



Good Friday Office of Readings

O God, come to our aid.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.**

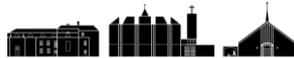
Amen.

Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle,
sing the last, the dread affray;
o'er the cross, the victor's trophy,
sound the high triumphal lay,
how, the pains of death enduring,
earth's Redeemer won the day.

When at length the appointed fullness
of the sacred time was come,
he was sent, the world's Creator,
from the Father's heavenly home,
and was found in human fashion,
offspring of the virgin's womb.

Now the thirty years are ended
which on earth he willed to see.
Willingly he meets his passion,
born to set his people free:
on the cross the Lamb is lifted,
there the sacrifice to be.

There the nails and spear he suffers,
vinegar and gall and reed.
From his sacred body piercèd
blood and water both proceed:
precious flood, which all creation
from the stain of sin hath freed.



Faithful Cross, above all other,
one and only noble Tree.
none in foliage, none in blossom,
none in fruit thy peer may be.
Sweet the wood and sweet the iron,
and thy load, most sweet is he.

Bend, O lofty Tree, thy branches,
thy too rigid sinews bend;
and awhile the stubborn harshness,
which thy birth bestowed, suspend;
and the limbs of heaven's high Monarch
gently on thine arms extend.

Thou alone wast counted worthy
this world's ransom to sustain,
that a shipwrecked race for ever
might a port of refuge gain,
with the sacred Blood anointed
of the Lamb for sinners slain.

Praise and honour to the Father,
praise and honour to the Son,
praise and honour to the Spirit,
ever Three and ever One:
One in might and One in glory,
while eternal ages run.

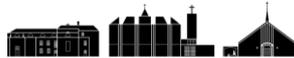
Psalm 2

They arise, the kings of the earth; princes plot against the Lord and his anointed.

Why this tumult among nations,
among peoples this useless murmuring?

They arise, the kings of the earth,
princes plot against the Lord and his Anointed.

'Come, let us break their fetters,
come, let us cast off their yoke.'



He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord is laughing them to scorn.

Then he will speak in his anger,
his rage will strike them with terror.

'It is I who have set up my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.'

I will announce the decree of the Lord:
The Lord said to me: 'You are my Son.
It is I who have begotten you this day.

Ask and I shall bequeath you the nations,
put the ends of the earth in your possession.

With a rod of iron you will break them,
shatter them like a potter's jar.'

Now, O kings, understand,
take warning, rulers of the earth;

serve the Lord with awe and trembling,
pay him your homage

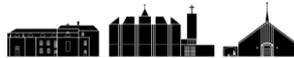
lest he be angry and you perish;
for suddenly his anger will blaze.

Blessed are they
who put their trust in God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

**They arise, the kings of the earth; princes plot against the Lord and his
anointed.**



Psalm 21 (22)

They divided my clothing among them. They cast lots for my robe.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress.

O my God, I call by day and you give no reply;
I call by night and I find no peace.

Yet you, O God, are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

In you our fathers put their trust;
they trusted and you set them free.

When they cried to you, they escaped.
In you they trusted and never in vain.

But I am a worm and no man,
scorned by men, despised by the people.

All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.

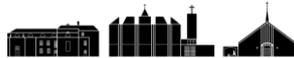
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend.'

Yes, it was you who took me from the womb,
entrusted me to my mother's breast.

To you I was committed from my birth,
from my mother's womb you have been my God.

Do not leave me alone in my distress;
come close, there is none else to help.

Many bulls have surrounded me,
fierce bulls of Bashan close me in.



Against me they open wide their jaws,
like lions, rending and roaring.

Like water I am poured out,
disjointed are all my bones.

My heart has become like wax,
it is melted within my breast.

Parched as burnt clay is my throat,
my tongue cleaves to my jaws.

Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.

They tear holes in my hands and my feet
and lay me in the dust of death.

I can count every one of my bones.
These people stare at me and gloat;

they divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.

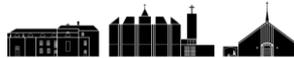
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me!

Rescue my soul from the sword,
my life from the grip of these dogs.

Save my life from the jaws of these lions,
my poor soul from the horns of these oxen.

I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.

'You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons.



'For he has never despised
nor scorned the poverty of the poor.

From him he has not hidden his face,
but he heard the poor man when he cried.'

You are my praise in the great assembly.
My vows I will pay before those who fear him.

The poor shall eat and shall have their fill.
They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him.
May their hearts live for ever and ever!

All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord,
all families of the nations worship before him;
for the kingdom is the Lord's, he is ruler of the nations.

They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust.

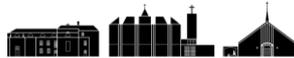
And my soul shall live for him,
my children serve him.

They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come,
declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn:
'These things the Lord has done.'

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

They divided my clothing among them. They cast lots for my robe.



Psalm 37 (38)

Those who sought my life used violence against me.

O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger;
do not punish me, Lord, in your rage.

Your arrows have sunk deep in me;
your hand has come down upon me.

Through your anger all my body is sick:
through my sin, there is no health in my limbs.

My guilt towers higher than my head;
it is a weight too heavy to bear.

My wounds are foul and festering,
the result of my own folly.

I am bowed and brought to my knees.
I go mourning all the day long.

All my frame burns with fever;
all my body is sick.

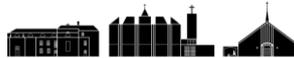
Spent and utterly crushed,
I cry aloud in anguish of heart.

O Lord, you know all my longing:
my groans are not hidden from you.

My heart throbs, my strength is spent;
the very light has gone from my eyes.

My friends avoid me like a leper;
those closest to me stand afar off.

Those who plot against my life lay snares;
those who seek my ruin speak of harm,
planning treachery all the day long.



But I am like the deaf who cannot hear,
like the dumb unable to speak.

I am like a man who hears nothing
in whose mouth is no defence.

I count on you, O Lord:
it is you, Lord God, who will answer.

I pray: 'Do not let them mock me,
those who triumph if my foot should slip.'

For I am on the point of falling
and my pain is always before me.

I confess that I am guilty
and my sin fills me with dismay.

My wanton enemies are numberless
and my lying foes are many.

They repay me evil for good
and attack me for seeking what is right.

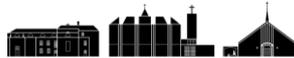
O Lord, do not forsake me!
My God, do not stay afar off!

Make haste and come to my help,
O Lord, my God, my saviour!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Those who sought my life used violence against me.



Versicle: False witnesses have risen up against me.

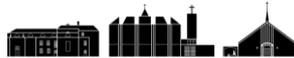
Response: **Falsehood has lied to itself.**

First Reading

Hebrews 9:11-28

Now Christ has come, as the high priest of all the blessings which were to come. He has passed through the greater, the more perfect tent, which is better than the one made by men's hands because it is not of this created order; and he has entered the sanctuary once and for all, taking with him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but his own blood, having won an eternal redemption for us. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer are sprinkled on those who have incurred defilement and they restore the holiness of their outward lives; how much more effectively the blood of Christ, who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, can purify our inner self from dead actions so that we do our service to the living God.

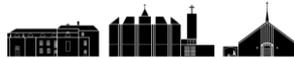
He brings a new covenant, as the mediator, only so that the people who were called to an eternal inheritance may actually receive what was promised: his death took place to cancel the sins that infringed the earlier covenant. Now wherever a will is in question, the death of the testator must be established; indeed, it only becomes valid with that death, since it is not meant to have any effect while the testator is still alive. That explains why even the earlier covenant needed something to be killed in order to take effect, and why, after Moses had announced all the commandments of the Law to the people, he took the calves' blood, the goats' blood and some water, and with these he sprinkled the book itself and all the people, using scarlet wool and hyssop; saying as he did so: This is the blood of the covenant that God has laid down for you. After that, he sprinkled the tent and all the liturgical vessels with blood in the same way. In fact, according to the Law almost everything has to be purified with blood; and if there is no shedding of blood, there is no remission. Obviously, only the copies of heavenly things can be purified in this way, and the heavenly things themselves have to be purified by a higher sort of sacrifice than this. It is not as though Christ had entered a man-made sanctuary which was only modelled on the real one; but it was heaven itself, so that he could



appear in the actual presence of God on our behalf. And he does not have to offer himself again and again, like the high priest going into the sanctuary year after year with the blood that is not his own, or else he would have had to suffer over and over again since the world began. Instead of that, he has made his appearance once and for all, now at the end of the last age, to do away with sin by sacrificing himself. Since men only die once, and after that comes judgement, so Christ, too, offers himself only once to take the faults of many on himself, and when he appears a second time, it will not be to deal with sin but to reward with salvation those who are waiting for him.

Responsory

**Jesus remember me, when you come into your Kingdom,
Jesus remember me, when you come into your Kingdom.**

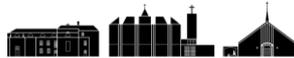


Second Reading From the Catecheses by Saint John Chrysostom, bishop

If we wish to understand the power of Christ's blood, we should go back to the ancient account of its prefiguration in Egypt. "Sacrifice a lamb without blemish," commanded Moses, "and sprinkle its blood on your doors." If we were to ask him what he meant, and how the blood of an irrational beast could possibly save men endowed with reason, his answer would be that the saving power lies not in the blood itself, but in the fact that it is a sign of the Lord's blood. In those days, when the destroying angel saw the blood on the doors he did not dare to enter, so how much less will the devil approach now when he sees, not that figurative blood on the doors, but the true blood on the lips of believers, the doors of the temple of Christ.

If you desire further proof of the power of this blood, remember where it came from, how it ran down from the cross, flowing from the Master's side. The gospel records that when Christ was dead, but still hung on the cross, a soldier came and pierced his side with a lance and immediately there poured out water and blood. Now the water was a symbol of baptism and the blood, of the holy Eucharist. The soldier pierced the Lord's side, he breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and made it my own. So also with the lamb: the Jews sacrificed the victim and I have been saved by it.

"There flowed from his side water and blood." Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolised baptism and the holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from baptism, "the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit," and from the holy Eucharist. Since the symbols of baptism and the Eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he had fashioned Eve from the side of Adam. Moses gives a hint of this when he tells the story of the first man and makes him exclaim: "Bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh!" As God then took a rib from Adam's side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and the water after his own death.



Do you understand, then, how Christ has united his bride to himself and what food he gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are both brought into being and nourished. As a woman nourishes her child with her own blood and milk, so does Christ unceasingly nourish with his own blood those to whom he himself has given life.

Responsory

**Soul of my Saviour sanctify my breast,
Body of Christ, be thou my saving guest,
Blood of my Saviour, bathe me in thy tide,
wash me with waters gushing from thy side.**

**Strength and protection may thy passion be,
O blessed Jesus, hear and answer me;
deep in thy wounds, Lord, hide and shelter me,
so shall I never, never part from thee.**

**Guard and defend me from the foe malign,
in death's dread moments make me only thine;
call me and bid me come to thee on high
where I may praise thee with thy saints for ay.**

Let us pray.

Be mindful, Lord, of this your family,
for whose sake our Lord Jesus Christ, when betrayed,
did not hesitate to yield himself into his enemies' hands
and undergo the agony of the cross.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Amen.

Let us praise the Lord.

Thanks be to God.