Liturgy of the Hours

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Office of Readings

December 29, 2026

{ Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas }



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

The Lord of power and might is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Psalm 46

God our refuge and strength

He shall be called Emmanuel, which means: God-with-us (Matthew 1:23).

Gód is for ús a réfuge and stréngth, *
a hélper close at hánd, in tíme of distréss:
so wé shall not féar though the éarth should róck, *
though the móuntains fáll into the dépths of the séa,
even thóugh its wáters ráge and fóam, *
even thóugh the móuntains be sháken by its wáves.

The Lórd of hósts is wíth us: *
the Gód of Jácob is our strónghold.

The wáters of a ríver give jóy to God's cíty, *
the hóly pláce where the Móst High dwélls.
Gód is withín, it cánnot be sháken; *
Gód will hélp it at the dáwning of the dáy.
Nátions are in túmult, kíngdoms are sháken: *
he lífts his vóice, the éarth shrinks awáy.

The Lórd of hósts is wíth us: *
the Gód of Jácob is our strónghold.

Cóme, consíder the wórks of the Lórd, *
the redóubtable déeds he has dóne on the éarth.
He puts an énd to wárs over áll the éarth; †
the bów he bréaks, the spéar he snáps. *
He búrns the shíelds with fíre.
"Be stíll and knów that Í am Gód, *
supréme among the nátions, supréme on the éarth!"

The Lórd of hósts is wíth us: *
the Gód of Jácob is our strónghold.

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 of power and might is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Antiphon 2

Fullness of peace will dawn on the day of the Lord, and he will be our King.

Psalm 72

The Messiah's royal power

Opening their treasures, they offered him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh (Mat-

thew 2:11).

I

O Gód, give your júdgment to the kíng, *
to a kíng's son your jústice,
that he may júdge your péople in jústice *
and your póor in right júdgment.

May the móuntains bring forth péace for the péople *
and the hílls, jústice.
May he defénd the póor of the péople †
and save the chíldren of the néedy *
and crúsh the oppréssor.

He shall endúre like the sún and the móon *
from áge to áge.
He shall descénd like ráin on the méadow, *
like ráindrops on the éarth.

In his dáys jústice shall flóurish *
and péace till the móon fails.
He shall rúle from séa to séa, *
from the Great Ríver to earth's bóunds.

Befóre him his énemies shall fáll, *
his fóes lick the dúst.
The kíngs of Társhish and the séa coasts *
shall páy him tríbute.

The kíngs of Shéba and Séba *
shall bríng him gífts.
Before hím all kíngs shall fall próstrate, *
all nátions shall sérve him.

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

Fullness of peace will dawn on the day of the Lord, and he will be our King.

Antiphon 3

The Lord himself will come to save the poor.

II

For he shall sáve the póor when they crý *
and the néedy who are hélpless.
Hé will have píty on the wéak *
and save the líves of the póor.

From oppréssion he will réscue their líves, *
to hím their blood is déar.
Lóng may he líve, *
may the góld of Shéba be gíven him.
They shall práy for hím without céasing *
and bléss him all the dáy.

May córn be abúndant in the lánd †
to the péaks of the móuntains. *
May its frúit rústle like Lébanon;
may men flóurish in the cíties *
like gráss on the éarth.

May his náme be bléssed for éver *
and endúre like the sún.
Every tríbe shall be bléssed in hím, *
all nátions bless his náme.

Bléssed be the Lórd, God of Ísrael, †
who alóne works wónders, *
ever bléssed his glórious náme.

Let his glóry fill the éarth. *
Amén! Amén!

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 himself will come to save the poor.

Verse

When the shepherds saw the child.

— They understood what the angel had said of him.

Sit

Readings

First reading

The beginning of the letter of the apostle Paul to the Colossians

1:1-14

Thanksgiving and intercession

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the holy ones at Colossae, faithful brothers in Christ. May God our Father give you grace and peace.

We always give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in our prayers for you because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you bear toward all the saints—moved as you are by the hope held in store for you in heaven. You heard of this hope through the message of truth, the gospel, which has come to you, has borne fruit, and has continued to grow in your midst, as it has everywhere in the world. This has been the case from the day you first heard it and comprehended God's gracious intention through the instructions of Epaphras, our dear fellow slave, who represents us as a faithful minister of Christ. He it was who told us of your love in the Spirit.

Ever since we heard this we have been praying for you unceasingly and asking that you may attain full knowledge of his will through perfect wisdom and spiritual insight. Then you will lead a life worthy of the Lord and pleasing to him in every way. You will multiply good works of every sort and grow in the knowledge of God. By the might of his glory you will be endowed with the strength needed to stand fast, even to endure joyfully whatever may come, giving thanks to the Father for having made you worthy to share the lot of the saints in light. He rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son. Through him we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.

Responsory

Colossians 1:12, 13; James 1:17

Let us give thanks to God our Father,

— because he has rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son.

Every good and perfect gift comes down to us from above, from the Father of light.

— Because he has rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son.

Second reading

From a sermon by Saint Bernard, abbot

(Sermo 1 in Epiphania Domini, 1-2: PL 133, 141-143)

In the fullness of time the fullness of divinity appeared

The goodness and humanity of God our Savior have appeared in our midst. We thank God for the many consolations he has given us during this sad exile of our pilgrimage here on earth. Before the Son of God became man his goodness was hidden, for God's mercy is eternal, but how could such goodness be recognized? It was promised, but it was not experienced, and as a result few believed in it. *Often and in many ways the Lord used to speak through the prophets.* Among other things, God said: *I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction.* But what did men respond, thinking thoughts of affliction and knowing nothing of peace? They said: *Peace, peace, there is no peace.* This response made the *angels of peace weep bitterly,* saying: *Lord, who has believed our message?* But now men believe because they see with their own eyes, and because *God's testimony has now become even more credible.* He has gone so far as to *pitch his tent in the sun* so even the dimmest eyes see him.

Notice that peace is not promised but sent to us; it is no longer deferred, it is given; peace is not prophesied but achieved. It is as if God the Father sent upon the earth a purse full of his mercy. This purse was burst open during the Lord's passion to pour forth its hidden contents—the price of our redemption. It was only a small purse, but it was very full. As the Scriptures tell us: *A little child has*

been given to us, but in him dwells all the fullness of the divine nature. The fullness of time brought with it the fullness of divinity. God's Son came in the flesh so that mortal men could see and recognize God's kindness. When God reveals his humanity, his goodness cannot possibly remain hidden. To show his kindness what more could he do beyond taking my human form? My humanity, I say, not Adam's—that is, not such as he had before his fall.

How could he have shown his mercy more clearly than by taking on himself our condition? For our sake the Word of God became as grass. What better proof could he have given of his love? Scripture says: *Lord, what is man that you are mindful of him; why does your heart go out to him?* The incarnation teaches us how much God cares for us and what he thinks and feels about us. We should stop thinking of our own sufferings and remember what he has suffered. Let us think of all the Lord has done for us, and then we shall realize how his goodness appears through his humanity. The lesser he became through his human nature the greater was his goodness; the more he lowered himself for me, the dearer he is to me. *The goodness and humanity of God our Savior have appeared,* says the Apostle.

Truly great and manifest are the goodness and humanity of God. He has given us a most wonderful proof of his goodness by adding humanity to his own divine nature.

Responsory

Ephesians 1:5, Romans 8:29

From all eternity, God destined us in Jesus Christ to be his children by adoption,

— for it was his loving purpose to show in us the glory of his grace.

Long ago he knew us and chose to make us in the likeness of his own Son.

— For it was his loving purpose to show in us the glory of his grace.

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.

All-powerful and unseen God,

the coming of your light into our world
has made the darkness vanish.
Teach us to proclaim the birth of your Son Jesus Christ,
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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