

Liturgy of the Hours
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

December 7, 2026

{ Memorial – Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor }



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

O Word proceeding from on high,
light coming from the Father's light,
by birth you came to save the world
when time's appointed course had run.

Now come and fill our hearts with light,
consume them in your love's bright heat,
and when the herald's cry is heard,
may all deceit be put to flight.

So when at length you come as Judge
to probe our hearts in thought and deed,
to weigh the guilt for hidden sin
and crown the just for deeds well done,

Let not the nature of our sins
detain us in the evil throng,
but let us with the blessed share
the life of heaven evermore.

To you, O Christ, most loving King,
and to the Father, glory be,
one with the Spirit Paraclete,
from age to age for evermore. Amen.

*Metrical hymn, melody: Breslau, 8 8 8 8; first appeared in As Hymnodus Sacer,
Leipzig, 1625, adapted by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, 1809–1847*

Plainsong, mode II, melody 38; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983, Text: Verbum
supernum prodiens, a Patre lumen exiens, 10th c.*

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Sit or stand

PSALMODY

Antiphon 1

Bow down and hear me, Lord; come to my rescue.

Psalm 31:1-17, 20-25

A troubled person's confident appeal to God

Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit (Luke 23:46).

I

In yóu, O Lórd, I take réfuge. *

Let me néver be pút to sháme.

In your jústice, sét me frée, *

héar me and spéedily réscue me.

Be a róck of réfuge fór me, *

a míghty stróngthold to sáve me,

for yóu are my róck, my stróngthold. *

For your náme's sake, léad me and gúide me.

Reléase me from the snáres they have hídden *

for yóu are my réfuge, Lórd.

Into your hánds I comménd my spírit. *

It is yóu who will redéem me, Lórd.

O Gód of trúth, you detést *

those who wórship fálse and empty góds.

As for mé, I trúst in the Lórd: *

let me be glád and rejóice in your lóve.

Yóu have séen my afflíction *

and taken héed of my sóul's distréss,

have not hánded me óver to the énemy, *

but sét my féet at lárge.

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

Bow down and hear me, Lord; come to my rescue.

Antiphon 2

Lord, let the light of your countenance shine on your servant.

II

Have mércy on mé, O Lórd, *
for Í am in distréss.
Téars have wásted my éyes, *
my thróat and my héart.

For my lífe is spént with sórrow *
and my yéars with síghs.
Afflíction has bróken down my stréngth *
and my bónes waste áwáy.

In the fáce of áll my fóes *
Í am a repróach,
an óbject of scórn to my néighbors *
and of féar to my friends.

Thóse who sée me in the stréet *
run fár áwáy from me.
Í am like a déad man, forgóttén, *
like a thíngh thrown áwáy.

I have héárd the slándér of the crówd, *
féar is all aróund me,
as they plót togéther agáinst me, *
as they plán to take my lífe.

But as for mé, I trust in yóu, Lórd, *
I say: “Yóu are my Gód.
My lífe is in your hánds, delíver me *

from the hánds of those who háte me.

Let your fáce shíne on your sérvant. *
Sáve me in your lóve.”

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

Lord, let the light of your countenance shine on your servant.

Antiphon 3

Blessed be the Lord, for he has poured out his mercy upon me.

III

How gréat is the góodness, Lórd, *
that you kéepe for those who féar you,
that you shów to thóse who trúst you *
in the síght of mén.

You híde them in the shéltér of your présence *
from the plótting of mén:
you kéepe them sáfe within your tént *
from dispúting tóngues.

Bléssed be the Lórd who has shówn me †
the wónders of his lóve *
in a fórtified cíty.

“I am fár remóved from your síght,” *
I sáid in my alárm.
Yet you héard the vóice of my pléa *
when I cried for hélp.

Lóve the Lórd, all you sáints. *
He guárds his fáithful
but the Lórd will repáy to the fúll *
those who áct with príde.

Be stróng, let your héart take cóurage, *

all who hópe in the Lórd.

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

Blessed be the Lord, for he has poured out his mercy upon me.

VERSE

Lord, show us your mercy and love.

— And grant us your salvation.

Sit

READINGS

First reading

From the book of the prophet Isaiah

24:1-18

The coming of the Lord on that day

Lo, the Lord empties the land and lays it waste;
he turns it upside down,
scattering its inhabitants:

Layman and priest alike,
servant and master,

The maid as her mistress,
the buyer as the seller,

The lender as the borrower,
the creditor as the debtor.

The earth is utterly laid waste, utterly stripped,
for the Lord has decreed this thing.

The earth mourns and fades,
the world languishes and fades;
both heaven and earth languish.

The earth is polluted because of its inhabitants,
who have transgressed laws, violated statutes,

broken the ancient covenant.
Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants pay for their guilt;
Therefore they who dwell on earth turn pale,
and few men are left.

The wine mourns, the vine languishes,
all the merry-hearted groan.
Stilled are the cheerful timbrels,
ended the shouts of the jubilant,
stilled is the cheerful harp.
They cannot sing and drink wine;
strong drink is bitter to those who partake of it.

Broken down is the city of chaos,
shut against entry, every house.
In the streets they cry out for lack of wine;
all joy has disappeared
and cheer has left the land.
In the city nothing remains but ruin;
its gates are battered and desolate.
Thus it is within the land,
and among the peoples,
As with an olive tree after it is beaten,
as with a gleaning when the vintage is done.

These lift up their voice in acclaim;
from the sea they proclaim the majesty of the Lord:
“For this, in the coastlands,
give glory to the Lord!
In the coastlands of the sea,
to the name of the Lord, the God of Israel!”
From the end of the earth we hear songs:
“Splendor to the Just One!”

But I said, “I am wasted, wasted away.
Woe is me! The traitors betray:
with treachery have the traitors betrayed!
Terror, pit, and trap
are upon you, inhabitant of the earth;

He who flees at the sound of terror
will fall into the pit;
He who climbs out of the pit
will be caught in the trap.
For the windows on high will be opened
and the foundations of the earth will shake.

Responsory

Isaiah 24:14, 15; Psalm 96:1

Singing in praise they lift their voices:

— Let the Lord be glorified in your teachings.

Sing to the Lord a new song;

— let all the earth sing to the Lord

Second reading

From a letter by Saint Ambrose, bishop

(Epist. 2, 1-2. 4-5. 7: PL [edit. 1845,] 879, 881)

By the grace of your words win over your people

You have entered upon the office of bishop. Sitting at the helm of the Church, you pilot the ship against the waves. Take firm hold of the rudder of faith so that the severe storms of this world cannot disturb you. The sea is mighty and vast, but do not be afraid, for as Scripture says: *he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters.*

The Church of the Lord is built upon the rock of the apostles among so many dangers in the world; it therefore remains unmoved. The Church's foundation is unshakeable and firm against the assaults of the raging sea. Waves lash at the Church but do not shatter it. Although the elements of this world constantly beat upon the Church with crashing sounds, the Church possesses the safest harbor of salvation for all in distress. Although the Church is tossed about on the sea, it rides easily on rivers, especially those rivers that Scripture speaks of: *The rivers have lifted up their voice.* These are the rivers flowing from the heart of the man who is given drink by Christ and who receives from the Spirit of God. When

these rivers overflow with the grace of the Spirit, they lift up their voice.

There is also a stream which flows down on God's saints like a torrent. There is also a rushing river giving joy to the heart that is at peace and makes for peace. Whoever has received from the fullness of this river, like John the Evangelist, like Peter and Paul, lifts up his voice. Just as the apostles lifted up their voices and preached the Gospel throughout the world, so those who drink these waters begin to preach the good news of the Lord Jesus.

Drink, then, from Christ, so that your voice may also be heard. Store up in your mind the water that is Christ, the water that praises the Lord. Store up water from many sources, the water that rains down from the clouds of prophecy.

Whoever gathers water from the mountains and leads it to himself or draws it from springs, is himself a source of dew like the clouds. Fill your soul, then, with this water, so that your land may not be dry, but watered by your own springs.

He who reads much and understands much, receives his fill. He who is full, refreshes others. So Scripture says: *If the clouds are full, they will pour rain upon the earth.*

Therefore, let your words be rivers, clean and limpid, so that in your exhortations you may charm the ears of your people. And by the grace of your words win them over to follow your leadership. Let your sermons be full of understanding. Solomon says: *The weapons of the understanding are the lips of the wise*; and in another place he says: *Let your lips be bound with wisdom*. That is, let the meaning of your words shine forth, let understanding blaze out. See that your addresses and expositions do not need to invoke the authority of others, but let your words be their own defense. Let no word escape your lips in vain or be uttered without depth of meaning.

Responsory

2 Timothy 4:2; Sirach 48:4, 8

Proclaim the message, in season and out of season;

— refute falsehood, correct error, call to obedience.

Who is able to boast as you can? You have anointed kings as champions of righteousness.

— Refute falsehood, correct error, call to obedience.

Stand

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Lord,
you made Saint Ambrose
an outstanding teacher of the Catholic faith
and gave him the courage of an apostle.
Raise up in your Church more leaders after your own heart,
to guide us with courage and wisdom.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
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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