

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O God, come to my assistance;
O Lord, make haste to help me!
You are my rescuer, my help;
O Lord, do not delay.

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

Draw near to your servants, O Lord,
and answer their prayers with unceasing
kindness,
that, for those who glory in you as their Creator
and guide,
you may restore what you have created
and keep safe what you have restored.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Eccl 1:2, 2:21-23

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

Vanity of vanities, the Preacher says. Vanity of
vanities. All is vanity!

For so it is that a man who has laboured
wisely, skilfully and successfully must leave
what is his own to someone who has not toiled
for it at all. This, too, is vanity and great injustice;
for what does he gain for all the toil and strain
that he has undergone under the sun? What
of all his laborious days, his cares of office, his
restless nights? This, too, is vanity.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Ps 89 (90):3-6, 12-14, 17

Response:

O Lord, you have been our refuge from one
generation to the next.

1. You turn men back to dust
and say: 'Go back, sons of men.'
To your eyes a thousand years
are like yesterday, come and gone,
no more than a watch in the night. (R.)
2. You sweep men away like a dream,
like grass which springs up in the morning.
In the morning it springs up and flowers:
by evening it withers and fades. (R.)

3. Make us know the shortness of our life
that we may gain wisdom of heart.
Lord, relent! Is your anger for ever?
Show pity to your servants. (R.)
4. In the morning, fill us with your love;
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.
Let the favour of the Lord be upon us:
give success to the work of our hands. (R.)

SECOND READING

Col 3:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Colossians

Since you have been brought back to true life
with Christ, you must look for the things that are
in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right
hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things,
not on the things that are on the earth, because
you have died, and now the life you have is
hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is
revealed – and he is your life – you too will be
revealed in all your glory with him.

That is why you must kill everything in you
that belongs only to earthly life: fornication,
impurity, guilty passion, evil desires and
especially greed, which is the same thing as
worshipping a false god; and never tell each
other lies. You have stripped off your old
behaviour with your old self, and you have put
on a new self which will progress towards true
knowledge the more it is renewed in the image
of its creator; and in that image there is no
room for distinction between Greek and Jew,
between the circumcised or the uncircumcised,
or between barbarian and Scythian, slave and
free man. There is only Christ: he is everything
and he is in everything.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Your word is truth, O Lord,
consecrate us in the truth. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Lk 12:13-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Luke

A man in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Master,
tell my brother to give me a share of our
inheritance.' 'My friend,' he replied, 'who
appointed me your judge, or the arbitrator of
your claims?' Then he said to them, 'Watch, and
be on your guard against avarice of any kind,
for a man's life is not made secure by what he
owns, even when he has more than he needs.'

Then he told them a parable: 'There was once
a rich man who, having had a good harvest from
his land, thought to himself, "What am I to do? I
have not enough room to store my crops." Then
he said, "This is what I will do: I will pull down my
barns and build bigger ones, and store all my
grain and my goods in them, and I will say to my
soul: My soul, you have plenty of good things
laid by for many years to come; take things
easy, eat, drink, have a good time." But God
said to him, "Fool! This very night the demand
will be made for your soul; and this hoard of
yours, whose will it be then?" So it is when a
man stores up treasure for himself in place of
making himself rich in the sight of God.'

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

Graciously sanctify these gifts, O Lord, we pray,
and, accepting the oblation of this spiritual
sacrifice,
make of us an eternal offering to you.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

You have given us, O Lord, bread from
heaven,
endowed with all delights and sweetness in
every taste.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Accompany with constant protection, O Lord,
those you renew with these heavenly gifts
and, in your never-failing care for them,
make them worthy of eternal redemption.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GETTING OUR PRIORITIES RIGHT

LK 12:13-21

The parable of the wealthy landowner is one of the most chilling of all the parables of Jesus.

As he sees his barns unable to hold the year's bumper harvest, the landowner begins to talk to his soul or to 'think out loud.' He makes big plans for the future. He needs new barns to hold an even bigger harvest. Then, he will be able to retire, pay a steward to look after the running of the estate, and say to his soul, 'eat, drink and be merry.' Life will be good.

But he has left one vital element out of his calculations: no one knows how long a lease they have on life. This man is destined to die in the coming night, and what good will all his wealth be then?

In his greed and self-absorption, in his arrogance and complacency, the landowner had focused solely on earthly things – money, comfort, pleasure – and had forgotten about heavenly things. He had no concern for anyone or anything other than himself. He had no time for God. He failed to put God first.

The story of the rich landowner is deeply challenging. It is not a sin to be well-off or even to put one's human energies into a business that brings in a good profit. Where the moral issues arise is in the kind of stewardship we exercise over wealth. At creation, God committed the earth and its wealth to the first human beings to cultivate it and care for it. We cannot, for example, make limitless profit from the earth in a way that endangers its climate, or pay subsistence wages to sweat-shop workers in poor countries in order to pile our shop counters high with cheap goods. We cannot exploit for personal gain. Sins like these and many others can be traced back to the deadly or root sin of greed. ■

DO

Take the risk of giving – giving up, giving away. It will set you free. And you'll find that it's not just the Lord who loves the cheerful giver.

Think about your priorities. When all is said and done, what is most important to you?



SAY

"Lord, help me to work for the treasure that truly counts."

PRAY

In your prayer this week, ask the Lord to strengthen your faith so that you will see it as the greatest of all treasures.

LEARN

The Christian puts God first in everything

Greed and avarice are contrary to the Gospel

'Vanity' is a translation of the Hebrew word *hebel*, which means 'vapour' or 'breath,' i.e. something insubstantial and ephemeral, something you cannot grasp or hold onto. It's the key word in the Book of Ecclesiastes, occurring 38 times

REFLECT

How do we define success in today's world? What criteria do we commonly use? To be successful is to make it onto the Sunday Times Rich List. It is to own properties in the right places, or to feature regularly in the gossip columns and magazines that follow the lives of the rich and famous.

If we don't meet this definition of success, we can at least dream about it and work for it. We can seek to be online 'influencers.' We can buy Lottery tickets in the hope we'll strike it lucky; we can gamble on the horses; we can work 24/7 to build up our business; we can play the stock market.

All of which can be okay so long as we do not forget the point that Jesus makes in today's Gospel. There is only one prize worth going for, one treasure we must seek above all else - eternal life among the communion of saints in God's heavenly kingdom. The way we do that is to love God and neighbour and to do God's will. If we do that, then we will be rich indeed. ■