

*Liturgy of the Hours*  
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

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April 21, 2024

{ Fourth Sunday of Easter }



*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

This is the day, true day of God,  
serene with clear and holy light,  
on which the sacred blood has washed  
both shame and guilt from all the world.

In this the lost regain their faith,  
the blind receive the gift of light;  
can one remain in anxious fear  
who sees forgiveness for the thief?

The angels wonder at this work,  
they see the body wracked with pain,  
they see the thief draw near to Christ  
to pluck the fruit of blessed life.

How wondrous is the mystery:  
that flesh should cleanse the sins of flesh,  
to take away the guilt of all  
and wash the world of foul decay.

What could be more sublime than this:  
that guilt should seek the gift of grace,  
that charity should cast out fear,  
and death should render life renewed?

O Jesus, be for mind and heart  
our everlasting paschal joy  
and gather us, reborn by grace,  
to share your triumphs evermore.

To you, Lord Jesus, glory be,

who shine in vict'ry over death,  
with God the Father, ever blest,  
and loving Spirit, ever one. Amen.

*Metrical hymn, melody: EISENACH, 8 8 8 8; Johann Hermann Schein, 1586–1630*

*Plainsong, mode III, melody 56; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983\*, Text: Hic est dies  
verus Dei, St. Ambrose, 340–397*

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*Sit or stand*

## PSALMODY

### *Antiphon 1*

Alleluia, the stone was rolled back from the entrance to the tomb,  
alleluia.

### *Psalm 24*

*The Lord's entry into his temple*

*Christ opened heaven for us in the manhood he assumed (Saint Irenaeus).*

The Lórd's is the éarth and its fúllness, \*  
the wórld and áll its péoples.  
It is hé who sét it on the séas; \*  
on the wáters he máde it firm.

Who shall clímb the móuntain of the Lórd? \*  
Who shall stánd in his hólý pláce?  
The mán with clean hánds and pure héart, †  
who desíres not wórtlless thínghs, \*  
who has not swórn so as to decéive his néíghbor.

He shall recéive bléssings from the Lórd \*  
and rewárd from the Gód who sáves him.  
Súch are the mén who séek him, \*  
seek the fáce of the Gód of Jácob.

O gátes, lift hígh your héads; †  
grow hígher, áncient dóors. \*  
Let him énter, the kíng of glóry!

Whó is the kíng of glóry? †  
The Lórd, the míghty, the váliant, \*  
the Lórd, the váliant in wár.

O gátes, lift hígh your héads; †  
grow hígher, áncient dóors. \*  
Let him énter, the kíng of glóry!

Who is hé, the kíng of glóry? †  
Hé, the Lórd of ármies, \*  
hé is the kíng of glóry.

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*

Alleluia, the stone was rolled back from the entrance to the tomb,  
alleluia.

### *Antiphon 2*

Alleluia, woman, who is it you are looking for? Why do you seek the  
living among the dead? alleluia.

### *Psalm 66*

### *Eucharistic hymn*

*The Lord is risen and all people have been brought by him to the Father (Hesychius).*

### *I*

Cry out with jóy to Gód, all the éarth, \*  
O síng to the glóry of his náme.  
O rénder him glórious práise. \*  
Say to Gód: “How treméndous your déeds!  
Be cáuse of the gréatness of your stréngth \*  
your énemies críngé befóre you.  
Befóre you all the éarth shall bów; \*

shall síng to you, síng to your náme!”

Come and sée the wórks of Gód, \*  
treméndous his déeds among mén.  
He túrned the séa into dry lánd, \*  
they pássed through the ríver dry-shód.

Let our jóy then bé in hím; \*  
he rúles for éver by his míght.  
His éyes keep wáтч over the nátions; \*  
let rébels not ríse agáinst him.

O péoples, bléss our Gód, \*  
let the vóice of his práise resóund,  
of the Gód who gave life to our sóuls \*  
and képt our féet from stúmbing.

For yóu, O Gód, have tésted us, \*  
you have tríed us as sílver is tríed:  
you léd us, Gód, into the snáre; \*  
you láid a heavy búrden on our bácks.

You lét men ríde over our héads; †  
we wént through fire and through wáter \*  
but thén you bróught us relíef.

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*

Alleluia, woman, who is it you are looking for? Why do you seek the living among the dead? alleluia.

### *Antiphon 3*

Alleluia, do not weep, Mary; the Lord has risen from the dead, alleluia.

## *II*

Burnt óffering I bríng to your hóuse; \*  
to yóu I will páy my vóws,

the vóws which my líps have úttered,\*  
which my móuth spóke in my distréss.

I will óffer burnt ófferings of fátlings †  
with the smóke of búrning ráms.\*

I will óffer búllocks and góats.

Come and héar, áll who fear Gód.\*

I will téll what he díd for my sóul:  
to hím I críed alóud,\*  
with high práise réady on my tóngue.

If there had béen évil in my héart,\*  
the Lórd would nót have lístened.

But trúly Gód has lístened; \*  
he has héeded the vóice of my práyer.

Blessed be Gód who díd nó reject my práyer \*  
nor withhóld his lóve from mé.

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*

Alleluia, do not weep, Mary; the Lord has risen from the dead,  
alleluia.

### VERSE

My whole body rejoices, alleluia.

— With all my strength I will praise my God, alleluia.

*Sit*

### READINGS

#### *First reading*

From the book of Revelation

*The sign of the woman*

A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. Because she was with child, she wailed aloud in pain as she labored to give birth. Then another sign appeared in the sky: it was a huge dragon, flaming red, with seven heads and ten horns; on his heads were seven diadems. His tail swept a third of the stars from the sky and hurled them down to the earth.

Then the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth, ready to devour her child when it should be born. She gave birth to a son—a boy destined to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and to his throne. The woman herself fled into the desert, where a special place had been prepared for her by God; there she was taken care of for twelve hundred and sixty days.

Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. Although the dragon and his angels fought back, they were overpowered and lost their place in heaven. The huge dragon, the ancient serpent known as the devil or Satan, the seducer of the whole world, was driven out; he was hurled down to earth and his minions with him.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

“Now have salvation and power come,  
the reign of our God and the authority of his Anointed One.  
For the accuser of our brothers is cast out,  
who night and day accused them before our God.  
They defeated him by the blood of the Lamb  
and by the word of their testimony;  
love for life did not deter them from death.  
So rejoice, you heavens,  
and you that dwell therein!  
But woe to you, earth and sea,  
for the devil has come down upon you!  
His fury knows no limits,

for he knows his time is short.”

When the dragon saw that he had been cast down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the boy. But the woman was given the wings of a gigantic eagle so that she could fly off to her place in the desert, where, far from the serpent, she could be taken care of for a year and for two and a half years more.

The serpent, however, spewed a torrent of water out of his mouth to search out the woman and sweep her away. The earth then came to the woman’s rescue by opening its mouth and swallowing the flood which the dragon spewed out of his mouth. Enraged at her escape, the dragon went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep God’s commandments and give witness to Jesus. He took up his position by the shore of the sea.

*Responsory*

*Revelation 12:11, 12; 2 Maccabees 7:36*

Through the blood of the Lamb and the witness of their martyrdom, they have conquered. Their love for life did not deter them from death.

— So, let the heavens rejoice and all who dwell therein, alleluia.

You have suffered for a little while, but under God’s covenant you have gained eternal life.

— So, let the heavens rejoice and all who dwell therein, alleluia.

*Second reading*

From a homily on the Gospels by Saint Gregory the Great, pope

*(Hom. 14, 3-6: PL 76, 1129-1130)*

*Christ the good shepherd*

*I am the good shepherd. I know my own*—by which I mean, I love them—and *my own know me*. In plain words: those who love me are willing to follow me, for anyone who does not love the truth has not yet come to know it.

My dear brethren, you have heard the test we pastors have to undergo. Turn now to consider how these words of our Lord imply

a test for yourselves also. Ask yourselves whether you belong to his flock, whether you know him, whether the light of his truth shines in your minds. I assure you that it is not by faith that you will come to know him, but by love; not by mere conviction, but by action. John the evangelist is my authority for this statement. He tells us that *anyone who claims to know God without keeping his commandments is a liar*.

Consequently, the Lord immediately adds: *As the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep*. Clearly he means that laying down his life for his sheep gives evidence of his knowledge of the Father and the Father's knowledge of him. In other words, by the love with which he dies for his sheep he shows how greatly he loves his Father.

Again he says: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them; they follow me, and I give them eternal life*. Shortly before this he had declared: *If anyone enters the sheepfold through me he shall be saved; he shall go freely in and out and shall find good pasture*. He will enter into a life of faith; from faith he will go out to vision, from belief to contemplation, and will graze in the good pastures of everlasting life.

So our Lord's sheep will finally reach their grazing ground where all who follow him in simplicity of heart will feed on the green pastures of eternity. These pastures are the spiritual joys of heaven. There the elect look upon the face of God with unclouded vision and feast at the banquet of life for ever more.

Beloved brothers, let us set out for these pastures where we shall keep joyful festival with so many of our fellow citizens. May the thought of their happiness urge us on! Let us stir up our hearts, rekindle our faith, and long eagerly for what heaven has in store for us. To love thus is to be already on our way. No matter what obstacles we encounter, we must not allow them to turn us aside from the joy of that heavenly feast. Anyone who is determined to reach his destination is not deterred by the roughness of the road that leads to it. Nor must we allow the charm of success to seduce us, or we shall be like a foolish traveler who is so distracted by the pleasant meadows through which he is passing that he forgets where he is going.

*Responsory*

*See John 10:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 5:7*

The Good Shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep has risen from the dead.

— For the sake of the flock he willingly suffered death, alleluia.

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.

— For the sake of the flock he willingly suffered death, alleluia.

*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.

Almighty and ever-living God,  
give us new strength  
from the courage of Christ our shepherd,  
and lead us to join the saints in heaven,  
where he 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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