

Liturgy of the Hours
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

August 23, 2026

{ Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time }



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 day, more sacred than the rest,
shines forth the first and eighth of days,
which you, firstfruits of those who rise,
have consecrated to yourself.

O Jesus, raise our souls to you;
first grant that we may share your life,
then make our bodies rise to you,
for ever free from second death,

That soon we may be carried up
to meet you, Christ, on heaven's clouds,
to live with you for evermore,
our Resurrection and our Life.

And as we gaze upon your face,
conform us to your glory, Lord,
that we may know you as you are,
true light and sweetness for our souls.

Filled with your joy and sev'nfold grace
and given to the Father's care,
then may we see the perfect reign
of God, the holy Three in One. Amen.

Metrical hymn, melody: Morning Hymn, 8 8 8 8; François Barthélémon, 1741–1808

Plainsong, mode IV, melody 67; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983, Text: Dies ætasque
ceteris, unknown author, ca. 12th c.*

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Sit or stand

PSALMODY

Antiphon 1

See how the cross of the Lord stands revealed as the tree of life.

Psalm 1

There are two ways a man may take

They are happy who, putting all their trust in the cross, have plunged into the water of life (from an author of the second century).

Háppy indéed is the mán *
who fóllows not the cóunsel of the wícked;
nor língers in the wáy of sínners *
nor síts in the cómpany of scórners,
but whose delíght is the láw of the Lórd *
and who pónders his láw day and níght.

Hé is like a trée that is plánted *
besíde the flówing wáters,
that yíelds its frúit in due séason †
and whose léaves shall néver fáde; *
and áll that he dóes shall próspér.

Not só are the wícked, not só! †
For théy like wínnowed cháff *
shall be dríven awáy by the wínd.
When the wícked are júdged they shall not stánd, *
nor find róom among thóse who are júst;
for the Lórd guards the wáy of the júst *
but the wáy of the wícked leads to dóom.

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

See how the cross of the Lord stands revealed as the tree of life.

Antiphon 2

Here is a King of my own choosing who will rule on Mount Zion.

Psalm 2

The Messiah, king and conqueror

The rulers of the earth joined forces to overthrow Jesus, your anointed Son (Acts 4:27).

Why this tumult among nátions, *
among péoples this úseless múrmuring?
They arise, the kíns of the éarth, *
princes plót against the Lórd and his Anóinted.
“Cóme let us bréak their fétters, *
cóme, let us cást off their yóke.”

He who síts in the héavens láughs; *
the Lórd is láughing them to scórn.
Thén he will spéak in his ánger, *
his ráge will stríke them with térror.
“It is Í who have sét up my kíng *
on Zíon, my hólý móuntain.”

I will annóunce the decreée of the Lórd: †
The Lórd said to me: “Yóu are my Són. *
It is Í who have begóttén you this dáy.
Ásk and I shall bequéath you the nátions, *
put the énds of the éarth in your posséssion.
With a ród of íron you will bréak them, *
shátter them like a pótter’s jár.”

Nów, O kíns, understánd, *
take wárning, rúlers of the éarth;
sérve the Lórd with áwe *
and trémbling, páy him your hómage
lést he be ángry and you pérish; *
for súddenly his ánger will bláze.

Blessed are théy *
who put their trúst in Gód.

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

Here is a King of my own choosing who will rule on Mount Zion.

Antiphon 3

Lord, you are my protector; you have raised me up in glory.

Psalm 3

I am safe in the Lord's keeping

Christ fell asleep in death, but he rose from the dead, for God was his deliverer (Saint Irenaeus).

How mány are my fóes, O Lórd! *
How mány are rísing up agáinst me!
How mány are sáying abóut me: *
“There is no hélp for hím in Gód.”

But yóu, Lórd, are a shíeld abóut me, *
my glóry, who líft up my héad.
I crý alóud to the Lórd. *
He áswers from his hólý móuntain.

I líe down to rést and I sléep. *
I wáke, for the Lórd uphólds me.
I will not féar even thóusands of péople *
who are ránged on every síde agáinst me.

Aríse, Lórd; sáve me, my Gód, *
you who stríke all my fóes on the móuth,
you who bréak the téeth of the wícked! *
O Lórd of salvátion, bless your péople!

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, you are my protector; you have raised me up in glory.

VERSE

May the word of Christ ever fill your hearts.

— Share with one another the wisdom you receive.

Sit

READINGS

First reading

From the beginning of the book of the prophet Zephaniah

1:1-7, 14—2:3

The judgment of the Lord

The word of the Lord which came to Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah.

I will completely sweep away all things
from the face of the earth, says the Lord.

I will sweep away man and beast,
I will sweep away the birds of the sky,
and the fishes of the sea.

I will overthrow the wicked;
I will destroy mankind
from the face of the earth, says the Lord.

I will stretch out my hand against Judah,
and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

I will destroy from this place the last vestige of Baal,
the very names of his priests.

And those who adore the host of heaven on the roofs,
with those who adore the Lord
but swear by Milcom;

And those who have fallen away from the Lord,
and those who do not seek the Lord.

Silence in the presence of the Lord God!

for near is the day of the Lord,
Yes, the Lord has prepared a slaughter feast,
he has consecrated his guests.
Near is the great day of the Lord,
near and very swiftly coming,
Hark, the day of the Lord!
bitter, then, the warrior's cry.
A day of wrath is that day
a day of anguish and distress,
A day of destruction and desolation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
A day of thick black clouds,
a day of trumpet blasts and battle alarm
Against fortified cities,
against battlements on high.

I will hem men in
till they walk like the blind,
because they have sinned against the Lord;
And their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their brains like dung.
Neither their silver nor their gold
shall be able to save them
on the day of the Lord's wrath,
When in the fire of his jealousy
all the earth shall be consumed.
For he shall make an end, yes, a sudden end,
of all who live on the earth.

Gather, gather yourselves together,
O nation without shame!
Before you are driven away,
like chaff that passes on;
Before there comes upon you
the blazing anger of the Lord;
Before there comes upon you
the day of the Lord's anger.
Seek the Lord, all you humble of the earth,
who have observed his law;

Seek justice, seek humility;
perhaps you may be sheltered
on the day of the Lord's anger.

Responsory

Zephaniah 2:3; Luke 6:20

Seek the Lord, you humble of the earth, who obey his law.

— Seek righteousness, seek humility.

Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.

— Seek righteousness, seek humility.

Second reading

From the pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world
of the Second Vatican Council

(Gaudium et spes, n. 39)

The foreshadowing of the new age

We do not know the time when earth and humanity will reach their completion, nor do we know the way in which the universe will be transformed. The world as we see it, disfigured by sin, is passing away. But we are sure that God is preparing a new dwelling place and a new earth. In this new earth righteousness is to make its home, and happiness will satisfy, and more than satisfy, all the yearnings for peace that arise in human hearts. On that day, when death is conquered, the sons of God will be raised up in Christ; what was sown as something weak and perishable will be clothed in incorruption. Love and the fruits of love will remain, and the whole of creation, made by God for man, will be set free from the frustration that enslaves it.

We are warned indeed that a man gains nothing if he wins the whole world at the cost of himself. Yet our hope in a new earth should not weaken, but rather stimulate our concern for developing this earth, for on it there is growing up the body of a new human family, a body even now able to provide some foreshadowing of the new age. Hence, though earthly progress is to be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ's kingdom, yet in so far as it

can help toward the better ordering of human society it is of great importance to the kingdom of God.

The blessings of human dignity, brotherly communion and freedom—all the good fruits on earth of man's co-operation with nature in the Spirit of the Lord and according to his command—will be found again in the world to come, but purified of all stain, resplendent and transfigured, when Christ hands over to the Father an eternal and everlasting kingdom: “a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace.” On this earth the kingdom is already present in sign; when the Lord comes it will reach its completion.

Responsory

Psalm 96:11; Isaiah 49:13; Psalm 72:7

Rejoice, you heavens, and celebrate, O earth; cry out with praise, you mountains, for the Lord is coming.

— He will have compassion on his poor.

In his days justice will flourish and peace will abound.

— He will have compassion on his poor.

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.

Father,
help us to seek the values
that will bring us lasting joy in this changing world.
In our desire for what you promise
make us one in mind and heart.

Grant 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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