Liturgy of the Hours

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Morning Prayer

December 28, 2026

{ Feast – Holy Innocents, Martyrs }

Liturgy of the Hours
EBREVIARY

Invitatory

Stand and make sign of cross on lips with thumb

Lord, open my lips.

— And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

Psalm 95

A call to praise God

Encourage each other daily while it is still today (Hebrews 3:13).

Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for him.

— Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for him.

Come, let us sing to the Lord
and shout with joy to the Rock who saves us.
Let us approach him with praise and thanksgiving
and sing joyful songs to the Lord.

— Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for him.

The Lord is God, the mighty God,
the great king over all the gods.
He holds in his hands the depths of the earth
and the highest mountains as well.
He made the sea; it belongs to him,
the dry land, too, for it was formed by his hands.

— Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for him.

Come, then, let us bow down and worship,
bending the knee before the Lord, our maker.
For he is our God and we are his people,
the flock he shepherds.

— Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for him.

Today, listen to the voice of the Lord:
Do not grow stubborn, as your fathers did
in the wilderness,
when at Meriba and Massah
they challenged me and provoked me,
Although they had seen all of my works.

— Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for him.

Forty years I endured that generation.
I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray
and they do not know my ways."
So I swore in my anger,
"They shall not enter into my rest."

— Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for 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.

— Come, let us worship the newborn Christ who crowns with joy these children who died for him.

Morning Prayer

Hymn

The troubled tyrant hears with dread
that Christ, the King of kings, has come
to rule the house of Israel
and take his place on David's throne.

With frantic rage he cries aloud:
My rival comes to drive me out.
Now go, my guard, take up your swords
and make those cradles flow with blood.

What profit comes from such a sin?

What gain for Herod from this crime?
In safety Christ is borne away,
alone among so many slain.

Hail, flow'rs of martyrs, fresh and young,
who at the very dawn of life
were crushed by Christ's relentless foe,
like budding roses in a gale.

O tender lambs of sacrifice,
first victims from the flock of Christ,
beneath that altar, innocent,
with palm and crown you freely play.

To you, Lord Jesus, glory be,
the Virgin Mother's newborn Son,
with God the Father, ever blest,
and loving Spirit, ever one. Amen.

Metrical hymn, melody: Deus tuorum militum, 8 8 8 8; from the Grenoble Antiphoner, 1753

Plainsong, mode VI, melody 89; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983, Text: Audit tyrannus anxius, Prudentius, ca. 348–405*

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Sit or stand

Psalmody

Antiphon 1

Clothed in white robes, they will walk with me, says the Lord, for they are worthy.

Psalm 63:2–9

A soul thirsting for God

Whoever has left the darkness of sin yearns for God.

O Gód, you are my Gód, for you I lóng; *
for yóu my sóul is thírsting.
My bódy pínes for yóu *
like a drý, weary lánd without wáter.
So I gáze on yóu in the sánctuary *
to sée your stréngth and your glóry.

For your lóve is bétter than lífe, *
my líps will spéak your práise.
So I will bléss you áll my lífe, *
in your náme I will líft up my hánds.
My sóul shall be fílled as with a bánquet, *
my móuth shall práise you with jóy.

On my béd I remémber yóu. *
On yóu I múse through the níght
for yóu have béen my hélp; *
in the shádow of your wíngs I rejóice.
My sóul clíngs to yóu; *
your ríght hand hólds me fást.

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

Clothed in white robes, they will walk with me, says the Lord, for they are worthy.

Antiphon 2

These children cry out their praises to the Lord; by their death they have proclaimed what they could not preach with their infant voices.

Canticle – Daniel 3:57–88, 56

Let all creatures praise the Lord

All you servants of the Lord, sing praise to him (Revelation 19:5).

Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord. *
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Angels of the Lord, bless the Lord. *
You heavens, bless the Lord.
All you waters above the heavens, bless the Lord. *
All you hosts of the Lord, bless the Lord.
Sun and moon, bless the Lord. *
Stars of heaven, bless the Lord.

Every shower and dew, bless the Lord. *
All you winds, bless the Lord.
Fire and heat, bless the Lord. *
Cold and chill, bless the Lord.
Dew and rain, bless the Lord. *
Frost and chill, bless the Lord.
Ice and snow, bless the Lord. *
Nights and days, bless the Lord.
Light and darkness, bless the Lord. *
Lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord.

Let the earth bless the Lord. *
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Mountains and hills, bless the Lord. *
Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord.
You springs, bless the Lord. *
Seas and rivers, bless the Lord.
You dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord. *
All you birds of the air, bless the Lord.
All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord. *
You sons of men, bless the Lord.

O Israel, bless the Lord. *
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord. *
Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord.

Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord. *
Holy men of humble heart, bless the Lord.
Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, bless the Lord. *
Praise and exalt him above all forever.

Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *
Let us praise and exalt him above all forever.
Blessed are you, Lord, in the firmament of heaven. *
Praiseworthy and glorious and exalted above all forever.

Antiphon

These children cry out their praises to the Lord; by their death they have proclaimed what they could not preach with their infant voices.

Antiphon 3

From the mouths of children and babies at the breast you have found praise to foil your enemies.

Psalm 149

The joy of God's holy people

Let the sons of the Church, the children of the new people, rejoice in Christ, their King (Hesychius).

Síng a new sóng to the Lórd, *
his práise in the assémbly of the fáithful.
Let Ísrael rejóice in its máker, *
let Zíon's sons exúlt in their kíng.
Let them práise his náme with dáncing *
and make músic with tímbrel and hárp.

For the Lórd takes delíght in his péople. *
He crówns the póor with salvátion.
Let the fáithful rejóice in their glóry, *
shout for jóy and táke their rést.
Let the práise of Gód be on their líps *
and a twó-edged swórd in their hánd,

to déal out véngeance to the nátions *
and púnishment on áll the péoples;
to bínd their kíngs in cháins *

and their nóbles in féttters of íron;
to cárry out the séntence pre-ordáined; *
this hónor is for áll his fáithful.

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

From the mouths of children and babies at the breast you have found praise to foil your enemies.

Sit

Reading

Jeremiah 31:15

In Ramah is heard the sound of moaning,
of bitter weeping!
Rachel mourns her children,
she refuses to be consoled
because her children are no more.

Responsory

The just are the friends of God. They live with him for ever.

— The just are the friends of God. They live with him for ever.

God himself is their reward.

— They live with him for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

— The just are the friends of God. They live with him for ever.

Stand

Gospel Canticle

Antiphon

At the king's command these innocent babies and little children were put to death; they died for Christ, and now in the glory of heaven as they follow him, the sinless lamb, they sing for ever:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke 1:68-79

The Messiah and his forerunner

Make sign of cross

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *
he has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old †
that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.
He promised to show mercy to our fathers *
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham: *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High; *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
to give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,*
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

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

At the king's command these innocent babies and little children were put to death; they died for Christ, and now in the glory of heaven as they follow him, the sinless lamb, they sing for ever:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Intercessions

We rejoice in the glory of Jesus Christ, who conquered the enemy not by force of arms but with a white-robed army of children, and we cry out:

— The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

The Holy Innocents gave witness not by words but by their life's blood,
give us strength to be your witnesses before men, both by words and actions.

— The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

They were not ready for battle but you made them fit to win the palm of victory,
now that we are prepared for victory, do not let us despair.

— The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

You washed the robes of the Innocents in your blood;
cleanse us from all sin.

— The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

You rewarded the child martyrs with the first share in your kingdom,
do not let us be cast out from the unending heavenly banquet.

— The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

You knew persecution and exile as a child,
protect all children whose lives are in danger from famine, war and disasters.

— The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Concluding Prayer

Father,
the Holy Innocents offered you praise
by the death they suffered for Christ.
May our lives bear witness
to the faith we profess with our lips.

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.

Dismissal

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

— Amen.

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