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

Vespers for Eve of the Ascension

(Eve of the Ascension)

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

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.

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 Psalms Appointed

Psalm 127 *Nisi Dominus*

Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's, hallelujah.

- ¹ Unless the LORD builds the house, *
their labor is in vain who build it.
- ² Unless the LORD watches over the city, *
in vain the watchman keeps his vigil.
- ³ It is in vain that you rise so early and go to bed so late; *
vain, too, to eat the bread of toil, for he gives to his beloved sleep.
- ⁴ Children are a heritage from the LORD, *
and the fruit of the womb is a gift.
- ⁵ Like arrows in the hand of a warrior *
are the children of one's youth.
- ⁶ Blessed is the man who has his quiver full of them! *
he shall not be put to shame when he contends with his enemies in the gate.

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.

Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's, hallelujah.

Psalm 50 *Deus deorum*

Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good your vows to the Most High, hallelujah.

- ¹ The LORD, the God of gods, has spoken; *
he has called the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.
- ² Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty, *
God reveals himself in glory.
- ³ Our God will come and will not keep silence; *
before him there is a consuming flame, and round about him a raging storm.

- 4 He calls the heavens and the earth from above *
to witness the judgment of his people.
- 5 Gather before me my loyal followers, *
those who have made a covenant with me and sealed it with sacrifice.
- 6 Let the heavens declare the rightness of his cause; *
for God himself is judge.
- 7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak: "O Israel, I will bear witness against you; *
for I am God, your God.
- 8 I do not accuse you because of your sacrifices; *
your offerings are always before me.
- 9 I will take no bull-calf from your stalls, *
nor he-goats out of your pens;
- 10 For all the beasts of the forest are mine, *
the herds in their thousands upon the hills.
- 11 I know every bird in the sky, *
and the creatures of the fields are in my sight.
- 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you, *
for the whole world is mine and all that is in it.
- 13 Do you think I eat the flesh of bulls, *
or drink the blood of goats?
- 14 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and make good your vows to the Most High.
- 15 Call upon me in the day of trouble; *
I will deliver you, and you shall honor me."
- 16 But to the wicked God says: *
"Why do you recite my statutes, and take my covenant upon your lips;
- 17 Since you refuse discipline, *
and toss my words behind your back?
- 18 When you see a thief, you make him your friend, *
and you cast in your lot with adulterers.
- 19 You have loosed your lips for evil, *
and harnessed your tongue to a lie.
- 20 You are always speaking evil of your brother *
and slandering your own mother's son.

21 These things you have done, and I kept still, *
and you thought that I am like you."

22 I have made my accusation; *
I have put my case in order before your eyes.

23 Consider this well, you who forget God, *
lest I rend you and there be none to deliver you.

24 Whoever offers me the sacrifice of thanksgiving honors me; *
but to those who keep in my way will I show the salvation of God."

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.

Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good your vows to the Most High, hallelujah.

Psalm 1 *Beatus vir qui non abiit*

The Lord knows the way of the righteous, hallelujah!

1 Blessed are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, *
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

2 Their delight is in the law of the LORD, *
and they meditate on his law day and night.

3 They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; *
everything they do shall prosper.

4 It is not so with the wicked; *
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.

5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, *
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, *
but the way of the wicked is doomed.

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.

The Lord knows the way of the righteous, hallelujah!

The Lessons

A reading from 'Revelation 5:1-14 (NRSV)'

Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth." Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, singing with full voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, "To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Here ends the Reading.

The Song of Mary Magnificat Luke 1:46-55

Make fast with bonds of peace the unity the Spirit gives. There is one Body and one Spirit, hallelujah.

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

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, * for he has remembered his promise of mercy, The promise he made to our fathers, *
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.

Make fast with bonds of peace the unity the Spirit gives. There is one Body and one Spirit, hallelujah.

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 A

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;

R. And grant us your salvation.

V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

R. Let your people sing with joy.

V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

R. For only in you can we live in safety.

V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;

R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

V. Let your way be known upon earth;

R. Your saving health among all nations.

V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;

R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things: Mercifully give us faith to perceive that, according to his promise, he abides with his Church on earth, even

to the end of the ages; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. 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.

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. Alleluia, alleluia

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia

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*

Regina Caeli

O Queen of heaven, be joyful : *Alleluia*

For he who was born of your body : *Alleluia*

Has arisen as he promised : *Alleluia*

Pray for us to the Father : *Alleluia*

V: Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia.

R: *For the Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia.*

Let us pray:

O God, who by the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ gave gladness to the world: Grant, we pray, that we, aided by the prayers of the Virgin Mary his mother, may attain to the joys of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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