

Liturgy of the Hours
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

January 25, 2025

{ Feast – Conversion of Paul, Apostle }



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

Hard pressed beneath a weight of ills,
we come, O Paul, with humble prayer,
from heaven's treasure you will give
sure pledges of God's saving pow'r.

For, struck by God's all loving hand
and stirred by that divine assault
with strong embrace you championed those
you once pursued with vicious hate.

Be mindful of us still, we pray,
do not forget your former love,
and lead us back, who languish here,
to steadfast hope in heaven's grace.

Now, by your prayers, may love abound,
a charity that knows no harm,
that barbs of strife cannot assail,
that error cannot strike or wound.

O victim pleasing heav'n on high,
and for all nations light and love,
O Paul, we call upon your name,
our glorious patron, guard, and guide.

May hymns of lasting glory rise
to God, the blessed Three in One,
and may he crown us, one with you,
our prize for faith's good battles won. Amen.

Metrical hymn, melody: ST VENANTIUS 8 8 8 8; Rouen church melody, 1728

Plainsong, mode III, melody 54; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983, Text: Pressi malorum pondere, ca. 1795*

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Sit or stand

PSALMODY

Antiphon 1

Who are you, Lord? I am Jesus whom you are persecuting; you harm only yourself by kicking against the goad.

Psalm 19A

Praise of the Lord, Creator of all

The dawn from on high shall break on us . . . to guide our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:78, 79).

The héavens procláim the glóry of Gód *
and the firmament shows fóρθ the wórк of his hánds.

Dáy unto dáy tákes up the stóry *
and níght unto níght makes knówn the méssage.

No spéech, no wórd, no vóice is héárd †
yet their spán exténds through áll the éarth, *
their wórdс to the útmost bóunds of the wórld.

Thére he has pláced a tént for the sún; †
it comes fóρθ like a brídegroom cóming from his tént, *
rejóices like a chámpion to rún its cóurse.

At the énd of the ský is the rísing of the sún; †
to the fúrthest énd of the ský is its cóurse. *
There is nóthing concéaled from its búrning héat.

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

Who are you, Lord? I am Jesus whom you are persecuting; you harm only yourself by kicking against the goad.

Antiphon 2

Go, Ananias, and seek out Saul, who is praying to me; he is the one I have chosen to make my name known to the Gentiles and their kings, as well as to the people of Israel.

Psalm 64

Prayer for help against enemies

This psalm commemorates most particularly our Lord's passion (Saint Augustine).

Hear my voice, O Gód, as I compláin, *
guard my life from dréad of the fóe.
Híde me from the bánd of the wícked, *
from the thróng of thóse who do évil.

They shárpen their tóngues like swórd; *
they áim bitter wórds like árrows
to shóot at the ínnocent from ámbush, *
shóoting súddenly and récklessly.

They schéme their évil cóurse; *
they conspíre to lay sécret snáres.
They sáy: "Whó will sée us? *
Whó can séarch out our crímes?"

He will séarch who séarches the mínd *
and knóws the dépth of the héart.
Gód has shót them with his árrow *
and déalt them súdden wóunds.
Their ówn tongue has bróught them to rúin *
and áll who sée them móck.

Thén will áll men féar; †
they will téll what Gód has dóne. *
They will únderstánd God's déeds.
The júst will rejóice in the Lórd †

and flý to hím for réfuge.*
All the úpright héarts will 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

Go, Ananias, and seek out Saul, who is praying to me; he is the one I have chosen to make my name known to the Gentiles and their kings, as well as to the people of Israel.

Antiphon 3

Paul went into the synagogues and proclaimed to the Jews that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

Psalm 97

The glory of the Lord in his decrees for the world

This psalm foretells a world-wide salvation and that peoples of all nations will believe in Christ (St. Athanasius).

The Lord is kóng, let éarth rejóice,*
let áll the cóastlands be glád.
Clóud and dárkness are his ráiment; *
his thróne, jústice and ríght.

A fire prepáres his páth; *
it búrn up his fóes on every síde.
His líghtnings líght up the wórld,*
the éarth trémbles at the síght.

The móuntains mélt like wáx *
before the Lórd of áll the éarth.
The skíes procláim his jústice; *
all péoples sée his glóry.

Let thóse who serve ídols be ashámed, †
those who bóast of their wóρθless góds.*
All you spírít, wórship hím.

Zíon héars and is glád; †

the péople of Júdah rejóice *
becáuse of your júdgments, O Lórd.

For yóu indéed are the Lórd, †
most hígh above áll the éarth, *
exálted far abóve all spírits.

The Lórd loves thóse who hate évil: †
he gúards the sóuls of his sáints; *
he séts them frée from the wícked.

Líght shínes fóρθ for the júst *
and jóy for the úpríght of héart.
Rejóice, you júst, in the Lórd; *
gíve glóry to his hóly náme.

Glory to the Fátter, and to the Son, *
and to the Hóly Spírít:
as ít wás in the béginning, ís nów, *
and wíll be for éver. Amen.

Antiphon

Paul went into the synagogues and proclaimed to the Jews that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

VERSE

The Lord is gracious and merciful.

— He is slow to anger and full of compassion.

Sit

READINGS

First reading

From a letter of the apostle Paul to the Galatians

1:11-24

The Father has revealed his Son to me that I might proclaim his Gospel

I assure you, brothers, the gospel I proclaimed to you is no mere human invention. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I schooled in it. It came by revelation from Jesus Christ.

You have heard, I know, the story of my former way of life in Judaism. You know that I went to extremes in persecuting the Church of God and tried to destroy it; I made progress in Jewish observance far beyond most of my contemporaries, in my excess of zeal to live out all the traditions of my ancestors.

But the time came when he who had set me apart before I was born and called me by his favor chose to reveal his Son to me, that I might spread among the Gentiles the good tidings concerning him. Immediately, without seeking human advisers or even going to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, I went off to Arabia; later I returned to Damascus. Three years after that I went up to Jerusalem to get to know Cephas, with whom I stayed fifteen days. I did not meet any other apostles except James, the brother of the Lord. I declare before God that what I have just written is true.

Thereafter I entered the regions of Syria and Cilicia. The communities of Christ in Judea had no idea what I looked like; they had only heard that “he who was formerly persecuting us is now preaching the faith he tried to destroy,” and they gave glory to God on my account.

Responsory

Galatians 1:11-12; 2 Corinthians 11:10, 7

The Gospel which I preached to you is not a human message.

— I did not receive it through any man, but from our Lord Jesus Christ who revealed it to me.

As surely as Christ’s truth is in me, I have preached the Gospel to you.

— I did not receive it through any man, but from our Lord Jesus Christ who revealed it to me.

Second reading

From a homily by Saint John Chrysostom, bishop

(Hom. 2 de laudibus sancti Pauli: PG 50, 477-480)

For love of Christ, Paul bore every burden

Paul, more than anyone else, has shown us what man really is, and

in what our nobility consists, and of what virtue this particular animal is capable. Each day he aimed ever higher; each day he rose up with greater ardor and faced with new eagerness the dangers that threatened him. He summed up his attitude in the words: *I forget what is behind me and push on to what lies ahead.* When he saw death imminent, he bade others share his joy: Rejoice and be glad with me! And when danger, injustice and abuse threatened, he said: *I am content with weakness, mistreatment and persecution.* These he called the weapons of righteousness, thus telling us that he derived immense profit from them.

Thus, amid the traps set for him by his enemies, with exultant heart he turned their every attack into a victory for himself; constantly beaten, abused and cursed, he boasted of it as though he were celebrating a triumphal procession and taking trophies home, and offered thanks to God for it all: *Thanks be to God who is always victorious in us!* This is why he was far more eager for the shameful abuse that his zeal in preaching brought upon him than we are for the most pleasing honors, more eager for death than we are for life, for poverty than we are for wealth; he yearned for toil far more than others yearn for rest after toil. The one thing he feared, indeed dreaded, was to offend God; nothing else could sway him. Therefore, the only thing he really wanted was always to please God.

The most important thing of all to him, however, was that he knew himself to be loved by Christ. Enjoying this love, he considered himself happier than anyone else; were he without it, it would be no satisfaction to be the friend of principalities and powers. He preferred to be thus loved and be the least of all, or even to be among the damned, than to be without that love and be among the great and honored.

To be separated from that love was, in his eyes, the greatest and most extraordinary of torments; the pain of that loss would alone have been hell, and endless, unbearable torture.

So too, in being loved by Christ he thought of himself as possessing life, the world, the angels, present and future, the kingdom, the promise and countless blessings. Apart from that love nothing saddened or delighted him; for nothing earthly did he regard as

bitter or sweet.

Paul set no store by the things that fill our visible world, any more than a man sets value on the withered grass of the field. As for tyrannical rulers or the people enraged against him, he paid them no more heed than gnats.

Death itself and pain and whatever torments might come were but child's play to him, provided that thereby he might bear some burden for the sake of Christ.

Responsory

1 Timothy 1:13-14; 1 Corinthians 15:9

God was merciful to me, because in my unbelief I acted in ignorance.

— The abundant grace of our Lord was poured out on me, and gave me the faith and love which are ours through union with Christ Jesus.

I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.

— The abundant grace of our Lord was poured out on me, and gave me the faith and love which are ours through union with Christ Jesus.

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 acclaim 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.

God our Father,
you taught the gospel to all the world
through the preaching of Paul your apostle.
May we who celebrate his conversion to the faith
follow him in bearing witness to your truth.

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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