

Liturgy of the Hours
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

May 9, 2024

{ Solemnity – Ascension }



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

Hail thee, festival day!
Blest day that art hallowed for ever;
Day when the Christ ascends,
High in the heavens to reign.

Lo, the fair beauty of earth,
From the death of the winter arising!
Ev'ry good gift of the year
Now with its Master returns:

Hail thee, festival day!
Blest day that art hallowed for ever;
Day when the Christ ascends,
High in the heavens to reign.

He who was nailed to the cross
Is Lord and the ruler of all men;
All things created on earth
Sing to the glory of God:

Hail thee, festival day!
Blest day that art hallowed for ever;
Day when the Christ ascends,
High in the heavens to reign.

God the All-Father, the Lord,
Who rulest the earth and the heavens,
Guard us from harm without,
Cleanse us from evil within:

Hail thee, festival day!

Blest day that art hallowed for ever;
Day when the Christ ascends,
High in the heavens to reign.

Jesus the health of the world,
Enlighten our minds, thou Redeemer,
Son of the Father supreme,
Only begotten of God:

Hail thee, festival day!
Blest day that art hallowed for ever;
Day when the Christ ascends,
High in the heavens to reign.

*Melody: Salve Festa Dies; Music: R. Vaughan Williams, 1906; Text: Venantius
Honorius Fortunatus, 530–609; Translator: Maurice F. Bell, 1862–1947;
'Hail thee, festival day' tr M F Bell (1862–1947) from The English Hymnal.
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Sit or stand

PSALMODY

Antiphon 1

Sing to God, sing psalms to his name, make a path for him who
rides high above the clouds, alleluia.

Psalm 68

The Lord's triumphant entrance into his sanctuary

Ascending on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men (Ephesians 4:10).

I

Let Gód arise, let his fóes be scáattered.*
Let thóse who háte him flée befóre him.
As smóke is blown awáy so will théy be blown awáy; †
like wáx that mélts befóre the fire,*
so the wícked shall pérish at the présence of Gód.

But the júst shall rejóice at the présence of Gód,*
they shall exúlt and dánce for jóy.

O síng to the Lórd, make músic to his náme; †
make a híghway for hím who rídes on the clóuds.*
Rejóice in the Lórd, exúlt at his présence.

Fáther of the órphan, defénder of the wídow, *
súch is Gód in his hólý pláce.

Gód gives the lónely a hómé to líve in; †
he léads the prisoners fóρθ into fréedom: *
but rébels must dwéll in a párched lánd.

When you wént forth, O Gód, at the héad of your péople, *
when you márched across the désert, the éarth trémbled:
the héavens mélted at the présénce of Gód, *
at the présénce of Gód, Ísrael's Gód.

You póured down, O Gód, a génerous ráin: *
when your péople were stárved you gáve them new lífe.
It was thére that your péople fóund a hómé, *
prépared in your góodness, O Gód, for the pór.

Glory to the FátHER, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy SpíRit:
as it was in the bÉginning, is now, *
and will be for éver. Amen.

Antiphon

Sing to God, sing psalms to his name, make a path for him who
rides high above the clouds, alleluia.

Antiphon 2

The Lord God ascended on high; he has led captivity captive,
alleluia.

II

The Lórd gives the wórd to the béarers of good tídings: *
“The Almíghty has deféated a númerless ármý
and kíngs and ármies are in flíght, in flíght *
while yóu were at rést amóng the shéepfolds.”

At hómé the wómén alréady share the spóil. *
They are cóvered with sílver as the wíngs of a dóve,
its féathers brílliant with shíning góld *
and jéwels fláshing líke snów on Mount Zálmon.

The móuntains of Báshan are míghty móuntains; *

hígh-ridged móúntains are the móúntains of Báshan.
Why lóok with énvý, you hígh-ridged móúntains, †
at the móúntain where Gód has chósen to dwéll? *
It is thére that the Lórd shall dwéll for éver.

The cháriots of Gód are thóusands upon thóusands. *
The Lórd has come from Sínai to the hólý pláce.
You have góne up on hígh; you have táken cáptives, †
receíving mén in tríbute, O Gód, *
even thóse who rebél, into your dwélling, O Lórd.

May the Lórd be bléssed dáy after dáy. *
He béars our búrdens, Gód our sávior.
This Gód of óurs is a Gód who sáves. *
The Lórd our Gód holds the kéys of déath.
And Gód will smíte the héad of his fóes, *
the crówn of thóse who persíst in their síns.

The Lord sáid: “I will bríng them báck from Báshan; *
I will bríng them báck from the dépth of the séa.
Thén your féet will tréad in their blóod *
and the tóngues of your dógs take their sháre of the fóe.”

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 God ascended on high; he has led captivity captive,
alleluia.

Antiphon 3

They see your procession, O God, the procession of my God and
king to the sanctuary, alleluia.

III

They see your sólemn procéssion, O Gód, *
the procéssion of my Gód, of my kíng, to the sánctuary:
the síngers in the fórefront, the músícians coming lást, *
betwéen them, máidens sóunding their tímbréls.

“In festive gatherings, bless the Lórd; *
bless Gód, O yóu who are Ísrael’s sóns.”

There is Bénjamin, léast of the tríbes, at the héad, †
Júdah’s prínces, a míghty thróng, *
Zébulun’s prínces, Náph tali’s prínces.

Show fóρθ, O Gód, show fóρθ your míght, *
your míght, O Gód, which you have shówn for ús.
For the sáke of your témp le hígh in Jerúsalem *
may kíngs cóme to you brínging their tríbute.

Thréaten the wíld beast that dwélls in the réeds, †
the bánds of the míghty and lórds of the péoples. *
Lét them bow dówn óffering sílver.
Scátter the péoples who delight in wár. †
Prínces will máke their wáy from Égypt: *
Ethiópia will strétch out her hánds to Gód.

Kíngdoms of the éarth, sing to Gód, praise the Lórd *
who rides on the héavens, the áncient héavens.
He thúnders his vóice, his míghty vóice. *
Cóme, acknówledge the pówer of Gód.

His glóry is on Ísrael; his míght is in the skíes. *
Gód is to be féared in his hólý pláce.
Hé is the Lórd, Ísrael’s Gód. †
Hé gives stréngth and pówer to his péople. *
Bléssed be 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

They see your procession, O God, the procession of my God and
king to the sanctuary, alleluia.

VERSE

The Lord opened their minds, alleluia.

— That they might understand the Scriptures, alleluia.

Sit

READINGS

First reading

From the letter of the apostle Paul to the Ephesians

4:1-24

He ascended to heaven and led captivity captive

I plead with you, as a prisoner for the Lord, to live a life worthy of the calling you have received, with perfect humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another lovingly. Make every effort to preserve the unity which has the Spirit as its origin and peace as its binding force. There is but one body and one Spirit, just as there is but one hope given all of you by your call. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all, and works through all, and is in all.

Each of us has received God's favor in the measure in which Christ bestows it. Thus you find Scripture saying:

“When he ascended on high, he took a host of captives and gave gifts to men.”

“He ascended”—what does this mean but that he had first descended into the lower regions of the earth? He who descended is the very one who ascended high above the heavens, that he might fill all men with his gifts.

It is he who gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in roles of service for the faithful to build up the body of Christ, till we become one in faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, and form that perfect man who is Christ come to full stature.

Let us, then, be children no longer, tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine that originates in human trickery and skill in proposing error. Rather, let us profess the truth in love and grow to the full maturity of Christ the head. Through him the whole body grows, and with the proper functioning of the members joined firmly together by each supporting ligament, builds itself up

in love.

I declare and solemnly attest in the Lord that you must no longer live as the pagans do—their minds empty, their understanding darkened. They are estranged from a life in God because of their ignorance and their resistance; without remorse they have abandoned themselves to lust and the indulgence of every sort of lewd conduct.

That is not what you learned when you learned Christ! I am supposing, of course, that he has been preached and taught to you in accord with the truth that is in Jesus: namely, that you must lay aside your former way of life and the old self which deteriorates through illusion and desire, and acquire a fresh, spiritual way of thinking. You must put on that new man created in God's image, whose justice and holiness are born of truth.

Responsory

Ephesians 4:8 (Psalms 68:19); Psalms 47:6

When Christ ascended on high, he led captivity captive,
— he gave gifts to men, alleluia.

God ascends to shouts of joy, the Lord to the blasts of trumpets.
— He gave gifts to men, alleluia.

Second reading

From a sermon by Saint Augustine, bishop

(Sermo de Ascensione Domini, Mai 98, 1-2: PLS 2, 494-495)

*No one has ever ascended into heaven
except the one who descended from heaven*

Today our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him. Listen to the words of the Apostle: *If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God; seek the things that are above, not the things that are on earth.* For just as he remained with us even after his ascension, so we too are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.

Christ is now exalted above the heavens, but he still suffers on earth

all the pain that we, the members of his body, have to bear. He showed this when he cried out from above: *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?* and when he said: *I was hungry and you gave me food.*

Why do we on earth not strive to find rest with him in heaven even now, through the faith, hope and love that unites us to him? While in heaven he is also with us; and we while on earth are with him. He is here with us by his divinity, his power and his love. We cannot be in heaven, as he is on earth, by divinity, but in him, we can be there by love.

He did not leave heaven when he came down to us; nor did he withdraw from us when he went up again into heaven. The fact that he was in heaven even while he was on earth is borne out by his own statement: *No one has ever ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven.*

These words are explained by our oneness with Christ, for he is our head and we are his body. No one ascended into heaven except Christ because we also are Christ: he is the Son of Man by his union with us, and we by our union with him are the sons of God. So the Apostle says: *Just as the human body, which has many members, is a unity, because all the different members make one body, so is it also with Christ.* He too has many members, but one body.

Out of compassion for us he descended from heaven, and although he ascended alone, we also ascend, because we are in him by grace. Thus, no one but Christ descended and no one but Christ ascended; not because there is no distinction between the head and the body, but because the body as a unity cannot be separated from the head.

Responsory

Acts 1:3, 9, 4

During the forty days after his passion, he appeared to them and spoke with them about the kingdom of God.

— As they watched, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight, alleluia.

While he was with them, he told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the fulfillment of the Father's promise.

— As they watched, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight, alleluia.

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.

Stand

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God our Father,
make us joyful in the ascension of your Son Jesus Christ.
May we follow him into the new creation,
for his ascension is our glory and our hope.

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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