

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

## Vespers for Thursday after Ash Wednesday

(Thursday after Ash Wednesday)

Commemoration of Polycarp of Smyrna, Bishop and Martyr, 156

### Opening Sentence

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel; my heart teaches me, night after night. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not fall. *Psalm 16:7,8*

### The Invitatory

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 for ever. Amen.

**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 Psalms Appointed

### Psalm 124 *Nisi quia Dominus*

*I looked but there was no help; so my own arm brought me victory.*

- <sup>1</sup> If the LORD had not been on our side, \*  
let Israel now say;
- <sup>2</sup> If the LORD had not been on our side, \*  
when enemies rose up against us;
- <sup>3</sup> Then would they have swallowed us up alive \*  
in their fierce anger toward us;
- <sup>4</sup> Then would the waters have overwhelmed us \*  
and the torrent gone over us;
- <sup>5</sup> Then would the raging waters \*  
have gone right over us.
- <sup>6</sup> Blessed be the LORD! \*  
he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.
- <sup>7</sup> We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; \*  
the snare is broken, and we have escaped.
- <sup>8</sup> Our help is in the Name of the LORD, \*  
the maker of heaven and earth.

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

*I looked but there was no help; so my own arm brought me victory.*

### Psalm 136 *Confitemini*

*Give thanks to the Lord who does great wonders; for his mercy endures for ever.*

- <sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever.

- <sup>2</sup> Give thanks to the God of gods, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever.
- <sup>3</sup> Give thanks to the Lord of lords, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever.
- <sup>4</sup> Who only does great wonders, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>5</sup> Who by wisdom made the heavens, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>6</sup> Who spread out the earth upon the waters, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>7</sup> Who created great lights, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>8</sup> The sun to rule the day, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>9</sup> The moon and the stars to govern the night, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever.
- <sup>10</sup> Who struck down the firstborn of Egypt, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>11</sup> And brought out Israel from among them, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>12</sup> With a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>13</sup> Who divided the Red Sea in two, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>14</sup> And made Israel to pass through the midst of it, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>15</sup> But swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>16</sup> Who led his people through the wilderness, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever.
- <sup>17</sup> Who struck down great kings, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- <sup>18</sup> And slew mighty kings, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;

- 19 Sihon, king of the Amorites, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- 20 And Og, the king of Bashan, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- 21 And gave away their lands for an inheritance, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- 22 An inheritance for Israel his servant, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever.
- 23 Who remembered us in our low estate, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- 24 And delivered us from our enemies, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever;
- 25 Who gives food to all creatures, \*  
for his mercy endures for ever.
- 26 Give thanks to the God of heaven, \*  
for his mercy endures 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 for ever. Amen.

*Give thanks to the Lord who does great wonders; for his mercy endures for ever.*

**Psalm 31** *In te, Domine, speravi*

*Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me.*

- 1 In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; \*  
deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; \*  
make haste to deliver me.
- 3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; \*  
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me.
- 4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, \*  
for you are my tower of strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, \*  
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, O God of truth.

<sup>6</sup> I hate those who cling to worthless idols, \*  
and I put my trust in the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> I will rejoice and be glad because of your mercy; \*  
for you have seen my affliction; you know my distress.

<sup>8</sup> You have not shut me up in the power of the enemy; \*  
you have set my feet in an open place.

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

*Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me.*

## The Lessons

A reading from 'John 1:29-34 (NRSV)'

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."

Here ends the Reading.

The Song of Mary Magnificat Luke 1:46-55

*God is always looking at you from heaven, that your actions are everywhere visible to the divine eyes and are constantly being reported to God by the Angels.*

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 for ever. Amen.

*God is always looking at you from heaven, that your actions are everywhere visible to the divine eyes and are constantly being reported to God by the Angels.*

## 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 for ever. 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*

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in  
all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, by your mercy,  
obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

### *Commemoration of Polycarp of Smyrna, Bishop and Martyr, 156*

If any would come after me, let them deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me.

V. The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree.

**R. And shall spread abroad like a cedar in Lebanon.**

O God, the maker of heaven and earth, you gave your venerable servant, the holy and gentle Polycarp, the  
boldness to confess Jesus Christ as King and Savior and the steadfastness to die for his faith: Give us grace,  
following his example, to share the cup of Christ and to rise to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who  
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### *A Prayer of Self-Dedication*

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our  
wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray you, as you will, and always  
to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

### *Prayer for Mission*

O God and Father of all, whom the whole heavens adore: Let the whole earth also worship you, all nations obey  
you, all tongues confess and bless you, and men and women everywhere love you and serve you in peace; through  
Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Pause and add prayers for healing, and intercessory and thanksgiving prayers here.*

### *A 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 for ever 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.*

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