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of the SEASONS



*First Reading**Exodus 14.15-15.1*

Then YHWH said to Moses. “Why are you calling me? Tell the descendants of Israel to go on, and you raise your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it; and the descendants of Israel will go through the middle of the sea on dry ground. But I will make the Egyptians obstinate, and they will follow, for me to gain the respect because of Pharaoh and his army with its chariots and horsemen. The Egyptians will then know that I am YHWH, when I have won respect for myself because of Pharaoh and his army with its chariots and horsemen.”

Then God’s angel, the one who went at the head of the Israelite camp, moved around behind them, and the column of cloud moved from in front of them to their rear, where it came between the Egyptian and Israelite camp. It acted like a dark cloud to the Egyptians and a light for the Israelites, with the result that they did not come any closer to each other that night.

Then Moses stretched his hand over the sea, and YHWH made the sea recede by a strong wind that blew all night, and turned the sea into dry land, dividing the water; and so the descendants of Israel went into the middle of the sea on dry ground, with the water a wall to their right and to their left. The Egyptians, with all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and horsemen, pursued them and followed them into the middle of the sea.

What happened then, during the time before dawn, YHWH looked out on the Egyptian army through the column of fire and cloud,

and threw it into a panic; he clogged their chariot wheels so that they could hardly move. The Egyptians said, "Retreat! Escape from in front of Israel, because YHWH is fighting for them against the Egyptians!"

Then YHWH told Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea and let the water flow back over the Egyptians with their chariots and horsemen." And Moses stretched his hand over the sea, and when morning came, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing through it; and so YHWH drowned the Egyptians in the middle of the sea, and as the water returned, it covered the chariots and horsemen and all the army of Pharaoh that had entered the sea after the Israelites. Not so much as one of them survived. But the descendants of Israel had walked on dry land through the middle of the sea, with the water like a wall to their right and left.

That was how YHWH saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians on that day; and Israel looked at the Egyptians dead on the shore. Israel saw in this way the tremendous deed YHWH had done in Egypt; and so the people were in awe of YHWH, and believed in YHWH and in his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the descendants of Israel sang this song to YHWH:

*Antiphon:* Let us sing to the Master, since he has had a glorious triumph!

*Song*

*Exodus 15.1-6, 17-18*

I will sing to YHWH  
because he has had a glorious triumph!  
He has thrown horses and riders  
right into the sea!  
YHWH is my strength and my song  
and has come to my rescue;  
he is my God, and I will praise him  
and the God of my fathers; and I will glorify him.  
YHWH is a fighter,  
and YHWH is his name!  
He flung Pharaoh's chariots and army into the ocean!  
His elite officers are also drowned in the Red Sea!  
The ocean covered them,

and they sank to the bottom like stones!  
 Your right hand, YHWH, has shown its glorious power;  
 your right hand, YHWH, smashed the enemy to smithereens!  
 You will bring your people in and plant them  
 on the mountain you left as your legacy,  
 in the place, YHWH, you made for your own residence,  
 the holy place your hands have set up.  
 YHWH will be our King forever and ever!

*Antiphon:* Let us sing to the Master, since he has had a glorious triumph!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since even today we see how marvelous were the miracles you performed so long ago, when you saved a single nation from slavery, and how now you offer that rescue to everyone through the baptismal bath, may the peoples of the world please become true sons of Abraham and prove worthy of the heritage of Israel. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus.

#### *Second Reading*

*Ezekiel 36.16-28*

Then YHWH's utterance came to me, and said, "Son of Man, when the house of Israel lived in its own land, they defiled it by their conduct and actions; what they did was to me like the defilement of a menstruating woman; and so I poured my fury over them for the blood they had shed on the land, and for the idols they used to defile it. And I scattered them through the nations and they were dispersed through various countries. I punished them in accordance with their conduct and their actions.

"And when they came to these nations, wherever they went, they profaned my holy name, and the people said of them, 'These are YHWH's people, and yet they had to leave their land.' But I was concerned for the holiness of my name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the people wherever they went.

"And so say this to the house of Israel: 'This is what is said by God YHWH: "I am not going to do this for your sake, house of Israel; it is for the sake of my holy name, which you profaned among the nations wherever you went. I will show how holy my great name is, my

name which has been profaned among the nations by you as you lived among them; and the nations will know that I am YHWH,” says God YHWH, “when I have shown my holiness in you before their eyes.

““Because I will take you from among the nations, assemble you out of all the countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will shower you with clean water and wash off all your filth and your idols; I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will take out the heart of stone from your bodies and give you hearts of flesh. I will put my Spirit within you, and make you conduct yourself as I direct you, and you will keep my regulations and perform them. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors, and you will be my people and I will be your God.””

*Antiphon:* Like a deer panting for running water, my soul longs for you, my God.

*Song*

*Psalm 42.2-3, 5, 43.3-4*

Like a deer panting for a running stream,  
     my soul is panting for you, my God.  
 My soul is thirsty for God, the God of my life;  
     when will I go to his Temple to meet God face to face?  
 As I remember the past,  
     the soul inside me spills over:  
 how I used to go among throngs of people  
     and enter God's house,  
 among the cries of joy and praise  
     made by the pilgrim crowds at the festival.  
 Please send me your light and your truth,  
     and have them guide me;  
 make them bring me to your holy hill  
     and into your tent,  
 where I will go up to the altar of God,  
     the God of my delight,  
 and I will praise you on my harp,  
     God, my God.

*Antiphon:* Like a deer panting for running water, my soul longs for you,

my God.

**Prayer**

Dear Father, since you teach us in both the Old and New Treaties to celebrate this Passover mystery, please help us to understand your great love for us, and may the goodness you now show us confirm our hope in your future mercy. We make this request through our Master the Prince.

**Resume with the Te Deum**



**First Reading**

**1 Peter 1-21**

The Rock, an emissary of Prince Jesus, to those expatriates scattered through the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia who were chosen in the providence of God the Father by the Spirit's sanctification to be submissive to Prince Jesus and sprinkled with his blood:

God's blessing and peace upon you many times over.

Praised be God, the Father of our Master Prince Jesus, who has, by Prince Jesus' return from death, bestowed upon us from his enormous mercy a new birth into a life of hope—into an inheritance that is unending, untarnished, and undimmed, preserved in heaven for you who have the power of God to guard you in your faith—and into a rescue kept ready to be revealed at the last moment of time.

This should be a source of joy for you, if there must be at present a brief period when you suffer various troubles; so that the refined core of your faith, far more valuable than ephemeral gold refined by fire, will be found to be your praise, your glory, and your dignity when Prince Jesus comes out of his concealment. He is the one whom you love without having seen him, the one in whom even now without seeing you believe; the one who comprises your indescribable, sublime happiness, as you make your own the purpose of your faith: the emancipation of your souls.

It was this emancipation which was probed and explored by the

prophets who foretold the blessing which was to come upon you, as they searched into the when the moment was to be and what kind of opportunity was meant by the spirit of the Prince as he spoke in their hearts about the Prince's suffering and his subsequent glory; and they learned from him also that these revelations were at your service, not theirs, these revelations which have now been reported to you by those who have reported the good news under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, revelations into which angels long to penetrate.

This is why you should "fasten the belts" of your minds, and keep control over yourselves; you should put absolute hope in the blessing to be conferred upon you when Prince Jesus comes out of concealment. Like docile children, not taking as your pattern the desires you used to have in your ignorance, you are to become holy in all of your conduct in the way in which the one who called you is holy; as Scripture has it, "Be holy, because I am holy."

And if the one you call upon as your Father is the one who judges without partiality each one's deeds, you should spend this time of your life away from your home in trepidation, in the realization that you were not ransomed from the impotent gropings you inherited from your ancestors by ephemeral gold or silver, but by the inestimable blood of the Prince, sacrificed like an unblemished, unspotted lamb, destined for this task before ever the world was founded, and now making his appearance in this last era of time, for you—for those who because of him believe in the God who brought him back from death and gave him glory—so that it is God who is the source of your faith and hope.

The God and Father of our Master Prince Jesus is to be praised, because in his mercy he has given us new life in hope by bringing the Prince back from the dead. Hallelujah!

Free your minds from all that holds them down; learn self-control and put your full trust in God, who is offering you his grace by bringing the Prince back from the dead. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*Easter Homily by Melito of Sardis*

We should understand, my friends, that the paschal mystery is new and old at the same time, transitory and eternal, corruptible and incorruptible, and mortal and immortal. In terms of the Law, it is old; in terms of the Word, it is new; in its symbolism, it is transitory; in its grace,



it is eternal; it is corruptible in the sacrifice of the lamb, incorruptible in the eternal life of the Master; it is mortal in his burial in the earth, and immortal in his return to life from death.

Yes, the Law is old; but the Word is new; the precursor is transitory, but grace is eternal; the lamb could decay, but the Master cannot; he was slaughtered like a lamb, but he came back to life as God. “He was led like a sheep to slaughter, but he was not a sheep. He was silent as a lamb, yet he was not a lamb. The precursor has gone out of existence, and the reality has come. The lamb yields to God, and the sheep to a man, and the man is the Prince, who fills the whole of creation. The sacrifice of the lamb, the celebration of the Passover, and the prescriptions of the Law have been fulfilled in Prince Jesus; under the old Law, and still more under the new dispensation, everything pointed toward him.

Both the Law and the Word emanated from Zion and Jerusalem; but now the Law has yielded to the Word, and what is old to what is new. The commandment has become grace, the precursor a reality; the lamb has become a Son, the sheep a man, and the man, God.

The Master, though he was God, became man. He suffered for those who were suffering; he was bound for those in bonds; he was condemned for the guilty, and buried for those lying in graves—but he came back to life, and called out, “Who is there to fight with me? Come forward! I have freed the condemned, brought the dead back to life, and raised men from their graves. Can anyone say anything against me? I,” he said, “am the Prince; I have destroyed death, triumphed over the enemy, trampled underfoot the land beneath the earth, tied up the strong opponent, and taken men up to the heights of heaven. I am the Prince.

“And so, all you nations of human beings, come and receive forgiveness for the sins that contaminate you. I am your forgiveness. I am the Passover that brings you rescue; I am the lamb who was sacrificed for you. I am your ransom, your life, your return out of the grave, and you light. I am your rescue and your king. I will bring you to the heights of heaven. I will lift you up with my own right hand, and I will show you the eternal Father.”

By raising Jesus to life, God has been true to the promise made to our

ancestors. It is the Prince himself whom God has designated to be the judge of the living and the dead. Hallelujah!

God has made him Master and Prince; this Jesus whom you nailed to the cross. It is the Prince himself whom God has designated to be the judge of the living and the dead. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you give your Church constant growth by adding new members to your family, please help us put into action in our lives the bath we have received with faith. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 “Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of power and might—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;

and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.

*First Reading**1 Peter 1.22-2.10*

And once you have, in submission to the truth, washed your souls clean for sincere brotherly affection, you should love each other from the depths of your hearts, since now you have been reborn from a seed which is not one that dies, the indestructible seed of the utterance of the living God. That is, "All matter is like grass, and all of its splendor is like blossoms in the grass; the grass withers and the blossom drops off; but the Master's utterance remains forever." and this "utterance" is the good news reported to you.

And so keep far from everything wrong, from any kind of deception, hypocrisy, envy, or disparagement, and like newborn infants be hungry for the undiluted milk of the mind; so that you will grow up toward your emancipation, seeing that "you have tasted that the Master is benevolent." Approach that living stone, the one humans rejected but which God selected for its value, and build yourselves as living stones into a spiritual shrine; so that a sacred priesthood will be able to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Prince Jesus. Or as Scripture says, "I now place in Zion a stone, the cornerstone I have chosen for its value; and one who believes in it will not be shamed."

His value, observe, is for those of you who believe. For those who do not, “the stone which the builders rejected has been placed at the head of the corner,” and “it is a stone to trip over, and a rock standing as an obstacle.” Those who trip are the ones who do not believe God’s utterance, as was predicted.

But what you are is “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a sacred nation, a people to be purchased, so that you will be able to report the competence of” his calling you out of darkness into his miraculous light. You, who were “no people” are now “God’s people; you, who were unpitied” have now “been pitied.”

Build yourselves like living stones into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. Offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Prince Jesus. Hallelujah!

You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people God has claimed as his own. Offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Prince Jesus. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Discourse by St. Anastasius of Antioch*

The Prince, who has shown by his words and deeds that he really was God and the Master of the universe, said to his students as he was about to go up to Jerusalem, “We are going up to Jerusalem now, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the Gentiles and the chief priests and law-experts to be whipped and ridiculed and crucified.”

These words bore out the predictions of the prophets, who had foretold the death he was to undergo in Jerusalem. From the beginning, holy Scripture had foretold the Prince’s death, the sufferings that would precede it, and what would happen to his body afterwards. Scripture also affirmed that these things were going to happen to a person who was immortal and incapable of suffering because he was God.

Only by reflecting on the meaning of the Incarnation can we see how it is possible to say with perfect truth both that the Prince suffered and that he was incapable of suffering, and why the Word of God, in himself incapable of suffering, came to suffer. In fact, man could have been saved in no other way, as the Prince alone knew together with those to whom he revealed it. That is, he knows all the secrets of the Father, in the same way as “the Spirit penetrates the depths” of all

mysteries.

It was necessary for the Prince to suffer; his agony was absolutely unavoidable. He said so himself when he called his companions dull and slow to believe because they failed to recognize that he had to suffer and so enter his glory. Leaving behind him the glory that had been his with the Father before the world came into existence, he had gone out to save his people. This rescue, however, could be achieved only by the suffering of the author of our life, as Paul taught when he said that “the author of life himself was made complete through suffering.”

Because of us, he was deprived of his glory for a little while, the glory that was his as the only Son ever sired by the Father, but through the cross this glory is seen to have been restored to him in a certain way in the body that he had assumed. In his explanation of what water the Savior was referring to when he said, “A person who has faith in me will have rivers of living water flowing from within him,” John says in his Report of the Good News that “he was speaking of the Holy Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive, because the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet shown what he really was.” The “showing what he really was” he meant was his death upon the cross, for which the Master prayed to the Father before undergoing his agony, asking his Father to give him the glory he had in his presence before the world began.

Everything exists for God and through God; it was fitting that he would make complete through suffering Jesus, the source of our rescue, who would bring so many of God’s children to glory. May glory and power be his for ever. Hallelujah!

It was necessary for the Prince to suffer and so enter his glory. May glory and power be his for ever. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since by this Easter mystery you touch our lives with the healing power of your love, and have given us the freedom of the sons of God, may those of us who are now celebrating your gift please find joy in it forever in heaven. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit

as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of power and might—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.

Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.

## ednesday

### *First Reading*

*1 Peter 2.11-25*

My friends, please, like the expatriates and exiles you are, stay away from bodily cravings which make war against your souls; keep your conduct proper among the Gentiles, so that, no matter how much they may slander you as wrongdoers, they will, on the day when the accounting is made, acknowledge the truth about God from the good deeds they have seen.

Be submissive to every human institution which has the Master's sanction: to the emperor above all, but also to the governors he sends to punish criminals and reward the law-abiding, because God's will is in this direction; and by being law-abiding you will silence the ignorance of the unreflective; act like free people, but without using your freedom as an excuse for wrong; behave as God's slaves. Respect everyone, love the brotherhood, fear God, and defer to the emperor.

Household slaves are to submit with total devotion to their masters, to perverse masters as well as to those who are good and gentle; it is a blessing when a person out of reverence for God endures pain which is undeservedly incurred. That is, how meritorious is it for a person who has done wrong to put up with a beating? What is a blessing in God's eyes is to be patient when doing good and suffering harm. This, you understand, is what you have been called to, because the Prince too suffered for you, and left you an example, so that you would follow his steps. He is the one who "committed no sin nor was any deceit found in his mouth"; the one who when cursed did not curse back, when suffering harm threatened no harm, and put his trust in the one whose judgments are just; he is the one who "himself carried" our "sins" in his body upon the wood of the tree, so that we would be relieved of sin and live for virtue; the one "whose struggle has healed you." And you were

“like straying sheep”; but you have now turned back to your shepherd and the guardian of your souls.

The Prince suffered for us, and left us an example, so that we would follow in his footsteps. Hallelujah!

He carried our sins in his own body on the cross so that we could die to sin and live for holiness, so that we would follow in his footsteps. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*An Easter homily by an ancient author*

St. Paul is overjoyed in the knowledge that spiritual health has been restored to the human race. “Death entered the world through Adam,” he explains, “but life has been given back to the world through the Prince.” Again, he says, “The first man, who came from dirt, is dirty by his nature; the second one is from heaven, and his heavenly. And just as we have carried the image of the dirty man,” the image of human nature grown old in sin, “we should carry the image of the heavenly man”: human nature lifted up, redeemed, restored, and purified in the Prince. We must hold fast to the rescue we have received. “The Prince was the firstfruits,” says the Emissary; he is the source of return from the dead and life. “Those who belong to the Prince will follow him.” Since they model their lives on his purity, they will be secure in the hope of his return to life and of enjoying the glory promised in heaven with him. Our Master said so himself in the Good News: “Anyone who follows me will not go out of existence; he will pass from death to life.”

In this way, the suffering of our Savior is the rescue of mankind. The reason why he desired to die for us was that he wanted those of us who believe in him to live forever. When time reached completion, it was his will to become what we are, so that we could inherit the eternity he promised and live with him forever.

And so here is the grace conferred by these heavenly mysteries, and the gift which Easter, the most longed-for feast of the year, brings; here is where the beginnings of creatures are newly formed: children born from the life-giving font of holy Church, born once again with the simplicity of infants, and crying out with the evidence of a clean conscience. Chaste fathers and inviolate mothers accompany this new family, which is innumerable, born to new life through faith.



As they emerge from the grace-giving womb of the font, a blaze of candles burns brightly beneath the tree of faith. The Easter festival brings the grace of holiness from heaven to men. Through the repeated celebration of the sacred mysteries, they receive the spiritual nourishment of the Sacraments, and the fellowship of one community fostered at the very heart of holy Church worships the one God, and adores the triple name of his essential holiness, and along with the prophet sings the psalm which belongs to this yearly festival: "This is the day the Master has made; we should be happy and joyful."

And what is this day? It is the Master Prince Jesus himself, the author of light, who brings the sunrise and the beginning of life, as he says of himself, "I am the light of day; if anyone walks in daylight he does not stumble." That is to say, whoever follows the Prince in everything will come by this path to the throne of eternal light.

This was the prayer the Prince made to the Father while he was still on earth. "Father, I wish that those who have come to believe in me will also be where I am; and that they will find a home in us, just as you are in me and I am in you."

The first man was formed from the dirt of the earth; the second is from heaven. Just as we resemble the dirty man, we will also bear the image of the man from heaven. Hallelujah!

We are on earth like the earthy man; in heaven we will be like the heavenly man. Just as we resemble the dirty man, we will also bear the image of the man from heaven. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you give us the joy on this solemn feast of recalling the rising of the Prince to new life, may the joy of our annual celebration please bring us to the joy of eternal life. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.

The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of power and might—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.


 THURSDAY
*First Reading**1 Peter 3.1-17*

In the same sense, wives are to be submissive to their husbands, especially in those cases where the husbands do not have the faith from what has been told them, so that they can be won over with no words by your conduct, as they consider how respectfully and chastely you behave.

Your loveliness is not to come from externals such as braided hair, golden brooches, or the clothes you wear; it should consist in the hidden personality within your hearts, and lie within the adornment that does not decay: the spirit of gentleness and quiet, which is what has value in God's eyes. You will recall that this was the way in which the holy women of ancient times beautified themselves: by submitting to their husbands; as, for example Sarah listened to Abraham and called him master. You have become her children, and can do what is right without any trace of groveling.

And husbands in this spirit are to live in partnership with your wives, realistically, treating them carefully like delicate china, and like co-heirs of the gift of life, so that there will be no impediment to your prayers.

To sum up, you should all be in agreement with each other, sympathetic toward each other, with brotherly love for each other, tender to each other, and humble before each other, not doing harm to repay harm done, nor disparaging anyone to repay a slighting remark; on the contrary, you should speak highly of such a person, because this is what you are called to do, so that you will inherit commendation.

Or, to put it another way, "one who loves life and wishes to see pleasant days is to stop his tongue from speaking wrong and his lips from uttering deceit; he must turn aside from evil and do good, search out peace and follow after it." Because "The Master's eyes are on the virtuous and his ears are listening for their requests; but the Master's face is set against wrongdoers."

And who is there who can harm you if you are devoted to what is good? Even if you do suffer because of your virtue, you are fortunate; "have no fear of their terrors, and no concern; hold the Master," the

Prince, “sacred” in your hearts, and be always ready to defend yourself against any charge dealing with what you hope for—but with gentleness and respect, to keep your conscience clear, so that those who slander your good conduct in the Prince will be discredited in what they claim. It is better to suffer for doing good, if that is God’s will, than for doing evil.

It is a blessing for you to have people hate you and curse your name as evil because of the Son of Man; be glad on that day; celebrate it, because your reward in heaven will be great. Hallelujah!

If you suffer for your virtue, you should consider that you have received a great blessing. Hallelujah! Be glad on that day; celebrate it, because your reward in heaven will be great. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*from the Jerusalem Catecheses*

You were brought down to the font of the sacred Bath just as the Prince was taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb, which is before your eyes. Each of you was asked, “Do you believe in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?” You made the profession of faith that brings your rescue, you were immersed into the water, and you rose again from it three times. This symbolized the three days the Prince spent in the tomb.

In the same way as our Savior spent three days and three nights in the depths of the earth, your first rising from the water represented the first day, and your first immersion the first night. At night a man cannot see, but in the day he walks in the light; and so when you were immersed in the water, it was like night for you and you could not see; but when you rose out of it again, it was like coming into broad daylight. In the same instant, you died and were born again; the saving water was both your tomb and your mother.

Solomon’s phrase in another context is very apposite here. He spoke of “a time to give birth, and a time to die.” For you, however, it was the reverse: a time to die and a time to be born, though in fact both events took place at the same time, and your birth was simultaneous with your death.

This is something amazing and unheard-of. It was not we who actually died, were buried, and came back to life again; we only did this

symbolically; but we have been saved in actual fact. It is the Prince who was crucified, who was buried, and who came back to life again, and all this has been attributed to us. We share in his sufferings symbolically and gain rescue in reality. What unfathomable love for men! The Prince's undefiled hands were pierced by the nails, and he suffered the pain; I experience no pain and no anguish, yet by the share I have in his sufferings he freely grants me rescue.

No one should imagine that the Bath consists only in the forgiveness of sins and the grace of adoption. Our Bath is not like John's bath, which conferred only the forgiveness of sins. We know perfectly well that the Bath, besides washing away our sins and bringing us the gift of the Holy Spirit, is a symbol of the sufferings of the Prince. This is why Paul exclaims, "Do you not know that when we were bathed into Jesus the Prince we were, by that very act, sharing in his death? By the Bath, we went into the tomb with him."

These new-born lambs sing "Hallelujah!" as their song of praise. They have come to the streams of living water, and now they are filled with radiant beauty. Hallelujah!

They stand, dressed in white robes with palms in their hands, in the presence of the Lamb, and now they are filled with radiant beauty. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you gather the nations to praise your name, may everyone who is reborn in the baptismal Bath be united with all the rest in faith and love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,

the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of power and might—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

*First Reading**1 Peter 3.18-4.11*

The reason for this is that the Prince died because of sins, and died one time only for you, a virtuous man for vicious people, to bring you to God; he was made a corpse in his body while being given life in his spirit; and it was in this state that he went to make his proclamation to the spirits in prison, who during Noah's time kept disobeying while God's patience continued through the building of the Ark, into which only a few—eight persons—were saved through water.

—And the bathing which now saves you is the analogate of this, not by washing dirt off your body, but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience through the return to life of Prince Jesus, who is enthroned beside God and has angels, Dominations, and Powers as his subjects.

In any case, since the Prince underwent suffering in his body, you are to arm yourselves with the same attitude: that a person who undergoes suffering in his body has called a halt to his sinning, and is to live the rest of his time as a body following the will of God and no longer following human cravings. The time gone by ought to have been enough for doing what the Gentiles crave: living lives of over-indulgence, self-gratification, drunkenness, sprees, binges, and dissipated idolatry. Naturally, these people find it strange that you do not join them in the same wild orgies, and call you names for it; but they will have their own story to tell to the one who is prepared to judge the living and the dead.

And, of course, this is why the good news was reported to the dead too, so that they would be rated in a human way as bodies, while they were to live in God's way as spirits.

The end of everything has come near; and so be sensible and keep yourselves under control so that you can pray—with an attitude of intense love toward others, since love covers over hordes of sins, and of ungrudging hospitality toward each other.

Consistently with the gift he has received, each of you is to be of service to one another, like good brokers of God's varied blessings; a person who gives speeches is to speak as God's spokesman; a person who attends on others is to do so with the vigor which is infused into him by

God; so that in every case the credit will be given to God through Prince Jesus, who is the possessor of glory and power for all the endless ages. Amen.

The Prince died for our sins: the innocent for the guilty, so that he could lead us back to God. He was put to death materially, and was raised to life spiritually. Hallelujah!

He is enthroned next to God; he died to make eternal life our inheritance. He was put to death materially, and was raised to life spiritually. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*from the Jerusalem Catechesis*

When we were bathed into the Prince and dressed in his livery, we were transformed into an image of the Son of God. Since God destined us to be his adopted sons, he gave us a likeness to the Prince in his glory, and because we live in unity with the Prince, who is God's anointed, we are properly called "the anointed ones" ourselves. When he said, "Do not touch my anointed ones," God was speaking of us.

We became the "anointed ones" when received the sign of the Holy Spirit. In fact, everything took place in us through images, because we are images of the Prince ourselves. The Prince bathed in the river Jordan, and gave to its water the fragrance of divinity; and when he came up out of it, the Holy Spirit descended upon him, what was similar resting on what was similar. And we too, after coming up from the sacred water of the Bath, were anointed with chrism, which signifies the Holy Spirit, by whom the Prince was anointed and of whom blessed Isaiah prophesied in the Master's name, "The Spirit of the Master is upon me because he has anointed me; he has sent me to report the good news to the poor."

The Prince's anointing was not done by human hands, nor did it use ordinary oil; No, since the Father had destined him to be the Savior of the whole world, he anointed him himself with the Holy Spirit. What Peter said give evidence of this: "Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit." And the prophet David declared, "Your throne, my God, will endure forever; your royal scepter is a scepter of virtue. You have loved virtue and hated vice; and that is why God—your God—has anointed you with the oil of gladness above all your fellows."



The oil of gladness with which the Prince was anointed was a spiritual oil; it was in fact the Holy Spirit himself, who is called “the oil of gladness” because he is a source of spiritual joy. But we too have been anointed with oil, and by this anointing we have entered into fellowship with the Prince and have received a share in his life.

Be careful not to think that this oil is simply ordinary oil and nothing else. After the invocation of the Spirit, it is no longer ordinary oil; it is the gift of the Prince, and by the presence of his divinity, it becomes the instrument through which we receive the Holy Spirit. While our bodies are anointed symbolically on our foreheads and our senses, our souls are sanctified by the holy and life-giving Spirit.

You have believed the good news and have been sealed in accordance with the promise of the Holy Spirit. He is the pledge of our inheritance, the promise of freedom for those whom God has won for himself to the praise of his glory. Hallelujah!

God has anointed us and sealed us as his own; and as a pledge of what is to come, he has given us the Spirit that makes his home in our hearts—the promise of freedom for those whom God has won for himself to the praise of his glory. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Eternal Father, since you gave us the Easter mystery as our Treaty of transformation into conformity with you, may the new birth we celebrate show its effects in the way we live. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,

“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of power and might—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.



SATURDAY

*First Reading*

*1 Peter 4.12-5.14*

My friends, do not be turned away by the ordeal of fire that is

to come to refine you, as if something foreign to you were happening; be glad of it as your share in the Prince's suffering, whose purpose will be your enjoyment of happiness when his true reality comes out of concealment. If your names are blackened for your association with the Prince, you are fortunate, because the spirit of a good reputation and of God hovers over you.

That is, none of you should be being punished as a murderer, thief, criminal, or disturber of the peace; but if you are punished for being a "Christian," do not be ashamed of it, and praise God using this name. The moment, you understand, has arrived for the beginning of the crisis, starting with God's household; and if we are the first, what will the last of it be like for those who do not believe the report of God's good news?

And if "a virtuous person barely escapes, where will we find an impious sinner?" And this implies that those who suffer harm as God wishes are to entrust their souls to their faithful Creator as they do what is right.

I now make this plea to the elders among you as from a fellow-elder and witness of the Prince's suffering, as well as one who is to have his share in the glory that is going to be revealed: Shepherd the flock in your area, and watch over it voluntarily, as God would have it, not because you must, gratuitously, not because you are paid for it, and as models for the flock to imitate, not as masters over possessions you have been given; and then when the chief Shepherd appears, you will earn the indestructible laurel-wreath of glory.

And in the same way, those of you who are younger are to be submissive to the elders; and all of you are to clothe yourselves in unpretentiousness toward each other, because "God stands against the arrogant, and gives his blessings to the little ones." And so consider yourselves as insignificant beneath the mighty hand of God, so that he will elevate you when the time comes; and throw all your worries onto him, because he has care over you. Keep control of yourselves, and stay alert, because your opponent the devil is prowling around roaring like a lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand up to him with firm faith, and realize that what you suffer is the same that is expected of your brotherhood through the world; and then the God of every blessing, who has called you to his eternal glory in the Prince, will himself mend

your defects, set you up, and give you a firm foundation in your puny suffering. It is he who possesses the power, for all the ages. Amen.

Silvanus, one I consider a faithful brother to you, assisted me in writing this brief message to you as encouragement and evidence that what I have related is the true blessing of God; stand tall in it.

Your sister in Babylon, who is also chosen, sends you greetings, as does my son Mark; pass on the greeting to each other with a kiss of peace.

Peace to all of you in the Prince.

Be happy to the degree that you share in the sufferings of the Prince, because your joy will be that much greater when his glory is revealed. Hallelujah!

It is a blessing for you when people hate you because of the Son of Man, because your joy will be that much greater when his glory is revealed. Hallelujah!

*Second reading*

*from the Jerusalem Catecheses*

“On the night he was betrayed, our Master Prince Jesus took bread, and when he had expressed his gratitude to God for it, he tore the loaf apart and gave it to his students, with the words, “Take this; eat it; this is my body.” He took the cup, expressed his gratitude, and said, “Take this; drink it; this is my blood.” Since the Prince has himself declared the bread to be his body, who can have any further doubt? Since he has said himself quite categorically, “This is my blood,” who would dare to question it and say that it is not his blood?

Therefore, it is with complete assurance that we receive the bread and wine as the body and blood of the Prince; his body is given to us under the symbol of bread and his blood is given to us under the symbol of wine, in order to make us one body and blood with him by receiving them. Having his body and blood in the parts of our body, we become bearers of the Prince and sharers, as St. Peter says, in the divine nature.

Once, when speaking to the Judeans, the Prince said, “If you do not eat the meat of my body and drink my blood, you will have no life in you.” This horrified them, and they left him. Since they did not understand his words in a spiritual way, they thought the Savior wished

them to practice cannibalism.

Under the Old Treaty, there was showbread; but it came to an end with the old dispensation to which it belonged. Under the New Treaty, there is bread from heaven and the Cup of Rescue; these sanctify both soul and body, since the bread is adapted to the sanctification of the body, and the Word to the sanctification of the soul.

Do not, then, regard the Eucharistic elements as ordinary bread and wine; they are in fact the body and blood of the Master, as he has declared himself. Whatever your senses may tell you, be strong in faith.

You have been taught and you are firmly convinced that what looks and tastes like bread and wine is not bread and wine, but the body and blood of the Prince. You know also how David referred to this long ago when he sang, "Bread gives strength to man's heart and makes his face shine with the oil of gladness." So strengthen your heart by receiving this bread as spiritual bread, and bring joy to the face of your soul.

May purity of conscience remove the veil from the face of your soul, so that by contemplating the glory of the Master, as if you were looking into a mirror, you will be transformed from glory to glory in our Master Jesus the Prince. May glory be his through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Jesus took bread, expressed his gratitude, and tore apart the loaf, and then gave it to his students and said, "This is my body, which is given up for you. Do this in memory of me." Hallelujah!

When your children ask what this ritual means, tell them, "This is the sacrifice of the Master's Passover." Do this in memory of me. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Loving Father, since by the outpouring of your grace you increase the number of those who believe in you, please watch over your chosen family and give undying life to all those who have been born again in the baptismal bath. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of power and might—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaims you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.

I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

# Second Sunday of Easter

## *First Reading*

*Colossians 3.1-17*

But then if you did come back to life with the Prince, aim at what is above, where the Prince has his throne beside God's; give your attention to what is above, not what it on the earth. You died, remember, and your life is now concealed with the Prince in God; and when the Prince, who is our life, comes into the open, we will also come into the open with him in glory.

So kill the parts of you that are earthly: casual sex, filthiness, passion, lust, and that greediness which is actually idolatry. These bring God's vengeance, and are the way you used to behave when you lived in them. But now take them all off: vengeance, anger, malice, cursing, and dirty language; don't lie to each other, because you have stripped off the human being you used to be with all of its properties, and have got dressed in a new humanity which keeps renewing itself in knowledge, following the pattern of its creator. Here there are no Greeks and Judeans, circumcised and uncircumcised, foreigners, Scythians, slaves or free people; the Prince is everything and is in everyone.

And the point is that you are to dress yourselves in what is proper for people chosen, sacred and loved by God: tenderness, kindness, humility, patience, and tolerance; put up with each other, and forgive anyone you have a grievance against; you are to forgive others in the way your Master forgave you. And over and above this put on love, which is the cord that ties perfection together.

And then the Prince's peace should govern your hearts; this is what you were called to when you all became a single body; be grateful



for it. And what the Prince said ought to find a richly furnished home in you, as with all of his wisdom you teach and inform each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs which you sing with thankful hearts to God. Do everything you do and say everything you say in the name of Master Jesus, and be grateful to God, his Father, through him.

Since you have been raised to life with the Prince, set your hearts on what is in heaven where the Prince is enthroned beside God. Search out what is above, and not what is on earth. Hallelujah!

You have died, and your life is hidden with the Prince in God. Search out what is above, and not what is on earth. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

I am speaking now to those of you have been reborn in the Bath. My little children in the Prince, you are the new offspring of the Church, the gift of the Father, and the proof of Mother Church's fruitfulness. All those of you who stand firm in the Master are a holy seed, a new colony of bees, the very flowering of our service and fruit of our labor, my joy, and my winner's laurel crown.

I will address to you the words of the Emissary: "Put on the livery of the Master Prince Jesus, and take no care for matter and its desires," so that you will be dressed in the life of the one you have put on in this sacrament. "You have all been dressed in the Prince by your Bath in him; there is with the Prince neither Judean nor Greek, slave nor freeman, male nor female; you are all one and the same in Jesus the Prince."

This is the power of this sacrament; it is a sacrament of new life, which begins here and now with the forgiveness of all past sins, and will be brought to completion when the dead return to life. "You have been buried with the Prince in the Bath into death so that, in the same way as the Prince came back to life from death, you will walk in newness of life."

You are now walking by faith, still on pilgrimage in a mortal body away from the Master; but the one your steps are directed toward is himself the secure and certain path for you: Prince Jesus, the one who became man for our sake. He has stored up a wealth of happiness for everyone who holds him in reverence, and he will reveal it to those who put their hope in him, and bring it to completion when we have attained

the reality which we possess even now in hope.

This is the octave day of your new birth. Today the sign of faith that was prefigured in the Old Treaty by the circumcision of the body on the eighth day after birth is fulfilled in you. When the Master came back to life from death, he took off the mortality of his body; his risen body was still the same body, but it was no longer subject to death. By his return to life, he consecrated Sunday, or the Master's day; though it is the third day after his suffering, this day is the eighth after the Sabbath, and is therefore also the first day of the week.

And so your own hope of returning to life is sure and certain, even though it is not yet realized, because you have received the sacrament or sign of this reality, and have been given the pledge of the Spirit. "And then if you have returned to life with the Prince, search out what is above, where the Prince is enthroned beside God; set your hearts on what is heavenly, not what is on earth. You have died, remember, and your life is hidden with the Prince in God; and when the Prince, who is your life, appears, then you too will appear with him in glory."

You have died, and your life is hidden with the Prince in God. When the Prince, who is your life, appears, you too will appear with him in glory. Hallelujah!

You must consider yourselves dead to sin but alive for God in Prince Jesus our Master. When the Prince, who is your life, appears, you too will appear with him in glory. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear God of mercy, since you wash our sins off in water, give us new birth in the Spirit, and redeem us in the blood of the Prince, please increase our awareness of these blessings as we celebrate the Prince's return to life, and renew your gift of life within us. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Resume with the Te Deum


*First Reading**Revelation 1.1-20*

A revelation of Prince<sub>7</sub> Jesus<sub>14[3]</sub> which God<sub>96</sub> gave him to show to his slaves<sub>14</sub> what must happen with speed; and which he made known by sending it through his angel<sub>66</sub> to his slave<sub>14</sub> John<sub>4</sub>, who witnessed God<sub>96</sub>'s words<sub>18</sub> and the testimony<sub>9</sub> given by Prince<sub>7</sub> Jesus<sub>14[3]</sub> with his own eyes<sub>10</sub>.

It will go well for<sub>7</sub> the one who reads this out and for those who listen to the words<sub>18</sub> of this prophesy<sub>7</sub> and keep what is written in it; the moment<sub>7</sub> is near.

John<sub>4</sub>, to the seven communities<sub>20</sub> in Asia: Blessings on you and peace from he who is, who was, and who is coming<sub>3</sub>, and from the seven spirits<sub>24</sub> before his throne<sub>45</sub>, and from Prince<sub>7</sub> Jesus<sub>14[3]</sub>, the faithful witness<sub>5</sub>, the firstborn of the dead<sub>13</sub>, and the ruler of the kings<sub>21</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub>.

To the one who loves us and releases us from our sins<sub>3</sub> in his blood<sub>19</sub>, and who has made us a kingdom<sub>9</sub>—priests<sub>3</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> and his Father<sub>5</sub>—be glory<sub>17</sub> and might for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>. Amen<sub>9</sub>.

There he is coming, with the clouds<sub>7</sub>, and every eye<sub>10</sub> will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the tribes<sub>21</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub> will mourn him. Yes. Amen<sub>9</sub>.

“I am Alpha and Omega<sub>3</sub>, says the Master<sub>24</sub> God<sub>96</sub>, “He who is, who was, and who is coming<sub>3</sub>, The Ruler of all<sub>9</sub>.”

I, John<sub>4</sub>, your brother<sub>5</sub> and companion in the suffering<sub>5</sub>, kingdom<sub>9</sub>, and persistence<sub>7</sub> in Jesus<sub>14</sub>, was on the island called Patmos because of God<sub>96</sub>'s words<sub>18</sub> and Jesus<sub>14</sub>' testimony<sub>9</sub>. I was in the spirit<sub>24</sub> on the Master<sub>24</sub>'s day<sub>21</sub>, and I heard behind me a voice<sub>55</sub> great as a trumpet<sub>6</sub>, which said, “Write what you see onto a scroll<sub>21</sub> and send it to the seven communities<sub>20</sub>; to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis<sub>3</sub>, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

I turned to see the voice<sub>55</sub> that spoke to me, and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands<sub>7</sub>, and among<sub>8</sub> the lampstands<sub>7</sub> someone like a son<sub>8</sub> of man<sub>25</sub> dressed in a foot-length robe and belted across his chest with a golden sash; his head<sub>19</sub> and hair<sub>3</sub> were white as wool as white as snow; his eyes<sub>10</sub> were like a flame<sub>3</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub>, and his feet<sub>11</sub>

like burnished bronze, glowing as if in a furnace; and his voice<sub>55</sub> was like the sound<sub>55</sub> of rushing water<sub>18</sub>. In his right<sub>9</sub> hand<sub>16</sub> he had he had seven stars<sub>14</sub>, and from his mouth<sub>21</sub> issued a keen two-edged sword<sub>6</sub>; the sight of him was like the sun<sub>13</sub> shining with all its power<sub>12</sub>. When I saw him, I fell at his feet<sub>11</sub> like a dead man<sub>13</sub>.

He placed his right<sub>9</sub> hand upon me, and said, "Do not be afraid;

I am the First and the Last<sub>3</sub>, the one who is alive<sub>7</sub>; I was dead<sub>13</sub>, and now I am alive<sub>7</sub> for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>, and I have the keys<sub>4</sub> of death<sub>19</sub> and the land of the dead<sub>4</sub>. "Write, then, what you see; what exists now and what will happen after this. "The secret<sub>4</sub> of the seven stars<sub>14</sub> which you see in my right<sub>9</sub> hand and of the seven golden lampstands<sub>7</sub>: The seven stars<sub>14</sub> are angels<sub>66</sub> of the seven communities<sub>20</sub>, and the lampstands<sub>7</sub> are the seven communities<sub>20</sub>.

The Prince loved us and poured out his blood to free us from our sins; may glory and power be his forever. Hallelujah!

He is the source of everything and the firstborn of the dead; may glory and power be his forever. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*                      *Ancient Easter Homily by Pseudo-Chrysostom*

The Passover we are celebrating brings rescue to the whole human race, beginning with the first man, who is saved and given life along with all the others.

In an imperfect and transitory way, the forerunners and images of the past prefigured the perfect, eternal reality which has now been revealed; the presence of what is represented makes the symbol obsolete: when the king appears in person, no one pays reverence to his statue.

How far the symbol falls short of the reality can be seen from the fact that the symbolic Passover celebrated the brief life of the firstborn of the Judeans, while the real Passover celebrates the eternal life of all mankind. It is a small gain to escape death for a short time, only to die soon after; it is a very different thing to escape death altogether as we do through the sacrifice of the Prince, our Passover.

If it is correctly understood, the very name shows why this is our greatest feast. It is called "Passover" because the destroying angel passed over the houses of the Hebrews when he was striking down the

firstborn; but it is even more true to say that he passes over us, because he does so once for all when we are lifted up to eternal life by the Prince.

If we think only of the true Passover and ask why it is that the time of the Passover and the rescue of the firstborn is taken to be the beginning of the year, the answer must surely be that the sacrifice of the Passover is the beginning of eternal life for us. Because it comes round full circle and never comes to an end, the year is a symbol of eternity.

The Prince, the sacrifice that was offered for us, is the father of the world to come; he puts an end to our former life, and through the regenerating water of the Bath, in which we imitate his death and return to life, he gives us the beginning of a new life. The knowledge that the Prince is the Passover lamb who was sacrificed for us should make us regard the moment of his bloodshed as the beginning of our own lives; as far as we are concerned, the Prince's bloodshed on our behalf takes place when we become aware of his grace and understand the life conferred on us by this sacrifice. Once we have understood it, we should enter this new life with great eagerness and never return to the old one, which is now at an end. As Scripture says, "We have died to sin; but then how can we continue to live in it?"

Get rid of the old leaven of decay, and then you will be a new batch of bread. The Prince has become our Paschal sacrifice; so let us keep the feast with joy in the Master. Hallelujah!

He was put to death for our sins and raised to life for us to become virtuous; so let us keep the feast with joy in the Master. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Omnipotent, eternally living God, since your Spirit made us your children, who have the privilege of calling you our Father, please increase your Spirit of love in us and bring us to our promised inheritance. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

# Tuesday

## First Reading

## Revelation 2.1-11

“Write to the angel<sub>66</sub> of the community<sub>20</sub> in Ephesus: “This is what is said by the one who dominates the seven stars<sub>14</sub> in his right, hand, the one who walks among<sub>8</sub> the seven golden lampstands<sub>7</sub>: “I know your deeds<sub>20</sub>, your labor and your persistence<sub>7</sub>, and that you cannot put up

with evil people, and have tested those who call themselves Emissaries<sub>3</sub> and are not, and found them liars; and you maintain your persistence<sub>7</sub>, and have borne your burden for my name<sub>38</sub> and have not grown tired.

“But I have this against you that you have abandoned your first love. Remember, then, how far you have fallen and change heart and do the deeds<sub>20</sub> you did at first; if not, I will come to you and push your lampstand<sub>7</sub> from its place<sub>8</sub>—unless you change heart.

“But you do have this in your favor: you hate the deeds<sub>20</sub> of the Nicolaitans, which I hate also.”

Anyone with ears<sub>8</sub> is to listen to what the Spirit<sub>24</sub> tells the communities<sub>20</sub>: “I will give the one who wins the battle<sub>9</sub>, the right to eat from the tree<sub>7</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> which is in God<sub>96</sub>’s paradise.

“Write to the angel<sub>66</sub> of the community<sub>20</sub> in Smyrna: “This is what is said by the First and the last<sub>3</sub>, the one who became a dead man<sub>13</sub> and lived: I know your suffering<sub>5</sub> and poverty—but you are rich—and the blasphemy<sub>5</sub> of those who call themselves Judeans and are not, and are the synagogue of Satan<sub>8</sub>. Have no fear of what you are to undergo; the devil<sub>5</sub> is now about to throw you into prison<sub>4</sub> to test you, and you will have suffering<sub>5</sub> for ten days<sub>21</sub>. Remain faithful to death<sub>19</sub>, and I will give you the winner’s laurel crown<sub>8</sub> of life<sub>16</sub>.”

Anyone with ears<sub>8</sub> is to listen to what the Spirit<sub>24</sub> tells the communities<sub>20</sub>: “The one who wins the battle<sub>9</sub>, will not be harmed by the second death<sub>19</sub>.”

Be faithful to death, and I will give you the winner’s laurel crown of life. Those who have won the battle need not fear the second death. Hallelujah!

Fight to the death for the truth, and the Master God will do battle for you. Those who have won the battle need not fear the second

death. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*      *A Book to Monimus by St. Fulgentius of Ruspe*

The spiritual development of the body of the Prince is achieved through love. As St. Peter says, "Like living stones, you are built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Prince Jesus." And there can be no more effective way to pray for this spiritual growth than for the Church, which is itself the Prince's body, to make the offering of his body and blood in the sacramental form of bread and wine. "That is, the cup we drink is a sharing in the blood of the Prince, and the bread we tear apart is a sharing in the body of the Prince. Because there is one loaf, those of us who are multiple are one body, since we all share the same bread." And so we pray that all the parts of the Prince's body will remain firm in the unity of that body through the enduring bond of love, by the same grace which made the Church the Prince's body.

We are right to pray for this to be brought about in us through the gift of the one Spirit of the Father and the Son. The Holy Trinity, the one true God, is of its nature unity, equality, and love; and by one divine activity sanctifies his adopted sons. That is why Scripture says that "God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit he has given us." The Holy Spirit, who is the one Spirit of the Father and the Son, produces in those to whom he gives the grace of divine adoption the same effect as he produced among those whom the Acts of the Emissaries describes as having received the Holy Spirit. We are told that "the community of those who believed were of one heart and soul," because the one Spirit of the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is one God, had created a single heart and soul in all those who believed.

This is why St. Paul in his advice to the Ephesians says that this spiritual unity in the bond of peace must be preserved. "And so I, a prisoner for the Master, plead with you to lead a life that befits your calling, one that bears with each other in love, and is eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit."

God makes the Church itself a sacrifice pleasing in his sight by preserving within it the love which his Holy Spirit has poured out. Thus,

the grace of that spiritual love is always available to us, and enables us to offer ourselves to God continually as a living sacrifice which is holy and pleasing to him forever.

I pray for them all to be one thing, just exactly as you, Father are in me and I am in you. I have given them the glory you gave to me, so that they will be one thing in the same way that we are one thing. Hallelujah!

I have sent them into the world in the same way you sent me into the world, so that they will be one thing in the same way that we are one thing. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Omnipotent God, please help us proclaim the power of the Master's return to life, and may those of us who accept this sign of the Prince's love come to share the eternal life he reveals, as he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## ednesday

### First Reading

### Revelation 2.12-29

"Write to the angel<sub>66</sub> of the community<sub>20</sub> in Pergamum: "This is what is said by the one who has the two-edged sword<sub>6</sub>: I know where you live, where Satan<sub>8</sub> has his throne<sub>45</sub>, that you keep your grip upon my name<sub>38</sub> and did not repudiate my faith<sub>4</sub> even in the days<sub>21</sub> of my faithful Antipas, my witness<sub>5</sub>, who was killed among you where Satan<sub>8</sub> has his home.

"But I have a few things against you: that you have there some

who hold to the teaching<sub>3</sub> of Balaam, who taught Balak to put an obstacle in front of the feet<sub>11</sub> of the sons<sub>8</sub> of Israel<sub>3</sub> by eating idol-sacrifices and prostituting themselves; in this same way you have those who hold to the similar teaching<sub>3</sub> of the Nicolaitans.

"Change heart, then; if not, I will come to you with speed and war against you with the sword<sub>6</sub> in my mouth<sub>21</sub>."

One who has ears<sub>8</sub> is to listen to what the Spirit<sub>24</sub> tells the



communities<sub>20</sub>: "I will give to the one who wins the battle<sub>9</sub>, the hidden manna to eat; and I will give him a white stone<sub>8</sub>, and on the stone<sub>8</sub> a new name<sub>38</sub> will be written, which no one will know but the one who receives it.

"Write to the angel<sub>66</sub> of the community<sub>20</sub> in Thyatira: "This is what is said by the Son<sub>8</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>, who has eyes<sub>10</sub> like a flame<sub>3</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub> and feet like burnished bronze: I know your deeds<sub>20</sub>, your love, and your faith<sub>4</sub>, and your service and persistence<sub>7</sub>, and that your latest deeds<sub>20</sub> are more numerous than your first. But I have against you that you put up with the woman<sub>19</sub> Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet<sub>5</sub>, and teaches and misleads my slaves<sub>14</sub> into prostituting themselves and eating idol-sacrifices.

"I gave her time<sub>4</sub> to change heart, and she would not turn her mind from her prostitution<sub>7</sub>. Now I am throwing her onto a bed and those who had sex with her into great suffering<sub>5</sub>, unless they change heart from her deeds<sub>20</sub>; and I will kill her children<sub>3</sub> with death<sub>19</sub>, and all the communities<sub>20</sub> will know that I am the one who scrutinizes minds and hearts and that I give each one what his deeds<sub>20</sub> deserve.

"But I tell this to the rest<sub>8</sub> of you in Thyatira, who do not hold to this teaching<sub>3</sub>, who have not found out the 'depths,' as they say, of Satan<sub>8</sub>: I will not place another burden upon you; keep what you have until I come.

"And to the one who wins the battle<sub>9</sub>, and who keeps to the end<sub>3</sub> my deeds<sub>20</sub> I will give authority<sub>21</sub> over the nations<sub>24</sub>, and he will shepherd them with a staff<sub>4</sub> of iron and shatter them like jars<sub>3</sub> of clay, just as I received this from my Father<sub>5</sub>; and I will give him the morning star<sub>14</sub>."

Anyone who has ears<sub>8</sub> is to listen to what the Spirit<sub>24</sub> tells the communities<sub>20</sub>.

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Leo the Great*

My dear brothers and sisters, there is no doubt that the Son of God took our human nature into so close a unity with himself that one and the same Prince is present, not only in the firstborn of all creation,

but in all his sacred people as well. The head cannot be separated from the other parts of the body, nor can the parts from the head. It is true that it is not in this life and only in eternity that God will be everything in everyone; but even now in a complete, undivided way, he has a home in his temple, the Church. This was his promise to us, when he said, "And now I am with you even to the end of the world."

And so all that the Son of God did and taught to bring the world into conformity to God is not simply a matter of past history for us; here and now we experience his power at work among us. Since he was born to a virgin mother by the action of the Holy Spirit, the Prince keeps his Church spotless and makes her fruitful by the inspiration of that same Spirit. In the rebirth of the Bath, she bears children for God beyond all counting; these are the sons of whom it is written, "They are born from God, not from blood or material desire or human choice."

In the Prince, Abraham's posterity has received its blessing, because in him the whole world receives the adoption as sons, and in him the patriarch becomes the father of every nation, through the birth by faith, not human generation, of the descendants that were promised to him. The Prince forms a single flock of those he has made holy from every nation on earth, without exception, and fulfills every day the promise he made: "I have other sheep that do not belong to this flock; I have to shepherd them also, so that there will be one flock and one shepherd."

Though it was primarily to the Rock that he said, "Feed my sheep," the one Master guides every pastor in the discharge of his duties, and leads to rich, fertile pastures all those who come to the rock. There is no counting the sheep who are nourished with his lavish love, and who are prepared to give up their lives for the good shepherd who died for them.

But it is not only the martyrs who share in his suffering by their glorious courage; the same is true by faith of everyone who is born again in the Bath. That is why we are to celebrate the Master's paschal sacrifice with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth; the leaven of our former malice is thrown out, and a new creature is filled and made drunk on the Master himself. That is, the effect of our sharing in the body and blood of the Prince is to change us into what we receive; just as we died with him and have been buried and brought back to life with him, we

carry him inside us, both in body and in spirit, in everything we do.

I am a good shepherd; I know my sheep, and my sheep know me. Hallelujah!

I will tend my sheep and search for them; I will bring them out from among the peoples and lead them to pasture. I know my sheep, and my sheep know me. Hallelujah!

**Prayer**

Merciful God, since you have filled us with the hope of a return to life by restoring man to his original dignity, may those of us who relive this mystery every year please come to share it in perpetual love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



**First Reading**

**Revelation 3.1-22**

“Write to the angel<sup>66</sup> of the community<sup>20</sup> in Sardis: “This is said by the one who holds the seven Spirits<sup>24</sup> of God<sup>96</sup> and the seven stars<sup>14</sup>: I know your deeds<sup>20</sup>, that you have the name<sup>38</sup> of one who is alive<sup>7</sup> and you are dead<sup>13</sup>. Be alert, and preserve the rest<sup>8</sup> in you that is about to die; I have not found your deeds<sup>20</sup> complete before my God<sup>96</sup>. Remember, then, what you accepted and heard and keep it, and change heart. If you are not alert, I will come like a thief and you will not know the hour<sup>10</sup> I come upon you. But you have a few names<sup>38</sup> in Sardis<sup>3</sup> who have not soiled their robes<sup>7</sup> and who walk about with me in white, because they deserve to do so.

“The one who wins the battle, will be clothed in this way in white robes<sup>7</sup>, and I will not erase his name<sup>38</sup> from the scroll<sup>3</sup> of life<sup>16</sup>, and will acknowledge his name<sup>38</sup> before my Father<sup>5</sup> and before his angels<sup>66</sup>.”

Anyone who has ears<sup>8</sup> is to listen to what the Spirit<sup>24</sup> tells the communities<sup>20</sup>.

“Write to the angel<sup>66</sup> of the community<sup>20</sup> in Philadelphia: This

is said by the Holy One, the True One who holds the key<sub>4</sub> of David<sub>3</sub>, who opens and no one closes, who closes and no one opens: I know your deeds<sub>20</sub> and now I have placed before you an open door<sub>4</sub> which no one can close because you have a little power<sub>1,2</sub> and have preserved my words<sub>18</sub> and have not repudiated my name<sub>38</sub>. Now I am giving you some of the synagogue of Satan<sub>8</sub>, those who call themselves Judeans and who are not, and are lying; I am now making them come and prostrate themselves before your feet<sub>11</sub>, and they will recognize that I love you.

“Because you have preserved the words<sub>18</sub> which I spoke about persistence<sub>7</sub>, I will preserve you in the hour<sub>10</sub> of the test that is about to come upon the whole world<sub>3</sub> to test those who make their home<sub>14</sub> on the earth<sub>80</sub>. I am coming with speed; keep hold of what you have, or someone will take away your victor’s laurel crown<sub>8</sub>.

“I will make of the one who wins the battle<sub>9</sub>, a column in the temple<sub>16</sub> of my God<sub>96</sub>, and he will go outside no more; and I will write upon him the name<sub>38</sub> of my God<sub>96</sub> and the name<sub>38</sub> of the city<sub>27</sub> of my God<sub>96</sub>, the new Jerusalem<sub>3</sub> which is coming down from heaven<sub>54</sub> from my God<sub>96</sub>; and I will write my new name<sub>38</sub>.”

Anyone who has ears<sub>8</sub> is to listen to what the Spirit<sub>24</sub> tells the communities<sub>20</sub>.

“Write to the angel<sub>66</sub> of the community<sub>20</sub> in Laodicea: “This is what is said by the Amen<sub>9</sub>, the faithful and truthful witness<sub>5</sub>, the source<sub>3</sub> of the creation of God<sub>96</sub>: I know your deeds<sub>20</sub>, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. But as it is, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth<sub>21</sub>. It is because you say, ‘I am rich, I have grown wealthy, and have need<sub>3</sub> of nothing,’ and you do not recognize that you are miserable and pitiful and poor and blind and naked.

I advise you to buy from me gold<sub>5</sub> refined in fire<sub>26</sub> for you to grow rich and white robes<sub>7</sub>, to put on not to show the shame of your nakedness, and salve to put upon your eyes<sub>10</sub> for you to see. I correct and teach lessons to those I love; and so grow fervent and change heart.

“I am now standing at the door<sub>4</sub> and knocking; if anyone hears the sound<sub>55</sub> I make and opens the door<sub>4</sub> I will come to visit him and dine with him, and he will dine with me.

“I will give the one who wins the battle<sub>9</sub>, the right to sit with me upon my throne<sub>45</sub>, just as I won my battle and took my seat with my

Father<sub>5</sub> upon his throne<sub>45</sub>.”

Anyone who has ears<sub>8</sub> is to listen to what the Spirit<sub>24</sub> tells the communities<sub>20</sub>.

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Gaudentius of Brescia*

The heavenly sacrifice instituted by the Prince is the most gracious legacy of his new Treaty. On the night he was handed over to be crucified, he left us this gift as a pledge of his continuing presence.

This sacrifice is our nourishment on life's journey; by it we are fed and supported along the road of life until we leave this world and make our way to the Master. This was why he spoke these words to us: “If you do not eat the meat which is my body and drink my blood, you will not have life in you.”

It was the Master's will that his gifts would remain with us, and that those of us who have been redeemed by his priceless blood would be constantly sanctified in imitation of his own suffering; and so he commanded those of his faithful students whom he made the first priests of his Church to enact these mysteries of eternal life continually. All the priests throughout the churches of the world must celebrate these mysteries until the Prince comes again from heaven; and so all of us, priests and people alike, should be faithful to this eternal memorial of our redemption. It is before our eyes every day as a re-presentation of the suffering of the Prince; we hold it in our hands, receive it in our mouths, and accept it in our hearts.

It is appropriate for us to receive the body of the Prince in the form of bread, because, in the same way as there are many grains of wheat in the flour from which bread is made by mixing it with water and baking it in fire, we know that many parts make up the one body of the Prince, which is brought to maturity by the fire of the Holy Spirit. The Prince was sired by the Holy Spirit, and since it was fitting for him to fulfill all that was required, he entered the water of the Bath to sanctify it; and when he left the Jordan, he was filled with the Holy Spirit, who had descended upon him in the form of a dove. As the Evangelist tells us, “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan.”

In the same way, the wine of the Prince's blood, drawn from the many grapes in the vineyard he had planted, is extracted in the winepress of the cross. When people receive it with believing hearts, like

ample wineskins, it ferments inside them by its own power.

And so, now that you have escaped from the power of Egypt and Pharaoh, who is the devil, join with us, all of you, in receiving this sacrifice of the saving Passover with the eagerness of dedicated hearts. Then in our inmost being, we will be made completely holy by the very Master Prince Jesus, whom we believe to be present in his sacraments, and whose boundless power remains forever.

Jesus took bread, expressed his gratitude, and tore the loaf apart; then he gave it to his students, and said, “This is my body, which is given up for you. Do this in memory of me.” Hallelujah!

This is the bread that has come down from heaven; anyone who eats this bread will live forever. This is my body, which is given up for you. Do this in memory of me. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Merciful God, may the Easter mystery we celebrate please be effective throughout our lives. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



#### First Reading

After this I looked, and there in heaven<sup>54</sup> was an open door<sup>4</sup> and the first voice<sup>55</sup> I heard—the one like a trumpet<sup>6</sup>—was speaking to me. “Come up to me,” it said, “and I will show you what must happen after this.”

At once I was in the spirit<sup>24</sup>, and there in heaven<sup>54</sup> stood a throne<sup>45</sup>, and on the throne<sup>45</sup> there was someone seated<sup>28</sup>; and the one seated<sup>28</sup> had an appearance like jasper<sup>4</sup> and carnelian; and a rainbow which had the appearance of emerald circled the throne<sup>45</sup>. Surrounding the throne<sup>45</sup> were twenty-four thrones<sup>45</sup>, and on these thrones<sup>45</sup> were seated<sup>28</sup> twenty-four elders<sup>12</sup> dressed in white robes<sup>7</sup>, with golden winner’s laurel

#### Revelation 4.1-11

crowns<sub>8</sub> upon their heads<sub>19</sub>. From the throne<sub>45</sub> issued lightning<sub>4</sub>, noises<sub>55</sub>, and thunder<sub>10</sub>; there were seven torches of fire<sub>26</sub> burning before the throne<sub>45</sub>, and these are the seven Spirits<sub>24</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>; and in front of the throne<sub>45</sub> was a kind of sea<sub>26</sub> of glass, like crystal.

In the center<sub>8</sub> of the throne<sub>45</sub> and circling the throne<sub>45</sub> were four animals<sub>20</sub>, full of eyes<sub>10</sub> around and within them. The first animal<sub>20</sub> was like a lion<sub>6</sub>, the second animal<sub>20</sub> like an ox, the third animal<sub>20</sub> had a face<sub>10</sub> like a man<sub>25</sub>, and the fourth animal<sub>20</sub> was like an eagle<sub>3</sub> in flight. Each single one of these four animals<sub>20</sub> had six wings<sub>3</sub>, and all about it and within, it was full of eyes<sub>10</sub>; and day<sub>21</sub> and night<sub>8</sub>, they incessantly cry, “Holy! Holy! Holy! Master<sub>24</sub> God<sub>96</sub>, Ruler of All! He who is, who was, and who is coming<sub>3</sub>!”

And when the animals<sub>20</sub> give glory<sub>17</sub> and honor<sub>7</sub> and thanks to the one seated<sub>28</sub> on the throne<sub>45</sub> who is alive<sub>7</sub> for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>, the twenty-four elders<sub>12</sub> will fall to their knees before the one seated<sub>28</sub> upon the throne<sub>45</sub> and will worship the one who is alive<sub>7</sub> for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>, and will throw down their laurel crowns<sub>8</sub> before the throne<sub>45</sub>, and say, “You have the right, Master<sub>24</sub> and our God<sub>96</sub> to receive glory<sub>17</sub> and honor<sub>7</sub> and power<sub>12</sub>, because you created everything, and by your will it all existed and was created.”

Holy! Holy! Holy! Master God, Ruler of All! He who is, who was, and who is coming! The whole earth is full of his glory! Hallelujah!

The seraphim called out to each other, “The Master of Armies is Holy! Holy! Holy! The whole earth is full of his glory!” Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Theodore the Studite*

How priceless the gift of the cross is, and how splendid it is to contemplate! In the cross, there is no mixture of good and evil, as there was in the tree of paradise; it is completely beautiful to look at and good to taste; the fruit of this tree is life, not death, and light, not darkness. The tree does not drive us out of paradises; it opens the way for our return.

This was the tree on which the Prince, like king on a chariot, destroyed the devil, the master of death, and freed the human race from his tyranny. This was the tree on which the Master, like a brave warrior wounded in hands, feet, and side, healed the wounds of sin that the evil

serpent had inflicted on our nature. A tree once caused out death, but now a tree brings life; we were once deceived by a tree, but we have now repelled the cunning snake by a tree. What an astonishing transformation! That death would become life, that decay would become immortality, that shame would become glory! The holy Emissary was perfectly right to exclaim, "Far be it from me to take pride in anything except the cross of our Master Prince Jesus, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world!" The supreme wisdom that flowered on the cross has shown the stupidity of worldly wisdom's pride. The knowledge of everything good, which is the fruit of the cross, has cut away the shoots of immorality.

The wonders achieved by this tree were prefigured clearly even by the mere forerunners and figures that existed in the past. Meditate on these, if you are eager to learn. Was it not the wood of a tree that enabled Noah, at God's command, to escape the destruction of the flood with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives and every kind of animal? And surely the staff of Moses prefigured the cross when it changed water into blood, swallowed up the false snakes of Pharaoh's magicians, divided the ocean at one stroke, and then restored the water to its normal course, drowning the enemy and saving God's own people. Aaron's rod, which blossomed in one day in proof of his true priesthood, was another figure of the cross; and did not Abraham foreshadow the cross when he bound his son Isaac and placed him on the pile of wood?

By the cross, death was slaughtered and Adam was restored to life. The cross is the pride of all the Emissaries, the winner's crown of the martyrs, the sanctification of the saints. By the cross, we put on the Prince and throw aside our former self; by the cross, we, the Prince's sheep, have been gathered into one flock, destined for the sheepfolds of heaven.

A tree beyond all price stands in the center of paradise. By his own death on this tree, our Savior overcame death for us. Hallelujah!

Among the cedars in the forest, this one is taller than all the rest. By his own death on this tree, our Savior overcame death for us. Hallelujah!



Prayer

Dear Father, since in your plan of rescue, your Son Prince Jesus accepted the cross and freed us from the power of the enemy, may we please come to share the glory of his return to life, because he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*First Reading*

*Revelation 5.1-14*

Then I saw in the right<sub>9</sub> hand of the one seated<sub>28</sub> upon the throne<sub>45</sub> a scroll<sub>21</sub>, written inside and on its back, sealed with seven seals<sub>13</sub>. I then heard a great voice<sub>55</sub> cry, “Who has the right to open the scroll<sub>21</sub> and break its seals<sub>13</sub>?” But no one in heaven<sub>54</sub> or on earth<sub>80</sub> or under the earth<sub>80</sub> was able to open the scroll<sub>21</sub> or look into it. I wept profusely because no one was found so good as to open the scroll<sub>21</sub> or look into it.

Then one of the elders<sub>12</sub> told me, “Do not weep. Here is the lion<sub>6</sub> of the tribe<sub>21</sub> of Judah, the Root of David<sub>3</sub>, who has won the right to open the scroll<sub>21</sub> and break its seven seals<sub>13</sub>.” And I saw, surrounded<sub>8</sub> by the throne<sub>45</sub> and the four animals<sub>20</sub>, and surrounded<sub>8</sub> by the elders<sub>12</sub> a lamb<sub>30</sub>, standing as if slain, with seven horns<sub>10</sub> and seven eyes<sub>10</sub>, which are the seven Spirits<sub>24</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> sent into the whole world.

He came up and took it from the right<sub>9</sub> hand of the one who was seated<sub>28</sub> upon the throne<sub>45</sub>. And when he had taken the scroll<sub>21</sub>, the four animals<sub>20</sub> and the twenty-four elders<sub>12</sub> fell down before the lamb<sub>30</sub>, each of them with a harp<sub>3</sub> and golden bowls<sub>12</sub> full of incense<sub>4</sub>, which are the prayers<sub>3</sub> of the sacred people<sub>15</sub>; and they sang a new song: “You have the right to take the scroll<sub>21</sub> and open its seals<sub>13</sub> because you were slain and bought for God<sub>96</sub> by your blood<sub>19</sub> those from every tribe<sub>21</sub> and tongue<sub>8</sub> and people<sub>9</sub> and nation<sub>24</sub>, and made them a kingdom<sub>9</sub> and priests<sub>3</sub> for God<sub>96</sub>;

and they will rule over the earth<sub>80</sub>.”

Then I looked, and I heard the voice<sub>55</sub> of a great many angels<sub>66</sub> surrounding the throne<sub>45</sub> and the animals<sub>20</sub> and the elders<sub>12</sub>; their number<sub>10</sub>

was millions upon millions, and thousands upon thousands, and they were crying in a great voice<sub>55</sub>,

“The lamb<sub>30</sub> who was slain has the right to receive power<sub>12</sub> and riches and wisdom<sub>4</sub> and strength and honor<sub>7</sub> and glory<sub>17</sub> and praise<sub>3</sub>.”

And I heard every creature in heaven<sub>54</sub> and on earth<sub>80</sub> and under the earth<sub>80</sub> and upon the sea<sub>26</sub>, and everything within all these saying

“To the one seated<sub>28</sub> on the throne<sub>45</sub>

and to the lamb<sub>30</sub>

praise<sub>3</sub> and honor<sub>7</sub>

and glory<sub>17</sub> and might

for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>.”

And the four animals<sub>20</sub> said, “Amen<sub>9</sub>”; and the elders<sub>12</sub> fell to their knees and worshiped the one who is alive<sub>7</sub> for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>.

You have the right, Master, to take the scroll and open its seals, because you were slaughtered for us, and with your blood you have bought us for God. Hallelujah!

You have made us a kingdom of priests to serve our God, and with your blood you have bought us for God. Hallelujah!

*Second reading*

*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy  
by the Second Vatican Council*

“In his desire for everyone to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, God spoke in former times to our forefathers through the prophets, on many occasions and in different ways.” Then in the fullness of time, he sent his Son, the Word made man, anointed by the Holy Spirit, to bring good news to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted as the physician of body and spirit and the mediator between God and men.

In the unity of the person of the Word, his human nature was the instrument of our rescue; and so in the Prince there has come to be

the perfect atonement that brings us into conformity with God, and we have been given the power to offer the fullness of divine worship.

This work of man's redemption and God's perfect glory was foreshadowed by God's mighty deeds among the people of the Old Treaty. It was brought to fulfillment by the Master the Prince, especially through the paschal mystery of his blessed suffering, return to life from the dead, and ascension in glory; by dying, he destroyed out death, and by returning to life again, he restored our life. From his side, as he lay asleep on the cross, was born that wonderful sacrament which is the Church in its entirety.

Just as the Prince was sent by the Father, he in his turn sent the Emissaries, filled with the Holy Spirit. They were sent to report the Good News to every creature, and announce that we had been set free from the power of Satan and from death by the death and return to life of God's Son, and brought into the Kingdom of the Father. They were also sent to bring into effect this saving work that they announced, by means of the sacrifice and sacraments that are the pivot of the whole life of the liturgy.

In this way, men are brought by the Baptismal bath within the paschal mystery. Since they are dead with the Prince, buried with the Prince, and returned to life with the Prince, they receive the Spirit that makes them God's adopted children, who call, "Abba! Dad!"; and so they become the true adorers that the Father is looking for.

In the same way, whenever they eat the Master's dinner, they announce his death until he comes; and so, on the very day of Pentecost, on which the Church was made visible to the world, those "who received what Peter said were bathed. They remained steadfast in the teaching of the Emissaries and in the unity of the breaking of the bread, and praised God and enjoyed the favor of everyone."

From that time onward, the Church has never failed to assemble to celebrate the paschal mystery, by reading "what was written about him in every part of Scripture," by celebrating the Eucharist, in which the victory and triumph of his death are revealed, and also by showing their gratitude "to God for the inexpressible gift he has given us in Jesus the Prince, to the praise of God's glory."

What I really am is a vine, and you are the branches. Whoever lives in me and I in him produces a great deal of fruit. Hallelujah!

I have loved you in the same way the Father has loved me; stay in my love. Whoever lives in me and I in him produces a great deal of fruit. Hallelujah!

**Prayer**

Dear God, our Father, please look upon us with love, and since you redeem us and make us your children in the Prince, please give us true freedom and bring us to the inheritance you promised. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

# Third Sunday of Easter

## *First Reading*

## *Revelation 6.1-17*

Then I saw that the lamb<sub>30</sub> had opened one of the seven seals<sub>13</sub>, and I heard one of the four animals<sub>20</sub> cry in a voice<sub>55</sub> of thunder<sub>10</sub>, “Come!”

And I looked, and there was a white horse<sub>16</sub>, and the one seated<sub>28</sub> upon it had a bow; and a laurel crown<sub>8</sub> was given him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

And when he opened the second seal<sub>13</sub>, I heard the second animal<sub>20</sub> say, “Come!” and there came out a fiery-red horse<sub>16</sub>, and the one seated<sub>28</sub> upon it was given the right to take peace from the earth<sub>80</sub> so that people would kill each other; and a huge saber<sub>4</sub> was given him.

When he opened the third seal<sub>13</sub>, I heard the third animal<sub>20</sub> say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse<sub>16</sub>, and the one seated<sub>28</sub> upon it had a balance in his hand<sub>16</sub>; and I heard something like a voice<sub>55</sub> in the center<sub>8</sub> of the four animals<sub>20</sub> say, “A day’s wheat for a day’s wage, and three days’ barley for a day’s wage; but do no harm to the oil and wine<sub>8</sub>.”

And when he opened the fourth seal<sub>13</sub>, I heard the voice<sub>55</sub> of the fourth animal<sub>20</sub> say, “Come!” and I looked, and there was a pale horse<sub>16</sub>, and the one seated<sub>28</sub> upon it had the name<sub>38</sub> Death<sub>19</sub>, and the land of the dead<sub>4</sub> followed after him; and he was given authority<sub>21</sub> over a fourth of the earth<sub>80</sub> to kill it with sword<sub>6</sub>, famine, and death<sub>19</sub>, and by the earth<sub>80</sub>’s beasts<sub>38</sub>.

Then, when he opened the fifth seal<sub>13</sub>, I saw under the altar<sub>8</sub> the souls<sub>7</sub> of those who had been slain because of the word<sub>18</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>

and the <lamb's<sub>30</sub>> testimony, they had given. They cried in a great voice<sub>55</sub>,

“How long, holy and truthful commander, will you keep from passing sentence and avenging our blood<sub>19</sub> upon those who make their home<sub>14</sub> upon the earth<sub>80</sub>?” Then each of them was given a white cloak<sub>5</sub> and told to remain at rest a short time<sub>4</sub> more for the complete tally of their fellow-slaves<sub>3</sub> and brothers<sub>5</sub> who were to be killed as they were.

I looked when he opened the sixth seal<sub>13</sub>, and a huge earthquake<sub>7</sub> occurred; the sun<sub>13</sub> became black as hairy sackcloth, and the whole moon<sub>4</sub> turned into something like blood<sub>19</sub>, and the stars<sub>14</sub> in heaven<sub>54</sub>

fell to the earth<sub>80</sub> as a fig-tree drops its unripe fruit when shaken by a strong wind<sub>3</sub>; the heavens<sub>54</sub> vanished like a scroll<sub>21</sub> rolled up, and every mountain<sub>8</sub> and island was pushed out of place<sub>8</sub>; the kings<sub>21</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub> and the high classes, the generals, the rich, and the strong, and every slave<sub>14</sub> and free man hid themselves in caves and among rocks on the mountains<sub>8</sub> and said to the mountains<sub>8</sub> and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face<sub>10</sub> of the one seated<sub>28</sub> on the throne<sub>45</sub> and from the wrath<sub>6</sub> of the lamb<sub>30</sub>! The great day<sub>21</sub> of his wrath<sub>6</sub> has come, and who can bear it?”

I heard the voices of those who had been slain calling from under the altar, “Why are you not avenging our blood?” The Master answered, “Be patient a little longer until the full number of your brothers and sisters joins you.” Hallelujah!

They were given white robes to wear, and he told them, “Be patient a little longer until the full number of your brothers and sisters joins you.” Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*The First Defense of the Christians by St. Justin*

No one is to share the Eucharist with us unless he believes that what we teach is true, unless he is washed in the regenerating water of the Bath for the erasure of his sins, and unless he lives in agreement with the principles given us by the Prince.

We do not consume the Eucharistic bread and wine as if it were ordinary food and drink, because we have been taught that just as Prince Jesus our Savior became a man of flesh and blood by the power of the

Word of God, so also the food that our flesh and blood assimilates for its nourishment becomes the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus by the power of his own words contained in the prayer of gratitude.

The Emissaries, in their recollections (which are called the Reports of the Good News) handed down to us what Jesus commanded them to do. They tell us that he took bread, expressed his gratitude, and said, "Do this in memory of me. This is my body." In the same way, he took the cup, expressed his gratitude, and said, "This is my blood." The Master gave this command to them alone. Ever since then, we have constantly reminded each other of these things. The rich among us help the poor, and we are always united; and we praise the Creator of the universe for all that we receive through his Son Prince Jesus and through the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday, we have a single meeting of all our members, whether they live in the city or the outlying districts. The recollections of the Emissaries or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as there is time. When the reader has finished, the presider over the assembly speaks to us; he encourages everyone to imitate the examples of virtue we have heard in the readings. Then we all stand up together and pray.

On the conclusion of our prayer, bread and wine and water are brought forward. The presider offers prayers and expresses gratitude to the best of his ability, and the people give their assent by saying "Amen." The Eucharist is distributed, everyone present communicates, and the deacons take it to those who are absent.

The wealthy, if they wish, may make a contribution, and they decide the amount themselves. The collection is placed in the custody of the presider, who uses it to help the orphans and widows and everyone who for any reason is in distress, whether because of sickness, prison, or absence from home. In a word, he takes care of everyone in need.

We hold our joint meeting on Sunday because it is the first day of the week, the day on which God routed darkness and chaos and created the world, and because on that same day our Savior Prince Jesus returned to life. That is, he was crucified on Friday, and on Sunday he appeared to his Emissaries and students and taught them the things that we have passed on for your consideration.

When he was about to pass from this world to the Father, Jesus

established a memorial of his death; he gave us the sacrament of his body and blood. Hallelujah!

He gave us his body as food, his blood as drink, and he said, "Do this to remind yourselves of me." He gave us the sacrament of his body and blood. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, may we look forward with hope to our return to life after death, because you have made us your sons and daughters and restored the joy of our youth. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Resume with the Te Deum



#### First Reading

After this I saw four angels<sup>66</sup> standing on the four corners of the earth<sup>80</sup> controlling the earth<sup>80</sup>'s four winds<sup>3</sup>, to keep any wind<sup>3</sup> from blowing /on the earth<sup>80</sup>/ over the sea<sup>26</sup>, or against any tree<sup>4</sup>. Then I saw another angel<sup>66</sup> coming from the rising<sup>3</sup> of the sun<sup>13</sup> holding the seal<sup>13</sup> of the living God<sup>96</sup>. He cried in a great voice<sup>55</sup> to the four angels<sup>66</sup> who were given the right to harm the earth<sup>80</sup> and the sea<sup>26</sup>.

"Do no harm to the earth<sup>80</sup> or the sea<sup>26</sup> or the trees<sup>4</sup> until we seal up the foreheads<sup>8</sup> of the slaves<sup>14</sup> of our God<sup>96</sup>!"

Then I heard the number<sup>10</sup> of those sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe<sup>21</sup> of the sons<sup>8</sup> of Israel<sup>3</sup>: From the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Judah, twelve thousand sealed; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Reuben, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Gad, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Asher, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Naphthali, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Manasseh, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Simeon, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Levi, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Issachar, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Zebulun, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Joseph, twelve thousand; from the tribe<sup>21</sup> of Benjamin, twelve thousand sealed.

After this I looked, and there was a huge crowd<sup>4</sup>, which no one

#### Revelation 7.1-17



could count, from every nation<sup>24</sup> and tribe<sup>21</sup> and people<sup>9</sup> and tongue<sup>8</sup>, standing before the throne<sup>45</sup> and before the lamb<sup>30</sup>, dressed in white cloaks<sup>5</sup>, with palm-branches in their hands<sup>16</sup>. They cried in a great voice<sup>55</sup>, "Rescue<sup>3</sup> belongs to our God<sup>96</sup> seated<sup>28</sup> on the throne<sup>45</sup> and to the lamb<sup>30</sup>!"

All the angels<sup>66</sup> took their places around the throne<sup>45</sup>, the elders<sup>12</sup>, and the four animals<sup>20</sup>, and fell on their faces<sup>10</sup> before the throne<sup>45</sup> and worshiped God<sup>96</sup>, and said, "Amen<sup>9</sup>, Praise<sup>3</sup> and glory<sup>17</sup> and wisdom<sup>4</sup> and thanks and honor<sup>7</sup> and power<sup>12</sup> and strength to our God<sup>96</sup> for ages<sup>28</sup> upon ages<sup>28</sup>! Amen<sup>9</sup>."

Then one of the elders<sup>12</sup> spoke to me. "Who are these people," he said, "dressed in white cloaks<sup>5</sup>, and where have they come from?"

"My master<sup>24</sup>," I said, "You know."

"These," he answered, "are the ones who have come from the Great Suffering<sup>5</sup> and have washed their cloaks<sup>5</sup> and whitened them in the blood<sup>9</sup> of the lamb<sup>30</sup>. That is why they are in front of God<sup>96</sup>'s throne<sup>45</sup> and worship him day<sup>21</sup> and night<sup>8</sup> in his temple<sup>16</sup>; and the one seated<sup>28</sup> on the throne<sup>45</sup> will make his home with them. They will not be hungry again, nor will they feel thirst again; and the sun<sup>13</sup> will not beat upon them again, nor will any heat, because the lamb<sup>30</sup> from the center<sup>8</sup> of the throne<sup>45</sup> will shepherd them and lead them to springs<sup>5</sup> of water<sup>16</sup>, and God<sup>96</sup> will wipe every tear from their eyes<sup>10</sup>."

Who are these people clothed in white robes? Who are they and where have they come from? I said to him, "These are the people who have undergone the Great Suffering. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Hallelujah!

I saw beneath the altar the spirits of those who had been slaughtered because of their witness to the utterance of God. These are the people who have undergone the Great Suffering. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*Commentary on the First Letter of Peter  
by Bede the Venerable*

"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood." This praise was given long ago by Moses to the ancient people of God, and now the Emissary Peter properly gives it to the Gentiles, since they have come to believe in the Prince who, as the cornerstone, has brought the nations together in the rescue that belonged to Israel.

Peter calls them "a chosen race," because of their faith, to

distinguish them from those who have themselves been rejected by refusing to accept the living stone. They are “a royal priesthood” because they are united to the body of the Prince, the supreme king and true priest. As a sovereign, he grants them his kingdom, and as high priest, he washes their sins away by the offering of his blood. Peter says they are “a royal priesthood”; they must always remember to hope for an eternal kingdom and to offer God the sacrifice of a blameless life.

They are also called “a consecrated nation, a people claimed by God as his own,” in accordance with the Emissary Paul’s explanation of the prophet’s teaching: “My virtuous person lives by faith; but if he backslides, I will take no pleasure in him. But we,” he says, “are not the sort of people who backslide and are lost; we are those who remain faithful until we are rescued.” In the Acts of the Emissaries, we read, “The Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the Church of God, which he bought with his own blood.” In this way, through the blood of our Redeemer, we have become “a people claimed by God as his own,” in the same way in which in ancient times the people of Israel were ransomed from Egypt by the blood of a lamb.

In the next verse, Peter also makes a veiled allusion to the ancient story, and explains that this story is to be spiritually fulfilled by the new people of God, “so that,” he says, “they will announce his wondrous deeds.” Those who were freed by Moses from slavery in Egypt sang a song of triumph to the Master after they had crossed the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s army had been drowned. In the same way, now that our sins have been washed away in the Bath, we should also express proper gratitude for the gifts of heaven. The Egyptians who oppressed the people of God, and who can also stand for darkness or troubles, are an apt symbol of the sins that once oppressed us, but have now been destroyed by the Bath.

The release of the descendants of Israel and their journey to the long-promised land correspond with the mystery of our redemption. We are making our way toward the light of our heavenly home with the Prince’s grace leading us and showing us the way. The light of his grace was also symbolized by the cloud and the pillar of fire, which protected the Israelites from darkness throughout their journey, and brought them by a marvelous road to their promised homeland.

You are a chosen race, a holy nation, a people God has claimed as his own. Announce the marvelous deeds of the one who has called us out of darkness into his own wonderful light. Hallelujah!

The Master chose you and freed you from the land of slavery. Announce the marvelous deeds of the one who has called us out of darkness into his own wonderful light. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since your light of faith guides us to the path of the Prince, may all of us who follow him reject what is contrary to the Good News. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## uesday

### First Reading

### Revelation 8.1-13

Then, when he opened the seventh seal<sub>13</sub>, there was silence in heaven<sub>54</sub> for about a half hour.

Then I saw the seven angels<sub>66</sub> who stood before God<sub>96</sub>; they were given seven trumpets<sub>6</sub>. Then another angel<sub>66</sub> came and stood at the altar<sub>8</sub> with a golden censer. A great deal of incense<sub>4</sub> was given him to offer it for the prayers<sub>3</sub> of all the sacred people<sub>15</sub> upon the golden altar<sub>8</sub> before the throne<sub>45</sub>. The smoke<sub>12</sub> of the incense<sub>4</sub> for the prayers<sub>3</sub> of the sacred people<sub>15</sub> rose up from the hand<sub>16</sub> of the angel<sub>66</sub> before God<sub>96</sub>. Then the angel<sub>66</sub> took the censer, filled it with fire<sub>26</sub> from the altar<sub>8</sub>, and threw it to the earth<sub>80</sub>; and there came thunder<sub>10</sub> and noises<sub>55</sub> and lightning<sub>4</sub> and earthquake<sub>7</sub>.

Then the seven angels<sub>66</sub> who had the seven trumpets<sub>6</sub> prepared to sound them. The first angel<sub>66</sub> sounded, and there came hail<sub>4</sub> and fire<sub>26</sub> mixed with blood<sub>19</sub>, which was thrown onto the earth<sub>80</sub>; and a third of the earth<sub>80</sub> burned up; a third of the trees<sub>4</sub> burned up; and all the green grass burned up.

Then the second angel<sub>66</sub> sounded, and something like a huge mountain<sub>8</sub> burning with fire<sub>26</sub> was thrown into the sea<sub>26</sub>. A third of the sea<sub>26</sub> became blood<sub>19</sub>, and a third of the creatures with souls<sub>7</sub> in the sea<sub>26</sub> died, and a third of the ships were wrecked.

Then the third angel<sub>66</sub> sounded, and a huge star<sub>14</sub> burning like a torch fell from heaven<sub>54</sub>, upon a third of the rivers<sub>8</sub> and springs<sub>5</sub> of water<sub>18</sub>. The name<sub>38</sub> of the star<sub>14</sub> was Wormwood; and a third of the waters<sub>18</sub> became wormwood, and many humans<sub>25</sub> died from the waters<sub>18</sub>, because they had become bitter.

Then the fourth angel<sub>66</sub> sounded, and a third of the sun<sub>13</sub>, a third of the moon<sub>4</sub>, and a third of the stars<sub>14</sub> were assaulted, darkening a third of them; and the day<sub>21</sub> had no light for a third of itself, and the same was true of the night<sub>8</sub>.

Then I looked, and heard the voice<sub>55</sub> of one eagle<sub>3</sub> flying in mid-heaven<sub>3</sub> say, “Woe<sub>14</sub>! Woe<sub>14</sub>! Woe<sub>14</sub>! to those who make their home<sub>14</sub> upon the earth<sub>80</sub> because of the rest<sub>8</sub> of the sounds<sub>55</sub> of the trumpets<sub>6</sub> of the three angels<sub>66</sub> who are going to sound them!”

An angel stood by the altar with a golden censer. A large amount of incense was given to him, and clouds of incense rose from the hand of the angel in the presence of God. Hallelujah!

Each angel had a bowl filled with incense: the prayers of the sacred people; and clouds of incense rose from the hand of the angel in the presence of God. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

“Sing a new song to the Master; sing his praise in the meeting of the sacred people.” We are encouraged to sing a new song to the Master because we are new men who have learned a new song. A song is a thing of joy; more profoundly, it is a thing of love. And so anyone who has learned to love the new life has learned to sing a new song, and the new song reminds us of our new life. The new man, the new song, and the new Treaty all belong to the one single kingdom of God, and so the new man will sing a new song and belong to the new Treaty.

There is no one who does not love something; the question is what to love. The psalms do not tell us not to love, they tell us to choose the object of our love. But how can we choose unless we are chosen first? We cannot love unless someone has loved us first. Listen to the Emissary John: “We love him because he loved us first.” The source of man’s love for God can only be found in the fact that God loved him first; he has

given us himself as the object of our love, and he has also given us its source. What this source is you can learn more clearly from the Emissary Paul, who tells us, "The love of God has been poured into our hearts." This love is not something we produce ourselves; it comes to us "through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

And so, since we have this assurance, we should love God with the love God has given us. As John tells us more fully, "God is love, and anyone who has his home in love has his home in God, and God has his home in him." It is not enough to say, "Love comes from God." Would any of us have the effrontery to pronounce the words of Scripture, "God *is* love?" Only a person who knew what it was to have God make his home in him could say it.

But God offers us a short route to the possession of himself: he calls, "Love me and you will have me, because you would not be able to love me if you did not already possess me."

My dear brothers and sons, harvest of true faith and holy seeds of heaven, all of you who have been born again in the Prince and whose life comes from above, listen to me—or rather, listen to the Holy Spirit saying through me, "Sing a new song to the Master."

"Look," you tell me, "I am singing." Yes, you are singing; you are singing clearly; I can hear you. But make sure that your life does not contradict your words. Sing with your voices, your hearts, your lips, and your lives. "Sing a new song to the Master."

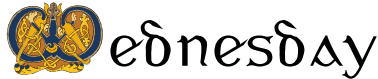
Now it is without question your desire to sing of the one you love, but you ask me how to sing his praises. You heard the words, "Sing a new song to the Master," and you want to know what praises to sing. The answer is, "His praise is in the gathering of the sacred people;" it is in the singers themselves. If you want to praise him, then live what you express. Live good lives and you will be his praise yourselves.

In the same way that the Prince was brought back from death by the glory of the Father, we must also live a new life, and we must love each other in the way the Master commanded us. Hallelujah!

Let us sing the praises of the Master; let us sing a new song to our God, and we must love each other in the way the Master commanded us. Hallelujah!

## Prayer

Dear Father, since you open the Kingdom of Heaven to those born again by water and the Spirit, please increase your gift of love in us, and may all those who have been freed from sins in the Bath receive everything you promised. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

*First Reading**Revelation 9.1-12*

Then the fifth angel<sub>66</sub> sounded, and I saw a star<sub>14</sub> fallen from heaven<sub>54</sub> to the earth<sub>80</sub>, which was given the key<sub>4</sub> to the shaft<sub>4</sub> of the pit<sub>7</sub>. He opened the shaft<sub>4</sub> of the pit<sub>7</sub>, and smoke<sub>12</sub> like the smoke<sub>12</sub> of a huge furnace rose out of the shaft<sub>4</sub> and the sun<sub>13</sub> and air grew dark from the smoke<sub>12</sub> from the shaft<sub>4</sub>.

And from the smoke<sub>12</sub> came locusts onto the earth<sub>80</sub>, and authority<sub>21</sub> was given them—authority<sub>21</sub> like that of scorpions<sub>3</sub> on the earth<sub>80</sub>. They were told not to harm the grass on the earth<sub>80</sub> or anything green or any tree<sub>4</sub>, but only those humans<sub>25</sub> who did not have God<sub>96</sub>'s seal<sub>13</sub> on their foreheads<sub>8</sub>. They were given the ability, not to kill them, but to torment them for five months<sub>6</sub>; and their torment<sub>6</sub> was like the torment<sub>6</sub> of a scorpion<sub>3</sub> when it stings a man<sub>25</sub>. And in those days<sub>21</sub> men<sub>25</sub> will look for death<sub>19</sub> and not find it; they will long to die, and death<sub>19</sub> will flee from them.

The appearance of the locusts is like horses<sub>16</sub> readied for war<sub>9</sub>; on their heads<sub>19</sub> are something like winners' laurel crowns<sub>8</sub> in gold; their faces<sub>10</sub> were like human<sub>25</sub> faces<sub>10</sub>, they have hair<sub>3</sub> like women<sub>19</sub>'s hair<sub>3</sub>, and their teeth are like lions<sub>6</sub>'; they have breastplates<sub>3</sub> like iron breastplates<sub>3</sub>, and the sound<sub>55</sub> of their wings<sub>3</sub> is like the sound<sub>55</sub> of chariots with many horses<sub>16</sub> rushing into war<sub>9</sub>. They have tails<sub>5</sub> like those of scorpions<sub>3</sub>, with stings, and in their tails<sub>5</sub> is their authority<sub>21</sub> to harm humans<sub>25</sub> for five months<sub>6</sub>. They have over them as king<sub>21</sub> the angel<sub>66</sub> of the pit<sub>7</sub>, whose name<sub>38</sub> in Hebrew is Abaddon, in English Destroyer.

The first woe<sub>14</sub> has gone by. There are two woes<sub>14</sub> coming after this.

I will perform miracles in the heavens and on the earth, with blood, fire, and columns of smoke. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Master will be saved. Hallelujah!

Stay alert, remain awake and pray, because you do not know when the time will come. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Master will be saved. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading      The First Defense of the Christians by Justin Martyr*

Through the Prince, we received new life, and consecrated ourselves to God. I will explain the way in which we did this. Those who believe that what it teach is true, and attest to their ability to live in accordance with that teaching are taught to ask God's forgiveness for their sins by prayer and fasting—and we pray and fast along with them. We then lead them to a place where there is water, and they are reborn in the same way as we were reborn; that is to say, they are bathed in the water in the name of God: the Father and Master of the whole universe, our Savior Prince Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. This is done because the Prince said, "If you are not born again, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven," and it is obviously impossible for anyone, once he is born, to reenter his mother's womb.

An explanation of how repentant sinners are to be freed from their sins is given by the prophet Isaiah, who said, "Wash and be clean; remove the evil from your souls; learn to do what is right. Be just to orphans, and give widows their rights. Come, let us think together, says the Master. If your sins are scarlet, I will make them white as wool; if they are as red as crimson, I will make them white as snow. But if you pay no attention to me, you will be eaten up by swords. The Master's mouth has spoken."

The Emissaries taught us the reason for this ceremony of ours. Our first birth took place without our knowledge or consent, because our parents had sex with each other, and we grew up surrounded by evil. So if we were not to remain children ruled by needs and ignorance, we needed a new birth we would be conscious of ourselves, and which would be the result of our own free choice. We also needed to have our sins forgiven; and this is why the name of God, the Father and Master of the whole universe, is pronounced in the water over anyone who chooses to be born again, and who has repented of his sins. The person who

leads the candidate for the Bath to the font calls on God by his this name alone, because God so far surpasses our powers of description that no one can really give a name to him. Anyone who dares to say that he can must be hopelessly insane.

This Bath is called “illumination” because of the mental illumination that is experienced by those who learn all of this. The person receiving this illumination is also bathed in the name of Prince Jesus, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who foretold everything about Jesus through the prophets.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Amen amen I tell you, no one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless he is born again from water and the Spirit.” Hallelujah!

What is born from a body is a body; what is born from the Spirit is spirit. No one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless he is born again from water and the Spirit. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Merciful Master, please listen to the prayers of your people, and may those of us who have received your gift of faith share forever in the new life of the Prince. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



#### *First Reading*

Then the sixth angel<sub>66</sub> sounded, and I heard one voice<sub>55</sub> from the horns<sub>10</sub> of the golden altar<sub>8</sub> before God<sub>96</sub>'s throne<sub>45</sub>, telling the sixth angel<sub>66</sub> who had the trumpet<sub>6</sub>, “Set free the four angels<sub>66</sub> who have been tied up in the great river<sub>8</sub> Euphrates!” Then the four angels<sub>66</sub>, who had been readied for the hour<sub>10</sub>, day<sub>21</sub>, month<sub>6</sub>, and year, were released for them to kill a third of mankind<sub>25</sub>.

The number<sub>10</sub> of the armies<sub>4</sub> of the cavalry was twice ten thousand ten thousands; I heard their number<sub>10</sub>. And this was how I saw the horses<sub>16</sub> in the vision and those seated<sub>28</sub> upon them: they had

#### *Revelation 9.13-21*



breastplates<sub>3</sub> that were fiery red, hyacinth-blue, and sulfur-yellow; the heads<sub>19</sub> of the horses<sub>16</sub> were like heads<sub>19</sub> of lions<sub>6</sub>, and from their mouths<sub>21</sub> issued fire<sub>26</sub>, smoke<sub>12</sub>, and sulfur<sub>6</sub>. A third of mankind<sub>25</sub> died from these three curses<sub>16</sub>, from the fire<sub>26</sub>, smoke<sub>12</sub>, and sulfur<sub>6</sub> that came from their mouths<sub>21</sub>. The authority<sub>21</sub> of the horses<sub>16</sub> was in their mouths<sub>21</sub> and in their tails<sub>5</sub>; they had tails<sub>5</sub> like serpents<sub>5</sub>, with heads<sub>19</sub>; and with these they did their harm.

And the rest<sub>8</sub> of mankind<sub>25</sub>, who were not killed in these curses<sub>16</sub>, did not change heart from the deeds<sub>20</sub> of their hands<sub>16</sub>, and cease worshiping demons<sub>3</sub> and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not change heart from their murders or their sorcery<sub>3</sub> or their prostitution<sub>7</sub> or their theft.

God calls every man to repent, because he has fixed the day on which he will pass just sentence upon the world. Hallelujah!

Servants of God, assemble all the inhabitants of the land and call out to the Master, because he has fixed the day on which he will pass just sentence upon the world Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*Treatise Against Heresies by St. Irenaeus*

If our material bodies are not saved, then the Master has not redeemed us with his blood, the eucharistic cup does not make us sharers in his blood, and the bread we break does not make us sharers in his body. There can be no blood without veins, flesh, and the rest of the human reality; and this is what the Word of God actually became; it was with his own blood he redeemed us. As the Emissary says, "We have been redeemed in him, through his blood, and our sins have been forgiven."

We are cells in his body, and are nourished by creation, which is his gift to us, because he is the one who causes the sun to rise and the rain to fall. He stated that the cup, which comes from his creation, was his blood, and he makes it the nourishment of our blood. He asserted that the bread, which comes from his creation, was his body, and he makes it the nourishment of our body. When the cup we mix and the bread we bake receive the utterance of God, the eucharistic elements become the body and blood of the Prince, by which our bodies live and

grow. How then can it be said that flesh belonging to the Master's own body and nourished by his body and blood is incapable of receiving God's gift of eternal life?

St. Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians that "we are parts of his body," of his flesh and bones. He is not speaking of some spiritual and incorporeal kind of man, "because spirits do not have flesh and bones." He is speaking of a real human body composed of flesh, sinews, and bones, nourished by the cup of the Prince's blood and receiving growth from the bread which is his body.

The cutting of a vine planted in the ground bears fruit at the proper time. A grain of wheat falls into the ground and decays only to be raised up again and multiplied by the Spirit of God, who sustains everything. The Wisdom of God places these things at the service of human beings, and when they receive God's utterance, they become the eucharist, which is the body and blood of the Prince. In the same way, our bodies, which have been nourished by the eucharist, will be buried in the earth and will decay, but they will rise again at the designated time, because the Word of God will raise them up for the glory of God the Father. Then the Father will dress our mortal nature in immortality and freely endow our corruptible nature with incorruptibility, because God's power is shown most perfectly in weakness.

I am the bread of life; your ancestors ate manna in the desert and died, but this is the bread that comes down from heaven, and anyone who eats this bread will never die. Hallelujah!

I am the living bread that comes down from heaven; anyone who eats this bread will live forever. This is the bread that comes down from heaven; anyone who eats this bread will never die. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since in this holy season we come to know the full depth of your love, and since you have freed us from the darkness of error and sin, please help us to cling to your truths with fidelity. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.


 FRIDAY
*First Reading**Revelation 10.1-11*

Then I saw another strong angel<sup>66</sup> coming down from heaven<sup>54</sup>, dressed in a cloud<sup>7</sup>, with a rainbow upon his head<sup>19</sup>; his face<sup>10</sup> was like the sun<sup>13</sup>, and his feet<sup>11</sup> like columns of fire<sup>26</sup>. He had a small, opened scroll<sup>4</sup> in his hand<sup>16</sup>. He put his right<sup>9</sup> foot<sup>11</sup> upon the sea<sup>26</sup>, his left on the earth<sup>80</sup>, and cried in a great voice<sup>55</sup> like a lion<sup>6</sup> roaring. And when he cried out, the seven thunders<sup>10</sup> spoke their sounds<sup>55</sup>.

When the seven thunders<sup>10</sup> spoke, I was about to write, and I heard a voice<sup>55</sup> from heaven<sup>54</sup> say, “Seal up what the seven thunders<sup>10</sup> have spoken, and do not write it down.”

Then the angel<sup>66</sup> I saw standing on the sea<sup>26</sup> and earth<sup>80</sup> raised his right<sup>5</sup> hand<sup>16</sup> to heaven<sup>54</sup> and swore by the one who is alive<sup>7</sup> for ages<sup>28</sup> upon ages<sup>28</sup>, who created heaven<sup>54</sup> and what is in it, earth<sup>80</sup> and what is on it, and the sea<sup>26</sup> and what is in it, that there would be time<sup>4</sup> no longer, and in the days<sup>21</sup> of the sound<sup>55</sup> of the seventh angel<sup>66</sup>, when he was about to sound his instrument, God<sup>96</sup>’s secret<sup>4</sup> would be brought to completion, as he announced to his slaves<sup>14</sup> the prophets<sup>9</sup>.

Then the voice<sup>55</sup> I heard from heaven<sup>54</sup> again spoke to me. “Go take the small scroll<sup>4</sup>,” it said, “which is open in the hand<sup>16</sup> of the one standing upon the sea<sup>26</sup> and the earth<sup>80</sup>.”

Then I went to the angel<sup>66</sup> and asked him to give me the small scroll<sup>4</sup>, and he told me, “Take it and eat it; it will sour your stomach, but in your mouth<sup>21</sup> it will be sweet as honey.” I took the small scroll<sup>4</sup> from the angel<sup>66</sup>’s hand<sup>16</sup> and ate it, and in my mouth<sup>21</sup> it was honey-sweet, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was soured.

Then he told me, “You must again prophesy to peoples<sup>9</sup> and nations<sup>24</sup> and tongues<sup>8</sup> and many kings<sup>21</sup>.”

When the trumpet sounds, God will have completed his secret plan, as he announced to his slaves the prophets. Hallelujah!

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and majesty,

as he announced to his slaves the prophets. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading**A Sermon by St. Ephrem*

Death trampled our Master under its feet; but he turned the tables and made death a highway for his own feet. He submitted to it, and freely endured it, because by this means he would be able to destroy death in spite of itself. Death had its own way when our Master left Jerusalem carrying his cross; but when he summoned the dead from the world beneath the earth by a loud cry from that cross, death was powerless to prevent it.

Death slaughtered him by the body which he had taken on; but that same body proved to be the weapon he used to conquer death. Concealed beneath the cloak of his humanity, his divinity engaged death in combat; and in killing our Master, death was killed itself. It was able to kill natural human life, but it was itself killed by the life that is above the nature of man.

Death could not consume our Master unless he possessed a body; and the land of the dead could not swallow him unless he carried our matter; and so he came in search of a chariot to ride to the land below the earth—the body he received from the Virgin. In it, he invaded death's fortress, broke open its safe, and scattered all its treasure.

Eventually, he came upon Eve, the mother of all the living; she was the vineyard whose enclosure her own hands had allowed death to violate, so that she could taste its fruit; and in this way, the mother of all the living became the source of death for every living creature. But in her place, Mary grew up, a new vine in the place of the old one. The Prince, the new life, had his home in her. When death, with its usual effrontery, came foraging for her mortal fruit, it encountered its own destruction in the hidden life that fruit contained. It swallowed him without suspecting a thing, and in so doing released life itself and set free throngs of men.

The one who was also the carpenter's son set up his cross above death's all-consuming jaws, and led the human race into the lodging of life. Since a tree had brought about the downfall of mankind, it was upon a tree that mankind crossed over into the realm of life; it was a bitter branch that had once been grafted onto that ancient tree, but the young shoot that has now been grafted in is a sweet one the shoot in which we are meant to recognize the Master no creature can resist.

We give you glory, Master, since you raised your cross to span the jaws of death like a bridge for souls to pass from the land of the dead

to the realm of the living. We give glory to you since you put on the body of a single mortal man and made it the source of life for every other mortal man. You are incontestably alive. Your murderers planted your living body in the earth in the way in which farmers plant grain; but it sprang up and yielded an abundant harvest of men raised from the dead.

Come then, my brothers and sisters, let us offer our Master the great, all-encompassing sacrifice of our love, and pour out our treasury of humans and prayers before the one who offered his cross in sacrifice to God for the enrichment of us all.

Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting? Death's "sting" is sin. But thank God, because he has given us the victory through our Master Prince Jesus. Hallelujah!

We have the spirit of faith, by which we believe that the one who raised Jesus to life will raise us too along with Jesus. But thank God, because he has given us the victory through our Master Prince Jesus. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, by the love of your Spirit, may those of us who have experienced the grace of the Master's resurrection please rise to the newness of life in joy. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## SATURDAY

#### First Reading

Then I was given a measuring-rod like a staff<sup>4</sup>, and told, "Stand up and measure God<sup>96</sup>'s temple<sup>16</sup>, the altar<sup>8</sup>, and those worshiping at it. Leave out the court outside the temple<sup>16</sup>, and do not measure it, because it will be given to the nations<sup>24</sup>, and they will trample on the holy city<sup>27</sup> for forty-two months<sup>6</sup>. I will give to my two witnesses<sup>5</sup> the ability, and they will prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days<sup>21</sup> dressed in sackcloth."

#### Revelation 11.1-19

They are the two olive trees and the two lampstands, which are standing before the Master<sub>24</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub>. If anyone wishes to harm them, fire<sub>26</sub> comes out of their mouths<sub>21</sub> and consumes their enemies; and if anyone will wish to harm them, he must be killed in this way. They have the authority<sub>21</sub> to lock up heaven<sub>54</sub> so that no rain will fall in the days<sub>21</sub> of their prophesy<sub>7</sub>; and they have the authority<sub>21</sub> over the waters<sub>18</sub> to turn them into blood<sub>19</sub> and to strike the earth<sub>80</sub> with every curse<sub>16</sub> as often as they please.

And when their testimony<sub>9</sub> is completed, the beast<sub>38</sub> which comes up from the pit<sub>7</sub> will make war<sub>9</sub> against them and conquer them and kill them. And their corpses<sub>3</sub> will lie on the street<sub>5</sub> of the great city<sub>27</sub> which is called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where their Master<sub>24</sub> was crucified. And those from peoples<sub>9</sub>, tribes<sub>21</sub>, tongues<sub>8</sub>, and nations<sub>24</sub> are looking at their corpses<sub>3</sub> for three and a half days<sub>21</sub>; and they do not take their corpses<sub>3</sub> away to bury them in a tomb. And those whose home<sub>14</sub> is on the earth<sub>80</sub> are celebrating and enjoying themselves over them; they send gifts to each other, because these two prophets, tormented those whose home<sub>14</sub> is on the earth<sub>80</sub>.

And after the three and a half days<sub>21</sub>, the spirit<sub>24</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> from God<sub>96</sub> came into them, and they stood upon their feet<sub>11</sub>; and great fear<sub>3</sub> fell upon those who looked at them. Then they heard a great voice<sub>55</sub> from heaven<sub>54</sub> tell them, "Come up to me," and they rose into heaven<sub>54</sub> in a cloud<sub>7</sub>, and their enemies were looking at them. At that hour<sub>10</sub> there was a huge earthquake<sub>7</sub>, and a tenth of the city<sub>27</sub> fell, and in the earthquake<sub>7</sub> there died seven thousand names<sub>38</sub> of men<sub>25</sub>; and the rest<sub>8</sub> were filled with terror and gave glory<sub>17</sub> to the God<sub>96</sub> of heaven<sub>54</sub>.

The second woe<sub>14</sub> has passed; the third is now coming swiftly.

Then the seventh angel<sub>66</sub> sounded, and there were great voices<sub>55</sub> in heaven<sub>54</sub>, which said,  
 "The kingdom, of the world  
 has become our Master<sub>24</sub>'s,  
 and that of his Prince<sub>7</sub>,  
 and he will rule it for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>!"

Then the twenty-four elders<sub>12</sub> who are seated<sub>28</sub> before God<sub>96</sub> on their thrones<sub>45</sub> fell on their faces<sub>10</sub> and worshiped God<sub>96</sub>, and said,  
 "Thank you, Master<sub>24</sub>, God<sub>96</sub>, Ruler of all,

who are and who were,  
 because you have taken up your great power<sub>12</sub>  
 and begun to rule.  
 The nations<sub>24</sub> ranted, and your wrath<sub>6</sub> came  
 and the moment<sub>7</sub> for judging the dead<sub>13</sub>,  
 and giving the reward to your slaves<sub>14</sub> the prophets,  
 and to the sacred ones<sub>15</sub>  
 and those who fear your name<sub>38</sub>,  
 small and great,  
 and for destroying the destroyers of the earth<sub>80</sub>.”

Then the temple<sub>16</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> in heaven<sub>54</sub> opened, and the Chest  
 of his Treaty was seen in his temple<sub>16</sub>; and there came lightning<sub>4</sub> and  
 noises<sub>55</sub> and thunder<sub>10</sub> and earthquake<sub>7</sub> and violent hail<sub>4</sub>.

The kingdom of this world belongs to the Master and his Prince, and he  
 will reign for ever and ever. Hallelujah!

His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and all the kings of  
 the earth will serve and obey him. And he will reign for ever and ever.  
 Hallelujah!

*Second reading*

*Commentary on John's Report  
 by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

“I am dying for everyone,” says the Master. “I am dying to give  
 them life through myself and to redeem the whole human race through  
 my humanity. In my death, death itself will die, and man’s fallen nature  
 will come back to life again with me. I wanted to be like my brothers in  
 every respect, so I became a man like you, a descendant of Abraham.”

In his clear understanding of this, St. Paul says, “In the same  
 way as the children of a family share the same flesh and blood, he too  
 shared our human nature, so that by his death he could destroy the  
 power of the devil, the prince of death.” Death itself and the prince of  
 death could only be destroyed by the Prince, who is more than anything  
 else giving himself up as a ransom for us all.

And so, speaking as a spotless victim offering himself to God  
 the Father for us, the Prince says in one of his psalms, “You did not want  
 any sacrifices or offerings; but you fitted a body to me. You took no  
 pleasure in holocausts or sin offerings; but then I said, “Now I am

coming.” He was crucified for everyone, desiring his one death for everyone to give all of us life in him. It was impossible for him to be conquered by death; nor could the one whose very nature is life be subject to decay. Yet we know that the Prince offered his body for the life of the world by his own prayer: “Holy Father, protect them,” and by his words, “It is for their sake that I consecrate myself.” By saying that he “consecrates himself,” he means that he offers himself to God as a spotless and sweet-smelling sacrifice. As the Law states, anything offered on the alter was consecrated and considered holy. And so the Prince gave his own body for everyone else’s life, and makes it the channel through which life flows once more into us.

How he does this I will explain to the best of my ability. When the life-giving Word of God lived in human flesh, he changed it into that good thing which is distinctively his: life; and by being completely united to the flesh in a way beyond our comprehension, he gave it the life-giving power which he has by his very nature. Therefore, the body of the Prince gives life to those who receive it. Its presence in mortal men expels death and drives away decay because it contains within itself in its entirety the Word, who totally abolishes decay.

I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep, and I am giving up my life for them. Hallelujah!

I have come for them to have life, and have it more fully. I know my sheep, and I am giving up my life for them. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you give new life to the faithful by the water of the Baptismal Bath, may we please not succumb to the influence of evil and remain true to your gift of life. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



# Fourth Sunday of Easter

## *First Reading*

Then a great sign<sup>7</sup> appeared in heaven<sup>54</sup>: a woman<sup>19</sup>, robed with the sun<sup>13</sup>, and with the moon<sup>4</sup> beneath her feet<sup>11</sup>; and on her head<sup>19</sup> was a victor's laurel crown<sup>8</sup> of twelve stars<sup>14</sup>. She was pregnant, and cried out in labor pains, and was in the agony of birth.

Then another sign<sup>7</sup> appeared in heaven<sup>54</sup>; there was a huge, fiery-red python<sup>13</sup>, who had seven heads<sup>19</sup> and ten horns<sup>10</sup>; and on his heads<sup>19</sup> seven crowns<sup>3</sup>, and his tail<sup>5</sup> swept a third of the stars<sup>14</sup> of heaven<sup>54</sup> to earth<sup>80</sup>. The python<sup>13</sup> then stood in front of the woman<sup>19</sup> who was about to give birth, to eat her child<sup>3</sup> when it was born. She gave birth to a son<sup>8</sup>, a male, who is going to shepherd all the nations<sup>24</sup> with a staff<sup>4</sup> of iron; and her child<sup>3</sup> was plucked away to God<sup>96</sup> and his throne<sup>45</sup>, and the woman<sup>19</sup> escaped into the desert<sup>3</sup>, where she has a place<sup>8</sup> readied by God<sup>96</sup>, so that she will be fed for one thousand two hundred sixty days<sup>21</sup>.

Then there was a war<sup>9</sup> in heaven<sup>54</sup>: Michael and his angels<sup>66</sup> were fighting with the python<sup>13</sup>. The python<sup>13</sup> and his angels<sup>66</sup> put up a battle, but were not strong enough, and no place<sup>8</sup> was found for them in heaven<sup>54</sup>. And he was thrown down—the huge python<sup>13</sup>, the serpent<sup>5</sup> of old, the one called “Devil<sup>5</sup>,” and “Satan<sup>8</sup>,” the one who leads the whole world<sup>3</sup> astray, was thrown down to the earth<sup>80</sup>, and his angels<sup>66</sup> were thrown down with him.

Then I heard a great voice<sup>55</sup> in heaven<sup>54</sup> say,  
“Now the rescue<sup>3</sup> and the power<sup>12</sup>  
and the kingdom<sup>9</sup>, of our God<sup>96</sup> has come,

## *Revelation 12.1-17*

and the authority<sub>21</sub> of his Prince<sub>7</sub>;  
 because the accuser of our brothers<sub>5</sub> has been thrown down:  
 the one who kept accusing them  
 before God<sub>9</sub>, day<sub>21</sub> and night<sub>8</sub>;  
 and they have conquered him  
 because of the blood<sub>19</sub> of the lamb<sub>30</sub>  
 and because of the words<sub>18</sub> of his testimony<sub>9</sub>;  
 and they did not love their souls<sub>7</sub> till death<sub>19</sub>.  
 And so celebrate, heaven<sub>54</sub>,  
 and those who make their home<sub>14</sub> in it!  
 Woe<sub>14</sub> to the earth<sub>80</sub> and the sea<sub>26</sub>,  
 because the devil<sub>5</sub> has come upon you,  
 with great fury<sub>10</sub>,  
 seeing that he has a brief moment<sub>7</sub> left!”

And when the python<sub>13</sub> saw that he had been thrown to the earth<sub>80</sub>, he harassed the woman<sub>19</sub> who had given birth to the male. Then the woman<sub>19</sub> was given the two wings<sub>3</sub> of the great eagle<sub>3</sub> for her to fly into the desert<sub>5</sub> to her place<sub>8</sub>, where she is fed for a moment<sub>7</sub>, moments<sub>7</sub>, and half a moment<sub>7</sub> away from the face<sub>10</sub> of the serpent<sub>5</sub>.

Then the serpent<sub>5</sub> spat from his mouth<sub>21</sub> behind the woman<sub>19</sub> water<sub>18</sub>—a kind of river<sub>8</sub>—to flood her out. But the earth<sub>80</sub> helped the woman<sub>19</sub>; and the earth<sub>80</sub> opened its mouth<sub>21</sub> and swallowed the river<sub>8</sub> which the python<sub>13</sub> had spat from his mouth<sub>21</sub>.

Then the python<sub>13</sub> was enraged with the woman<sub>19</sub>, and left to make war<sub>9</sub> with the rest<sub>8</sub> of her descendants who keep the commandments of God<sub>9</sub> and hold to the testimony<sub>9</sub> of Jesus<sub>14</sub>.

And he stood on the sand of the sea<sub>26</sub>.

Through the blood of the Lamb and the evidence of their martyrdom, they have won the battle; their love of life did not deter them from death. So the heavens and everyone who lives there should celebrate this. Hallelujah!

You have suffered for a little while, but under God’s Treaty you have gained eternal life. So the heavens and everyone who lives there should celebrate this. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading**A Homily on the Reports of the Good News  
by St. Gregory the Great*

“I am the good shepherd. I know those that belong to me”—by which I mean, I love them—“and my own know me.” In plain words, those who love me are willing to follow me, because anyone who does not love the truth has not yet come to know it.

My dear brothers and sister, you have heard the test we shepherds must pass. Now turn to consider how these words of our Master imply a test for yourselves too. Ask yourselves whether you belong to his flock, whether you know him, and whether the light of his truth shines in your minds. I assure you that it is not by faith that you will come to know him, but by love; it is not by mere conviction, but by action. John the Evangelist is my authority for this statement; he tells us that “anyone who claims to know God without keeping his commandments is a liar.”

And so, the Master immediately adds, “in the same way as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I am ready to give up my life for my sheep.” Clearly, he means that giving up his life for his sheep gives evidence of his knowledge of the Father and the Father’s knowledge of him; or in other words, by the love with which he dies for his sheep, he shows how greatly he loves his Father.

Again, he says, “My sheep listen to my voice, and I know who they are, and they follow me, and I am giving them eternal life.” Shortly before this, he had said, “If anyone enters the sheepfold through me, he will be saved; he will go in and out freely and find good pasture.” He will enter a life of faith; and from faith he will go out to vision, from belief to contemplation, and will grace in the good pastures of eternal life.

So our Master’s sheep will finally reach their grazing ground, where everyone who follows him in simplicity of heart will graze on the green pastures of eternity. These pastures are the spiritual joys of heaven; there, the chosen people look upon the face of God with unclouded vision, and feast at the banquet of life for ever more.

My brothers and sisters, my friends, let us start out for these pastures, where we will hold a joyful celebration with so many of our fellow citizens. May the thought of their happiness drive us on! We should rouse our hearts, rekindle our faith, and long eagerly for what heaven has in store for us. To love in this way is to be already on our

way. No matter what obstacles we encounter, we must not allow them to turn us aside from the joy of that heavenly feast. Anyone who is determined to reach his destination is not deterred by the roughness of the road that leads to it; and we too must not allow the charm of success to tempt us, or we will be like a foolish traveler, who is so distracted by the pleasant meadows he is passing through that he forgets where he is going.

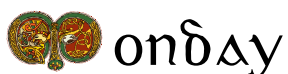
The Good Shepherd, who had given up his life for his sheep has returned to life; he willingly suffered death for his flock. Hallelujah!

The Prince has been sacrificed as our Passover; he willingly suffered death for his flock. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Omnipotent, eternally living God, please give us new strength from the courage of our shepherd the Prince, and lead us to join the saints in heaven. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Resume with the Te Deum



#### First Reading

#### Revelation 13.1-18

Then I saw a beast<sup>38</sup> coming up out of the sea<sup>26</sup>, with ten horns<sup>10</sup> and seven heads<sup>19</sup>, and on his horns<sup>10</sup> ten crowns<sup>3</sup> and on his heads<sup>19</sup> a name<sup>38</sup> of blasphemy<sup>5</sup>. And the beast<sup>38</sup> I saw was like a leopard; its feet<sup>11</sup> were like a bear's, and its mouth<sup>21</sup> was like a lion's /mouth/. The python<sup>13</sup> gave it his power<sup>12</sup> and his throne<sup>45</sup> and great authority<sup>21</sup>. One of its heads<sup>19</sup> seemed to be wounded to death<sup>19</sup>, and the curse<sup>16</sup> of death<sup>19</sup> had been cured. The whole earth<sup>80</sup> was astounded behind the beast<sup>38</sup>, and worshiped the python<sup>13</sup> who had given such authority<sup>21</sup> to the beast<sup>38</sup>, and worshiped the beast<sup>38</sup>, and said, "Is there anyone like the beast<sup>38</sup>? Is there anyone who can war against it?"

It was given a mouth<sup>21</sup> uttering boasts and blasphemies<sup>5</sup>; and

it was given authority<sub>21</sub> to act for forty-two months<sub>6</sub>. It opened its mouth<sub>21</sub> with blasphemies<sub>5</sub> against God<sub>9,6</sub>, blaspheming his name<sub>38</sub> and the name<sub>38</sub> of his tent<sub>3</sub>; those who make their home in heaven<sub>54</sub>. And it was given the right to make war<sub>9</sub> on the sacred people<sub>15</sub> and conquer them;

and it was given authority<sub>21</sub> over every tribe<sub>21</sub> and people<sub>9</sub> and tongue<sub>8</sub> and nation<sub>24</sub>. And all those whose home<sub>14</sub> is on the earth<sub>80</sub> worshiped it if their names<sub>38</sub> were not written in the scroll<sub>3</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> of the lamb<sub>30</sub> that was slain from the foundation of the world.

If anyone has ears<sub>8</sub>, he should listen: If anyone is taken captive, he will go into captivity; if anyone kills with a saber<sub>4</sub>, he must be killed with a saber<sub>4</sub>. Here is the persistence<sub>7</sub> and faith<sub>4</sub> of the sacred people<sub>15</sub>.

Then I saw another beast<sub>38</sub> coming up out of the earth<sub>80</sub>, with two horns<sub>10</sub> like a lamb<sub>30</sub>, but which spoke like a python<sub>13</sub>. It exercises all the authority<sub>21</sub> of the first beast<sub>38</sub> in its presence. It makes the earth<sub>80</sub> and those whose home<sub>14</sub> is in it worship the first beast<sub>38</sub> whose curse<sub>16</sub> of death<sub>19</sub> was cured. And it performs great signs<sub>7</sub>, so much as to make fire<sub>26</sub> come down from heaven<sub>54</sub> to earth<sub>80</sub> in the presence of men<sub>25</sub>. And it leads astray those whose home<sub>14</sub> is on the earth<sub>80</sub> because of the signs<sub>7</sub> it is permitted to perform before the beast<sub>38</sub>, and tells those whose home<sub>14</sub> is on the earth<sub>80</sub> to make a statue<sub>10</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub> which had the curse<sub>16</sub> from the saber<sub>4</sub> and lived. And it was given the ability to give breath<sub>24</sub> to the statue<sub>10</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub>, so that the statue<sub>10</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub> would speak and make all those who did not worship the statue<sub>10</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub> be killed. And it made everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave<sub>14</sub>, be given a mark<sub>7</sub> on their right<sub>9</sub> hands<sub>16</sub> or on their foreheads<sub>8</sub>; and no one could buy or sell if he did not have the mark<sub>7</sub>; the name<sub>38</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub> or the number<sub>10</sub> of its name<sub>38</sub>.

Here is wisdom<sub>4</sub>: One who has a mind should count up the number<sub>10</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub>, because it is the number<sub>10</sub> of a man<sub>25</sub>. His number<sub>10</sub> is six hundred sixty-six.

The one who is victorious will be dressed in white robes. I will praise his name in the presence of my Father and the angels. Hallelujah!

Anyone who persists until the end will be saved. I will praise his name in the presence of my Father and the angels. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading**The Book on the Holy Spirit by Basil the Great*

Our Master made a treaty with us through the Bath in order to give us eternal life. In the Bath, there is an image both of death and of life, since the water is the symbol of death, and the Spirit gives the pledge of life. The association of water and the Spirit is explained by the double purpose for which the Bath was instituted: to destroy the sin in us so that it could never again give birth to death, and to enable us to live by the Spirit and so win the reward of holiness. The water into which the body enters as if into a tomb symbolizes death; the spirit instills into us his life-giving power, and awakens our souls from the death of sin to the life they had in the beginning. This, then, is what it means to be born again from water and Spirit: we die in the water, and come to life again in the Spirit.

To signify this death, and to illuminate those who are bathed by transmitting the knowledge of God to them, the great sacrament of the Bath is administered by a three-fold immersion and the invocation of the three divine Persons. Whatever grace there is in the water comes from the presence of the Spirit, not its own nature, “since the Bather is not a cleaning of the body but a pledge made to God from a clear conscience.”

As a preparation for our life after the resurrection, our Master tells us in the Good News how we should live here and now. He teaches us to be peaceable, patient, undefiled by desire for pleasure, and detached from worldly wealth. In this way, we can by our own free choice achieve the kind of life that will be natural in the world to come.

Through the Holy Spirit, we are restored to paradise, we rise to the Kingdom of Heaven, and we are reinstated as adopted sons. Thanks to the Spirit, we win the right to call God our Father, we become sharers in the grace of the Prince, we are called children of light, and we share in eternal glory—in a word, every blessing is showered down on us, both in this world and in the world to come. As we contemplate these blessings even know, like a reflection in a mirror, it is as though we already possessed the benefits our faith tells us we will enjoy one day. If this is the pledge, what will the perfection be? If these are the firstfruits, what will the full harvest be?

As we rise out of the water of the Bath, our sins are washed away, and

the Holy Spirit comes down to us like a dove, bringing the peace of God from heaven, where the Church is prefigured by Noah's Container. Hallelujah!

The blessed water of the sacrament of the Bather free us for eternal life; and the Holy Spirit comes down to us like a dove, bringing the peace of God from heaven, where the Church is prefigured by Noah's Container. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Dear Father, since through the obedience of your servant and Son Jesus, you lifted a fallen world back up, please free us from sin and bring us the joy that lasts forever. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



### First Reading

### Revelation 14.1-13

Then I looked, and there was the lamb<sub>30</sub>, standing upon Mount<sub>8</sub> Zion, and with him one hundred forty-four thousand who had his name<sub>38</sub> and the name<sub>38</sub> of his father<sub>5</sub> written upon their foreheads<sub>8</sub>. Then I heard a sound<sub>55</sub> from heaven<sub>54</sub> like the sound<sub>55</sub> of many waters<sub>18</sub> and the sound<sub>55</sub> of enormous thunder<sub>10</sub>; and the sound<sub>55</sub> I heard was like harpists playing on their harps<sub>3</sub>. They are singing a new song before the throne<sub>45</sub> and before the four animals<sub>20</sub> and the elders<sub>12</sub>; and no one could learn the song except the hundred forty-four thousand who were purchased from the earth<sub>80</sub>. They are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women<sub>19</sub>; they are virgins. They are the ones following the lamb<sub>30</sub> wherever he goes; they have been purchased from the human<sub>25</sub> race as firstfruits for God<sub>96</sub> and the lamb<sub>30</sub>, and nothing false<sub>3</sub> has been found in their mouths<sub>21</sub>. They are spotless.

Then I saw another angel<sub>66</sub> flying in mid-heaven<sub>3</sub> with the eternal good news to report the news to those seated<sub>28</sub> on the earth<sub>80</sub>, and to every nation<sub>24</sub> and tribe<sub>21</sub> and tongue<sub>8</sub> and people<sub>9</sub>, crying in a great voice<sub>55</sub>, "Fear God<sub>96</sub> and give him glory<sub>17</sub>, because the hour<sub>10</sub> of his verdict<sub>4</sub> has come; and give worship to the one who made heaven<sub>54</sub>, the earth<sub>80</sub>, the sea<sub>26</sub>, and the springs<sub>5</sub> of water<sub>18</sub>."

Then another angel<sub>66</sub>, a second one, followed him, and said, “She has fallen! Great Babylon<sub>6</sub> has fallen! She is the one who made all the nations<sub>24</sub> drunk with the wine<sub>8</sub> of the fury<sub>10</sub> of her prostitution<sub>7</sub>!”

Then another, a third angel<sub>66</sub> followed them, crying in a great voice<sub>55</sub>, “If anyone worships the beast<sub>38</sub> or its statue<sub>10</sub> and accepts its mark<sub>7</sub> on his forehead<sub>8</sub> or hand<sub>16</sub>, he will also drink the wine<sub>8</sub> of the fury<sub>10</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>, poured unmixed into the cup<sub>4</sub> of his wrath<sub>6</sub>, and will be punished in fire<sub>26</sub> and sulfur<sub>6</sub> before his sacred angels<sub>66</sub> and before the lamb<sub>30</sub>. And the smoke<sub>12</sub> of his torment<sub>6</sub> will rise up for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>, and there will be no respite day<sub>21</sub> or night<sub>8</sub> for those who worship the beast<sub>38</sub> and its statue<sub>10</sub>, and for anyone who accepts the mark<sub>7</sub> of its name<sub>38</sub>.”

Here is the persistence<sub>7</sub> of the sacred people<sub>15</sub>, who keep the commandments of God<sub>96</sub> and faith<sub>4</sub> in Jesus<sub>14</sub>.

Then I heard a voice<sub>55</sub> from heaven<sub>54</sub> say, “Write this: It will be a blessing<sub>7</sub> to be one of the dead<sub>13</sub> who die in the Master<sub>24</sub> from now on.

Yes,” says the spirit<sub>24</sub>, “So that they will rest from their labor. Their deeds<sub>20</sub> follow along with them.”

I heard a great many angels in heaven cry, “Honor the Master and give him glory; worship him, because he created heaven and earth, the seas and the rivers.” Hallelujah!

I saw the mighty angel of God flying in mid-heaven; he called in a loud voice, “Honor the Master and give him glory; worship him, because he created the earth, the seas, and the rivers.” Hallelujah!

### *Second Reading*

### *A Sermon by St. Peter Chrysologus*

“I appeal to you by the mercy of God.” This appeal is made by Paul—or rather, it is made by God through Paul, because of God’s desire to be loved rather than feared, and to be a father rather than a master. God appeals to us in his mercy to avoid having to punish us in his harshness.

Listen to the Master’s appeal: I want you to see your own body in me, its parts—your heart, your bones, and your blood. You may be in fear of what is divine, but why not love what is human? You may run away from me as the Master, but why not run to me as your father?



Perhaps you are filled with shame for causing my bitter suffering, but do not be afraid; this cross inflicts a mortal injury on death, not me. These nails no longer give me pain, and only deepen your love for me. I do not cry out because of these wounds; through them I draw you to my hearts. My body was stretched out on the cross as a symbol of my all-embracing love, not of how much I suffered. I consider it no loss to shed my blood; it is the price I have paid for your ransom. Then come and return to me and learn to follow me as your father, who repays good for evil, love for injury, and boundless charity for piercing wounds.

Listen now to what the Emissary encourages us to do: "I appeal to you," he says, "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice." By this invitation of his, Paul has raised every human being to priestly rank.

And the priesthood of the Christian is a marvelous one, because he is both the victim offered on his own behalf, and the priest who makes the offering. He does not need to go beyond himself to find what he is to slaughter for God: he brings the sacrifice with himself and in himself to offer to God for himself. The victim remains, and the priest remains, always one and the same; even when slaughtered, the victim continues to live; and the priest who slaughters him cannot kill him. It is certainly an amazing sacrifice in which a body is offered without being slaughtered and blood is offered without being shed.

The Emissary says, "I appeal to you by the mercy of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice." My brothers and sisters, this sacrifice follows the pattern of the Prince's sacrifice by which he gave his body as a living immolation for the life of the world. He really made his body a living sacrifice, because, even though killed, he continues to live. In such a victim, death receives its ransom, but the victim remains alive. Death itself is what suffers the punishment. This is why death for the martyrs is actually a birth, and their end is a beginning. Their execution is the door to life, and those who were thought to have been erased from the earth shine brilliantly in heaven.

Paul says, "I appeal to you by the mercy of God to present yourselves as a sacrifice that is living and holy." The prophet said the same thing, "You had no desire for sacrifices and offerings; but you prepared a body for me." Each of us is called to be both a sacrifice to God and his priest; do not forfeit what divine authority confers upon you. Put on the clothes of holiness, and tie the belt of chastity around

you. Have the Prince be your helmet, and the cross on your forehead your unfailing protection. Keep burning the sweet-smelling incense of prayer continually. Take up the sword of the Spirit, and let your heart be an altar. Then, with full confidence in God, present your body for sacrifice. God desires faith, not death; God is thirsty for self-surrender, not blood; God is appeased by the offering of your free will, not by slaughter.

You have the right, Master, to take the scroll and open its seals, because you were slaughtered for us, and you have bought us for God with your blood. Hallelujah!

You have made us a kingdom of priests to serve our God; and you have bought us for God with your blood. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Omnipotent God, may we as we celebrate the resurrection please share with each other the joy the Prince has won for us. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## ednesday

#### First Reading

#### Revelation 14.14-15.4

Then I looked, and there was a white cloud<sup>7</sup>, and seated<sup>28</sup> on the cloud<sup>7</sup> someone like a son<sup>8</sup> of man<sup>25</sup> who had a golden winner's laurel crown<sup>8</sup> on his head<sup>19</sup> and in his hand<sup>16</sup> a sharp sickle<sup>7</sup>. Then another angel<sup>66</sup> came out of the temple<sup>16</sup> crying in a great voice<sup>55</sup> to the one seated<sup>28</sup> on the cloud<sup>7</sup>, "Put your sickle<sup>7</sup> to use and reap, because the harvest of the earth<sup>80</sup> is ripe!" Then the one seated<sup>28</sup> on the cloud<sup>7</sup> threw his sickle<sup>7</sup> to the earth<sup>80</sup>, and the earth<sup>80</sup> was reaped.

Then another angel<sup>66</sup> came from the temple<sup>16</sup> in heaven<sup>54</sup>, and he also had a sharp sickle<sup>7</sup>. Another angel<sup>66</sup> came from the altar<sup>8</sup> with authority<sup>21</sup> over the fire<sup>26</sup>, and called in a great voice<sup>55</sup> to the one with the sharp sickle<sup>7</sup>, "Put your sharp sickle<sup>7</sup> to use, and gather the clusters from the earth<sup>80</sup>'s vine, because its grapes have ripened." And the angel<sup>66</sup>

threw his sickle<sub>7</sub> to the earth<sub>80</sub> and harvested the earth<sub>80</sub>'s vine,  
and threw the product into the great winepress<sub>4</sub> of the fury<sub>10</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>;  
and the winepress<sub>4</sub> was trampled outside the city<sub>27</sub>, and blood<sub>19</sub> came out  
of the winepress<sub>4</sub> up to the bridles of horses<sub>16</sub> for one thousand six  
hundred stadia.

Then I saw another sign<sub>7</sub> in heaven<sub>54</sub> that was great and  
astonishing:  
seven angels<sub>66</sub> with the seven last curses<sub>16</sub>: last, because in them God<sub>96</sub>'s  
fury<sub>10</sub> is brought to completion.

Then I saw something like a sea<sub>26</sub> of glass mixed with fire<sub>26</sub>, and  
those who had won the battle<sub>9</sub> with the beast<sub>38</sub> and with his statue<sub>10</sub> and  
the number<sub>10</sub> of his name<sub>38</sub> standing upon the sea<sub>26</sub> of glass holding  
God<sub>96</sub>'s harps<sub>3</sub>. And they sang the song of Moses, God<sub>96</sub>'s slave<sub>14</sub>, and  
the song of the lamb<sub>30</sub>:

“Your deeds<sub>20</sub> are great and astonishing,  
Master<sub>24</sub>, God<sub>96</sub>, Ruler of all<sub>9</sub>;  
your roads are just and true,  
king<sub>21</sub> of the nations<sub>24</sub>.  
Would anyone not be in awe of you, Master<sub>24</sub>,  
or not glorify your name<sub>38</sub>;  
because you alone are holy,  
and because all the nations<sub>24</sub> have come  
and have given worship before you,  
because your sentences have been pronounced.”

They sang the song of the Lamb: “How marvelous and great are your  
deeds, Master God, Ruler of All; your roads are just and true, King  
of the nations.” Hallelujah!

Master you have performed wonderful deeds. Who is your  
equal among the gods? Who is like you, so majestic in holiness? Your  
roads are just and true, King of the nations. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*Treatise on the Trinity by St. Hilary*

We believe that the Word became flesh and that we receive his  
flesh in the Master's dinner. Then how can we fail to believe that he  
really lives in us? When he became man, he dressed himself in our flesh,  
and united it to himself forever. In the sacrament of his body, he actually

gives us his own flesh, which he has united to his divinity. This is why we are all one and the same thing, because the Father is in the Prince, and the Prince is in us. He is in us through his flesh, and we are in him. With him we form a unity which is in God.

The manner of our indwelling in him through the sacrament of his body and blood is evident from the Master's own words: "This world will see me no longer; but you will see me. Because I am alive, you will also be alive, because I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you." If it had been a question of mere unity of will, why would he have given us this explanation of the steps by which it is achieved? He is in the Father by reason of his divine nature, we are in him by reason of his human birth, and he is in us through the mystery of the sacraments.

This, surely, is what he wished us to believe; this is how he wanted us to understand the perfect unity that is achieved through our Mediator, who lives in the Father while we live in him, and who, while living in the Father, also lives in us. This is how we attain to unity with the Father. The Prince is in absolute truth in the Father by his eternal siring of him; we are in absolute truth in the Prince, and he is likewise in us.

The Prince himself testified to the reality of this unity when he said, "Anyone who eats the meat of my body and drinks my blood lives in me, and I live in him." No one will be in the Prince unless the Prince has himself been in him; the Prince will take to himself only the flesh of those who have already received his flesh.

He had already explained the mystery of this perfect unity when he said, "As the living Father sent me and I live through the Father, anyone who eats the meat of my body will live through me." We "live through his flesh" just as he draws his life from the Father. This type of comparison helps our understanding, because we can grasp a point more easily when we have an analogy; and the point is that the Prince is the wellspring of our life. Since those of us who are in the flesh have the Prince living in us through his flesh, we will draw life from him in the same way as he draws life from the Father.

"Whoever eats the meat of my body and drinks my blood lives in me, and I live in him," says the Master. Hallelujah!

There is no great nation which has gods as near to it as our

God is near to us. “He lives in me and I live in him,” says the Master. Hallelujah!

*Prayer*

Dear God, our Father, life of the faithful, glory of the humble, and happiness of the virtuous, please listen to our prayer and fill our emptiness with the blessing of the Eucharist, which is the foretaste of eternal joy. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*First Reading*

*Revelation 15.5-16.21*

After this I looked, and the temple<sub>16</sub> of the tent<sub>3</sub> of witness in heaven<sub>5,4</sub> was opened, and the seven angels<sub>66</sub> with the seven curses<sub>16</sub> came out of the temple<sub>16</sub>, dressed in clean, gleaming linen, and belted round their chests with golden sashes. Then one of the four animals<sub>20</sub> gave the seven angels<sub>66</sub> seven golden bowls<sub>12</sub> full of the fury<sub>10</sub> of the God<sub>96</sub> who lives for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>. Then the temple<sub>16</sub> was filled with smoke<sub>12</sub> from the glory<sub>17</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> and his power<sub>12</sub>, and no one was able to enter the temple<sub>16</sub> until the seven curses<sub>16</sub> of the seven angels<sub>66</sub> were complete.

Then I heard a great voice<sub>55</sub> from the temple<sub>16</sub> say to the seven angels<sub>66</sub>, “Go pour out onto the earth<sub>80</sub> the seven bowls<sub>12</sub> of the fury<sub>10</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>.”

The first left and poured out his bowl<sub>12</sub> onto the earth<sub>80</sub>, and there came foul, painful sores on the men<sub>25</sub> who had the mark<sub>7</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub> and on the ones who worshiped his statue<sub>10</sub>.

Then the second poured out his bowl<sub>12</sub> into the sea<sub>26</sub>, and it turned into blood<sub>19</sub> like that of a dead man<sub>13</sub>, and every soul<sub>7</sub> with life<sub>16</sub> in the sea<sub>26</sub> died.

Then the third angel<sub>66</sub> poured out his bowl<sub>12</sub> onto the rivers<sub>8</sub> and springs<sub>5</sub> of water<sub>18</sub>, and they became blood<sub>19</sub>. Then I heard the angel<sub>66</sub>

of the waters<sub>18</sub> say, “You are just, <Master<sub>24</sub>>, who is and who was, Holy One, because you have given this verdict<sub>4</sub>; they have poured out the blood<sub>19</sub> of the sacred people<sub>15</sub> and the prophets<sub>9</sub>, and you have given them blood<sub>19</sub> to drink. They deserve it.” Then I heard the altar<sub>8</sub> say, “Yes, Master<sub>24</sub>, God<sub>96</sub>, Ruler of all<sub>9</sub>, your verdicts<sub>4</sub> are truthful and just.”

Then the fourth poured out his bowl<sub>12</sub> onto the sun<sub>13</sub>, and it was given the right to burn men<sub>25</sub> in fire<sub>26</sub>; and the men<sub>25</sub> were burned with fierce heat, and they blasphemed the name<sub>38</sub> of the God<sub>96</sub> who had authority<sub>21</sub> over these curses<sub>16</sub> and did not change heart and give him glory<sub>17</sub>.

Then the fifth poured out his bowl<sub>12</sub> onto the beast<sub>38</sub>'s throne<sub>45</sub>, and its kingdom<sub>9</sub> grew dark, and people chewed their tongues<sub>8</sub> from pain<sub>3</sub> and blasphemed the God<sub>96</sub> of heaven<sub>54</sub> from their pain<sub>3</sub> and their sores, and did not change heart from their deeds<sub>20</sub>.

Then the sixth poured out his bowl<sub>12</sub> onto the great river<sub>8</sub> Euphrates, and its water<sub>18</sub> dried up, to prepare the road for the kings<sub>21</sub> from the rising<sub>3</sub> of the sun<sub>13</sub>.

Then I saw issue from the mouth<sub>21</sub> of the python<sub>13</sub> and from the mouth<sub>21</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub> and from the mouth<sub>21</sub> of the false prophet<sub>3</sub> three unclean spirits<sub>24</sub> like frogs; they are spirits<sub>24</sub> of demons<sub>3</sub> performing signs<sub>7</sub>, who travel to the kings<sub>21</sub> of the whole world<sub>3</sub> to lead them into the great war<sub>9</sub> of the day<sub>21</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>, the Ruler of all<sub>9</sub>.

—Now I am coming like a thief. It will go well for<sub>7</sub> the one who stays alert and takes care of his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked for people to see his shame.

And they led them to the place<sub>8</sub> called in Hebrew Harmagedon.

Then the seventh poured out his bowl<sub>12</sub> into the air; and there came a great voice<sub>55</sub> out of <heaven's<sub>54</sub>> temple<sub>16</sub> from <God<sub>96</sub>>, which said,

“It has been done!” Then there were lightning<sub>4</sub>, noises<sub>55</sub>, and thunder<sub>10</sub>, and an immense earthquake<sub>7</sub>, so great an earthquake<sub>7</sub> had not happened since the human race<sub>25</sub> had been upon the earth<sub>80</sub>. And the great city<sub>27</sub> split into three parts<sub>4</sub> and the cities<sub>27</sub> of the nations<sub>24</sub> fell.

Then Babylon<sub>6</sub> the Great was remembered before God<sub>96</sub>, for him to give her the cup<sub>4</sub> of the wine<sub>8</sub> of the fury<sub>10</sub> of his wrath<sub>6</sub>. Every

island fled away, and the mountains<sup>8</sup> could not be found. Then a violent hail<sup>4</sup> with stones of a talent's weight fell from heaven<sup>54</sup> upon the human<sup>25</sup> race; and the men<sup>25</sup> blasphemed the God<sup>96</sup> of the curse<sup>16</sup> of the hail<sup>4</sup> because this curse<sup>16</sup> was extremely severe.

If the head of the house knew when the thief was coming, he would certainly stay alert. "And now I am coming like a thief," says the Master. "It will go well for a person who remains alert." Hallelujah!

Just when people are saying, "Now we have peace and security," suddenly ruin will come upon them. "And now I am coming like a thief," says the Master. "It will go well for a person who remains alert." Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*Treatise on John by St. Augustine*

"I now give you a new commandment: for you to love each other." This commandment that he is giving the students is a new one, Master Jesus tells them. But was it not contained in the Old Law, where it is written, "You are to love your neighbor as much as you love yourself?" Why does the Master call it new, when clearly it is old? Or is the commandment new because it divests us of our former selves and dresses us in the new man? Love does in fact renew the person who listens to, or rather, obeys, its command; but only that love which Jesus distinguished from a natural love by the qualification, "in the way in which I have loved you."

This is the kind of love that renews us. When we love as he loved us, we become new men, heirs of the new Treaty and singers of the new song. My brothers and sisters, this was the love that even in days gone by renewed the holy men, the patriarchs and prophets of ancient times. In later times, it renewed the blessed Emissaries, and now it is the turn of the Gentiles. From the entire human race throughout the world, this love gathers into one body a new people, to be the bride of God's only Son. She is the bride the Song of Songs asks about: "Who is this who comes here dressed in white?" Yes, her clothes are certainly white, because she has been made new; and the source of her renewal is nothing other than this new commandment.

And so all her members make each other's welfare their joint

concern. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with him, and if one member is honored, all the rest are happy. They hear and obey the Master's words, "I am giving you a new commandment: for you to love each other"; but not as men love each other for their own selfish purposes, but because they are all gods and sons of the Supreme Being. They love each other as God loves them, so that they will be brothers of his only Son. He will lead them to the only goal that will satisfy them, where all their desires will be fulfilled—because when God is everything in everyone, there will be nothing left to desire.

This love is the gift of the Master, who said, "You must love each other in the same way I have loved you." His object in loving us, then, was to enable us to love each other. By loving us himself, our mighty head has linked us all together as cells in his own body, bound to each other by the tender bond of love.

God has given us this commandment: anyone who loves God must also love his brother. Hallelujah!

The whole Law and the prophets rest on these two commandments: anyone who loves God must also love his brother. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since in restoring human nature, you have given us a greater dignity than we had in the beginning, please keep us in your love and continue to sustain those who have received new life in the Bath. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



#### First Reading

#### Revelation 17.1-18

Then one of the angels<sub>66</sub> who had the seven bowls<sub>12</sub> came up and spoke to me. "Come here," he said, "and I will show you the sentence<sub>3</sub> on the great prostitute<sub>7</sub> who is seated<sub>28</sub> upon many waters<sub>18</sub>, with whom the kings<sub>21</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub> have had sex, and those whose



home<sub>14</sub> is the earth<sub>80</sub> have grown drunk with the wine<sub>8</sub> of her prostitution<sub>7</sub>.”

Then he led me, in the spirit<sub>24</sub>, into the desert<sub>3</sub>, and I saw a woman<sub>19</sub> seated<sub>28</sub> on a scarlet beast<sub>38</sub> which was full of names<sub>38</sub> of blasphemy<sub>5</sub> and had seven heads<sub>19</sub> and ten horns<sub>10</sub>. The woman<sub>19</sub> was dressed in purple<sub>3</sub> and scarlet and bejeweled with gold<sub>5</sub> and precious stones<sub>8</sub> and pearls<sub>5</sub>. She had a golden cup<sub>4</sub> in her hand<sub>16</sub>, full of vileness<sub>3</sub> and the filth of her prostitution<sub>7</sub>. On her forehead<sub>8</sub> was written a name<sub>38</sub>: “A secret<sub>4</sub>: Babylon<sub>6</sub> the Great, the mother of prostitutes<sub>7</sub> and of the vileness<sub>3</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub>.” I saw that the woman<sub>19</sub> was drunk from the blood<sub>19</sub> of the sacred people<sub>15</sub> and the blood<sub>19</sub> of Jesus<sub>14</sub>’ witnesses<sub>5</sub>. I was astounded on seeing this.

Then the angel<sub>66</sub> told me, “Why are you surprised? I will tell you the secret<sub>4</sub> of the woman<sub>19</sub> and the beast<sub>38</sub> carrying her which has the seven heads<sub>19</sub> and ten horns<sub>10</sub>: The beast<sub>38</sub> you see existed and does not exist

and is going to come up out of the pit<sub>7</sub> and go to its ruin; and this will astonish all those whose home<sub>14</sub> is on the earth<sub>80</sub>, whose names<sub>38</sub> are not written in the scroll<sub>21</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> from the foundation of the universe, when they look at the beast<sub>38</sub> which existed and does not exist and will exist.

“Here a mind with wisdom<sub>4</sub> is needed: The seven heads<sub>19</sub> are seven mountains<sub>8</sub>, where the woman<sub>19</sub> is seated<sub>28</sub>. They are also seven kings<sub>21</sub>; five have fallen, one exists, and the other has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain a short while. The beast<sub>38</sub> which existed and does not exist is itself the eighth and comes from the seven, and is going to his ruin. Also, the ten horns<sub>10</sub> you see are ten kings<sub>21</sub> who have not yet received their kingdoms<sub>9</sub>, and will receive authority<sub>21</sub> as kings<sub>21</sub> for one hour<sub>10</sub> after the beast<sub>38</sub>. They have one conviction<sub>3</sub> and give their power<sub>12</sub> and authority<sub>21</sub> to the beast<sub>38</sub>. They will make war with the lamb<sub>30</sub>, and the lamb<sub>30</sub> will conquer them, because he is Master<sub>24</sub> of masters<sub>24</sub> and King<sub>21</sub> of kings<sub>21</sub>, and those with him are called, chosen, and faithful.”

Then he told me, “The waters<sub>18</sub> you see on which the prostitute<sub>7</sub> is seated<sub>28</sub> are peoples<sub>9</sub> and crowds<sub>4</sub> and nations<sub>24</sub> and tongues<sub>8</sub>. And the ten horns<sub>10</sub> you see and the beast<sub>38</sub> will hate the prostitute<sub>7</sub> and will leave her abandoned and naked, and will eat up her flesh<sub>7</sub> and burn her in fire<sub>26</sub>; because God<sub>96</sub> has put it into their hearts to

perform his conviction<sub>3</sub>; and they will have one conviction<sub>3</sub> and give their kingdoms<sub>9</sub> to the beast<sub>38</sub> until the words<sub>18</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> have reached completion.

“And the woman<sub>19</sub> you see is the great city<sub>27</sub> which has kingship<sub>9</sub> over the kings<sub>21</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub>.”

The rulers of the earth will wage war against the Lamb; but the Lamb will be victorious over them, because he is Master of masters, and King of kings. Hallelujah!

He was given a crown, and like a conqueror rode out conquering and to conquer, because he is Master of masters, and King of kings. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*                      *A Letter to the Corinthians by St. Clement*

My friends, Prince Jesus is our rescue; he is the high priest through whom we present our offerings and the helper who supports us in our weakness. Through him, our gaze penetrates the heights of heaven, and we see, as if we were looking into a mirror, the supremely holy face of God. The eyes of our hearts are opened through the Prince, and our weak and clouded understanding reaches up toward the light. The Master God willed that we were to taste eternal knowledge through him, because the Prince “is the radiance of God’s glory, and as much greater than the angels as the name God has given him is superior to theirs.”

So then, my brothers and sisters, we should do battle with all our strength under this unerring command. Think of the men serving under our military commanders, and how well disciplined they are, how readily and submissively they carry out orders. Not everyone can be a prefect, a tribune, a centurion or a captain of fifty, but each man in his own rank executes the orders of the emperor and the officers in command.

The great cannot exist without those in humble status, and those of low rank cannot exist without the great; it is always the harmonious working together of its various parts that ensures the well-being of the whole. Take our own body as an example: the head is

helpless without the feet, and the feet can do nothing without the head. Even our least important parts are useful and necessary to the whole body, and all of them work together for its well-being in harmonious subordination.

And so, we should preserve the unity of the body that we form in Prince Jeus, and everyone should give his neighbor the deference to which his particular gifts entitle him. The strong are to care for the weak, and the weak respect the strong; the wealthy are to assist the poor, and the poor man should thank God for giving him someone to supply his needs; the wise are to show their wisdom by good deeds and not eloquence, and humble people are to have others speak of his humility, not himself—and a man who preserves his chastity should not prate about it, and should recognize that the ability to control his desires has been given to him by someone else.

Think, my brothers and sisters, of how we first came into being, and what we were at the first moment of our existence. Think of the dark womb out of which our Creator brought us into this world, where he had his gifts prepared for us even before we were born. We owe all this to him, and we must show our gratitude to him for everything. May glory come to him through all the ages of ages. Amen.

The Prince is the head of the body which is the Church, and the firstborn from the dead. You were returned to life in him by faith in the power of the God who brought him back from death.

In the Prince, the completeness of divinity lives in human form, and in him you find your own fulfillment; you were buried with him in the Bath. You were returned to life in him by faith in the power of the God who brought him back from death.

#### Prayer

Dear Father of our freedom and rescue, please listen to the prayers of those redeemed by your Son's suffering; may we have life through you and eternal joy with you. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## SATURDAY

*First Reading**Revelation 18.1-20*

After this I saw another angel<sup>66</sup> coming down from heaven<sup>54</sup> with great authority<sup>21</sup>; the earth<sup>80</sup> shone with his glory<sup>17</sup>. He cried in a strong voice<sup>55</sup>, “She has fallen! Babylon<sup>6</sup> the Great has fallen, and has become a home for demons<sup>3</sup>; a prison<sup>4</sup> for every unclean spirit<sup>24</sup>, and a prison<sup>4</sup> for every unclean and disgusting bird<sup>3</sup>, because all the nations<sup>24</sup> have grown drunk on the wine<sup>8</sup> of the fury<sup>10</sup> of her prostitution<sup>7</sup>, and the kings<sup>21</sup> of the earth<sup>80</sup> have had sex with her, and the merchants<sup>4</sup> of the earth<sup>80</sup> have enriched themselves with the power<sup>12</sup> of her excess!”

Then I heard another voice<sup>55</sup> from heaven<sup>54</sup> say, “Escape from her, my people<sup>9</sup>, or you will share in her sins<sup>3</sup> and receive her curses<sup>16</sup>, because her sins<sup>3</sup> are heaped up to heaven<sup>54</sup>, and God<sup>96</sup> has remembered her injustices! Give her back what she has given! Double her double for her deeds<sup>20</sup>! Mix a double drink for her in the cup<sup>4</sup> she mixed! Give her as much torment<sup>6</sup> and grief<sup>4</sup> as she has glorified and overindulged herself!—because she says in her heart, ‘I am enthroned as queen, I am no widow, and will not see grief<sup>4</sup>’ Because of this, in one day<sup>21</sup> her curses<sup>16</sup> will come: death<sup>19</sup> and grief<sup>4</sup> and famine, and she will burn up in fire<sup>26</sup>, because the God<sup>96</sup> who sentences her is strong!”

Then the kings<sup>21</sup> of the earth<sup>80</sup> who had sex with her and overindulged themselves will weep and wail over her, when they see the smoke<sup>12</sup> of her burning, standing far off for fear<sup>3</sup> of her torment<sup>6</sup>.

“Ah<sup>14</sup>! Ah<sup>14</sup>, great city<sup>27</sup>,” they will say.

“Babylon<sup>6</sup>, strong city<sup>27</sup>!

In one hour<sup>10</sup> your verdict<sup>4</sup> has come!”

And the merchants<sup>4</sup> of the earth<sup>80</sup> will weep and wail over her, because no one will buy their products any longer: products of gold and silver, precious stones<sup>8</sup> and pearls<sup>5</sup>, linens<sup>5</sup> and purple<sup>3</sup>, silks and scarlet, all their aromatic wood<sup>7</sup>, and all their articles<sup>3</sup> of ivory; all their articles<sup>3</sup> of costly woods<sup>7</sup> and bronze and iron and marble, their cinnamon, perfume, and incense<sup>4</sup>, myrrh and sandalwood, wine<sup>8</sup> and oil, flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses<sup>16</sup> and chariots, and bodies and souls<sup>7</sup> of men<sup>25</sup>.

—The harvest-time your soul<sup>7</sup> yearned after is gone from you,

and all your delicacies and splendor have been wrenched from you and will never be found again.

The merchants<sub>4</sub> of all this, who made themselves rich out of her, will stand far off for fear<sub>3</sub> of her torment<sub>6</sub>, weeping and wailing, and say,

“Ah<sub>14</sub>! Ah<sub>14</sub>, great city<sub>27</sub>,  
dressed in linens<sub>5</sub> and purple<sub>3</sub> and scarlet,  
bejeweled with gold<sub>5</sub> and precious stones<sub>8</sub> and pearls<sub>5</sub>;  
all this wealth is gone in one hour<sub>10</sub>!”

And every pilot and everyone on the place<sub>8</sub> of boats, and sailors and those who work the sea<sub>26</sub>, stood far off and cried out when they saw the smoke<sub>12</sub> of her burning, “Who is like the great city<sub>27</sub>?” And they threw ashes on their heads<sub>19</sub> and cried out, weeping and wailing,

“Ah<sub>14</sub>! Ah<sub>14</sub>, great city<sub>27</sub>,  
where everyone who had a boat  
grew rich on the sea<sub>26</sub> with your wealth,  
in one hour<sub>10</sub> it is gone!”

Gloat over her, heaven<sub>54</sub>, sacred people<sub>15</sub>, Emissaries<sub>3</sub> and prophets<sub>9</sub>,  
because God<sub>96</sub> has carried out his sentence<sub>3</sub> on her!

Leave Babylon, those of you who are carrying the Master’s utensils, and purify yourselves, because the Master will lead you out and the God of Israel will be your rear guard. Hallelujah!

Leave Babylon, my people; each one is to save himself from the Master’s fury, because the Master will lead you out and the God of Israel will be your rear guard. Hallelujah!

*Second reading*

*Commentary on the Letter to the Romans  
by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

Even though there are many of us, we are one body, and parts of each other, united by the Prince in the bonds of love. “The Prince has made Judeans and Gentiles into one thing by breaking down the barrier that divided us and abolishing the Law with its rules and regulations.” This is why we should all be of the same mind, and if one member suffers some reverse, we should all suffer with him; if one member is honored, we should all be glad.

Paul says, “Accept each other as the Prince accepted you, for the glory of God.” “Accepting each other” means being willing to share each other’s thoughts and feelings, carrying each other’s burdens, and “preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” This is how God accepted us in the Prince, because John’s evidence is true, and he said that “God” the Father “loved the world enough to give it the only Son he ever fathered.” God’s Son was given as a ransom for the lives of us all; he has set us free from death, and redeemed us from death and sin.

Paul throws light on the purpose of God’s plan when he says that the Prince became the slave of the circumcised to show God’s loyalty. God had promised the Hebrew patriarchs that he would bless their offspring and make them as numerous as the stars in the sky. This is why the Divine Word himself, who as God maintains all creation in existence and is the source of its well-being, appeared in the flesh and became man. He came into this world to serve, not to be served; and in fact, as he said himself, to serve and give his life as a ransom for many, many others.

The Prince stated that his coming in visible form was to fulfill the promise made to Israel: “I was sent only to the sheep lost out of the household of Israel,” he said. Paul was perfectly correct, then, in saying that the Prince became a servant of the circumcised to fulfill the promise made to the patriarchs, and that God the Father had assigned him this task, as well as the task of bringing rescue to the Gentiles, so that they would also praise their Savior and Redeemer as the Creator of the universe. In this way, God’s mercy has been extended to everyone, including the Gentiles; and it can be seen that the mystery of the divine wisdom contained in the Prince has not failed in its benevolent purpose. In the place of those who fell away, the whole world has been saved.

It was our duty to proclaim what God said to you first; but since you reject it, and so condemn yourselves as not fit for eternal life, we will now turn to the Gentiles. Hallelujah!

This is what the Master commanded us to do: I have made you a light to the nations. We will now turn to the Gentiles. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, may those of us whom you renew in the Bath give evidence

of our faith by the way we live, and by the suffering, death, and return to life of your Son, may we come to eternal joy. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

# Fifth Sunday of Easter

## *First Reading*

*Revelation 18.21-19.10*

Then one strong angel<sup>66</sup> took a huge stone<sup>8</sup> like that used in a mill and threw it into the sea<sup>26</sup>, and said, “With this force will Babylon<sup>6</sup> the great city<sup>27</sup> be thrown down, and it will be found no longer! And the sound<sup>55</sup> of harpists and minstrels and flautists and trumpeters will be heard in you no longer; and artisans of every craft will be found in you no longer; the sound<sup>55</sup> of the mill will be heard in you no longer; the light<sup>4</sup> of a lamp<sup>3</sup> will shine in you no longer; the voice<sup>55</sup> of a bride<sup>4</sup> and groom will be heard in you no longer; because your merchants<sup>4</sup> were the potentates of the earth<sup>80</sup>, since all the nations<sup>24</sup> were led astray by their sorcery.”

In her were found the blood<sup>19</sup> of prophets<sup>9</sup>, and sacred people<sup>15</sup>, and all those slaughtered on the earth<sup>80</sup>.

After this I heard something like a great voice<sup>55</sup> of a huge crowd<sup>4</sup> in heaven<sup>54</sup>, saying,  
“Halleluia!

Rescue<sup>3</sup>, glory<sup>17</sup>, and power<sup>12</sup> are our God<sup>96</sup>’s



because his verdicts<sub>4</sub> are truthful and just!  
 Because he has sentenced the great prostitute<sub>7</sub>  
 who destroyed the earth<sub>80</sub> with her prostitution<sub>7</sub>,  
 and he has avenged the blood<sub>19</sub> of his slaves<sub>14</sub> at her hands<sub>16</sub>!”

A second time, they said,  
 “Halleluia!  
 And her smoke<sub>12</sub> rises up for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>!”

Then the twenty-four elders<sub>12</sub> and the four animals<sub>20</sub> fell to  
 their knees and worshiped God<sub>96</sub> seated<sub>28</sub> upon the throne<sub>45</sub>, and said,  
 “Amen<sub>9</sub>. Halleluia!”

Then a voice<sub>55</sub> came from the throne<sub>45</sub>, which said,  
 “Praise our God<sub>96</sub>, all you slaves<sub>14</sub> of his  
 and those who hold him in awe, small and great!”

Then I heard something like the voice<sub>55</sub> of a huge crowd<sub>4</sub>, and  
 like the voice<sub>55</sub> of many waters<sub>18</sub>, and like the voice<sub>55</sub> of strong thunder<sub>10</sub>  
 saying, “Halleluia!

The rule has begun  
 of the Master<sub>24</sub>, God<sub>96</sub>, the Ruler of all!  
 We must celebrate and frolic  
 and give him glory<sub>17</sub>,  
 because the wedding of the lamb<sub>30</sub> has come,  
 and his wife<sub>19</sub> has made herself ready;  
 she has been given the right  
 to be dressed in clean, gleaming linen<sub>5</sub>.”

The linen<sub>5</sub> is the virtuous acts of the sacred people<sub>15</sub>.

Then he told me, “Write this: It will go well for<sub>7</sub> those called  
 to the wedding-banquet of the lamb<sub>30</sub>.” Then he told me, “These are the  
 truthful words<sub>18</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>.”

I fell before his feet<sub>11</sub> to worship him, and he told me, “Do not  
 do that! I am a fellow-slave<sub>3</sub> of yours and of your brothers<sub>5</sub> and sisters  
 who have the testimony<sub>9</sub> of Jesus<sub>14</sub>. Worship God<sub>96</sub>.”

The testimony<sub>9</sub> of Jesus<sub>14</sub> is the spirit<sub>24</sub> of prophesy<sub>7</sub>.

I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of mighty thunder: “Our God  
 the Master is reigning forever; now the rescue and power and authority  
 of the Prince has come.” Hallelujah!

A voice from the throne proclaimed, “Praise God, all you

sacred people; praise him, everyone who holds him in awe, great and small. Now the rescue and power and authority of the Prince has come.”  
Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Maximus of Turin*

The Prince has returned to life! He has burst open the gates of the world below and let the dead go free; he has renewed the earth through the members of his Church who are now born again in the Bath, and has made it blossom once again with men brought back to life. His Holy Spirit has unlocked the doors of heaven, which are standing wide open to receive those who rise from the earth. Because of the Prince’s return to life, the thief rises to paradise, the bodies of those God has blessed enter the holy city, and the dead are restored to the companionship of the living. There is an upward movement in the whole of creation, with each element raising itself to something higher. We see the Land of the Dead restoring its victims to the upper world, the earth sending its buried dead to heaven, and heaven presenting the new arrivals to the Master. In one and the same movement, our Savior’s suffering raises men from the depths, lifts them up off the earth, and sets them in the highest places.

The Prince has returned to life. His return brings life to the dead, forgiveness to sinners, and glory to the saints. And so David the prophet summons all creation to join in celebrating the Easter festival: “Hold a festival and celebrate,” he says, “on this day that the Master has made!”

The Prince’s light is an endless day that knows no night. The Prince *is* this day, says the Emissary; because this is the meaning of his words, “Night is almost over; day is close.” He tells us that night is almost over, not that it is about to fall; and by this, we are meant to understand that the coming of the Prince’s light puts Satan’s darkness to rout, leaving no place for any shadow of sin. His everlasting radiance dispels the dark clouds of the past and checks the hidden growth of vice. The Son is that day to whom the day, which is the Father, communicates the mystery of his divinity. He is the day who says through the mouth of Solomon, “I have caused an unfailing light to rise in heaven.”

And, in the same way that in heaven no night can follow day, so no sin can overshadow the Prince’s virtue. The heavenly day is

perpetually bright and shining with brilliant light; clouds can never darken its skies. In the same way, the light of the Prince is eternally glowing with luminous radiance, and can never be extinguished by the darkness of sin. This is why John the Evangelist says, “The light shines in darkness, but the darkness could not grasp it.”

And so, my brothers and sisters, each of us should certainly celebrate this holy day. No one’s consciousness of his sinfulness should make him withdraw from our joint celebration, and no one should be kept away from our public prayer by the burden of his guilt. He may in fact be a sinner, but he must not despair of pardon on this day which is so highly privileged; because, if a thief could receive the blessing of paradise, how could a Christian be refused forgiveness?

The Master in all his beauty has been lifted above the stars, and his splendor shines out among the clouds of heaven, where his name will be praised forever. Hallelujah!

He goes out from the highest places in heaven, and returns to those heights, where his name will be praised forever. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, please look upon us with love, and since you are redeeming us and making us your children in the Prince, please give us true freedom and bring us to the inheritance you promised. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Resume with the Te Deum



#### First Reading

#### Revelation 19.11-21

Then I saw heaven<sub>54</sub> opened, and there there was a white horse<sub>16</sub>, and the one seated<sub>28</sub> on it was faithful and truthful, and he makes judgments and wars with justice. His eyes<sub>10</sub> are a flame<sub>3</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub>,

and on his head<sub>19</sub> are many crowns<sub>3</sub> with names<sub>38</sub> written which no one knows but he; he is dressed in a robe<sub>7</sub> dipped in blood<sub>19</sub>, and his name<sub>38</sub> is the Word<sub>18</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>. The army<sub>4</sub> in heaven<sub>54</sub> follow him on white horses<sub>16</sub>,

dressed in clean, white linen<sub>5</sub>. From his mouth<sub>21</sub> issues a sharp sword<sub>6</sub> for him to slash the nations<sub>24</sub>, and he will shepherd them with an iron staff<sub>4</sub>. He himself will trample the winepress<sub>4</sub> of the wine<sub>8</sub> of the fury<sub>10</sub> of the wrath<sub>6</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> the Ruler of all<sub>9</sub>. He has on his robe<sub>7</sub> and his thigh a name<sub>38</sub> written: King<sub>21</sub> of kings<sub>21</sub> and Master<sub>24</sub> of masters<sub>24</sub>.

Then I saw one angel<sub>66</sub> standing in the sun<sub>13</sub>; he cried in a great voice<sub>55</sub> to all the birds<sub>3</sub> flying in mid-heaven<sub>3</sub>, “Come here and gather for the great banquet of God<sub>96</sub>, to eat the flesh<sub>7</sub> of kings<sub>21</sub>, the flesh<sub>7</sub> of captains, the flesh<sub>7</sub> of the strong, the flesh<sub>7</sub> of horses<sub>16</sub> and those seated<sub>28</sub> upon them, and the flesh<sub>7</sub> of everyone, free and slave<sub>14</sub>, small and great!”

Then I saw the beast<sub>38</sub> and the kings<sub>21</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub> and their armies<sub>4</sub> gathered to make war<sub>9</sub> on the one seated<sub>28</sub> on the horse<sub>16</sub> and his army<sub>4</sub>, and the beast<sub>38</sub> was captured, and with him the false prophet<sub>3</sub> who made before it the signs<sub>7</sub> by which it led astray those who accepted the mark<sub>7</sub> of the beast<sub>38</sub> and those who worshiped its statue<sub>10</sub>. These two were thrown alive into the lake<sub>6</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub> burning with sulfur<sub>6</sub>, and the rest<sub>3</sub> were killed by the sword<sub>6</sub> which issued from the mouth<sub>21</sub> of the one seated<sub>28</sub> on the horse<sub>16</sub>, and all the birds<sub>3</sub> gorged themselves with their flesh<sub>7</sub>.

He wore a cloak soaked in blood, and his name was the Word of God. He will tread out the burning anger of the Omnipotent God in the winepress. Hallelujah!

On his cloak and on his thigh was written, King of Kings, and Master of Masters. He will tread out the burning anger of the Omnipotent God in the winepress. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Gregory of Nyssa*

The reign of life has begun; the tyranny of death has ended. A new birth has occurred, a new life has arrived, a new order of existence has appeared, and our very nature has been transformed. This birth is not brought about “by human fathering, the will of man, or material desire; it is by God.”

If you wonder how this can be, I will explain it in clear language. Faith is the womb that conceives this new life, the Bath is the rebirth by which it is brought out into the light of day; the Church is its nurse, her teachings, its milk, the bread from heaven, its food. It is brought to maturity by the practice of virtue; it is wedded to wisdom; it gives birth to hope. Its home is the Kingdom; its rich inheritance, the joys of paradise; its end is not death, but the blessed, everlasting life prepared for those who are fit for it.

“This is the day the Master made”—a day far different from those made when the world was first created and which are measured by the passage of time. This is the beginning of a new creation; on this day, as the prophet says, God is making a new heaven and a new earth. What is this new heaven, you may ask; it is the dome of our faith in the Prince. What is this new earth? A good heart, a heart like the earth, which drinks up the rain that falls on it and yields a rich harvest.

In this new creation, purity of life is the sun, the virtues are the stars, transparent goodness is the air, and “the depths of the riches of wisdom and knowledge” is the sea. Healthy teaching, the divine doctrine, is the grass and plants that feed God’s flock, who are the people he shepherds; the keeping of the commandments is the fruit borne by the trees.

It is the true man who is created on this day, the man made in the image and likeness of God; because “this day the Master has made” is the beginning of this new world. The prophet says about this day that it is not like other days, nor is this night like other nights.

But still, we have not spoken of the greatest gift it has brought us; this day destroyed the pangs of death and brought to birth the firstborn of the dead. “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” What wonderful news! The one who became like us for our sake, to make us his brothers, is now presenting to his real Father his own humanity to draw all his kindred up after him.

Death came through a man, and the return to life from death has also come through a man. In the same way that every man dies in Adam, every man will be brought to life in the Prince. Hallelujah!

We are waiting for the fulfillment of his promise: a new heaven and a new earth. In the same way that every man dies in Adam, every

man will be brought to life in the Prince. Hallelujah!

**Prayer**

Dear Father, please help us to search out the values that will bring us unchanging joy in this changing world, and in our desire for what you promise, please make us one in mind and heart. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*First Reading*

*Revelation 20.1-15*

Then I saw an angel<sub>66</sub> coming down from heaven<sub>54</sub> with the key<sub>4</sub> of the pit<sub>7</sub> and a huge chain in his hand<sub>16</sub>. He laid hold of the python<sub>13</sub>, the serpent<sub>5</sub> of old, who is Devil<sub>5</sub> and Satan<sub>8</sub>, and chained him for a thousand years<sub>6</sub>, and threw him into the pit<sub>7</sub> and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would not lead the nations<sub>24</sub> astray until the thousand years<sub>6</sub> were completed. After that he must be set free for a short time<sub>4</sub>.

Then I saw thrones<sub>48</sub>, and people sat upon them, and the right to pass sentence<sub>3</sub> was given them. I also saw the souls<sub>7</sub> of those beheaded for the testimony<sub>9</sub> of Jesus<sub>14</sub> and the words<sub>18</sub> of God<sub>6</sub> and those who did not worship the beast<sub>38</sub> or his statue<sub>10</sub> or accept his mark<sub>7</sub> on their foreheads<sub>8</sub> or on their hands<sub>16</sub>. They were alive and reigning with the Prince<sub>7</sub> for a thousand years<sub>6</sub>. The rest<sub>8</sub> of the dead<sub>13</sub> did not live until the thousand years<sub>6</sub> were completed. This is the first resurrection. It will go well for<sub>7</sub> the sacred person<sub>15</sub> who has a share<sub>4</sub> in the first resurrection; the second death<sub>19</sub> has no authority<sub>21</sub> over them; they will be priests<sub>3</sub> of God<sub>6</sub> and the Prince<sub>7</sub>, and will reign with him for the thousand years<sub>6</sub>.

And when the thousand years<sub>6</sub> are over, Satan<sub>8</sub> will be set free from his prison<sub>4</sub>, and he will emerge to lead astray the nations<sub>24</sub> in the four corners of the earth<sub>80</sub>: Gog and Magog, to lead them into war<sub>9</sub>—and their number<sub>10</sub> is like the sand of the sea<sub>26</sub>.

Then they marched over the width<sub>3</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub> and surrounded the encampment of the sacred people<sub>15</sub> and the beloved city<sub>27</sub>, and fire<sub>26</sub> came from heaven<sub>54</sub> and consumed them; and the devil<sub>5</sub>

who led them astray was thrown into the lake<sub>6</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub> and sulfur<sub>6</sub> where the beast<sub>38</sub> and the false prophet<sub>3</sub> were, and they will be punished day<sub>21</sub> and night<sub>8</sub> for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>.

Then I saw a great white throne<sub>45</sub> and the one seated<sub>28</sub> upon it, from whose face<sub>10</sub> the earth<sub>80</sub> and heaven<sub>54</sub> fled, and no place<sub>8</sub> was found for them. Then I saw the dead<sub>13</sub>, great and small, standing before the throne<sub>45</sub>, and scrolls<sub>21</sub> were opened. Another scroll<sub>21</sub>, that of life<sub>16</sub>, opened, and the dead<sub>13</sub> were sentenced by what was written in the scrolls<sub>24</sub> as their deeds<sub>20</sub> merited.

Then the sea<sub>26</sub> gave up the dead<sub>13</sub> in it, and death<sub>19</sub> and the land of the dead<sub>4</sub> gave up the dead<sub>13</sub> in them, and each one was sentenced as his deeds<sub>20</sub> merited. Then death<sub>19</sub> and the land of the dead<sub>4</sub> were thrown into the lake<sub>6</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub>. This is the second death<sub>19</sub>, the lake<sub>6</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub>. If anyone was not found written in the scroll<sub>3</sub> of life<sub>16</sub>, he was thrown into the lake<sub>6</sub> of fire<sub>26</sub>.

The Prince must reign until God has brought all enemies under his feet; and the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Hallelujah!

Then death and the land of the dead will give up their dead, and death and the land of the dead will be thrown into the lake of fire. And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Commentary on John's Report  
by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

The Master calls himself a vine and those united to him branches in order to teach us how much we will benefit from our union and how important it is for us to remain in his love. By receiving the Holy Spirit, who is the bond of union between us and our Savior the Prince, those who are joined to him like branches on a vine share his own nature.

On the part of those who come to the vine, their union with him depends on a deliberate act of will; on his part, the union is achieved by grace. Because we had good will, we made the act of faith that brought us to the Prince, and we received from him the dignity of adoptive sonship that made us his own relatives, as St. Paul said: "The one who is joined to the Master is one spirit with him."

The prophet Isaiah calls the Prince the foundation, because it is upon him that we as living and spiritual stones are built into a holy priesthood to be a residence for God in the Spirit. This temple can be built on no other foundation than the Prince. Here, the Prince is teaching the same truth by calling himself a vine, since the vine is the parent of its branches, and provides their nourishment.

We have been reborn through the Spirit from the Prince and in the Prince, to bear the fruit of life—not the fruit of the old, sinful life; the fruit of a new life founded on our faith in him and our love for him. Like branches growing on a vine, we now draw our life from the Prince, and we adhere to his holy commandment in order to preserve this life. Since we are eager to safeguard the blessing of our noble birth, we are careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit who is living in us, and who makes us aware of God's presence in us.

Let the wisdom of John teach us how we live in the Prince and the Prince lives in us: "The proof that we are living in him and he is living in us is that he has given us a share in his Spirit." In the same way that the trunk of the vine gives its own natural properties to each of its branches, the Word of God, the only Son God ever fathered, gives Christians a certain kinship with himself and the Father by bestowing the Holy Spirit on them, because they have been united to him by faith and determination to do his will in everything. He helps them grow in love and reverence for God, and teaches them to distinguish right from wrong, and to act with integrity.

Live in me in the way I live in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself apart from the vine, you cannot bear fruit unless you live in me. Hallelujah!

I choose you to go out and bear fruit, and for your fruit to last. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself apart from the vine, you cannot bear fruit unless you live in me. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you restored your people to eternal life by raising your Son the Prince from death, please make our faith strong and our hope sure; and may we never doubt that you will fulfill the promises you have made. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son,



who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## ednesday

### *First Reading*

### *Revelation 21.1-8*

Then I saw a new heaven<sup>54</sup> and a new earth<sup>80</sup>; the first heaven<sup>54</sup> and the first earth<sup>80</sup> have gone, and the sea<sup>26</sup> is no more. Then I saw the Sacred City<sup>27</sup>, the new Jerusalem<sup>3</sup> coming down from heaven<sup>54</sup> from God<sup>96</sup> readied like a bride<sup>4</sup> adorned for her husband. Then I heard a great voice<sup>55</sup> from <heaven<sup>54</sup>> say, “Here is the tent<sup>3</sup> of God<sup>96</sup> with the human race<sup>25</sup>; and he will make his home with them, and they will be his people<sup>9</sup>, and God<sup>96</sup> himself will be their God<sup>96</sup> with them; and he will dry every tear from their eyes<sup>10</sup>. And death<sup>19</sup> will exist no longer, and grief<sup>4</sup> and weeping and pain<sup>3</sup> will exist no longer, because what existed at first is gone.”

Then the one seated<sup>28</sup> on the throne<sup>45</sup> said, “Now I am making everything new. Write this,” he said, “These words<sup>18</sup> are trustworthy and truthful.” Then he told me, “It is done! I am Alpha and Omega<sup>3</sup>, the beginning<sup>3</sup> and the end<sup>3</sup>. I will give to the one who feels thirst what is in the spring<sup>5</sup> of the water<sup>18</sup> of life<sup>16</sup> at no cost. the one who wins the battle<sup>9</sup> will inherit this, and I will be God<sup>96</sup> for him, and he will be a son<sup>8</sup> to me. As for cowards, skeptics, the impure, the adulterers, prostitutes<sup>7</sup>, sorcerers<sup>3</sup>, idol-worshippers, and every sort of liar, their fate<sup>4</sup> is in the lake<sup>6</sup> burning with fire<sup>26</sup> and sulfur<sup>6</sup>, which is the second death<sup>19</sup>.”

This is the place where God lives among human beings, and he will make his home there among them, and he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Hallelujah!

There will be no more death; grief, tears, and sorrow will be forgotten, because the earlier world has disappeared. And he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Hallelujah!

### *Second Reading*

### *A Letter to Diognetus*

Christians are indistinguishable from other men either in nationality, language, or customs. They do not live in separate cities of

their own, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life. Their teaching is not based on fantasies inspired by the curiosity of men. Unlike some other people, they advocate no purely human teaching; and in their clothing, food, and way of life in general, they follow the customs of whatever country they happen to be living in, whether it is Greek or foreign.

And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through them. They play their full role as citizens, but labor under all the disabilities of aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it is, is a foreign country. Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not expose them. They share their meals, but not their wives. They live materially, but they are not governed by their material desires. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven; they are obedient to the laws, but live on a level that transcends law.

Christians love every human being, but everyone persecutes them. They are condemned because they are not understood; they are put to death, but raised to life again. They live in poverty, but enrich many others; they are totally destitute, but possess a wealth of everything. They suffer disgrace, but that is their honor; they are defamed, but shown to be right. A blessing is their answer to abuse, and deference their response to insult. They receive the punishment of criminals for the good they do, but even this makes them happy, since they are receiving the gift of life. They are attacked by the Judeans as foreigners, they are persecuted by the Greeks, and yet no one can explain the reason for this hatred.

Speaking generally, we may say that a Christian is to the world what a soul is to a body. Just as the soul is present in every part of the body while it remains distinct from it, Christians are found in all the countries of the world, but cannot be identified with the world. In a way similar to the way the body contains the invisible soul, Christians are seen living in the world, but their religious life remains unseen. The body hates the soul and fights against it, not because of any injury the soul has done it, but because of the restriction the soul places on its pleasures. In the same way, the world hates the Christians because they are opposed to its enjoyments, not because they have done it any wrong.

Christians love those who hate them, just as the soul loves the body and all its parts, despite the body's hatred. It is by the soul enclosed within the body that the body is held together; and analogously, it is by the Christians held prisoner, so to speak, in the world, that the world is held together. The soul has a mortal home, even though it is immortal; and Christians also live for a while among things that cease to exist, while they are waiting for the freedom from change and decay that will be theirs in heaven. And just as the soul benefits from the deprivation of food and drink, Christians flourish under persecution.

This is the Christians' elevated, divinely assigned function, from which they are not allowed to excuse themselves.

I am the world's light; no one who follows me will walk in darkness, because he will have the light of life. Hallelujah!

I am the source of all grace of the way and truth; all hope for life and strength rests in me. No one who follows me will walk in darkness, because he will have the light of life. Hallelujah!

*Prayer*

Dear Father of complete holiness, please guide our hearts to you, and keep in the light of your truth all those you have freed from the darkness of unbelief. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*First Reading*

*Revelation 21.9-27*

Then one of the seven angels<sub>66</sub> who had the seven bowls<sub>12</sub> full of the seven last curses<sub>16</sub> came up and spoke to me. "Come over here," he said; "I will show you the bride<sub>4</sub>, the wife<sub>19</sub> of the lamb<sub>30</sub>."

He brought me in the spirit<sub>24</sub> up onto a great, high mountain<sub>8</sub>, and showed me the sacred city<sub>27</sub> Jerusalem<sub>3</sub> coming down from the sky from God<sub>96</sub>, with the glory<sub>17</sub> of God<sub>96</sub>. Its radiance was like a priceless stone<sub>8</sub>, like crystalline jasper<sub>4</sub>; it had a great, high wall<sub>6</sub> round it, with twelve

gates<sub>11</sub>, and at the gates<sub>11</sub> were twelve angels<sub>66</sub>, and on them were inscribed names<sub>38</sub>, which were <the names<sub>38</sub>> of the twelve tribes<sub>21</sub> of the sons<sub>8</sub> of Israel<sub>3</sub>; on the east<sub>3</sub> were three gates<sub>11</sub>, on the north three gates<sub>11</sub>, on the south three gates<sub>11</sub>, and on the west three gates<sub>11</sub>. The walls<sub>6</sub> of the city<sub>27</sub> had twelve foundations<sub>3</sub>, and on them were the twelve names<sub>38</sub> of the twelve Emissaries<sub>3</sub> of the lamb<sub>30</sub>.

The one speaking to me had a golden measuring-rod to measure the city<sub>27</sub>, its gates<sub>11</sub>, and its wall<sub>6</sub>. The city<sub>27</sub> was laid out in a square, its length equal to its width<sub>3</sub>. He measured the city<sub>27</sub> with the rod, and it was twelve thousand stadia; its length, width<sub>3</sub>, and height are equal. Then he measured its wall<sub>6</sub>, which was one hundred forty-four cubits

by human<sub>25</sub> measure—which is that of the angel<sub>66</sub>. The wall's<sub>6</sub> construction was of jasper<sub>4</sub>, and the city<sub>27</sub> was pure gold<sub>5</sub>, like clear glass.

The foundations<sub>3</sub> of the city<sub>27</sub>'s wall<sub>6</sub> were decorated with precious stones<sub>8</sub>: the first foundation<sub>3</sub> was jasper<sub>4</sub>, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates<sub>11</sub> were twelve pearls<sub>5</sub>, each of the gates<sub>11</sub> made of a single pearl<sub>5</sub>; and the street<sub>3</sub> of the city<sub>27</sub> was pure gold<sub>5</sub> like transparent glass.

I saw no temple<sub>16</sub> in it, because the Master<sub>24</sub>, God<sub>96</sub>, the Ruler of all<sub>9</sub> is its temple<sub>16</sub>, and the lamb<sub>30</sub>. And the city<sub>27</sub> has no need<sub>3</sub> for the sun<sub>13</sub> or the moon<sub>4</sub> to shine upon it, because the glory<sub>17</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> fills it with light, and its lamp<sub>3</sub> is the lamb<sub>30</sub>; and all the nations<sub>24</sub> walk in its light<sub>4</sub>. And the kings<sub>21</sub> of the earth<sub>80</sub> bring into it the glory<sub>17</sub> <and honor<sub>7</sub> of the nations<sub>24</sub>>; and its gates<sub>11</sub> are not closed during the day<sub>21</sub>—and there is no more night<sub>8</sub> there. And they will bring into it the glory<sub>17</sub> and honor<sub>7</sub> of the nations<sub>24</sub> <so that they will enter it>; nothing coarse will enter it, nor anyone who does what is vile<sub>3</sub> or false<sub>3</sub>; only those written in the lamb<sub>30</sub>'s scroll<sub>21</sub> of life.

Your golden streets, Jerusalem, will ring with happy songs; and throughout your length and breadth one great cry will rise from the lips of everyone: Hallelujah!

You will shine in splendor like the sun; every man on earth will pay you homage; and throughout your length and breadth one great cry

will rise from the lips of everyone: Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*Treatise by St. Gaudentius of Brescia*

One man died for everyone, and now in every church in the mystery of bread and wine, he heals those for whom he is offered in sacrifice, giving life to those who believe, and holiness to those who consecrate the offering. This is the meat of the Lamb; this is his blood. The bread that came down from heaven state, “The bread that I am to give is the meat of my body for the life of the world.” It is significant, too, that his blood would be given to us in the form of wine, because his own words in the Good News, “What I really am is a vine,” imply clearly enough that whenever wine is offered as a representation of the Prince’s suffering, it is his blood. This means that it was about the Prince that the blessed patriarch Jacob prophesied when he said, “He will wash his tunic in wine and his cloak in the blood of the grape.” The tunic was our flesh, which the Prince was to put on like clothes and which he was to wash in his own blood.

As Creator and Master of everything, whatever its nature, he brought bread out of the earth and changed it into his own body. Not only had he the power to do this, but he had promised it; and, as he had changed water into wine, he changed wine into his own blood. “It is the Master’s Passover,” Scripture tells us: that is, the Master’s passing. We are no longer to look upon the bread and wine as earthly substances; they have become heavenly, because the Prince has passed into them and changed them into his body and blood. What you receive is the body of the one who is the heavenly bread, and the blood of the one who is the sacred vine; because when he offered his students the consecrated bread and wine, he said, “This is my body; this is my blood.” We have put our trust in him. I urge you to have faith in him; truth can never be deceptive.

When the Prince told the crowds that they must eat the meat of his body and drink his blood, they were horrified and began to complain to each other, “This is disgusting! How can anyone listen to it?” As I already told you, thoughts like this must be driven away. The Master himself used heavenly fire to be rid of them by going on to state, “Spirit is what gives life; matter is of no use at all; and what I have told you is spirit and life.”

The living Father sent me, and I live through the Father; and anyone who eats me will live through me. Hallelujah!

This is my body, which will be given up for you. Anyone who eats me will live through me. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Dear Father, since in your love you brought us from evil to goodness and from misery to happiness, please give through your blessings the courage of perseverance to those you have called and made virtuous by faith. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



### First Reading

Then he showed me a river<sub>8</sub> of the water<sub>18</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> gleaming like crystal flowing from the throne<sub>45</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> and the lamb<sub>30</sub>. In the center<sub>8</sub> of its street<sub>3</sub>, and with the river<sub>8</sub> on each side, was a tree<sub>7</sub> of life<sub>16</sub>, yielding its fruit each month<sub>6</sub>; and the leaves of the tree<sub>7</sub> are for the healing of nations<sub>24</sub>.

Nothing cursed will exist any longer, and the throne<sub>45</sub> of God<sub>96</sub> and the lamb<sub>30</sub> will be in it, and his slaves<sub>14</sub> will worship him; and they will see his face<sub>10</sub>, and his name<sub>38</sub> will be upon their foreheads<sub>8</sub>. And there will be night<sub>8</sub> no longer, and they will have no need<sub>3</sub> of the light<sub>4</sub> of a lamp<sub>3</sub> or the light<sub>4</sub> of the sun<sub>13</sub>, because God<sub>96</sub> the Master<sub>24</sub> will shine upon them, and they will reign for ages<sub>28</sub> upon ages<sub>28</sub>.

Then he told me, "These words<sub>18</sub> are trustworthy and truthful; and the Master<sub>24</sub>, the God<sub>96</sub> of the spirits<sub>24</sub> of the prophets<sub>9</sub>, has sent his angel<sub>66</sub> to show his slaves<sub>14</sub> what must happen with speed. And now I am coming swiftly. It will go well for<sub>7</sub> the one who preserves the words<sub>18</sub> of the prophesy<sub>7</sub> of this scroll<sub>21</sub>.

And I, John<sub>4</sub>, am the one who heard and saw this. And when I heard and saw it, I fell down at the feet<sub>11</sub> of the angel<sub>66</sub> who showed this to me. "Do not do that!" he said. "I am a fellow-slave<sub>3</sub> or yours and

### Revelation 22.1-9

of your brothers, the prophets, and of those who preserve the words of this scroll. Worship God.”

There will be no more night, because the Master God will be light for his slaves, and they will reign for ever. Hallelujah!

The Lamb's throne will be in the holy city, and his slaves will worship him there, and they will reign for ever. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by Blessed Isaac of Stella*

In the same way as the head and body of a man form one single man, the Son of the Virgin and those he has chosen form a single man and the one Son of Man. “The Prince is whole and entire, head and body,” say the Scriptures, since all the parts form one body, which, with its head, is one Son of Man, and he with the Son of God is one Son of God, who himself with God is one God. Therefore, the whole body, with its head, is Son of Man, Son of God, and God. This is the explanation of the Master's words, “Father I desire them to be one thing in us, in the same way as you and I are one thing.”

And so, in accordance with this well-known reading of Scripture, neither the body without the head, nor the head without the body, make the whole Prince. When everyone is united with God they become one God. The Son of God is one thing with God by nature; the Son of Man is one thing with him in his person; we, his body are one thing with him sacramentally. Consequently, those who are by faith spiritual parts of the Prince's body can truly say that they are what he is: the Son of God and God himself. But what the Prince is by his nature, we are as his partners; what he is in himself in all completeness, we are as participants. Finally what the Son of God is by his being sired, his parts are by adoption, as the text says, “You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, which enables you to exclaim, ‘Abba!’ ‘Dad!’”

He gave me the power through his Spirit to become sons of God, so that all those he chose would be taught by the firstborn among many brothers to say, “Our Father in heaven.” In another place, he also says, “I am going to rise up to my Father and your Father.”

The Son of Man, our head, was born by the Spirit from the womb of the Virgin; and by the same Spirit we are reborn in the water of the Bath as his body and as sons of God. And just as he was born

without any sin, we are reborn in the forgiveness of our sins. Just as he carried on the cross the sum total of the whole body's sins in his own physical body, he gave his members the grace of rebirth so that no sin would be ascribed to his mystical body. It is written, "It is a blessing for a man when God accuses him of no sin." The man who has received this blessing is undoubtedly the Prince, who forgives sins insofar as God is his head. Insofar as this man is the head of the body, no sin is forgiven him; but insofar as the body that belongs to this head consists of many parts, sin is not ascribed to it.

Since he is virtuous in himself, it is he who makes himself virtuous. He alone is both Savior and saved. In his own body on the cross, he carried what he had washed from his body by the water of the Bath; and as he brings rescue through wood and water, he is the Lamb of God who rids the world of its sins which he took upon himself. And as a priest himself, he offers himself as a sacrifice to God, and he is himself God. Thus, through his own self, the Son is brought into conformity to himself as God, as well as to the Father and the Holy Spirit.

We are all one body in the Prince, and in the one body we are all parts of each other. Complete divinity lives in his body, and in him you find your fulfillment. Hallelujah!

The Prince is the head of the body, the Church, and the firstborn of the dead, so that in every way the primacy will be his. Complete divinity lives in his body, and in him you find your fulfillment. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Master, please prepare us for eternal life by this Easter mystery, and may our celebration of the Prince's death and return to life guide us to our rescue. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.




 ΔΑΤΟΥΡΔΑΥ
*First Reading**Revelation 22.10-21*

Then he told me, “Do not seal up the words<sub>18</sub> of the prophesy<sub>7</sub> of this scroll<sub>21</sub>, because the moment<sub>7</sub> is near. A wrongdoer is to do his wrong still, a pervert still to defile himself, and a virtuous person still to do his acts of virtue, and a sacred person<sub>15</sub> to be sacred still. Now I am coming swiftly, and my compensation with me, to give to each one what his deeds<sub>20</sub> merit. I am Alpha and Omega<sub>3</sub>, the first and the last<sub>3</sub>, the beginning<sub>3</sub> and the end<sub>3</sub>. It will go well for<sub>7</sub> those who wash their robes<sub>5</sub>, so that they will have authority<sub>21</sub> over the tree<sub>7</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> and will enter the city<sub>27</sub> by the gates<sub>11</sub>. Outside are dogs and sorcerers<sub>3</sub> and prostitutes<sub>7</sub> and adulterers and idol-worshippers and everyone who loves and performs what is false<sub>3</sub>. “I, Jesus<sub>14</sub>, sent my angel<sub>66</sub> to tell you and the communities<sub>20</sub> the facts about these things. I am the root and the offspring of David<sub>3</sub>, the shining morning star<sub>14</sub>.”

And the spirit<sub>24</sub> and the bride<sub>4</sub> say, “Come!” and the one who hears

is to say, “Come!” And one who feels thirst is to come, and one who wishes is to receive the water<sub>18</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> at no cost.

I solemnly swear to everyone who hears the words<sub>18</sub> of the prophesy<sub>7</sub> of this scroll<sub>21</sub>: If anyone adds to it, God<sub>96</sub> will add to him the curses<sub>16</sub> written in this scroll<sub>21</sub>; and if anyone removes anything from the words<sub>18</sub> of the scroll<sub>21</sub> of this prophesy<sub>7</sub>, God<sub>96</sub> will remove his share<sub>4</sub> in the tree<sub>7</sub> of life<sub>16</sub> and the sacred city<sub>27</sub> which are written of in this scroll<sub>21</sub>.

The one who swears to this says, “Yes. Come swiftly.” Amen<sub>9</sub>.

Come, Master<sub>24</sub> Jesus<sub>14</sub>.

The blessings of Master<sub>24</sub> Jesus<sub>14</sub> be with all of you. Amen<sub>9</sub>.

I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star. The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Each one who listens is to say, “Come.” Amen. Come, Master Jesus. Hallelujah!

Come to the water, all of you who are thirsty; listen to what I say and come to me. Each one who listens is to say, “Come.” Amen. Come, Master Jesus. Hallelujah!

*Second reading**Discourse on the Psalms by St. Augustine*

Our thoughts in this present life should turn on the praise of God, because it is in praising God that we will find our happiness forever in the life to come, and no one can be ready for the next life unless he trains for it now. So we praise God during our earthly life, and at the same time, we make our requests of him. Our praise is expressed with joy, and our requests with yearning. We have been promised something we do not possess as yet, and because the promise was made by someone who keeps his word, we trust him and are content; but insofar as the possession is delayed, we can only long and yearn for it. It is good for us to persevere in longing until we receive what was promised, and yearning is over; then only praise will remain.

Because there are these two periods of time: the one that now exists, beset with the troubles and concerns of this life, and the other still to come, which is a life of everlasting serenity and joy, we are given two liturgical seasons, one before Easter, and the other after it. The season before Easter represents the troubles in which we live here and now, while the time after Easter, which we are celebrating at the moment, represents the happiness that will be ours in the future. What we recall before Easter is what we experience in this life; what we celebrate after Easter is what points to something we do not yet possess. This is why we keep the first season with fasting and prayer; but now the fast is over, and we devote the present season to praise. This is the meaning of the "Hallelujah!" we sing.

Both these periods are represented and demonstrated for us in our head the Prince. The Master's suffering depicts to us our present life of trouble, and shows how we must suffer and endure hardship and finally die. The Master's return to life and glorification shows us the life that will be given to us in the future.

And so, my brothers and sisters, we now encourage you to praise God. That is what we are all telling each other when we say, "Hallelujah!" You say to your neighbor, "Praise the Master!" and he says the same to you. We are all urging each other to praise the Master, and each of us is by this act doing what we are urging the others to do. But take care that your praise comes from your whole reality; in other words, see to it that you praise God with your minds, your lives, and all your actions, and not with your lips and voices alone.

We are praising God now, assembled here in church; but when you go your separate ways again, it seems as if we stop praising God; but provided we do not stop living a good life, we will always be praising God. You stop praising God only when you turn away from virtue and from what is pleasing to God; if you never turn aside from the good life, your tongue may be silent, but your actions will cry aloud, and God will perceive your intentions; because just as our ears hear each others' voices, God's ears hear our thoughts.

Your sorrow will be turned into joy. Hallelujah!

While the world is happy, you will be crying; but your sorrow will be turned into joy. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Loving Father, since through our rebirth in the Bath you give us your life and promise immortality, please guide our steps by your unceasing care toward the life of glory. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

The title "Sixth Sunday of Easter" is rendered in a black, Gothic-style font. The word "Sixth" is on the top line, "Sunday" is on the second line, and "of Easter" is on the third line. The letters are highly decorative, with intricate flourishes and patterns. The 'S' in "Sixth" is particularly large and ornate, featuring a blue and gold design. The 'E' in "Easter" is also large and decorated with a green and gold pattern. The overall style is traditional and elegant.

*First Reading*

*1 John 1.1-10*

What existed from the beginning, what we heard, what we saw with our own eyes, what we looked on and handled with our hands, dealing with the meaning of life—and the life disclosed itself; we have seen it and swear to it, and we inform you of the eternal life which existed facing the Father and which disclosed itself to us—what we saw and heard is what we are informing you of so that you will have companionship with us. Our companionship is with the Father and with his Son Prince Jesus; and we are writing this for your joy to be complete.

And this is the message we heard from him and are reporting to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. If we were to say that we had companionship with him and were walking about in darkness, we would be lying and not doing what is true; but if we walk about in the light, in the way that he exists in the light, we have companionship with each other, and the blood of Jesus washes us clean of every sin.

If we say we have no sin, we are fooling ourselves, and the truth is not in us; if we admit our sins, he is faithful and just, and will remove the sins from us and wash us clean of any vice. If we claim that we have not sinned, we are making him a liar, and what he has said is not in us.

The life disclosed itself; we have seen it and swear to it, and we inform you of the eternal life which existed facing the Father and which disclosed itself to us. Hallelujah!

We know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding, so that we would know the true God, because we are in his Son, Prince Jesus. He is the true God and eternal life which existed facing the Father and which disclosed itself to us

*Second Reading**Commentary on 2 Corinthians  
by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

Those who have a sure hope, guaranteed by the Spirit, that they will come back to life have a grasp on the future that is the same as if it were already present. They say, “Outward appearances will no longer be our criterion for evaluating other men. Our lives are all controlled by the Spirit now, and we are not confined to this physical world that is subject to decay. The light of the only Son God ever fathered has shone on us, and we have been transformed into the Word, the source of all life. While sin was still our master, the ropes of death still tied us tight, but now that the Prince’s virtue has found a place in our hearts, we have freed ourselves from our former condition of decay.”

This means that none of us lives materially any more, at least not to the extent that living materially means being subject to the weaknesses of matter, which include decay. “Once we thought of the Prince materially, but we do not think in this way any longer,” says St. Paul. By this he meant that the Word became flesh and made his home among us; he suffered death materially to give everyone life. It was in his matter that we knew him previously, but we do not do this any longer. Even though he remains material, since he came to life again on the third day and is now with his Father in heaven, we know that he has passed beyond material life; because “once he died, he will never die again; death has no power over him any longer. His death was a death for sin, which he died once for all; his life is life with God.”

Since the Prince in this way has become the source of our life, those of us who follow in his footsteps must not think of ourselves as living materially any longer, but as having passed beyond this. St. Paul’s saying is absolutely true that “when someone is in the Prince, he is a completely different person; his old life is over and a new one has begun.” We have become virtuous by our faith in the Prince, and the power of the curse has been broken. The Prince’s coming to life again for our sake has put an end to the authority of death; he have come to know the true God and to worship him in spirit and in truth, through the Son, our mediator, who sends down on the world the Father’s blessings.

And so St. Paul shows deep insight when he says, “This is all God’s doing; he is the one who has brought us into conformity with

himself in the Prince.” The reason is that the mystery of the Incarnation and the renewal it achieved could not have happened without the Father’s will. Through the Prince, we have gained access to the Father, since as the Prince himself said, no one comes to the Father except through him. “This is all God’s doing,” then. “He is the one who has brought us into conformity with himself through the Prince, and who has given us the service of producing the conformity.”

We find our happiness in God through our Master Prince Jesus, through whom we have gained our conformity with God. Hallelujah!

It pleased God to have every perfection find its home in the Prince,  
and for God to choose to bring everything into conformity with himself through him, through whom we have gained our conformity with God. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Eternal God, please help us celebrate our joy in the return to life of the Master and to express in our lives the love we celebrate. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Resume with the Te Deum



#### First Reading

#### 1 John 2.1-11

My children, I am writing this to keep you from sinning; but if any of us commits a sin, we have a patron to speak for us before the Father, the virtuous Prince Jesus; he is himself the conciliation for our sins, and not simply for ours, but the sins of the whole world. And this is the way we are to recognize that we know him: by keeping his commandments. A person who claims to know him and does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth does not exist in him; one who does keep what he says really has the love of God made complete in him.

This is how we know we exist in him; a person who claims to have his home in him should walk about as he walked about.

My friends, I am not writing a new commandment to you; it is the old commandment which you had from the beginning; the old commandment is the message you have heard.

Yet I am writing a new commandment to you—something which is true in him and in you, in that the darkness is vanishing and the real light is already shining: A person who says that he exists in the light and hates his brother or sister has been in darkness, even up to the time he makes the statement. A person who loves his brother and sister has his home in the light, and there is no obstacle within him. One who hates his brother exists in darkness and walks about in darkness—and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

I give you a new commandment: you are to love each other with the same love I have for you. Anyone who loves his brother lives in the light. Hallelujah!

We can be sure that we know the Prince only if we keep his commandments. Anyone who loves his brother lives in the light. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*The Trinity, by Didymus of Alexandria*

The Holy Spirit renews us in the Bath through his divinity, which he shares with the Father and the Son. Since he finds us in a deformed state, the Spirit restores our original beauty and fills us with his grace, leaving no room for anything inappropriate to his love. The Spirit frees us from sin and death, and changes us from the earthly men we were, men of dirt and ashes, into spiritual men who share in God's glory and are sons and heirs of God the Father, who bear a likeness to the Son, and are his coheirs and brothers, destined to reign with him and share his glory. In place of earth, the Spirit reopens heaven to us and gladly admits us into paradise, giving us even now greater honor than the angels, and by the holy water of the Bath quenching the unquenchable fires of hell.

We human beings are conceived twice: we owe our first conception to our human body, and our second to the divine Spirit. John says, "He gave to all those who did accept him and believed in what he really was, the power to become God's children. These people

are the ones who are born from God, not from blood or material desire or human choice.” Everyone who believed in the Prince, he says, received the power to become a child of God, which is to say of the Holy Spirit, and to gain kinship with God. To show that these people’s parent was God, he adds these words from the Prince: “Amen amen I tell you, without being born from water and Spirit, no one can enter God’s kingdom.”

The font gives symbolic birth to our visible bodies visibly, through the service of the priests; but the Spirit of God, whom even the mind’s eye cannot see, bathes into himself both our souls and our bodies, through the service of angels, and gives them a new birth.

Speaking quite literally, and also in harmony with the words “of water and Spirit,” John the Bather says of the Prince, “He will bathe you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” Since we are only clay pottery, we must first be washed off in water and then hardened by spiritual fire, “because God is a consuming fire.” We need the Holy Spirit to make us perfect and renew us, because spiritual water can scrub us clean, and spiritual fire can recast us as if it were an oven and make us into new men.

I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground. I will pour my spirit on your offspring, and they will grow like willows by flowing streams. Hallelujah!

The water I give will become a spring within that person, gushing up to eternal life. I will pour my spirit on your offspring, and they will grow like willows by flowing streams. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

God of mercy, may our celebration of your Son’s return to life help us experience its effect in our lives. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## Tuesday

*First Reading*

*1 John 2.12-17*

I am writing to you, the children, because your sins are taken away through his name.



I am writing to you, the fathers, because you have recognized the one that existed from the beginning.

I am writing to you young people, because you have conquered the evil spirit.

I have written to you, boys and girls, because you have recognized the Father.

I have written to you, fathers, because you have recognized the one that existed from the beginning.

I have written to you, young people, because you are strong, and God's utterances have their home in you, and you have conquered the evil spirit.

Do not love the world or what is in the world; if a person loves the world, the love of the Father does not exist in him; because everything that is in the world—bodily desire, lust for seeing, and arrogant living—does not come from the Father; it belongs to the world. And the world and its desire vanishes, but a person who does the will of God lasts forever.

The world and all its enticements vanish, but a person who does the will of God lasts forever. Hallelujah!

If a person loves the world, the love of the Father does not exist in him; but a person who does the will of God lasts forever. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Commentary on the Good News by John  
by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

Everyone who receives the sacred meat of the Prince's body is united with him as a cell in his body. This is the teaching of St. Paul when he speaks of the mystery of our religion "that was hidden from earlier generations, but has now been revealed to the holy Emissaries and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles are joint heirs with the Judeans, that they are cells in the same body, and that they have a share in the promise made by God in Jesus the Prince."

And if in the Prince all of us, both ourselves and the one who is within us by his own matter, are cells in the same body, is it not clear that we are one and the same thing, both with each other and with the Prince? He is the bond that unites us, because he is God and man at the same time.

And with regard to our unity in the Spirit, we can say, following the same line of thought, that all of us who have received one and the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit, are united intimately, both with each other and with God. Taken one by one, there are many of us, and the Prince sends the Spirit, who is both the Father's Spirit and his own, to take up residence in each of us. Yet that Spirit, who is one and indivisible, gathers those who are distinct from each other as individuals, and causes them all to appear as a unity in himself. Just as the meat of the Prince's sacred body has the power to make those in whom it is present into one body, so the one, indivisible Spirit of God, who lives in everyone, makes all of us become one in spirit.

And so St. Paul appeals to us to "put up with each other in love, and spare no effort in achieving by the bonds of peace the unity that comes from the Spirit. There is only one body and one Spirit, just as there is only one hope held out to us by God's call. There is one Master, one faith, one Bath, and one God and Father of all of us, who is above everyone, and works through everyone, and is in everyone." If the one Spirit has his home in us, the one God and Father of everyone will be in us, and he, through his Son, will gather everyone who shares the same Spirit into unity with each other and with himself.

There is also another way of showing that we are made one thing by sharing in the Holy Spirit: If we have given up our worldly way of life and submitted once for all to the laws of the Spirit, it must surely be obvious to everyone that by rejecting, in a sense, our own life and taking on the supernatural likeness of the Holy Spirit who is united to us, our nature is transformed so that we are no longer merely human beings, but also sons of God, spiritual men, by reason of the share we have received in the divine nature. We are all one thing, therefore, in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are one thing in mind and holiness, we are one thing through our communion in the sacred meat of the Prince's body, and through our sharing in the one Holy Spirit.

Since there is only one loaf of bread, we form one body, even though there are many of us, because all of us share in the one bread and the one cup. Hallelujah!

In your goodness, my God, you provided for the poor and you give a home to the friendless, because all of us share in the one bread and

the one cup. Hallelujah!

**Prayer**

Dear God, our Father, may we look forward with hope to our return to life, because you have made us your sons and daughters and restored the joy of our youth. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

 Wednesday

*First Reading*

*1 John 2.18-29*

My children, it is the final moment; and just as you heard about the counter-Prince that is coming, there have already been a number of counter-Princes; and we know from this that it is the final moment. They came from among us, but they did not belong to us; if they belonged to us, they would have stayed with us; but they left us to make it clear that all of them did not belong to us.

All of you, however, have had an anointing from the one who is holy, and you all have knowledge. I am not writing to you because you do not know the truth; I am writing because you do know it, and know that every lie does not belong to the truth. Is there any liar who does not deny that Jesus is the Prince? That is the one who is the counter-Prince, who is repudiating the Father and the Son. Everyone who repudiates the Son does not possess the Father; it is a person who acknowledges the Son who possesses the Father also.

You see to it that what you heard from the beginning has its home in you; if what you heard from the beginning finds its home in you, you have your home in the Son and the Father too. And this is what the promise is that he promised us: eternal life.

I have written this to you about the people who would lead you astray; but the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you have no need to have anyone teach you; you stay in him as his anointing teaches you about everything and is true and is no lie, just as it taught you.

So now, my children, stay in him, so that we will have

confidence if he should appear and will not be embarrassed by his presence among us. If you know that he is virtuous, you know that everyone who practices virtue was born from him.

The anointing you received has stayed in your hearts; you do not need anyone to teach you, because his anointing teaches you about everything. Hallelujah!

Enjoy yourselves and have fun in your God the Master, because he has given us a teacher to instruct us in holiness. You do not need anyone to teach you, because his anointing teaches you about everything. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Leo the Great*

My friends, the days which passed between the Master's return to life and his rising to heaven were by no means uneventful; during them great sacramental mysteries were confirmed, and great truths revealed. In those days the fear of death with all its horrors was removed, and the immortality of both body and soul affirmed. It was then that the Master breathed on all his Emissaries and filled them with the Holy Spirit; and after giving the keys of the kingdom to blessed Peter, whom he had chosen and set above all the others, he entrusted him with the care of his flock.

During these days the Master joined two of his students as their companions on the road, and by scolding them for their timidity and hesitant fears, he swept away all the clouds of our uncertainty. Their lukewarm hearts were fired by the light of faith and began to burn within them as the Master opened up the Scriptures. And as they shared their dinner with him, their eyes opened as he tore apart the bread, and opened far more gladly to the sight of their own glorified humanity than did the eyes of our first parents to the shame of their sin.

Throughout the whole period between the return to life and the rising into heaven, God's providence was at work to instill this one lesson into the hearts of the students, and to set this one truth before their eyes, that our Master Prince Jesus, who was really born, really suffered, and really died, should really be recognized as returned to life from the dead. The blessed Emissaries together with all the others had been intimidated by the catastrophe of the cross, and their faith in the

return to life had been uncertain; but now they were so strengthened by the evident truth that when their Master rose into heave, far from feeling any sadness, they were filled with great joy.

In fact, that blessed company had a great and inexpressible cause for joy when it saw man's nature rising above the dignity of the whole heavenly creation, above the ranks of angels, and above the exalted status of the archangels. And there will be no limit to its upward course until humanity was admitted to a throne beside the eternal Father, to be ensconced at last in the glory of the one to whose nature it was wedded in the person of the Son.

I am leaving to prepare a place for you, but I will come back and take you with me so that you will be with me where I am. Hallelujah!

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Patron to remain with you forever. But I will come back and take you with me so that you will be with me where I am. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Master, as we celebrate your Son's return to life, may we be as happy with all the sacred ones when he returns in glory, since he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*First Reading*

*Ephesians 4.1-24*

But I ask you as a prisoner for the Master, behave consistently with the call you received: Act with complete humility and gentleness; be patient and put up with each other in love, and work hard at keeping spiritual unity by binding the unity together with peace, since there is one body and one Spirit, just as your call was a call to one single hope; there is one Master, one belief, one Bath, and one God, the Father of

everything, who is over everything, permeating everything, and in everything.

But each of us has been given this gift to the degree that the Prince has freely bestowed it. This is why Scripture says, “As he ascended into the heavens, he captured captivity, and gave gifts to mankind.” (And what would “ascended” mean if he had not “descended” to the lower regions, the earth? So the one who “descended” is in fact the one who “ascended” above all the spheres of heaven, so that everything would be full of him.)

That is, he was the one who gave the gifts of being in some cases his emissaries, in others prophets, deliverers of the report, shepherds, and teachers, to equip the sacred people for the service they are to perform, which is to develop the Prince’s body, until everyone achieves the unity which comes from belief and the knowledge of the Son of God—achieves mature manhood, with the completeness of the Prince as its standard.

So we must not be babies any more, tossed up and down and blown here and there by every wind of new learning that blows in the shell-game that some people play as they try to con others into error; we should be truthful in love and grow in every way toward the one who is the head, the Prince, the one from whom the whole body is connected together and integrated through all its constituent joints, and who actively produces consistently with the differences in each part the body’s growth in the development of himself in love.

In any case, what I am telling you, and in the Master I know what I am saying, is that you should no longer behave the way the Gentiles behave, with their empty minds and darkened intellects making them strangers to God’s life because of the unknowing that they have in them from their fixed attitudes; they have deadened their feelings and surrendered to excess, and this led them into the performance of all kinds of filth and greed.

But this is not what you learned when you studied the Prince. You did hear about him, didn’t you, and learn in him what the truth in Jesus was like? That you are supposed to strip away yourselves with your earlier conduct—your old humanity that is decaying, with its fraudulent urges—and to renew yourselves in your spirits with a new mind, and dress yourselves in a new humanity created as God would have it in

virtue and the holiness of truth.

When the Prince rose into the heights, he took captivity captive, and gave gifts to human beings. Hallelujah!

God goes up with shouts of joy; the Master ascends with the blare of trumpets. He gave gifts to human beings. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

Today our Master Prince Jesus rose up to heaven; our hearts should rise along with him. Listen to the Emissary's words: "If you have come back to life with the Prince, set your hearts on what is above where the Prince is enthroned beside God; search out what is above, not what is on earth." That is, in the same way as he stayed with us even after his ascension, we are also already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.

Why do those of us on earth not make an effort to find rest with him in heaven even now, through the faith, hope, and love that unites us to him? While he is in heaven, he is also with us; and while we are on earth, we 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 in love.

He did not leave heaven when he came down to us; and he did not go away 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 gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven: the Son of Man, who is in heaven."

These words are explained by our unity in the Prince, because he is our head and we are his body. No one went up into heaven except the Prince, because we are also the Prince: he is the Son of Man by his union with us, and we are sons of God by our union with him. So the Emissary says, "In the same way that the human body, which has many parts, is a unity, because all the different parts make up one body, this is how it is with the Prince." He also has many "parts," but is one body.

It was out of pity for us he came down from heaven, and although he went back up alone, we also go up there, because we are in him by grace; and so, no one but the Prince descended, and no one but the Prince ascended—not because there is no distinction between the

head and the body, but because the body as a unit cannot be separated from the head.

During the forty days after his suffering, 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. Hallelujah!

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. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Father in heaven, since our minds were prepared for the coming of your Kingdom when you took the Prince beyond our sight so that we could see him in his glory, may we follow where he has led and find our hope in his glory, because he is Master through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of power and might—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.



And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.



*First Reading*

*1 John 3.1-10*

See how much love the Father has given us: that we would be called God's children! And that is what we are! This is why the world does not recognize us; because it did not recognize him. My friends, now we are God's children; what we will be has not yet become clear. We know that if it does become clear, we will be like him, because we will see him as he is. And everyone who has this hope in him makes himself pure in the sense in which he is pure.

Anyone who commits a sin is also breaking the law, because sin is lawlessness. And you know that he appeared to take our sins from us, and that there is no sin in him. Anyone who has his home in him does not keep committing sins; everyone who keeps sinning has not seen him and has not recognized him.

My children, don't let anyone lead you astray. A person who

practices virtue is virtuous in the sense in which he himself is virtuous. A person who keeps committing sin belongs to the devil, because the devil sinned from the beginning; and the Son of God appeared for this very reason: to undo the deeds of the devil. Everyone fathered by God does not keep committing sin, because God's offspring have their home in him, and they cannot keep sinning, because they have their birth from God. This is the respect in which it will be clear who are God's children, and who are the devil's children; everyone who does not practice virtue does not belong to God, and neither does anyone who does not love his brother or sister.

See how much love the Father has given us: that we would be called God's children! And that is what we are! Hallelujah!

We know that when he appears we will be like him, because we will see him as he is. And that is what we are! Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Leo the Great*

At Easter, my dear friends, it was the Master's return to life that was the cause of our joy; our present happiness is due to his rising up into heaven. We are recalling with all the appropriate ceremony the day on which our poor human nature was carried up in the Prince above all of heaven's armies, above all the ranks of angels, and beyond the highest heavenly powers to the throne of God the Father.

It is upon this regulated structure of divine acts that we have been solidly constituted, so that the grace of God will show itself as still more marvelous when, in spite of the removal from men's sight of everything that is properly felt to command their reverence, faith does not fail, hope is not shaken, and love does not grow cold.

That is, the power of great minds and the light of truly believing souls is so great that they put unhesitating faith in what is not seen with physical eyes; they fix their desires on what is beyond sight. This kind of fidelity could never be born in our hearts, and no one could become virtuous by faith, if our rescue consisted only in what was visible.

And so our Redeemer's visible presence has passed into the sacraments. Our faith is nobler and stronger because sight has been replaced by a teaching whose authority is accepted by believing minds which are illuminated from above. This faith was increased by the

Master's ascension and strengthened by the Holy Spirit; it would remain unshaken by fetters and prisons, exile and hunger, fire and hungry beasts, and the most refined tortures ever devised by brutal persecutors. Throughout the world women no less than men, and tender girls as well as boys have given their life's blood in the struggle for this faith; it is a faith that has driven out devils, healed the sick, and raised the dead.

Even the blessed Emissaries, though they had been strengthened by so many miracles and taught by a great deal of instruction, became frightened at the cruel suffering their Master underwent, and could not accept his return to life without doubts. Yet they made such progress through his ascension that they now found joy in what had previously terrified them. They were able to fix their minds on the Prince's divinity as he sat enthroned beside his Father, since what was presented to their physical eyes no longer hindered them from turning all their attention to the realization that he had not left his Father when he came down to earth, and had not abandoned his students when he rose up to heaven.

The truth is that the Son of Man was revealed as Son of God in a more perfect and transcendent way once he entered his Father's glory; he now began to be indescribably more present in his divinity to those from whom he was further removed in his humanity. A more mature faith enabled their minds to stretch upward to the Son in his equality with the Father; it was no longer necessary to have contact with the Prince's tangible body, in which as man he is inferior to the Father. That is, while his glorified body retained the same nature, the faith of those who believed in him was now summoned to heights where, as the Father's equal, the only Son he ever sired is reached not by physical handling but by spiritual discernment.

We have a high priest like this, who is enthroned beside the throne of majesty in heaven. We should approach him in sincerity and full of faith, with our hearts washed clean and freed from an evil conscience. Hallelujah!

Let us stand firm in the profession of our hope, because the one who made the promise is faithful. We should approach him in sincerity and full of faith, with our hearts washed clean and freed from an evil conscience. Hallelujah!

*Prayer*

Dear Master, please listen to our prayer for your good news to reach everyone, and for those of us who receive rescue through what you say to be your children in deed as well as in name. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

*First Reading**1 John 3.11-17*

This is the message you heard from the beginning: you are to love each other. Not like Cain, who belonged to the evil spirit and murdered his brother; and why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, and those of his brother were virtuous.

Don't be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. You know that we have passed over from death to life, because we love our brothers and sisters. One who does not have love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that every murderer does not have eternal life making its home in him.

And this is how we recognize love: that he gave up his life for us; and we should give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. How can a person who has a living in this world and sees his brother or sister in need and locks him out of his heart have the love of God making its home in him?

This is how we recognize love: that the Prince gave up his life for us; and we should give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. Hallelujah!

We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers and sisters. And we should give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. Hallelujah!

*Second reading**A Treatise on John, by St. Augustine*

The Church recognizes two kinds of life as having been entrusted to her by God: One is a life of faith, and the other a life of

vision; one is a life spent on pilgrimage in time, and the other is one in a home in eternity; one is a life of hard work, and the other one of rest; one is spent on the road, and the other in our native land; one is active and involves labor, and the other is contemplative and the reward of labor.

The first kind of life is symbolized by the Emissary the Rock, the second by John. All of the first life is lived in this world, and it will come to an end with this world. The second life will be imperfect until the end of this world, but it will have no end in the next world. And that is why the Prince says to the Rock, "Follow me," but he says of John, "If I wish him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me."

You are to follow me by imitating my endurance of transient evils; John is to remain until my coming, when I will bring eternal blessings. A way of saying this more clearly might be that your active life will be more perfect if you follow the example of my suffering; but to attain its full perfection, John's life of contemplation must wait until I come.

Perfect patience consists in following the Prince faithfully, even to death; but for perfect knowledge, we must wait for his coming. Here, in the land of the dying, the sufferings of the world must be endured; there, in the land of the living is where the benefits from the Master will be seen.

The Prince's words, "I wish him to remain until I come" should not be taken to mean that John was to remain on earth until the Prince's coming, but that he was to wait, because it is not now but only when the Prince comes that the life he symbolizes will find fulfillment. On the other hand, the Prince says to the Rock, "Your duty is to follow me," because the life the Rock symbolizes can attain its goal only by action here and now.

Yet we should make no mental separation between these great Emissaries; both lived the life symbolized by the Rock, and both were to attain the life symbolized by John. Symbolically, one followed and the other stayed, but by living by faith, both of them endured the sufferings of this present life of sorrow and they both longed for the joys of the future life of happiness.

And they were not alone in this. They were united with the whole Church, the bride of the Prince, which will in time be freed from

the trials of this life and live forever in the joy of the next one. These two kinds of life were represented respectively by the Rock and John, but both Emissaries lived by faith in this present, passing life, and in eternal life both have the joy of vision.

And so, to guide all the sacred people who are inseparable united to the body of the Prince through the storms of this life, the Rock, the chief of the Emissaries, received the keys of the Kingdom of heaven with the power to lock and unlock sins; and for the sake of the same sacred people, John the evangelist rested on the breast of the Prince, to plumb the depths of that other, hidden life.

That is, it is not only the Rock but the whole Church that locks and unlocks sin; and as for the sublime teaching of John about the Word, who in the beginning was God facing God, and everything else he told us about the Prince's divinity and about the trinity and unity of the Godhead, which now, until the Master comes, is all like a faint reflection in a mirror, but which will be seen face to face in the Kingdom of heaven—it was not only John who drank in this teaching that came from the Master's breast as if from a spring. Everyone who belongs to the Master is to drink it in, insofar as each is capable of doing so; and this is why the Master is the one who has spread John's report of the Good News throughout the world.

The God of every favor has called us to glory in Jesus the Prince. He will restore, support, and strengthen us after we have suffered for a little while. Hallelujah!

The one who brought Jesus back to life will also bring us back to life with Jesus. He will restore, support, and strengthen us after we have suffered for a little while. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Master, please teach us to know you better by doing good to others, and help us grow in your love and come to understand the eternal mystery of the Prince's death and return to life. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

# Seventh Sunday of Easter

*First Reading*

*1 John 3.18-24*

Children, don't love in words or with your tongues; love in deeds and in reality.

This is how we will know that we belong to the truth and can have confidence in our hearts in his presence. That is, if our hearts condemn us, he is even greater than our hearts, and knows everything. And if, my friends, our hearts accuse us of nothing, then we can be optimistic about God; and we will receive from him whatever we ask, because we have kept his commandments and have done what is best in his eyes.

And this is what his commandment is: we are to believe that his Son the Prince is the one named Jesus, and are to love each other as he commanded us.

One who keeps his commandments has his home in him, and he has his home in that person; and the way we are to know if he has his home in us is from the Spirit he gave us.

Everyone who keeps God's commandments has his home in God, and God has his home in him. We know that he has his home in us by the Spirit he has given us. Hallelujah!

In his Holy Spirit, God created wisdom, which he has poured upon all creation and has offered to those who love him. We know that he has his home in us by the Spirit he has given us. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Homily on the Song of Songs  
by St. Gregory of Nyssa*

When love has completely driven fear away, and fear has been

transformed into love, then the unity brought us by our Savior will be fully realized, because everyone will be united to everyone else through their union with the one supreme Good. They will have the perfection attributed to doves, as I interpret the text: "There is one single one who is my dove, my perfect one. She is the only child of her mother, her chosen one."

The Master's words in the Good News bring out the meaning of this text more clearly. After having conferred total power on his students by his blessing, he obtained many more gifts for them by his prayer to the Father. Among these was the greatest gift of all, which was that they were no longer to be divided in their assessment of what was right and good, because they were all to be united to the one supreme Good. As the Emissary says, they were to be bound together with the bonds of peace in the unity that comes from the Holy Spirit. They were to be made one body and one spirit by the one hope to which they were all called. We would do better, however, to quote the sacred words of the Good News itself: "I pray," says the Master, "that they will all be one thing, exactly as you, Father, are in me and I am in you; that they will also be one thing in us."

Now the bond that creates this unity is glory. No one can deny that the Holy Spirit is called "glory" if he thinks carefully about the Master's words: "I gave them the glory you gave me." In fact, he gave this glory to his students when he told them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." Although he had always possessed it, even before the world came into being, he received this glory himself when he put on human nature. Then, when his human nature had been glorified by the Spirit, the glory of the Spirit was passed on to all his relatives, beginning with his students. This is why he said, "I gave them the glory you gave me, so that they will be one thing just as we are one thing; I wish them to be absolutely one thing, with me in them and you in me."

Anyone who has grown from infancy to manhood and reached spiritual maturity possesses the mastery over his emotions and the purity that makes it possible for him to receive the glory of the Spirit. He is that perfect dove upon whom the eyes of the groom rests when he says, "There is only one who is my dove, my perfect one."

I don't call you slaves any longer, I call you friends, those I love, because



you have seen everything I have done among you. Receive the Holy Spirit, your Patron, whom the Father will send you.

You are my friends if you do what I command you. Receive the Holy Spirit, your Patron, whom the Father will send you.

#### Prayer

Father, please help us keep in mind that our Savior the Prince lives with you in glory and promised to stay with us until the end of time. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Resume with the Te Deum



#### First Reading

*1 John 4.1-10*

My friends, do not believe every spirit; test the spirits to see if they belong to God, because a great many false prophets have come into the world. This is how you will recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges that Prince Jesus has come in his body is the Spirit of God, and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus does not belong to God; this one is the spirit of the counter-Prince whom you heard was coming, and is already in the world at this moment.

But you belong to God, my children, and have won the battle with that sort, because what is in you is greater than what is in the world. They belong to the world; this is why their speech is worldly and why the world listens to them. But we belong to God; and a person who recognizes God listens to us, and one who does not belong to God does not listen to us. This is how we distinguish between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of deception.

My friends, we should love each other, because love comes from God, and everyone who loves was fathered by God and recognizes God. One who does not love does not recognize God, because God is love.

The love of God became clear among us, because God sent the

only Son he ever fathered into the world so that we would have life through him. And this is what love consists in: not that we loved God, but in the fact that he himself loved us and sent his Son to conciliate our sins.

*Second Reading*

*Catechetical Instruction  
by St. Cyril of Jerusalem*

“The water I give him will become a spring of water inside him, gushing up to eternal life.” This is a new kind of water, a running, leaping water, gushing up for those who are fit for it. But why did the Prince call the grace of the Spirit “water”? Because everything depends on water; plants and animals have their origin in water. Water comes down out of heaven as rain, and although it is always the same in itself, it produces many different effects, one in palm trees, another in vines, and so on through the whole of creation. It does not come down as one thing at one time and another at another, but while remaining essentially the same, it adapts itself to the needs of every creature that receives it.

In the same way, the Holy Spirit, whose nature is always the same, simple, and indivisible, hands out grace to each person as he chooses. Like a dry tree which puts out shoots when watered, the soul bears the fruit of holiness when a change of attitude has made it fit to receive the Holy Spirit. Though the Spirit never changes, the effects of his action, by the will of God and in the Prince’s name, are numerous and marvelous.

The Spirit makes one man a teacher of divine truth, inspires another to prophesy, gives another the power of driving devils away, enables another to interpret Holy Scripture. The Spirit strengthens one man’s self-control, shows another how to help the poor, teaches another to fast and lead a life of asceticism, makes another ignore the needs of the body, and trains still another for martyrdom. His action is different in different people, but the Spirit himself is always the same. “In each person,” Scripture says, “the Spirit reveals his presence in a particular way for the common good.”

The Spirit comes gently and makes himself known by his fragrance. He is not felt as a burden, because he is light—very light. Rays of illumination and knowledge stream before him as he approaches. The Spirit comes with the tenderness of a true friend and protector to save,

heal, teach, advise, strengthen, and console. The Spirit comes to illuminate the mind first of the one who receives him, and then through him the minds of others as well.

As light strikes the eyes of a man who comes out of darkness into the sunshine and enables him to see clearly things he could not make out before; in the same way, light floods the soul of a man considered fit to receive the Holy Spirit, and enables him to see things beyond the range of human vision—things hitherto undreamed of.

There are different services, but the same God who achieves all of them in everyone. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person in a singular way for the good of everyone. Hallelujah!

You are the Prince's body, and all of you are cells in it. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person in a singular way for the good of everyone. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Master, please send the power of your Holy Spirit upon us, so that we will remain faithful and do your will in our daily lives. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



#### *First Reading*

*1 John 4.11-21*

My friends, if God loved us this much, we ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God; but if we love each other, God has his home in us, and his love becomes complete in us.

And this is how we recognize that we have our home in him and he has his in us: that he has given us a share in his Spirit. And we have seen and swear that the Father sent his Son to be the world's rescue. A person who acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God has God at home in him and he is at home in God; and we have recognized and

believed in the love God has for us.

God is love, and one who has his home in love has his home in God, and God has his home in him. Love is made complete among us in this way, for us to be optimistic facing the day of judgment, because we are in the world in the way in which he is. There is no fear in love; love, when complete, drives fear away; because fear deals with punishment, and a person who is afraid has not reached the fullness of love. But we have love because he was the first to love us.

If a person says he loves God and hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. If a person does not love his brother or sister whom he sees, he cannot love the God whom he does not see. And this is the command which we have from him: one who loves God is to love his brothers and sisters also.

God loved us first, and sent his own Son to be the sacrifice that frees us from our sins. We have come to know and believe in the love God has for us. Hallelujah!

The Master himself has become our savior; he has redeemed us in his love. We have come to know and believe in the love God has for us. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*The Holy Spirit, by St. Basil the Great*

The titles given to the Holy Spirit must surely stir the soul of anyone who hears them, and make him realize that they are referring to nothing less than the Supreme Being. Is he not called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, the unfaltering Spirit, the guiding Spirit? But his principal and most personal title is the Holy Spirit.

Every creature turns to the Holy Spirit in his need for sanctification; every living thing searches for him in accordance with its own ability. His breath empowers each to achieve its own natural end.

The Spirit is the source of holiness, a spiritual light; and he offers his proper light to every mind to help it in its search for truth. By nature the Spirit is beyond the reach of our mind; but we can know him by his goodness. The power of the Spirit fills the whole universe, but he gives himself only to those who are fit to receive him, and acts in each one in accordance with the degree of his faith.

Though he is simple in himself, the Spirit is multiple in his mighty deeds. The whole of his being is present to each individual; the whole of his being is present everywhere—and even though he is shared by many people and things, he remains unchanged; his self-giving is no loss to himself. Like the sunshine, which permeates all the atmosphere, spreading over land and sea, and yet is enjoyed by each person as though it were for him alone, the Spirit pours his grace fully, enough for everyone, and yet is present as though exclusively to everyone who can receive him. He gives a delight limited only by their own nature to all the creatures that share in him, not one limited by his ability to give.

The Spirit raises our hearts to heaven, guides the steps of the weak, and brings to perfection those who are making progress. He illuminates those who have been washed clean of every stain of sin and makes them spiritual by communion with himself.

In the same way as clear, transparent substances become very bright when sunlight falls on them, and shine with a new radiance, so souls in whom the Spirit has his home, and who are illuminated by the Spirit, become spiritual themselves and a source of grace for others.

From the Spirit comes foreknowledge of the future, understanding of the mysteries of the faith, insight into the hidden meaning of Scripture, and other special gifts. And it is through the Spirit we become citizens of heaven, we are admitted into the company of the angels, we enter eternal happiness, and have our home in God. We acquire a likeness to God through the Spirit; in fact, we attain what is beyond our most sublime aspirations: we become God.

Do not be worried; I am going to the Father. When I am taken up from you I will send you the Spirit of truth, and your hearts will be full of joy. Hallelujah!

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Patron, the Spirit of truth; and your hearts will be full of joy. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

God of power and mercy, please send your Holy Spirit to take up residence in our hearts and make us temples of his glory. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages

of ages. Amen.

## ednesday

### *First Reading*

*1 John 5.1-12*

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Prince was fathered by God; and everyone who loves the parent loves the one fathered by the parent. And this is how we recognize that we love God's children: by the fact that we love God and keep his commandments. This is what love for God is; to keep his commandments—and his commandments are not a burden, because everyone fathered by God conquers the world. And this faith of ours is the victory which wins the battle with the world. Who could be the one who has won the battle with the world if he is not the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

That person is the one who came by water and blood—not simply by water, but water and blood. And the Spirit is the evidence for this, because the Spirit is truth. The evidence is actually triple: the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are evidence of the same thing. If we accept testimony from human beings, the evidence God gives is greater; and this is evidence from God—because he did present evidence about his Son. One who believes in the Son has the evidence God gave within him; and one who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he did not believe the evidence God presented about his Son.

And this evidence attests that God has given us eternal life, and that this life exists in his Son. A person who possesses the son possesses the life; the one who does not possess the Son of God does not have the life.

Prince Jesus came through water and blood; not simply in water, but in water and blood. The Spirit gives evidence of this, and the Spirit is the truth. Hallelujah!

On that day a spring of water will open for the house of David and the people of Jerusalem, to wash their sins away. The Spirit gives evidence of this, and the Spirit is the truth. Hallelujah!

### *Second Reading*

*The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*

*by the Second Vatican Council*

When the Son completed the work with which the Father had entrusted him on earth, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost to sanctify the Church unceasingly, and thus to enable believers to have access to the Father through the Prince in the one Spirit. He is the Spirit of life, the spring of water gushing up to give eternal life. Through him the Father gives life to human beings, dead because of sin, until he brings their mortal bodies back to life in the Prince.

The Spirit takes up residence in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as if in a temple. He prays in them and gives evidence in them to their adoption as children. He leads the Church into every truth, and gives it unity in communion and in service; he endows it with different hierarchical and charismatic gifts, directs it by their means, and enriches it with his yield.

By the power of the Good News, he enables the church to grow young, perpetually renews it, and leads it to complete union with its Bridegroom. That is, the Spirit and the Bride say to Master Jesus, "Come!"

In this way, the Church reveals itself as a people whose unity has its source in the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The whole community of the faithful, who have an anointing by the Holy Spirit, cannot err in faith. They manifest this distinctive characteristic of theirs in the supernatural instinct of faith (*sensus fidei*) of the whole people when, from the bishops to the most ordinary lay person among the faithful, they display a universal agreement on matters of faith and morals.

This instinct of faith is awakened and kept in being by the Spirit of Truth. Through it the people of God hold indefectibly to "the faith once delivered to the sacred people," penetrate it more deeply by means of right judgment, and apply it more perfectly to their lives. They do all this under the guidance of the sacred teaching office; by faithful obedience to it, they receive what is really the word of God, not the pronouncements of human beings.

Moreover, the Holy Spirit not only sanctifies and guides God's people by the sacraments and the ministries, and enriches it with virtues, he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every state of life, "assigning his gifts to each as he chooses." By means of these special

gifts, he equips them and makes them eager for various activities and responsibilities that benefit the Church in its renewal or its increase, in accordance with the text: “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for a good purpose.”

These charisms, the simpler and more widespread as well as the most outstanding, should be accepted with a sense of gratitude and consolation, since in a very special way they answer and serve the needs of the Church.

On the last day of the festival, Jesus cried out, “Streams of living water will flow from the hearts of all those who believe in me.” He was speaking of the Spirit whom all the believers would receive. Hallelujah!

If anyone is thirsty, he is to come to me and drink; streams of living water will flow from his heart. He was speaking of the Spirit whom all the believers would receive. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

God of mercy, please unite your Church in the Holy Spirit, so that we will be able to serve you with all our hearts and work together with unselfish love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## Thursday

#### First Reading

*1 John 5.13-21*

I have written this to you so that you will know that you have eternal life, those of you who believe in who the Son of God is. And the confidence we have when we face him consists in the fact that if we ask anything that is in accordance with his will, he listens to us. If we are aware that he is listening to us no matter what we ask, we are aware that we possess the answers to the requests we made from him.

If a person sees a brother or sister committing a sin that is not deadly, he is to make a request of God, and he will give life to those whose sin is not deadly. Sin that leads to death exists; I don't say that a person is to make requests about that sort. Every vicious act is a sin, but



there is sin that does not produce death.

We know that everyone fathered by God does not commit sins; the one born from God keeps him safe, and the evil spirit cannot hold him. We know that we belong to God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil spirit. And we know that the Son of God has arrived and has given us intelligence for us to know the one who is true; and we exist in the one who is true, in his Son Prince Jesus. He is the true God and eternal life.

My children, keep yourselves away from idols.

We know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding, for us to know the true God. Hallelujah!

No one has ever seen God; the only son, who is in the Father's bosom, has made him known, and given us understanding, for us to know the true God. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*

*A Commentary on John's Report  
by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

After the Prince completed his mission on earth, it still remained necessary for us to become sharers in the divine nature of the Word. We had to give up our own life and be so transformed that we would be pleasing to God; and this was something we could do only by sharing in the Holy Spirit.

It was extremely fitting that the sending of the Spirit and his descent upon us should take place after the departure of our Savior the Prince. As long as the Prince was with them bodily, it must have seemed to believers that they possessed every blessing in him; but when the time came for him to rise up to his heavenly Father, it was necessary for him to be united through the Spirit to those who worshiped him, and to take up residence in our hearts through faith.

Only by his own presence within us in this way could he give us the confidence to cry out "Abba! (Dad!)," make it easy for us to grow in holiness, and through our possession of the omnipotent Spirit, fortify us invincibly against the wiles of the devil and the assaults of human beings.

It can easily be shown from examples both in the Old Treaty and the New that the Spirit changes those in whom he makes his

residence; he so transforms them that they begin to live a completely new kind of life. Saul was told by the prophet Samuel, “The Spirit of the Master will take possession of you, and you will be changed into another man.” St. Paul writes, “As we see the radiance of the Master with unveiled faces, that radiance, which comes from the Master who is the Spirit, transforms all of us into his own likeness, from one degree of radiance to another.”

Does this not show that the Spirit changes those in whom he comes to reside, and alters the whole pattern of their lives? With the Spirit within them, it is quite natural for people who had been absorbed by what is in this world to become entirely other-worldly in outlook, and for cowards to become men of great courage. There can be no doubt that this is what happened to the Students. The strength they received from the Spirit enabled them to hold firmly to the Prince’s love, facing the violence of their persecutors without fear. Our Savior’s saying, then, was very true that it was to their advantage for him to return to heaven; his return was the time designated for the descent of the Holy Spirit.

If I do not go, the Patron will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will teach you every truth. Hallelujah!

He will not speak on his own; he will tell you what he hears from me and will announce to you what is in the future. When he comes, he will teach you every truth. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Father, please have your Spirit come upon us with power, to fill us with his gifts; may he make our hearts pleasing to you and ready to do your will. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



#### *First Reading*

#### *2 John*

The elder to a lady chosen to be mistress of her servants and to her children, whom I truly love—and I am not the only one who does;

all those who recognize the truth do, because of the truth that has its home in us and which will be with us forever

Blessings, mercy, and peace will be yours from God the Father, and from Prince Jesus, the Father's Son, in truth and love.

I was extremely happy to find numbers of your children walking about in truth, following the commandment we have received from the Father.

But now I ask you, my lady, not as if I were writing a new commandment to you—it is the one we had from the beginning—for us to love each other.

And this is what love is: for us to walk about as he commanded us. And this is the commandment which we heard from the beginning: that you walk about in love.

That is, there are many frauds that have come into the world; the ones who do not recognize that Prince Jesus has been with us bodily. A person who says this is a fraud and the counter-Prince. Take care of yourselves, or you will lose what you have worked for; you are to earn your full reward. Every person who “goes beyond” what was taught and does not stay with the teaching of the Prince does not possess God; a person who stays with the teaching possesses both the Father and the Son.

If a person comes to you and does not bring with him this teaching, do not accept him into your house or give him any welcome; a person who welcomes him has a share in his evil deeds.

I have a great deal to write to you—which I would not like to do with paper and ink; I hope to come to you and speak face to face with you, to make your happiness complete.

The children of your sister who has been chosen send their regards.

The Father has given us this commandments—it is not a new commandment, but one that we received from the beginning—to walk in truth and love. Hallelujah!

Follow the path the Master has taught you and you will live. Walk in truth and love. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading**The Trinity, by St. Hilary*

Our Master commanded us to bathe people in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In the Bath, then, we profess faith in the Creator, in the only Son he ever fathered, and in the gift which is the Spirit. There is one Creator of everything, because in God there is one Father from whom everything has its existence. And there is the one Son, the only one God fathered, our Master Prince Jesus, through whom everything exists. And there is one Spirit, the gift who is in everyone. So all follow their proper order, in accordance with the proper operation of each: one power which brings everything into being, one Son, through whom everything comes into existence, and one gift of perfect hope. Nothing is missing from this flawless union: in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, there is infinity of unlimited existence, perfect reflection of the divine image, and mutual enjoyment of the gift.

Our Master has described the purpose of the Spirit's presence in us. Let us listen to what he says: "I have still a great deal to say to you, but you cannot bear it now. It is to your advantage for me to go away, because if I go, I will send the Patron." Also, "I will ask the Father, and he will send you another Patron to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. He will guide you into all the truth; because he will not speak on his own, but will say whatever he hears; and he will announce the future to you. He will enhance my reputation, because he will take what is mine."

From among many of our Master's sayings, these have been chosen to guide our understanding, because they reveal to us the intention of the giver, the nature of the gift, and the condition for its reception. Since our weak minds cannot comprehend the Father or the Son, we have been given the Holy Spirit as our intermediary and patron, to shed light on that hard teaching of our faith: the incarnation of God.

We receive the Spirit of truth so that we can know what pertains to God. In order to grasp this, consider how useless the faculties of the human body would become if they were denied their exercise. Our eyes cannot fulfill their task without light, either natural or artificial; our ears cannot react without sound vibrations; and in the absence of any odor our nostrils are ignorant of their function. Not that these senses would lose their own nature if they were not used; it is that they demand objects of experience in order to function. It is the same with the human

soul. Unless it absorbs the gift of the Spirit through faith, the mind has the ability to know God, but lacks the light necessary for that knowledge.

This unique gift which is in the Prince is offered in its totality to everyone. It is available everywhere, but it is given to each man in proportion to his readiness to receive it; its presence is more complete the greater a man's desire is to deserve it. This gift will remain with us until the end of the world, and will be our comfort in the time of waiting. By the favors it bestows, it is the pledge of our hope for the future, the light of our minds, and the splendor that irradiates our understanding.

The time has come for me to return to the one who sent me, says the Master, so do not be worried or in despair. I will ask the Father to watch over you. Hallelujah!

If I do not go, the Patron will not come; when I am taken up, I will send him to you. I will ask the Father to watch over you. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Father, since in showing what the Prince really is and sending us your Spirit you open the way to eternal life, may our sharing in this gift increase our love and make our faith grown stronger. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



#### *First Reading*

*3 John*

The elder to my friend Gaius, whom I truly love.

My friend, I pray that you are as prosperous and healthy in every way as your soul is. It made me extremely happy when some of the brothers came and told me the truth about you, about the way you walk about in the truth. I can't have any greater happiness than to hear that my children walk about in the truth.

My friend, you are being faithful whatever you do for the brothers, even the ones who are not your countrymen; they have told

about your love publicly in the community; and you will do them a favor if you send them along with the respect God deserves, because they started out for his sake and did not accept anything from pagans. We should give welcome to people like this to share in the deeds they perform in the truth.

I wrote a small letter to the community; but Diotrophes, who is impressed with his own importance, does not recognize our authority; and for this reason, if I come, I will mention what he is doing, rattling on with slander against us; and not satisfied with that, he not only won't give a welcome to the brothers, he keeps those who want to from doing it and expels them from the community.

My friend, don't copy what is bad; copy what is good. One who does good comes from God; one who does evil has not seen God. Demetrius has credentials from everyone, and from the Truth itself; and we can also swear to him—and you know that what we swear to is true.

I have a good deal to write to you, but I don't want to write with ink and pen. I hope in the near future to see you and speak with you face to face.

Peace to you.

Your friends send their regards.

Pass on regards by name to our friends.

Do not imitate an evil example; follow what is good. By doing good, you will become a child of God. Hallelujah!

Grace is at work in the one who endures suffering for the sake of God. By doing good, you will become a child of God. Hallelujah!

*Second Reading*                      *A sermon by a Sixth Century African author*

The students spoke in the language of every nature. At Pentecost, God chose this means to indicate the presence of the Holy Spirit: whoever had received the Spirit spoke in every kind of language. We must realize, dear brothers, that this is the same Holy Spirit by whom love is poured into our hearts. It was love that was to bring the Church of God together all over the world; and just as individual men who received the Holy Spirit in those days could speak in different languages, so today the Church, united by the Holy Spirit, speaks in the language of every people.

And so, if someone tells us, “You received the Holy Spirit; why do you not speak in different languages?” our answer should be, “I do in fact speak in the languages of every human being, because I belong to the Prince’s body, which is the Church, and she speaks every language. What else did the presence of the Holy Spirit indicate at Pentecost, except that God’s Church was to speak in the language of every people?”

This was the way in which the Master’s promise was to fulfilled: “No one puts new wine into old wineskins. New wine is put into fresh skins, and so both are preserved.” So when the students were heard speaking in all kinds of languages, some people were not far wrong in saying, “They have been drinking too much new wine.” The truth is that the students had now become fresh wineskins, renewed and made holy by grace. The new wine of the Holy Spirit filled them, so that their fervor brimmed over and they spoke in many different languages. By this spectacular miracle, they became a sign of the Catholic Church, which embraces the language of every nation.

Keep this feast, then, as members of the one body of the Prince. It will be no empty festival for you if you really live what you are celebrating. That is, you are the members of that Church which the Master recognizes as his own, and is himself recognized by her; that same Church which he fills with the Holy Spirit as she spreads throughout the world. He is like a bridegroom who never loses sight of his own bride; no one could ever deceive him by substituting some other woman.

To you men of every nation, then, who make up the Church of the Prince, you, the parts of the Prince’s body, you, the body of the Prince, you, the bride of the Prince—to all of you the Emissary addresses these words: “Put up with each other in love; do everything you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Notice that when Paul urges us to bear with each other, he bases his argument on love, and when he speaks of our hope of unity, he emphasizes the bond of peace. This Church is the house of God, built up of living stones, whose master is the omnipotent God. It is his delight to live in it. Be careful then, to keep him from the sorrow of seeing it undermined by schism and collapsing in ruins.

God, who can read everyone’s heart, sent his Spirit to the Gentiles, just

as he did to us. He made no distinction between them and us, and he washed their hearts clean by faith. Hallelujah!

God also gave the life-giving change of attitude to the Gentiles. He made no distinction between them and us, and he washed their hearts clean by faith. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Omnipotent Father, please let the love we have celebrated in this Easter season be put into practice in our daily lives. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages.

Amen.

