

COLLECT

Almighty God,
 who through your only-begotten Son
 Jesus Christ
 have overcome death and opened to
 us the gate of everlasting life:
 grant that, as by your grace going
 before us you put into our minds
 good desires,
 so by your continual help
 we may bring them to good effect;
 through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

(Alternative readings)
 The reading from Acts must be used
 as either the first or second reading.

Acts 7:55-end

*A reading from the Acts of the
 Apostles.*

Standing before the high priest and
 the council, Stephen, filled with the
 Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and
 saw the glory of God and Jesus
 standing at the right hand of God.
 "Look," he said, "I see the heavens
 opened and the Son of Man standing
 at the right hand of God!" But they
 covered their ears, and with a loud
 shout all rushed together against
 him. Then they dragged him out of
 the city and began to stone him; and
 the witnesses laid their coats at the
 feet of a young man named Saul.
 While they were stoning Stephen,
 he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my
 spirit." Then he knelt down and cried
 out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not
 hold this sin against them." When he
 had said this, he died.

Or Genesis 8:1-19

PSALM Psalm 31:1-5. 15-16
 (or 31:1-5)

R *Into your hands I commend my
 spirit, for you have redeemed me,
 O Lord God of truth.*

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
 let me never be put to shame;
 deliver me in your righteousness.
 Incline your ear to me;

make haste to deliver me.
 Be my strong rock, a fortress to save
 me, for you are my rock and my
 stronghold;
 guide me, and lead me for your
 name's sake. **R**

Take me out of the net
 that they have laid secretly for me,
 for you are my strength.
 Into your hands I commend my spirit,
 for you have redeemed me, O Lord
 God of truth. **R**

SECOND READING

(Alternative readings)
Either 1 Peter 2:2-10

*A reading from the first letter of
 Peter.*

Like newborn infants, long for the
 pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you
 may grow into salvation – if indeed
 you have tasted that the Lord is
 good. Come to him, a living stone,
 though rejected by mortals yet
 chosen and precious in God's sight.
 Like living stones, let yourselves be
 built into a spiritual house, to be a
 holy priesthood, to offer spiritual
 sacrifices acceptable to God through
 Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:
 "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a
 cornerstone chosen and precious;
 and whoever believes in him will not
 be put to shame." To you then who
 believe, he is precious; but for those
 who do not believe, "The stone that
 the builders rejected has become the
 very head of the corner," and
 "A stone that makes them stumble,
 and a rock that makes them fall."
 They stumble because they disobey
 the word, as they were destined to
 do. But you are a chosen race, a
 royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's
 own people, in order that you may
 proclaim the mighty acts of him who
 called you out of darkness into his
 marvellous light. Once you were
 not a people, but now you are
 God's people; once you had not
 received mercy, but now you have
 received mercy.

Or Acts 7:55-end (as above)

GOSPEL John 14:1-14

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus
 Christ according to John.*

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not
 let your hearts be troubled. Believe in
 God, believe also in me. In my Father's
 house there are many dwelling-places.
 If it were not so, would I have told you
 that I go to prepare a place for you?
 And if I go and prepare a place for
 you, I will come again and will take you
 to myself, so that where I am, there
 you may be also. And you know the
 way to the place where I am going."
 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do
 not know where you are going. How
 can we know the way?" Jesus said to
 him, "I am the way, and the truth, and
 the life. No one comes to the Father
 except through me. If you know me,
 you will know my Father also. From
 now on you do know him and have
 seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord,
 show us the Father, and we will be
 satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I
 been with you all this time, Philip, and
 you still do not know me? Whoever
 has seen me has seen the Father. How
 can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do
 you not believe that I am in the Father
 and the Father is in me? The words
 that I say to you I do not speak on my
 own; but the Father who dwells in me
 does his works. Believe me that I am in
 the Father and the Father is in me; but
 if you do not, then believe me because
 of the works themselves. Very truly, I
 tell you, the one who believes in me
 will also do the works that I do and, in
 fact, will do greater works than these,
 because I am going to the Father. I
 will do whatever you ask in my name,
 so that the Father may be glorified in
 the Son. If in my name you ask me for
 anything, I will do it."

POST COMMUNION

Eternal God,
 whose Son Jesus Christ is the way,
 the truth, and the life:
 grant us to walk in his way,
 to rejoice in his truth,
 and to share his risen life;
 who is alive and reigns, now and for
 ever.

