

Liturgy of the Hours
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

March 8, 2026
{ Third Sunday in Lent }



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.

HYMN

For forty days the circuit runs,
this holy season of renown;
by myst'ry and by number taught
let us observe our lenten fast.

Christ, King and Maker of all time,
has consecrated in due course
this fast proclaimed and practiced first
by prophets and the Law of old.

So let us use with more restraint
our speech, our sleep, our idle mirth,
and, frugal in our food and drink,
stand guard with heightened vigilance.

Let us avoid all wicked sin
that undermines the heedless heart
and grant no room for ruthless pow'r
to our deceitful, wily foe.

Grant us, O Blessed Trinity,
O Undivided Unity,
to see this service of our fast
bring forth your fruit within our hearts. Amen.

*Metrical hymn, melody: ERHALT UNS, HERR, 8 8 8 8; later form of melody from
Joseph Klug's Gestliche Lieder, Wittenberg, 1535*

Plainsong, mode I, melody 28, Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983, Text: Ex more docti
mystico, attributed to St. Gregory the Great, ca. 540-604*

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Sit or stand

PSALMODY

Antiphon 1

Day by day I shall bless you, Lord.

Psalm 145

Praise of God's majesty

Lord, you are the Just One, who was and who is (Revelation 16:5).

I

I will give you glóry, O Gód my Kíng, *
I will bléss your náme for éver.

I will bléss you dáy after dáy *
and praíse your náme for éver.
The Lord is gréat, híghly to be praísed, *
his gréatness cáannot be méasured.

Age to áge shall procláim your wórks, *
shall decláre your míghty déeds,
shall spéak of your spléndor and glóry, *
tell the tále of your wónderful wórks.

They will spéak of your térrible déeds, *
recóunt your gréatness and míght.
They will recáll your abúndant góodness; *
age to áge shall ríng out your jústice.

The Lord is kínd and fúll of compássion, *
slow to ánger, abóunding in lóve.
How góod is the Lórd to áll, *
compássionate to áll his créatures.

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

Day by day I shall bless you, Lord.

Antiphon 2

Your kingdom, Lord, is an everlasting kingdom.

II

All your créatures shall thánk you, O Lórd, *
and your fríends shall repéat their bléssing.
They shall spéak of the glóry of your réign *
and decláre your míght, O Gód,

to make knówn to mén your mighty déeds *
and the glórious spléndor of your réign.
Yóurs is an éverlasting kíngdom; *
your rúle lasts from áge to áge.

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

Your kingdom, Lord, is an everlasting kingdom.

Antiphon 3

The Lord is faithful in all his words and loving in all his deeds.

III

The Lord is fáithful in áll his wórds *
and lóving in áll his déeds.
The Lórd suppórts all who fáll *
and ráises áll who are bowed dówn.

The éyes of all créatures look to yóu *
and you gíve them their fóod in due tíme.
You ópen wíde your hánd, *

grant the desires of áll who live.

The Lord is júst in áll his wáys *
and lóving in áll his déeds.

He is clóse to áll who cáll him, *
who cáll on hím from their héarts.

He gránts the desires of those who féar him, *
he héars their cry and he sáves them.

The Lórd protécts all who lóve him; *
but the wicked he will útterly destróy.

Let me spéak the práise of the Lórd, †
let all mankind bléss his holy náme *
for éver, for áges unénding.

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 is faithful in all his words and loving in all his deeds.

VERSE

The Lord will feed him with the bread of life and understanding.

— And give him the water of wisdom to drink.

Sit

READINGS

First reading

From the book of Exodus

(22:20—23:9)

The law concerning aliens and the poor (The Book of the Covenant)

Thus says the Lord:

“Whoever sacrifices to any god, except to the Lord alone, shall be doomed.

“You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens

yourselves in the land of Egypt. You shall not wrong any widow or orphan. If ever you wrong them and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry. My wrath will flare up, and I will kill you with the sword; then your own wives will be widows, and your children orphans.

“If you lend money to one of your poor neighbors among my people, you shall not act like an extortioner toward him by demanding interest from him.

“If you take your neighbor’s cloak as a pledge, you shall return it to him before sunset; for this cloak of his is the only covering he has for his body. What else has he to sleep in? If he cries out to me, I will hear him; for I am compassionate.

“You shall not revile God, nor curse a prince of your people.

“You shall not delay the offering of your harvest and your press. You shall give me the first-born of your sons. You must do the same with your oxen and your sheep; for seven days the firstling may stay with its mother, but on the eighth day you must give it to me.

“You shall be men sacred to me. Flesh torn to pieces in the field you shall not eat; throw it to the dogs.

“You shall not repeat a false report. Do not join the wicked in putting your hand, as an unjust witness, upon anyone. Neither shall you allege the example of the many as an excuse for doing wrong, nor shall you, when testifying in a lawsuit, side with the many in perverting justice. You shall not favor a poor man in his lawsuit.

“When you come upon your enemy’s ox or ass going astray, see to it that it is returned to him. When you notice the ass of one who hates you lying prostrate under its burden, by no means desert him; help him, rather, to raise it up.

“You shall not deny one of your needy fellow men his rights in his lawsuit.

“You shall keep away from anything dishonest. The innocent and the just you shall not put to death, nor shall you acquit the guilty. Never take a bribe, for a bribe blinds even the most clear-sighted and twists the words even of the just.

“You shall not oppress an alien; you well know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt.”

Responsory

Psalm 82:3–4; see James 2:5

Give justice to the weak and the orphan, defend the afflicted and the destitute.

- Rescue the weak and the poor, and save them from the grasp of the wicked.

God chose the poor of this world to be rich in faith; he has given them his kingdom as their inheritance.

- Rescue the weak and the poor, and save them from the grasp of the wicked.

Second reading

From a treatise on John by Saint Augustine, bishop

(Tract. 15, 10–12. 16–17: CCL 36, 154–156)

A Samaritan woman came to draw water

A woman came. She is a symbol of the Church not yet made righteous but about to be made righteous. Righteousness follows from the conversation. She came in ignorance, she found Christ, and he enters into conversation with her. Let us see what it is about, let us see why *a Samaritan woman came to draw water*. The Samaritans did not form part of the Jewish people: they were foreigners. The fact that she came from a foreign people is part of the symbolic meaning, for she is a symbol of the Church. The Church was to come from the Gentiles, of a different race from the Jews.

We must then recognize ourselves in her words and in her person, and with her give our own thanks to God. She was a symbol, not the reality; she foreshadowed the reality, and the reality came to be. She found faith in Christ, who was using her as a symbol to teach us what was to come. *She came then to draw water.* She had simply come to draw water, in the normal way of man or woman.

Jesus says to her: Give me water to drink. For his disciples had gone to the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman therefore says to him: How

is it that you, though a Jew, ask me for water to drink, though I am a Samaritan woman? For Jews have nothing to do with Samaritans.

The Samaritans were foreigners; Jews never used their utensils. The woman was carrying a pail for drawing water. She was astonished that a Jew should ask her for a drink of water, a thing that Jews would not do. But the one who was asking for a drink of water was thirsting for her faith.

Listen now and learn who it is that asks for a drink. *Jesus answered her and said: If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink," perhaps you might have asked him and he would have given you living water.*

He asks for a drink, and he promises a drink. He is in need, as one hoping to receive, yet he is rich, as one about to satisfy the thirst of others. He says: *If you knew the gift of God.* The gift of God is the Holy Spirit. But he is still using veiled language as he speaks to the woman and gradually enters into her heart. Or is he already teaching her? What could be more gentle and kind than the encouragement he gives? *If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink," perhaps you might ask and he would give you living water.*

What is this water that he will give if not the water spoken of in Scripture: *With you is the fountain of life?* How can those feel thirst who *will drink deeply from the abundance in your house?*

He was promising the Holy Spirit in satisfying abundance. She did not yet understand. In her failure to grasp his meaning, what was her reply? *The woman says to him, Master, give me this drink, so that I may feel no thirst or come here to draw water.* Her need forced her to this labor, her weakness shrank from it. If only she could hear those words: *Come to me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you.* Jesus was saying this to her, so that her labors might be at an end; but she was not yet able to understand.

Responsory

John 7:37-39; 4:13

Jesus cried out: If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

Streams of living water will flow from the heart of whoever believes in me.

- He was speaking of the Spirit who would be received by those who believed in him.

Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never be thirsty again.

- He was speaking of the Spirit who would be received by those who believed in him.

Stand

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Father,
you have taught us to overcome our sins
by prayer, fasting and works of mercy.
When we are discouraged by our weakness,
give us confidence in your love.

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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