

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

Let my prayer come into your presence.  
Incline your ear to my cry for help, O Lord.

**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**

Almighty and merciful God,  
graciously keep from us all adversity,  
so that, unhindered in mind and body alike,  
we may pursue in freedom of heart  
the things that are yours.  
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 2 Maccbees 7:1-29-14**

A reading from the second book of  
Maccabees.

There were seven brothers who were  
arrested with their mother. The king tried to  
force them to taste pig's flesh, which the Law  
forbids, by torturing them with whips and  
scourges. One of them, acting as spokesman  
for the others, said, "What are you trying  
to find out from us? We are prepared to die  
rather than break the Law of our ancestors."

With his last breath the second brother  
exclaimed, "Inhuman fiend, you may  
discharge us from this present life, but the  
King of the world will raise us up, since it  
is for his laws that we die, to live again for  
ever."

After him, they amused themselves with  
the third, who on being asked for his tongue  
promptly thrust it out and boldly held out  
his hands, with these honourable words, "It  
was heaven that gave me these limbs; for  
the sake of his laws I disdain them; from him  
I hope to receive them again." The king and  
his attendants were astounded at the young  
man's courage and his utter indifference to  
suffering.

When this one was dead they subjected the  
fourth to the same savage torture. When he  
neared his end he cried, "Ours is the better  
choice, to meet death at men's hands, yet  
relying on God's promise that we shall be  
raised up by him; whereas for you there can  
be no resurrection, no new life."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 16

Response:

**I shall be filled, when I awake,  
with the sight of your glory, O Lord.**

1. Lord, hear a cause that is just,  
pay heed to my cry.  
Turn your ear to my prayer:  
no deceit is on my lips. (R.)
2. I kept my feet firmly in your paths;  
there was no faltering in my steps.  
I am here and I call, you will hear me,  
O God.  
Turn your ear to me; hear my words. (R.)
3. Guard me as the apple of your eye.  
Hide me in the shadow of your wings.  
As for me, in my justice I shall see your  
face  
and be filled, when I awake, with the sight  
of your glory. (R.)

**SECOND READING 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5**

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to  
the Thessalonians.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and  
God our Father who has given us his love  
and, through his grace, such inexhaustible  
comfort and such sure hope, comfort you and  
strengthen you in everything good that you  
do or say.

Finally, brothers, pray for us; pray that the  
Lord's message may spread quickly, and be  
received with honour as it was among you;  
and pray that we may be preserved from the  
interference of bigoted and evil people, for  
faith is not given to everyone. But the Lord  
is faithful, and he will give you strength and  
guard you from the evil one, and we, in the  
Lord, have every confidence that you are  
doing and will go on doing all that we tell  
you. May the Lord turn your hearts towards  
the love of God and the fortitude of Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Stay awake, praying at all times  
for the strength to stand with confidence  
before the Son of Man.**

Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

Luke 20:27-38

[For short form read between >and<]

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
Luke.

>Some Sadducees – those who say that  
there is no resurrection – approached Jesus  
and they put this question to him, < "Master,  
we have it from Moses in writing, that if a  
man's married brother dies childless, the man  
must marry the widow to raise up children  
for his brother. Well, then, there were seven  
brothers. The first, having married a wife,  
died childless. The second and then the  
third married the widow. And the same with  
all seven, they died leaving no children.  
Finally the woman herself died. Now, at  
the resurrection, to which of them will she  
be wife since she had been married to all  
seven?"

>Jesus replied, "The children of this world  
take wives and husbands, but those who are  
judged worthy of a place in the other world  
and in the resurrection from the dead do not  
marry because they can no longer die, for

they are the same as the angels, and being  
children of the resurrection they are sons  
of God. And Moses himself implies that the  
dead rise again, in the passage about the  
bush where he calls the Lord the God of  
Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of  
Jacob. Now he is God, not of the dead, but of  
the living; for to him all are in fact alive."

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**

Look with favour, we pray, O Lord,  
upon the sacrificial gifts offered here,  
that, celebrating in mystery the Passion of  
your Son,  
we may honour it with loving devotion.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I  
shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures where he  
gives me repose,  
near restful waters he leads me.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by this sacred gift, O Lord,  
we give you thanks and beseech your mercy,  
that, by the pouring forth of your Spirit,  
the grace of integrity may endure  
in those your heavenly power has entered.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.





There was no one official set of beliefs in the time of Jesus. There were certain important differences among the religious groups, for instance, the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

In today's Gospel reading, we have an example of such a teaching, namely, the resurrection of the dead. The opponents of Jesus use a belief which they themselves do not accept, to challenge Jesus and put him on the spot. Whose wife will a woman be at the resurrection if she has been the spouse of seven brothers in turn?

If this bizarre puzzle were restricted to just two or possibly three male siblings, it would be a genuine question. In a society which had little or any idea of a meaningful existence after death, a person's survival depended on descendants carrying on their name. This was seen, not as the family surname being passed down the generations, but as the person's existence being somehow prolonged because their name was remembered by later members of their family. This was the older Jewish belief, so the Sadducees could claim that their article of faith was more traditional than the later development which the Pharisees held.

Jesus' reply includes a reference to another disputed question, that of the existence of angels. He implies that life in the resurrection is of a different order to present existence, but it is God who is the giver of both. The point about angels may well be that since they have no possibility of producing offspring, there will be no need for marriage. His opponents began by appealing to Moses, the great figure in Torah thought: Jesus answers them by quoting from the same source. His reasoning may not seem convincing to us, but according to the rules of argument of the time, it is enough to answer the Sadducees. ■

#### SAY

**Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life**

(see John 11:25)

#### REFLECT

A Jewish person recently remarked that this life is all that he has. Christians are familiar with the idea of resurrection: it is the core of our faith. The Easter proclamation is "The Lord is risen!" Baptism, the chief sacrament of initiation, means entering into the life of the risen Christ.

However, this belief in a future life can undermine our appreciation of this present one. Some people accept intolerable living conditions, hoping that they will be rewarded with some blessed state in the next. They may even be encouraged to adopt such a fatalistic attitude by powerful individuals who want to preserve their own position and power.

Another unfortunate consequence of looking to a future life beyond this one is that we may not accept that we have responsibilities for the state of our world: we may become literally otherworldly and focus on heaven rather than on earth.

Jesus tells his opponents that all people are in fact alive to God, the giver of all life. We might look at the way we live now, and try to reflect the kind of God we claim to believe in. ■

#### DO

Look at tombstones or the obituary column in a newspaper. Renew your belief in the resurrection of the dead.



#### LEARN

If a man died childless, his brother was expected to marry his widow and raise up children for him: this is known as 'levirate marriage'.

Onan's sin was that he refused his obligation to raise up children for his deceased brother.

Belief in the resurrection of the dead comes late in the Hebrew scriptures: the Pharisees believed in it, the Sadducees did not.