

COLLECT

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy
the works of the devil
and to make us the children of God and
heirs of eternal life:
grant that we, having this hope,
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;
that when he shall appear in power and
great glory
we may be made like him
in his eternal and glorious kingdom;
where he is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 1:7. 12-18

A reading from the book of the prophet Zephaniah.

Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm." Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

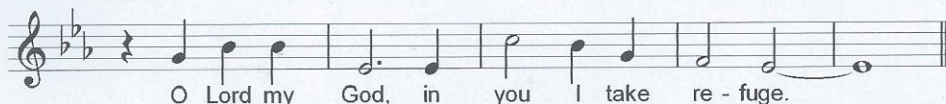
PSALM Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12
(or 90:1-8)



R *O Lord my God, in you I take refuge.*

Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the earth and the world were formed,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God. **R**

You turn us back to dust and say:
"Turn back, O children of earth."
For a thousand years in your sight are
but as yesterday,
which passes like a watch in the night. **R**



You sweep them away like a dream;
they fade away suddenly like the grass.
In the morning it is green and flourishes;
in the evening it is dried up and
withered. **R**

For we consume away in your displeasure;
we are afraid at your wrathful indignation.
You have set our misdeeds before you
and our secret sins in the light of your
countenance. **R**

[When you are angry, all our days are gone;
our years come to an end like a sigh.
The days of our life are three score years
and ten,
or if our strength endures, even four score;
yet the sum of them is but labour and
sorrow,
for they soon pass away and we are gone. **R**

Who regards the power of your wrath
and your indignation like those who fear
you?
So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. **R**

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

Concerning the times and the seasons,
brothers and sisters, you do not need
to have anything written to you. For you
yourselves know very well that the day
of the Lord will come like a thief in the
night. When they say, "There is peace and
security," then sudden destruction will
come upon them, as labour pains come
upon a pregnant woman, and there will
be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in
darkness, for that day to surprise you like
a thief; for you are all children of light and
children of the day; we are not of the night
or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep
as others do, but let us keep awake and be
sober; for those who sleep, sleep at night,
and those who are drunk get drunk at
night. But since we belong to the day, let
us be sober, and put on the breastplate of
faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of
salvation. For God has destined us not for
wrath but for obtaining salvation through
our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so
that whether we are awake or asleep we
may live with him. Therefore encourage one
another and build up each other, as indeed
you are doing.

GOSPEL Matthew 25:14-30

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples, "The kingdom of
heaven is as if a man, going on a journey,
summoned his slaves and entrusted his
property to them; to one he gave five
talents, to another two, to another one,

to each according to his ability. Then he
went away. The one who had received the
five talents went off at once and traded
with them, and made five more talents. In
the same way, the one who had the two
talents made two more talents. But the
one who had received the one talent went
off and dug a hole in the ground and hid
his master's money. After a long time the
master of those slaves came and settled
accounts with them. Then the one who had
received the five talents came forward,
bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master,
you handed over to me five talents; see,
I have made five more talents.' His
master said to him, 'Well done, good
and trustworthy slave; you have been
trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in
charge of many things; enter into the joy
of your master.' And the one with the two
talents also came forward, saying, 'Master,
you handed over to me two talents; see,
I have made two more talents.' His
master said to him, 'Well done, good
and trustworthy slave; you have been
trustworthy in a few things, I will put you
in charge of many things; enter into the
joy of your master.' Then the one who had
received the one talent also came forward,
saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a
harsh man, reaping where you did not sow,
and gathering where you did not scatter
seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid
your talent in the ground. Here you have
what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You
wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you,
that I reap where I did not sow, and gather
where I did not scatter? Then you ought to
have invested my money with the bankers,
and on my return I would have received
what was my own with interest. So take
the talent from him, and give it to the one
with the ten talents. For to all those who
have, more will be given, and they will have
an abundance; but from those who have
nothing, even what they have will be taken
away. As for this worthless slave, throw him
into the outer darkness, where there will be
weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

POST COMMUNION

Gracious Lord,
in this holy sacrament
you give substance to our hope:
bring us at the last
to that fullness of life for which we long;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

