

*Liturgy of the Hours*  
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

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December 27, 2024

{ Feast – John, Apostle and Evangelist }



*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

Chaste, holy guardian  
of the Virgin Mother,  
honored as herald  
of the Word eternal,  
help us, your servants;  
wipe away our failings,  
John, blest and faithful.

River cascading  
from the eternal fountain,  
running through parched earth,  
to refresh the thirsty,  
you draw from fullness  
all the streams you offer,  
heart from heart drinking.

John, light and honor  
for the earth and heaven,  
gain for us mercy,  
pardon for our failures;  
grant us to fathom  
Christ's exalted myst'ry,  
which you have taught us.

Seeing the true Word,  
hidden in the Father,  
faith, grace, and favor,  
through the earth extending,  
lead us, kind teacher,

to enjoy for ever,  
beauty eternal.

Glory for ever  
be to Christ the most high,  
born of the Virgin,  
Son of holy Mary,  
who with the Father  
and the Holy Spirit  
reigns through the ages. Amen.

*Metrical hymn, melody: Diva servatrix, 11 11 11 5; from the Bayeux Antiphoner,  
1739*

*Plainsong, mode IV, melody 75; Liber Hymnarius, Solesmes, 1983\*, Text: Virginis  
virgo venerande custos, St. Peter Damian, O.S.B. Camald., ca. 1007-1072*

*The English translation of Hymns and chants from The Liturgy of the Hours © 2023  
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*Sit or stand*

## PSALMODY

### *Antiphon 1*

John gave testimony to the Word of God; he gave witness to Jesus  
Christ whom he had seen.

### *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 wórk 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 éarþh, \*  
their wórds 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 conceáled 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*

John gave testimony to the Word of God; he gave witness to Jesus  
Christ whom he had seen.

*Antiphon 2*

This is the disciple whom Jesus loved.

*Psalms 64*

*Prayer for help against enemies*

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

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

They shárpen their tóngues like swórds; \*  
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 árrów \*  
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*

This is the disciple whom Jesus loved.

*Antiphon 3*

At the last supper John reclined close to the Lord; blessed that  
apostle to whom the mysteries of heaven were revealed.

*Psalm 99*

*Holy is the Lord our God*

*Christ, higher than the Cherubim, when you took our lowly nature you transformed  
our sinful world (Saint Athanasius).*

The Lórd is kíng; the péoples trémble. †  
He is thróned on the chérubim; the éarth quákes. \*  
The Lórd is gréat in Zíon.

Hé is suprême over áll the péoples. †  
Let them práise his náme, so terríble and gréat. \*  
He is hólý, fúll of pówer.

Yóu are a kíng who lóves what is ríght; †  
you have estáblished équity, jústice and ríght; \*

yóu have estáblished them in Jácob.

Exált the Lórd our Gód; †  
bow dówn before Zíon, his fóotstool. \*  
Hé the Lórd is hólý.

Amóng his priésts were Áaron and Móses, †  
among thóse who invóked his náme was Sámuel. \*  
They invóked the Lórd and he ánswered.

To thém he spóke in the píllar of clóud. †  
They díd his wíll; they képt the láw, \*  
which hé, the Lórd, had gíven.

O Lórd our Gód, you ánswered thém. †  
For thém yóu were a Gód who forgíves; \*  
yet you púnished áll their offénses.

Exált the Lórd our Gód; †  
bow dówn before his hólý móuntain \*  
for the Lórd our Gód is hólý.

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 last supper John reclined close to the Lord; blessed that  
apostle to whom the mysteries of heaven were revealed.

### VERSE

They proclaimed the Lord's praises, told of his power to save.

— And of the wonders he had worked.

### *Sit*

### READINGS

#### *First reading*

From the first letter of the apostle John

*Word of life and light of God*

This is what we proclaim to you:  
what was from the beginning,  
what we have heard,  
what we have seen with our eyes,  
what we have looked upon  
and our hands have touched—  
we speak of the word of life.  
(This life became visible;  
we have seen and bear witness to it,  
and we proclaim to you the eternal life  
that was present to the Father  
and became visible to us.)

What we have seen and heard  
we proclaim in turn to you  
so that you may share life with us.  
This fellowship of ours is with the Father  
and with his Son, Jesus Christ.  
Indeed, our purpose in writing you this  
is that our joy may be complete.

Here, then, is the message  
we have heard from him  
and announce to you:  
that God is light;  
in him there is no darkness.  
If we say, “We have fellowship with him,”  
while continuing to walk in darkness,  
we are liars and do not act in truth.  
But if we walk in light, as he is in the light,  
we have fellowship with one another,  
and the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

If we say, “We are free of the guilt of sin,”  
we deceive ourselves; the truth is not to be found in us.  
But if we acknowledge our sins,  
he who is just can be trusted

to forgive our sins  
and cleanse us from every wrong.  
If we say, “We have never sinned,”  
we make him a liar  
and his word finds no place in us.

My little ones,  
I am writing this to keep you from sin.  
But if anyone should sin,  
we have, in the presence of the Father,  
Jesus Christ, an intercessor who is just.  
He is an offering for our sins,  
and not for our sins only,  
but for those of the whole world.

The way we can be sure of our knowledge of him  
is to keep his commandments.

*Responsory*

*1 John 1:2, 4; John 20:31*

We proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and  
has been revealed to us. We write of this that you may rejoice,

— and that your joy may be full.

These things have been written, that you may believe that Jesus is the  
Christ, the Son of God, and believing you may have life in his name.

— And that your joy may be full.

*Second reading*

From the tractates on the first letter of John by Saint Augustine,  
bishop

*(Tract 1, 1.3: PL 35, 1978. 1980)*

*Life itself was revealed in the flesh*

*Our message is the Word of life. We announce what existed from the  
beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our own eyes,  
what we have touched with our own hands. Who could touch the  
Word with his hands unless the Word was made flesh and lived among  
us?*



Now this Word, whose flesh was so real that he could be touched by human hands, began to be flesh in the Virgin Mary's womb; but he did not begin to exist at that moment. We know this from what John says: *What existed from the beginning*. Notice how John's letter bears witness to his Gospel, which you just heard a moment ago: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God*.

Someone might interpret the phrase *the Word of life* to mean a word about Christ, rather than Christ's body itself which was touched by human hands. But consider what comes next: *and life itself was revealed*. Christ therefore is himself the Word of life.

And how was this life revealed? It existed from the beginning, but was not revealed to men, only to angels, who looked upon it and feasted upon it as their own spiritual bread. But what does Scripture say? *Mankind ate the bread of angels*.

Life itself was therefore revealed in the flesh. In this way what was visible to the heart alone could become visible also to the eye, and so heal men's hearts. For the Word is visible to the heart alone, while flesh is visible to bodily eyes as well. We already possessed the means to see the flesh, but we had no means of seeing the Word. The Word was made flesh so that we could see it, to heal the part of us by which we could see the Word.

John continues: *And we are witnesses and we proclaim to you that eternal life which was with the Father and has been revealed among us*—one might say more simply “revealed to us.”

*We proclaim to you what we have heard and seen*. Make sure that you grasp the meaning of these words. The disciples saw our Lord in the flesh, face to face; they heard the words he spoke, and in turn they proclaimed the message to us. So we also have heard, although we have not seen.

Are we then less favored than those who both saw and heard? If that were so, why should John add: *so that you too may have fellowship with us*? They saw, and we have not seen; yet we have fellowship with them, because we and they share the same faith.

*And our fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ his Son*.

*And we write this to you to make your joy complete*—complete in that fellowship, in that love and in that unity.

*Responsory*

At the last supper John reclined close to the Lord;

— blessed that apostle to whom the mysteries of heaven were revealed.

He drank from the streams of living water which flowed from the heart of the Lord.

— Blessed that apostle to whom the mysteries of heaven were revealed.

*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.

God our Father,

you have revealed the mysteries of your Word  
through John the apostle.

By prayer and reflection

may we come to understand the wisdom he taught.

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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