

The Saint Bede's Breviary: Companions of St. Luke Edition

Vespers for Wednesday after Christmas

THE HOLY INNOCENTS *(transferred)*

Opening Sentence

Yours is the day, O God, yours also the night; you established the moon and the sun. You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter. *Psalm 74:15,16*

The Invitatory and Psalter

V: O God, make speed to save us.

R: O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Alleluia

O Gracious Light *Phos hilaron*

O gracious Light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

The Psalm or Psalms Appointed

Psalm 116 *Dilexi, quoniam*

O LORD, *I am your servant; I am your servant and the child of your handmaid, hallelujah.*

¹ I love the LORD, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.

² The cords of death entangled me; the grip of the grave took hold of me; *
I came to grief and sorrow.

³ Then I called upon the Name of the LORD: *
"O LORD, I pray you, save my life."

⁴ Gracious is the LORD and righteous; *
our God is full of compassion.

⁵ The LORD watches over the innocent; *
I was brought very low, and he helped me.

⁶ Turn again to your rest, O my soul. *
for the LORD has treated you well.

⁷ For you have rescued my life from death, *
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.

⁸ I will walk in the presence of the LORD *
in the land of the living.

⁹ I believed, even when I said, "I have been brought very low." *
In my distress I said, "No one can be trusted."

¹⁰ How shall I repay the LORD *
for all the good things he has done for me?

¹¹ I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the LORD.

¹² I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *
in the presence of all his people.

¹³ Precious in the sight of the LORD *
is the death of his servants.

¹⁴ O LORD, I am your servant; *
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

¹⁵ I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and call upon the Name of the LORD.

¹⁶ I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *
in the presence of all his people,

¹⁷ In the courts of the LORD'S house, *
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

O LORD, *I am your servant; I am your servant and the child of your handmaid, hallelujah.*

Psalm 98 *Cantate Domino*

Jerusalem, rejoice with great rejoicing; for your Savior comes to you.

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song, *
for he has done marvelous things.

² With his right hand and his holy arm *
has he won for himself the victory.

³ The LORD has made known his victory; *
his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.

⁴ He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, *
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

⁵ Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; *
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.

⁶ Sing to the LORD with the harp, *
with the harp and the voice of song.

⁷ With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
shout with joy before the King, the LORD.

⁸ Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *
the lands and those who dwell therein.

⁹ Let the rivers clap their hands, *
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, when he comes to judge the earth.

¹⁰ In righteousness shall he judge the world *
and the peoples with equity.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Jerusalem, rejoice with great rejoicing; for your Savior comes to you.

Psalm 120 *Ad Dominum*

A child has been born for us and he is named Prince of Peace, hallelujah.

¹ When I was in trouble, I called to the LORD; *
I called to the LORD, and he answered me.

² Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips *
and from the deceitful tongue.

³ What shall be done to you, and what more besides, *
O you deceitful tongue?

⁴ The sharpened arrows of a warrior, *
along with hot glowing coals.

⁵ How hateful it is that I must lodge in Meshech *
and dwell among the tents of Kedar!
⁶ Too long have I had to live *
among the enemies of peace.
⁷ I am on the side of peace, *
but when I speak of it, they are for war.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

A child has been born for us and he is named Prince of Peace, hallelujah.

The Lessons

A reading from 'Matthew 2:13-18 (NRSV)'

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son." When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

Here ends the Reading.

The Song of Mary *Magnificat* *Luke 1:46-55*

When you were born of the Virgin, then were the Scriptures fulfilled: you came down like a gentle rain upon a woolen fleece to bring salvation to all people. We praise you, O God.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in you, O God my Savior, *
for you have looked with favor on your lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your name.

You have mercy on those who fear you *
from generation to generation.
You have shown strength with your arm *
and scattered the proud in their conceit,
Casting down the mighty from their thrones *
and lifting up the lowly.
You have filled the hungry with good things *
and sent the rich away empty.
You have come to the help of your servant Israel, *
for you have remembered your promise of mercy, The promise made to our forebears, *
to Abraham and his children for ever

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

When you were born of the Virgin, then were the Scriptures fulfilled: you came down like a gentle rain upon a woolen fleece to bring salvation to all people. We praise you, O God.

The Prayers

V: The Lord be with you.

R: *And also with you.*

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. *Amen.*

Suffrages B

That this evening may be holy, good, and peaceful,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That your holy angels may lead us in paths of peace and goodwill,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be pardoned and forgiven for our sins and offenses,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That there may be peace to your Church and to the whole world,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may depart this life in your faith and fear,
and not be condemned before the great judgment seat of Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in
the communion of [the glorious and ever-blessed Virgin Mary,
St. Michael the Defender, _____ and] all your saints,
entrusting one another and all our life to Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

Collect of the Day

We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Commemoration of First Sunday after Christmas

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

A Collect for Protection

O God, the life of all who live, the light of the faithful, the strength of those who labor, and the repose of the dead: We thank you for the blessings of the day that is past, and humbly ask for your protection through the coming night. Bring us in safety to the morning hours; through him who died and rose again for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Prayer for Mission

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. **Amen.**

[\[Include authorized intercessions or thanksgivings~opens new window\]](#)

Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. ***Amen.***

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus forever and ever. ***Amen.***

Ephesians 3:20

The Angelus

The Angel of the Lord announced to Mary

And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord

Be it unto me according to your word

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

And the Word was made flesh.

And dwelled among us.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R: *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

Let us pray:

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***