

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.
O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of mercy to all who call to you.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

God of might, giver of every good gift,
put into our hearts the love of your name,
so that, by deepening our sense of reverence,
you may nurture in us what is good
and, by your watchful care,
keep safe what you have nurtured.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 20:7-9

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah.
You have seduced me, Lord, and I have let
myself be seduced;
you have overpowered me: you were the
stronger.
I am a daily laughing-stock,
everybody's butt.
Each time I speak the word, I have to howl
and proclaim: "Violence and ruin!"
The word of the Lord has meant for me
insult, derision, all day long.
I used to say, "I will not think about him,
I will not speak in his name any more."
Then there seemed to be a fire burning in
my heart,
imprisoned in my bones.
The effort to restrain it wearied me,
I could not bear it.
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 62

Response:
For you my soul is thirsting,
O Lord my God.

- O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.
My body pines for you
like a dry, weary land without water. (R.)

- So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.
For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise. (R.)
- So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy. (R.)
- For you have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast. (R.)

SECOND READING

Romans 12:1-2

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and
worship him, I beg you, in a way that is
worthy of thinking beings, by offering
your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly
pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on
the behaviour of the world around you, but
let your behaviour change, modelled by your
new mind. This is the only way to discover
the will of God and know what is good, what
it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing
to do.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
enlighten the eyes of our mind,
so that we can see
what hope his call holds for us.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 16:21-27

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples
that he was destined to go to Jerusalem
and suffer grievously at the hands of the
elders and chief priests and scribes, to be
put to death and to be raised up on the third
day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started
to remonstrate with him. "Heaven preserve
you, Lord," he said. "This must not happen
to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get
behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my
path, because the way you think is not God's
way but man's."

Then Jesus said to his disciples. "If anyone
wants to be a follower of mine, let him
renounce himself and take up his cross and
follow me. For anyone who wants to save his
life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life
for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man
gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his
life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange
for his life?

"For the Son of Man is going to come
in the glory of his Father with his angels,
and, when he does, he will reward each one
according to his behaviour."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this sacred offering, O Lord,
confer on us always the blessing of salvation,
that what it celebrates in mystery
it may accomplish in power.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

How great is the goodness, Lord,
that you keep for those who fear you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed by this bread from the heavenly
table,
we beseech you, Lord,
that, being the food of charity,
it may confirm our hearts
and stir us to serve you in our neighbour.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Statue of St. Peter with the key before the cathedral of San Pietro, Vatican City

A person's fortunes may change very quickly. They may lose their job unexpectedly or suddenly discover they have a serious illness which requires immediate and drastic treatment and their life is turned upside down.

Peter the apostle probably felt much the same way: one minute Jesus is praising him as someone to whom God has revealed Jesus' true identity as the Christ, the Son of the living God, the next he is being scolded for getting the idea of Jesus' future suffering completely wrong. From being the Rock on whom Jesus will build his Church, Peter is now the stone which will cause people to trip and fall. Peter may well say, God forbid that this happen to you, Lord! But Jesus tells him that this is in fact God's will.

Several times in the gospel tradition we find teaching on taking up the cross and following Jesus. To follow means to be a disciple. We know (and most probably hope) that being a disciple will not mean that we will suffer martyrdom like Jesus or Peter or those who have literally given their lives for their faith in our lifetime. But to be a disciple means living by the teachings of Jesus, and this will cost us: discipleship will make demands on the way we live, the way we treat people and the way we conduct our affairs. Sometimes this will feel like a crucifixion. Peter tried to divert Jesus from the path that would lead to Jerusalem and the cross. He did this out of the best of intentions, not wanting his friend and master to get into trouble, to put himself in a situation which would inevitably lead to his death. But this was the cost to Jesus of being faithful to his mission. Our daily cross is to be faithful to ours, and sometimes it is harder to be faithful in the little things than to perform one heroic (and perhaps spectacular) action. ■

SAY

**For you my soul is thirsting,
O Lord my God.**

DO

If we think about Jesus being tested *rather than being* tempted, we might gain a different perspective on our efforts to be truly his disciples. It is not a question of *What should I do?* So much as *What kind of person am I?* Keep that in mind next time.

PETER'S FORTUNE

REFLECT

Jesus calls Peter Satan. This is because Peter is acting in exactly the same way in which Matthew presents the devil in the scene at the beginning of the gospel narrative which we usually call the Temptations. There, the devil is trying to divert Jesus from being the Son of God in the true way which will eventually lead to the cross, but to take the easier way of becoming the kind of Messiah whom the people could easily recognise and rally around. There Jesus resists, using more or less the same expression we hear today: *Go away, Satan!*

In one sense, it would be easy enough for Jesus to resist the suggestions of the devil in that episode: it is clear that he (and we) know who it is that he is dealing with. Here, the text is much more subtle. The devil is acting out of malice: Peter is acting out of love and affection, but the result will be the same, the end of Jesus being truly the Son of the living God. ■

LEARN

The devil, or Satan, is not a major figure in the bible.

As far as the biblical writers are concerned, human beings are perfectly capable of messing up their own lives without interference from any outside agency or being.

Peter, the leader of the Twelve, is a fallible human being.

The Pharisees are not mentioned among the opponents of Jesus in the gospel today or in the Passion Narrative.