry.

Let thóse who serve ídols be ashámed, †
those who bóast of their wórthless góds. *
All you spírits, wórship hím.

Zíon héars and is glád; †
the péople of Júdah rejóice *
becáuse of your júdgments, O Lórd.

For yóu indéed are the Lórd, †
most hígh above áll the éarth, *
exálted far abóve all spírits.

The Lórd loves thóse who hate évil: †
he gúards the sóuls of his sáints; *
he séts them frée from the wícked.

Líght shines fórth for the júst *
and jóy for the úpright of héart.
Rejóice, you júst, in the Lórd; *
give glóry to his hóly náme.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, *
and will be for ever. Amen.

Antiphon

A light has dawned for the just; joy has come to the upright of heart, alleluia.

Antiphon 3

The Lord has made known his saving power, alleluia.

Psalm 98

The Lord triumphs in his judgment

This psalm tells of the Lord's first coming and that people of all nations will believe in him (Saint Athanasius).

Síng a new sóng to the Lórd *
for hé has worked wónders.
His ríght hand and his hóly árm *
have bróught salvátion.

The Lórd has made knówn his salvátion; *
has shown his jústice to the nátions.
He has remémbered his trúth and lóve *
for the hóuse of Ísrael.

All the énds of the éarth have séen *
the salvátion of our Gód.
Shóut to the Lórd, all the éarth, *
ríng out your jóy.

Sing psálms to the Lórd with the hárp *
with the sóund of músic.
With trúmpets and the sóund of the hórn *
acclaim the Kíng, the Lórd.

Let the séa and all withín it thúnder; *
the wórld, and all its péoples.
Let the rívers cláp their hánds *
and the hílls ring out their jóy.

Rejóice at the présence of the Lórd, *
for he comes to rúle the éarth.
He will rúle the wórld with jústice *
and the péoples with fáirness.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, *
and will be for ever. Amen.

Antiphon

The Lord has made known his saving power, alleluia.

Verse

In these last days God has spoken to us through his Son.

— The Word through whom he made all things.

Sit

Readings

First reading

From the letter to the Colossians

2:4–15

Our faith in Christ

I tell you all this so that no one may delude you with specious arguments. I may be absent in body but I am with you in spirit, happy to see good order among you and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

Continue, therefore, to live in Christ Jesus the Lord, in the spirit in which you received him. Be rooted in him and built up in him, growing ever stronger in faith, as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude.

See to it that no one deceives you through any empty, seductive philosophy that follows mere human traditions, a philosophy based on cosmic powers rather than on Christ.

In Christ the fullness of deity resides in bodily form. Yours is a

share of this fullness, in him who is the head of every principality and power.

You were also circumcised in him, not with the circumcision administered by hand but with Christ's circumcision which strips off the carnal body completely. In baptism you were not only buried with him but also raised to life with him because you believed in the power of God who raised him from the dead. Even when you were dead in sin and your flesh was uncircumcised, God gave you new life in company with Christ. He pardoned all our sins.

He canceled the bond that stood against us with all its claims, snatching it up and nailing it to the cross. Thus did God disarm the principalities and powers. He made a public show of them and, leading them off captive, triumphed in the person of Christ.

Responsory

Colossians 2:9, 10, 12

The fullness of divinity lives in Christ's humanity;

— he is the head over every power and authority.

In baptism we were buried with Christ, and in baptism we have risen to a new life with him through our faith in the power of God.

— He is the head over every power and authority.

Second reading

From a sermon by Saint Leo the Great, pope

(Sermo 6 in Nativitate Domini, 2-3, 5: PL 54, 213-216)

The birthday of the Lord is the birthday of peace!

Although the state of infancy, which the majesty of the Son of God did not disdain to assume, developed with the passage of time into maturity of manhood, and although after the triumph of the passion and the resurrection all his lowly acts undertaken on our behalf belong to the past, nevertheless today's feast of Christmas renews for us the sacred beginning of Jesus' life, his birth from the Virgin Mary. In the very act in which we are reverencing the birth of our Savior, we are also celebrating our own new birth. For the birth of Christ is the origin of the Christian people; and the birth-

day of the head is also the birthday of the body.

Though each and every individual occupies a definite place in this body to which he has been called, and though all the progeny of the church is differentiated and marked with the passage of time, nevertheless as the whole community of the faithful, once begotten in the baptismal font, was crucified with Christ in the passion, raised up with him in the resurrection and at the ascension placed at the right hand of the Father, so too it is born with him in this Nativity, which we are celebrating today.

For every believer regenerated in Christ, no matter in what part of the whole world he may be, breaks with that ancient way of life that derives from original sin, and by rebirth is transformed into a new man. Henceforth he is reckoned to be of the stock, not of his earthly father, but of Christ, who became Son of Man precisely that men could become sons of God; for unless in humility he had come down to us, none of us by our own merits could ever go up to him.

Therefore the greatness of the gift which he has bestowed on us demands an appreciation proportioned to its excellence; for blessed Paul the Apostle truly teaches: *We have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.* The only way that he can be worthily honored by us is by the presentation to him of that which he has already given to us.

But what can we find in the treasure of the Lord's bounty more in keeping with the glory of this feast than that peace which was first announced by the angelic choir on the day of his birth? For that peace, from which the sons of God spring, sustains love and mothers unity; it refreshes the blessed and shelters eternity; its characteristic function and special blessing is to join to God those whom it separates from this world.

Therefore, may those *who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God,* offer to the Father their harmony as sons united in peace; and may all those whom he has adopted as his members meet in the firstborn of the new creation

who came not to do his own will but the will of the one who sent him; for the grace of the Father has adopted as heirs neither the contentious nor the dissident, but those who are one in thought and love. The hearts and minds of those who have been reformed according to one and the same image should be in harmony with one another.

The birthday of the Lord is the birthday of peace, as Paul the Apostle says: *For he is our peace, who has made us both one;* for whether we be Jew or Gentile, *through him we have access in one Spirit to the Father.*

Responsory

Ephesians 2:13-14, 17

You were once far away from God, but now you have been brought very near through the blood of Christ.

— He himself is our peace who has made us all one.

Christ came to proclaim the good news to us: peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near.

— He himself is our peace who has made us all one.

Stand

Te Deum

You are God: we praise you;
You are the Lord: we acclaim you;
You are the eternal Father:
All creation worships you.

To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:
Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

The glorious company of apostles praise you.
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

Throughout the world the holy Church acclaims you:

Father, of majesty unbounded,
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the King of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.

When you became man to set us free
you did not spurn the Virgin's womb.

You overcame the sting of death,
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

You are seated at God's right hand in glory.
We believe that you will come, and be our judge.

Come then, Lord, and help your people,
bought with the price of your own blood,
and bring us with your saints
to glory everlasting.

Concluding Prayer

Let us pray.

Ever-living God,
in the birth of your Son
our religion has its origin and its perfect fulfillment.
Help us to share in the life of Christ
for he is the salvation of mankind,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

— Amen.

Acclamation

Let us praise the Lord.

— And give him thanks.

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