

here. See, here is the place where they laid him. But you must go and tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him, just as he told you."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL YEAR C

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 24:1-12

On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, the women went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but on entering discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there. As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the women lowered their eyes. But the two men said to them, 'Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee: that the Son of Man had to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and rise again on the third day?' And they remembered his words.

When the women returned from the tomb they told all this to the Eleven and to all the others. The women were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. The other women with them also told the apostles, but this story of theirs seemed pure nonsense, and they did not believe them.

Peter, however, went running to the tomb. He bent down and saw the binding cloths, but nothing else; he then went back home, amazed at what had happened.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

PART THREE: LITURGY OF BAPTISM

The priest prays a blessing over the water.

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

All stand with lighted candles and renew their baptismal profession of faith:

Do you reject Satan? **I do.** And all his works? **I do.** And all his empty promises?

I do. Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children? **I do.**

Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin? **I do.** Do you reject Satan, father of sin, and prince of darkness? **I do.** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth? **I do.** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

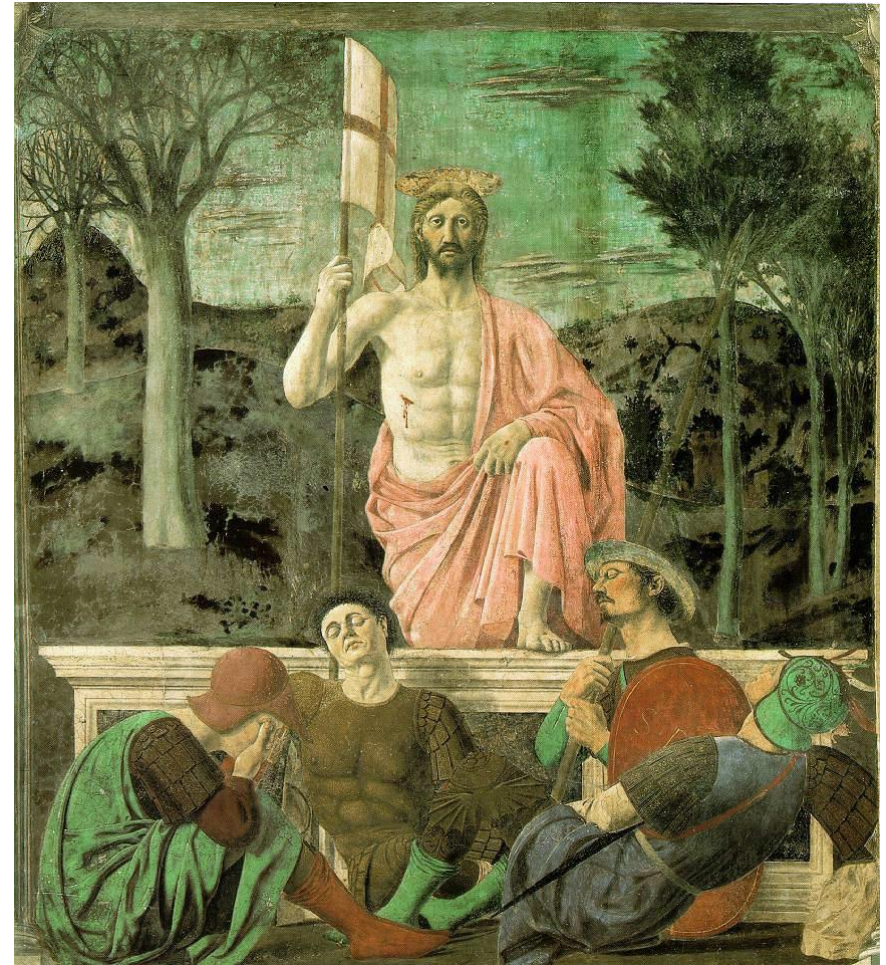
I do. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting? **I do.**

PART FOUR: LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Easter

The Easter Vigil

Readings for Year A, B, C



The Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Piero della Francesca, 1463, Mural in fresco and tempera, Museo Civico di Sansepolcro, Arezzo, Italy.

THE EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT

By most ancient tradition, this is the night of keeping vigil for the Lord, in which the faithful, carrying lighted lamps in their hands, should be like those looking for the Lord when he returns, so that at his coming he may find them awake and have them sit at his table.

The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil must take place during the night, so that it begins after nightfall and ends before daybreak on the Sunday.

FIRST PART: THE SOLEMN BEGINNING OF THE VIGIL OR LUCERNARIUM

The Blessing of the Fire and the Preparation of the Candle

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

Amen.

Dear brethren,

On this most sacred night,

In which Our Lord Jesus Christ

passed over from death to life,

the Church calls upon her sons and daughters,

scattered throughout the world,

to come together to watch and pray.

If we keep the memorial

Of the Lord's paschal solemnity in this way,

Listening to his word and celebrating his mysteries,

Then we shall have the sure hope

Of sharing his triumph over death

And living with him in God.

The Priest blesses the fire, saying with hands extended:

Let us pray,.

O God, who through your Son

Bestowed upon the faithful the fire of your glory,

Sanctify ✠ this new fire, we pray,

And grant that,

By these paschal celebrations,

We may be so inflamed with heavenly desires,

That with minds made pure

We may attain festivities of unending splendour.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

After the blessing of the new fire, one of the ministers brings the paschal candle to the

Priest, who cuts a cross into the candle with a stylus. Then he makes the Greek letter

Alpha above the cross, the letter Omega below, and the four numerals of the current year

between the arms of the cross, saying meanwhile:

1. Christ yesterday and today (*he cuts a vertical line*);
2. The Beginning and the End (*he cuts a horizontal line*);
3. The Alpha (*he cuts the letter Alpha above the vertical line*);
4. And the Omega (*he cuts the letter Omega below the vertical line*).
5. All time belongs to him (*he cuts the first numeral of the current year in the upper left corner of the cross*);
6. And all the ages (*he cuts the second numeral of the current year in the upper right corner of the cross*).
7. To him be glory and power (*he cuts the third numeral of the current year in the lower left corner of the cross*);
8. Through every age and for ever. Amen (*he cuts the fourth numeral of the current year in the lower right corner of the cross*).

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;

his right hand raised me up.

I shall not die, I shall live

and recount his deeds.

The stone which the builders rejected

has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,

a marvel in our eyes.

GOSPEL YEAR A

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 28:1-10

After the sabbath, and towards dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre. And all at once there was a violent earthquake, for the angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. His face was like lightning, his robe white as snow. The guards were so shaken, so frightened of him, that they were like dead men. But the angel spoke; and he said to the women, 'There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him." Now I have told you.' Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell the disciples.

And there, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings' he said. And the women came up to him and, falling down before him, clasped his feet. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL YEAR B

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 16:1-7

When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices with which to go and anoint him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising.

They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' But when they looked they could see that the stone - which was very big - had already been rolled back. On entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were struck with amazement. But he said to them, 'There is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not

that what had become old is made new,
and all things are restored to integrity through Christ,
just as by him they came into being.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Gloria is now sung while bells are rung.

Collect.

Let us pray.

O God, who make this most sacred night radiant
with the glory of the Lord's Resurrection,
stir up in your Church a spirit of adoption,
so that, renewed in body and mind,
we may render you undivided service.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans. 6:3-11

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a Christian dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 117:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
for his love has no end.
Let the sons of Israel say:
'His love has no end.'

When the cutting of the cross and of the other signs has been completed, the Priest may insert five grains of incense into the candle in the form of a cross, meanwhile saying:

By his holy
And glorious wounds
May Christ our Lord
Guard us
And protect us. **Amen.**

The Priest lights the paschal candle from the new fire, saying:

May the light of Christ rising in glory
Dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

Burning coals from the fire are placed in the thurible and incense is added. The smoking thurible is brought into the church, followed by the paschal candle, the Priest and the people, all holding unlit candles in their hands.

THE PROCESSION

Priest: The Light of Christ

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

The priest lights his candle from the paschal candle.

Priest: The Light of Christ

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

All light their candles from the flame of the paschal candle.

Priest: The Light of Christ

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

The paschal candle is placed on a large candlestand in the sanctuary. The lights are lit throughout the church, except for the altar candles.

THE EASTER PROCLAMATION (EXSULTET) (Shorter form, sung by a lay person.)

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven,
exult, let Angel ministers of God exult,
let the trumpet of salvation
sound aloud our mighty King's triumph!
Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her,
ablaze with light from her eternal King,
let all corners of the earth be glad,
knowing an end to gloom and darkness.
Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice,
arrayed with the lightning of his glory,
let this holy building shake with joy,
filled with the mighty voices of the peoples.
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just,
with ardent love of mind and heart
and with devoted service of our voice,
to acclaim our God invisible,
the almighty Father,
and Jesus Christ, our Lord, his Son, his Only Begotten.

Who for our sake paid Adam's debt to the eternal Father,
and, pouring out his own dear Blood,
wiped clean the record of our ancient sinfulness.

These then are the feasts of the Passover,
in which is slain the Lamb, the one true Lamb,
whose Blood anoints the doorposts of believers.

This is the night,
when once you led our forebears, Israel's children,
from slavery in Egypt
and made them pass dry-shod through the Red Sea.

This is the night
that with a pillar of fire
banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night
that even now, throughout the world,
sets Christian believers apart from wordly vices
and from the gloom of sin,
leading them to grace
and joining them to his holy ones.

This is the night,
when Christ broke the prison-bars of death
and rose victorious from the underworld.

O wonder of your humble care for us!
O love, O charity beyond all telling,
to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

O truly necessary sin of Adam,
destroyed completely by the Death of Christ!

O happy fault
that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!

"I shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your defilement and all your idols. I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws and sincerely respect my observances. You will live in the land which I gave your ancestors. You shall be my people and I will be your God."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Pss 41:3,5; 42:3-4. R. Ps 41:1

**R. Like a deer that longs for running streams,
my soul longs for you, my God.**

My soul is thirsting for God,
the God of my life;
when can I enter and see
the face of God? **R.**

These things will I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd
into the house of God,
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,
the throng wild with joy. **R.**

O send forth your light and your truth;
let these be my guide.
Let them bring me to your holy mountain,
to the place where you dwell. **R.**

And I will come to the altar of God,
the God of my joy.
My redeemer, I will thank you on the harp,
O God, my God. **R.**

Let us pray.

O God of unchanging power and eternal light,
look with favour on the wondrous mystery of the whole Church
and serenely accomplish the work
of human salvation,
which you planned from all eternity;
may the whole world know and see
that what was cast down is raised up,

The precepts of the Lord are right,
They gladden the heart,
The command of the Lord is clear,
It gives light to the eyes. **R.**

The fear of the Lord is holy,
Abiding for ever.
The decrees of the Lord are truth
And all of them just. **R.**

They are more to be desired than gold,
Than the purest of gold
And sweeter are they than honey,
Than honey from the comb. **R.**

Let us pray
O God, who constantly increase your Church
by your call to the nations,
graciously grant
to those you wash clean in the waters of Baptism
the assurance of your unfailing protection.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SEVENTH READING

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel 36:16-28

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: 'Son of man, the members of the House of Israel used to live in their own land, but they defiled it by their conduct and actions. I then discharged my fury at them because of the blood they shed in their land and the idols with which they defiled it. I scattered them among the nations and dispersed them in foreign countries. I sentenced them as their conduct and actions deserved. And now they have profaned my holy name among the nations where they have gone, so that people say of them, "These are the people of the Lord; they have been exiled from his land."

'But I have been concerned about my holy name, which the House of Israel has profaned among the nations where they have gone.

'And so, say to the House of Israel, "The Lord says this: I am not doing this for your sake, House of Israel, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I mean to display the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. And the nations will learn that I am the Lord – it is the Lord who speaks – when I display my holiness for your sake before their eyes. Then I am going to take you from among the nations and gather you together from all the foreign countries, and bring you home to your own land.

The sanctifying power of this night
dispels wickedness, washes faults away,
restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners.

O truly blessed night,
when things of heaven are wed to those of earth,
and divine to the human.

On this, your night of grace, O holy Father,
accept this candle, a solemn offering,
the work of bees and of your servants' hands,
an evening sacrifice of praise,
this gift from your most holy Church.

Therefore, O Lord,
we pray you that this candle,
hallowed to the honour of your name,
may persevere undimmed,
to overcome the darkness of this night.
Receive it as a pleasing fragrance,
and let it mingle with the lights of heaven.
May this flame be found still burning
by the Morning Star:
the one Morning Star who never sets,
Christ your Son,
who, coming back from death's domain,
has shed his peaceful light on humanity,
and lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

SECOND PART: LITURGY OF THE WORD

In this Vigil, nine readings are provided, seven from the Old Testament and two from the New. Where serious pastoral reasons demand it, the number of readings may be reduced to three from the Old Testament, including their Responsorial Psalms and two from the New.

Priest: Dear brothers and sisters,
now that we have begun our solemn Vigil,
let us listen with quiet hearts to the Word of God.
Let us meditate on how God in times past saved his people
and in these, the last days, has sent us his Son as our Redeemer.
Let us pray that our God may complete this paschal work of salvation
by the fullness of redemption.

A reading from the book of Genesis 1:1-2:2*God saw all he made, and indeed it was very good.*

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water.

God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night.' Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven.' Evening came and morning came: the second day.

God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day.

God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven.' And so it was. God created great sea-serpents and every kind of living creature with which the waters teem, and every kind of winged creature. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply upon the earth.' Evening came and morning came: the fifth day.

God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles, and every kind of wild beast.' And so it was. God made every kind of wild beast, every kind of cattle, and every kind of land reptile. God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself,
in the image of God he created him,
male and female he created them.

Because you have forsaken the fountain of wisdom.
Had you walked in the way of God,
you would have lived in peace for ever.
Learn where knowledge is, where strength,
where understanding, and so learn
where length of days is, where life,
where the light of the eyes and where peace.
But who has found out where she lives,
who has entered her treasure house?

But the One who knows all knows her,
he has grasped her with his own intellect,
he has set the earth firm for ever
and filled it with four-footed beasts,
he sends the light – and it goes,
he recalls it – and trembling it obeys;
the stars shine joyfully at their set times:
when he calls them, they answer, 'Here we are';
they gladly shine for their creator.
It is he who is our God,
no other can compare with him.
He has grasped the whole way of knowledge,
and confided it to his servant Jacob,
to Israel his well-beloved;
so causing her to appear on earth
and move among men.

This is the book of the commandments of God,
the law that stands for ever;
those who keep her live,
those who desert her die.
Turn back, Jacob, seize her,
in her radiance make your way to light:
do not yield your glory to another,
your privilege to a people not your own.
Israel, blessed are we:
what pleases God has been revealed to us.
The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm 18: 8-11 R. Jn 6:69**R. Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.**

The law of the Lord is perfect,
It revives the soul.
The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
It gives wisdom to the simple. **R.**

Responsorial Psalm Is 12:2-6. R.v.3

R. You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.

Truly, God is my salvation,
I trust, I shall not fear.
For the Lord is my strength, my song,
he became my saviour.
With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation. **R.**

Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!
Declare the greatness of his name. **R.**

Sing a psalm to the Lord
for he has done glorious deeds;
make them known to all the earth!
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. **R.**

Let us pray.
Almighty ever-living God,
sole hope of the world,
who by the preaching of your Prophets
unveiled the mysteries of this present age,
graciously increase the longing of your people,
for only at the prompting of your grace
do the faithful progress in any kind of virtue.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SIXTH READING

A reading from the prophet Baruch. 3:9-15,32 - 4:4

Listen, Israel, to commands that bring life;
hear, and learn what knowledge means.
Why, Israel, why are you in the country of your enemies,
growing older and older in an alien land,
sharing defilement with the dead,
reckoned with those who go to Sheol?

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 103:1-2,5-6,10,12-14,24,35 R. cf. v.30

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and glory,
wrapped in light as in a robe!

You founded the earth on its base,
to stand firm from age to age.
You wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak:
the waters stood higher than the mountains.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow in between the hills.
On their banks dwell the birds of heaven;
from the branches they sing their song.

From your dwelling you water the hills;
earth drinks its fill of your gift.
You make the grass grow for the cattle
and the plants to serve man's needs.

How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches.
Bless the Lord, my soul!

Let us pray.
Almighty ever-living God, who are wonderful in the ordering of all your works,

may those you have redeemed understand
that there exists nothing more marvelous
than the world's creation in the beginning
except that, at the end of the ages,
Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

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SECOND READING

A reading from the book of Genesis 22:1-18

God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham' he called. 'Here I am' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'

Rising early next morning Abraham saddled his ass and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He chopped wood for the burnt offering and started on his journey to the place God had pointed out to him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. Then Abraham said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there; we will worship and come back to you.'

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, loaded it on Isaac, and carried in his own hands the fire and the knife. Then the two of them set out together. Isaac spoke to his father Abraham, 'Father,' he said. 'Yes, my son,' he replied. 'Look,' he said 'here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' Abraham answered, 'My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.' Then the two of them went on together.

When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven. 'Abraham, Abraham' he said. 'I am here' he replied. 'Do not raise your hand against the boy' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your son, your only son.' Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt-offering in place of his son.

Abraham called this place 'The Lord Provides', and hence the saying today: On the mountain the Lord provides.

The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven. 'I swear by my own self - it is the Lord who speaks - because you have done this, because you have not refused me your son, your only son, I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of their enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience.'

so that what the Saints of old never doubted would come to pass
your Church may now see in great part fulfilled.
Through Christ our Lord.

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Amen.

FIFTH READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 55:1-11

Thus says the Lord:

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty;

though you have no money, come!

Buy corn without money, and eat,

and, at no cost, wine and milk.

Why spend money on what is not bread,

your wages on what fails to satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and you will have good things to eat
and rich food to enjoy.

Pay attention, come to me;

listen, and your soul will live.

With you I will make an everlasting covenant

out of the favours promised to David.

See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples,

a leader and a master of the nations.

See, you will summon a nation you never knew,

those unknown will come hurrying to you,

for the sake of the Lord your God,

of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,

call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,

the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;

for my thoughts are not your thoughts,

my ways not your ways - it is the Lord who speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above earth

as my ways are above your ways,

my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return
without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for
the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not
return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was
sent to do.

for the mountains may depart,
the hills be shaken,
but my love for you will never leave you
and my covenant of peace with you will never be shaken,
says the Lord who takes pity on you.

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Unhappy creature, storm-tossed, disconsolate,
see, I will set your stones on carbuncles
and your foundations on sapphires.
I will make rubies your battlements,
your gates crystal,
and your entire wall precious stones.
Your sons will all be taught by the Lord.
The prosperity of your sons will be great.
You will be founded on integrity;
remote from oppression, you will have nothing to fear;
remote from terror, it will not approach you.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 29:2,4-6,11-13. R. v.2
R. I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me
and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.
O Lord, you have raised my soul from the dead,
restored me to life from those who sink into the grave.

Sing psalms to the Lord, you who love him,
give thanks to his holy name.
His anger lasts a moment; his favour all through life.
At night there are tears, but joy comes with dawn.

The Lord listened and had pity.
The Lord came to my help.
For me you have changed my mourning into dancing:
O Lord my God, I will thank you for ever.

Let us pray.
Almighty ever-living God,
surpass, for the honour of your name,
what you pledged to the Patriarchs by reason of their faith,
and through sacred adoption increase the children of your promise,

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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Responsorial Psalm Ps 15: 5, 8-11, R. v.1

**R. Keep me safe, O God;
you are my hope.**

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. **R.**

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay. **R.**

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever. **R.**

Let us pray.
O God, supreme Father of the faithful,
who increase the children of your promise
by pouring out the grace of adoption
throughout the whole world
and who through the Paschal Mystery
make your servant Abraham father of nations,
as once you swore,
grant, we pray,
that your peoples may enter worthily
into the grace to which you call them.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THIRD READING

A reading from the book of Exodus. 14:15 - 15:1

The sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea.

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots

and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of the Lord, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and of cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried, 'the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!' 'Stretch out your hand over the sea,' the Lord said to Moses, 'that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.' Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh's whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them. That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

Responsorial Psalm Ex 15: 1-6, 17-18. R. v. 1

Let us sing to the Lord:

he has covered himself in glory.

I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!

Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea!

The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation.

This is my God and I extol him,

my father's God and I give him praise. **R.**

The Lord is a warrior! The Lord is his name.

The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea,

the flower of his army is drowned in the sea.

The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone. **R.**

Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power,

your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy.

In the greatness of your glory you crushed the foe. **R.**

You will lead them and plant them on your mountain,
the place, O Lord, where you have made your home,
the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made.
The Lord will reign for ever and ever. **R.**

Let us pray.

O God, whose ancient wonders remain undimmed in splendour even in our day,
for what you once bestowed on a single people,
freeing them from Pharaoh's persecution
by the power of your right hand,
now you bring about as the salvation of the nations
through the waters of rebirth,
grant, we pray, that the whole world
may become children of Abraham
and inherit the dignity of Israel's birthright.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FOURTH READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 54:5-14

With everlasting love the Lord your redeemer has taken pity on you.

Thus says the Lord:

Now your creator will be your husband,

his name, the Lord of Hosts;

your redeemer will be the Holy One of Israel,

he is called the God of the whole earth.

Yes, like a forsaken wife, distressed in spirit,

the Lord calls you back.

Does a man cast off the wife of his youth?

says your God.

I did forsake you for a brief moment,

but with great love will I take you back.

In excess of anger, for a moment

I hid my face from you.

But with everlasting love I have taken pity on you,

says the Lord, your redeemer.

I am now as I was in the days of Noah

when I swore that Noah's waters

should never flood the world again.

So now I swear concerning my anger with you

and the threats I made against you;