**Office of the Dead**

**The Office of Readings**

**Introduction**

O God, come to our aid.

   O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

   and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning,

   is now, and ever shall be,

   world without end.

Amen. Alleluia.

**Hymn**

Antiphon:

Keep in mind that Jesus Christ has died for us

and is risen from the dead.

He is our saving Lord,

he is joy for all ages.

If we die with the Lord,

we shall live with the Lord. (Antiphon)

If we endure with the Lord,

we shall reign with the Lord. (Antiphon)

In him all our sorrow,

in him all our joy. (Antiphon)

In him hope of glory,

in him all our love. (Antiphon)

In him our redemption,

in him all our grace. (Antiphon)

In him our salvation,

in him all our peace. (Antiphon)

**Psalmody**

Ant. 1 From the earth you formed me, with flesh you clothed me; Lord, my Redeemer, raise me up again at the last day.

**Psalm 40:2-14, 17-18**

**Thanksgiving and a prayer for help**

I

I wáited, I wáited for the Lórd †

and he stóoped down to mé; \*

he héard my crý.

He dréw me from the déadly pít, \*

from the míry clay.

He sét my féet upon a róck \*

and made my fóotsteps fírm.

He pút a new sóng into my móuth, \*

práise of our Gód.

Mány shall sée and féar \*

and shall trúst in the Lórd.

Háppy the mán who has pláced \*

his trúst in the Lórd

and has nót gone óver to the rébels \*

who fóllow false góds.

How mány, O Lórd my Gód, \*

are the wónders and desígns

that yóu have wórked for ús; \*

you háve no équal.

Shóuld I procláim and spéak of them, \*

they are móre than I can téll!

You do not ásk for sácrifice and ófferings, \*

but an ópen éar.

You do not ásk for hólocaust and víctim. \*

Instéad, here am Í.

In the scróll of the bóok it stands wrítten \*

that Í should do your wíll.

My Gód, I delíght in your láw \*

in the dépth of my héart.

Glory be 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.

Ant. From the earth you formed me, with flesh you clothed me; Lord, my Redeemer, raise me up again at the last day.

Ant. 2 Lord, may it please you to rescue me; look upon me and help me.

II

Your jústice Í have procláimed \*

in the gréat assémbly.

My líps I háve not séaled; \*

you knów it, O Lórd.

I have not hídden your jústice in my héart \*

but decláred your faithful hélp.

I have not hídden your lóve and your trúth \*

from the gréat assémbly.

O Lórd, you wíll not withhóld \*

your compássion from mé.

Your mérciful lóve and your trúth \*

will álways gúard me.

For Í am besét with évils \*

too mány to be cóunted.

My síns have fállen upón me \*

and my síght fáils me.

They are móre than the háirs of my héad \*

and my héart sínks.

O Lórd, cóme to my réscue; \*

Lord, cóme to my áid.

O lét there be rejóicing and gládness \*

for áll who séek you.

Let them éver say: ‘The Lórd is gréat’, \*

who lóve your saving hélp.

As for mé, wrétched and póor, \*

the Lórd thinks of mé.

Yóu are my réscuer, my hélp, \*

O Gód, do not deláy.

Glory be 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.

Ant. Lord, may it please you to rescue me; look upon me and help me.

Ant. 3 My soul is thirsting for the living God; when shall I see him face to face?

**Psalm 42
Longing for the Lord and his temple**

Líke the déer that yéarns \*

for rúnning stréams,

só my sóul is yéarning \*

for yóu, my Gód.

My sóul is thírsting for Gód, \*

the Gód of my lífe;

whén can I énter and sée \*

the fáce of Gód?

My téars have becóme my bréad, \*

by níght, by dáy,

as I héar it sáid all the day lóng: \*

‘Whére is your Gód?’

Thése things will Í remémber \*

as I póur out my sóul:

how I would léad the rejóicing crówd \*

into the hóuse of Gód,

amid críes of gládness and thanksgíving, \*

the thróng wild with jóy.

Whý are you cast dówn, my sóul, \*

why gróan withín me?

Hope in Gód; I will práise him stíll, \*

my sáviour and my Gód.

My sóul is cast dówn withín me \*

as I thínk of yóu,

from the cóuntry of Jórdan and Mount Hérmon, \*

from the Híll of Mízar.

Déep is cálling on déep, \*

in the róar of wáters;

your tórrents and áll your wáves \*

swept óver mé.

By dáy the Lórd will sénd \*

his lóving kíndness;

by níght I will síng to hím, \*

praise the Gód of my lífe.

I will sáy to Gód, my róck: \*

‘Whý have you forgótten me?

Whý do Í go móurning \*

oppréssed by the fóe?’

With críes that píerce me to the héart, \*

my énemies revíle me,

sáying to me áll the day lóng: \*

‘Whére is your Gód?’

Whý are you cast dówn, my sóul, \*

why gróan withín me?

Hope in Gód; I will práise him stíll, \*

my sáviour and my Gód.

Glory be 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.

Ant. My soul is thirsting for the living God; when shall I see him face to face?

Lord, countless are our mercies.

* Give me life according to your word.

**First Readings**

From the first letter of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians 15:12-34

The resurrection of Christ is the hope of the faithful

Tell me, if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how is it that some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, Christ himself has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is void of content and your faith is empty too. Indeed, we should then be exposed as false witnesses to God, for we have borne witness before him that he raised up Christ; but he certainly did not raise him up if the dead are not raised. Why? Because if the dead are not raised, than Christ was not raised, and if Christ was not raised, your faith is worthless. You are still in your sins, and those who have fallen asleep in Christ are the deadest of the dead. If our hopes in Christ are limited to this only, we are the most pitiable of men.

But as it is, Christ is now raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. Death came through a man; hence the resurrection of the dead comes through a man also. Just as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will come to life again, but each one in proper order: Christ the first fruits and then, at his coming, all those who belong to him. After that will come the end, when, after having destroyed every sovereignty, authority, and power, he will hand over the kingdom to God the Father.

Christ must reign until God has put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Scripture reads that God "has placed all things under his feet." But when it says that everything has been made subject, it is clear that he who has made everything subject to Christ is excluded. When, finally, all has been subjected to the Son, he will then subject himself to the One who made all things subject to him, so that God may be all in all.

If the dead are not raised, what about those who have themselves baptized on behalf of the dead? If the raising of the dead is not a reality, why be baptized on their behalf? And why are we continually putting ourselves in danger? I swear to you, brothers, by the very pride you take in me, which I cherish in Christ Jesus our Lord, that I face death every day. If I fought those beasts at Ephesus for purely human motives, what profit was there for me? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!" Do not be led astray any longer. "Bad company corrupts good morals." Return to reason, as you ought, and stop sinning. Some of you are quite ignorant of God; I say it to your shame.

**Responsory** 1 Cor 15:25-26; see Rev 20:13, 14

Christ must reign until God has brought all enemies under his feet.

* And the last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Then death and Sheol will give up their dead, death and Sheol will be cast into the fiery lake.

* And the last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Alternative:

From the first letter of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians 15:35-57

The resurrection of the dead and the coming of the Lord

Perhaps someone will say, “How are the dead to be raised up? What kind of body will they have?” a nonsensical question! The seed you sow does not germinate unless it dies. When you sow, you do not sow the full-blown plant, but a kernel of wheat or some other grain. God gives body to it as he pleases —to each seed its own fruition. Not all bodily nature is the same. Men have one kind of body, animals another. Birds are of their kind, fish are of theirs. There are heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies. The splendor of the heavenly bodies is one thing, that of the earthly another. The sun has a splendor of its own, so has the moon, and the stars have theirs. Even among the stars, one differs from another in brightness.

So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown in the earth is subject to decay, what rises is incorruptible. What is sown is ignoble, what rises is glorious. Weakness is sown, strength rises up. A natural body is put down and a spiritual body comes up.

If there is a natural body, be sure there is also a spiritual body. Scripture has it that Adam, the first man, became a living soul; the last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. Take note, the spiritual was not first; first came the natural and after that the spiritual.

The first man was of earth, formed from dust, the second is from heaven. Earthly men are like the man of earth, heavenly men are like the man of heaven.

Just as we resemble the man from earth, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. This is what I mean, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; no more can corruption inherit incorruption.

Now I am going to tell you a mystery. Not all of us shall fall asleep, but all of us are to be changed—in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility, this mortal body with immortality. When the corruptible frame takes on incorruptibility and the mortal immortality then will the saying of Scripture be fulfilled: “Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of the death is sin, and sin gets its power from the law. But thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Responsory** See Job 19:25, 26, 27

I know that my Redeemer lives and on the last day I shall rise again.

* In my body I shall look on God, my Savior.

I myself shall see him; my own eyes will gaze on him.

* In my body I shall look on God, my Savior.

Alternative:

From the second letter of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians 4:16 —5:10

When the body of our earthly dwelling place lies in death, we gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven

We do not lose heart, because our inner being is renewed each day even though our body is being destroyed at the same time. The present burden of our trial is light enough, and earns for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. We do not fix our gaze on what is seen but on what is unseen. What is seen is transitory; what is unseen lasts forever.

Indeed, we know that when the earthly tent in which we dwell is destroyed we have a dwelling provided for us by God, a dwelling in the heavens, not made by hands but to last forever. We groan while we are here, even as we yearn to have our heavenly habitation envelop us. This it will, provided we are found clothed and not naked. While we live in our present tent we groan; we are weighed down because we do not wish to be stripped naked but rather to have the heavenly dwelling envelop us, so that what is mortal may be absorbed by life. God has fashioned us for this very thing and has given us the Spirit as a pledge of it.

Therefore we continue to be confident. We know that while we dwell in the body we are away from the Lord. We walk by faith, not by sight. I repeat, we are full of confidence and would much rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. This being so we make it our aim to please him whether we are with him or away from him. The lives of all of us are to be revealed before the tribunal of Christ so that each one may receive his recompense, good or bad, according to his life in the body.

**Responsory**

Lord, do not judge me according to my deeds:

I have done nothing worthy in your sight:

therefore I implore you, God of majesty,

* blot out all my guilt.

Lord, wash away my iniquities, and cleanse me from my sins.

* blot out all my guilt.

**Second Readings**

From a sermon by Saint Anastasius of Antioch, bishop

(Oratio 5, de Resurrectione Christi, 6-7. 9: PG 89, 1358-1359. 1361-1362)

Christ will change our lowly body

To this end Christ died and rose to life that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. But God is not God of the dead, but of the living. That is why the dead, now under the dominion of one who has risen to life, are no longer dead but alive. Therefore life has dominion over them and, just as Christ, having been raised from the dead, will never die again, so too they will live and never fear death again. When they have been thus raised from the dead and freed from decay, they shall never again see death, for they will share in Christ's resurrection just as he himself shared in their death.

This is why Christ descended into the underworld, with its imperishable prison-bars: to shatter the doors of bronze and break the bars of iron and, from decay, to raise our life to himself by giving us freedom in place of servitude.

But if this plan does not yet appear to be perfectly realized—for men still die and bodies still decay in death—this should not occasion any loss of faith. For, in receiving the first-fruits, we have already received the pledge of all the blessings we have mentioned; with them we have reached the heights of heaven, and we have taken our place beside him who has raised us up with himself, as Paul says: In Christ God has raised us up with him, and has made us sit with him in the heavenly places.

And the fulfillment will be ours on the day predetermined by the Father, when we shall put off our childish ways and come to perfect manhood. For this is the decree of the Father of the ages: the gift, once given, is to be secure and no more to be rejected by a return to childish attitudes.

There is no need to recall that the Lord rose from the dead with a spiritual body, since Paul in speaking of our bodies bears witness that they are sown as animal bodies and raised as spiritual bodies: that is, they are transformed in accordance with the glorious transfiguration of Christ who goes before us as our leader.

The Apostle, affirming something he clearly knew, also said that this would happen to all mankind through Christ, who will change our lowly body to make it like his glorious body.

If this transformation is a change into a spiritual body and one, furthermore, like the glorious body of Christ, then Christ rose with a spiritual body, a body that was sown in dishonor, but the very body that was transformed in glory.

Having brought this body to the Father as the firstfruits of our nature, he will also bring the whole body to fulfillment. For he promised this when he said: I, when I am lifted up, will draw all men to myself.

**Responsory** Jn 5:28-29; 1 Cor 15:52

All who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God.

* those who have done good deeds will go forth to the resurrection of life;

those who have done evil will go forth to the resurrection of judgment.

In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the final trumpet blast,

the dead shall rise.

* those who have done good deeds will go forth to the resurrection of life;

Alternative:

From a letter by Saint Braulio, bishop

(Epist. 19: PL 80, 665-666)

The risen Christ is the hope of all Christians

Lazarus our friend is sleeping. In saying this, Christ who is the hope of all believers refers to the departed as those who are asleep. By no means does he regard them as dead.

Paul the apostle does not want us to grieve about those who have fallen asleep. Our faith tells us that all who believe in Christ will never die; indeed faith assures us that Christ is not dead, nor shall we die.

The Lord himself will come down from heaven and there will be the command of the archangel's voice and the sound of the trumpet; then those who were united with Christ in death will rise.

Let the hope of resurrection encourage us, then, because we shall see again those whom we lose here below. Of course, we must continue to believe firmly in Christ; we must continue to obey his commandments. His power is so great that it is easier for him to raise the dead to life than it is for us to arouse those who are sleeping. As we are saying all these things some unknown feeling causes us to burst into tears; some hidden feeling discourages the mind which tries to trust and to hope. Such is the sad human condition; without Christ all of life is utter emptiness.

O death! You separate those who are joined to each other in marriage. You harshly and cruelly divide those whom friendship unites. But your power is broken. Your heinous yoke has been destroyed by the One who sternly threatened you when Hosea cried out: O Death! I shall be your death. And with the words of the Apostle we, too, deride you: O death! Where is your victory? O death! Where is your sting!

Your conqueror redeemed us. He handed himself over to wicked men so that he could transform the wicked into persons who were truly dear to him. It would take too long to narrate all the consolations intended for our benefit in the Scriptures. But by focusing our attention upon the glory of our Redeemer there is sufficient hope for our resurrection. Through faith we know that we are already risen from the dead. The Apostle writes: If we have died with Christ, we believe that we are at the same time living with him.

We do not really belong to ourselves; we belong to the One who redeemed us. Our will should always depend on his. For this reason we say in the Lord's Prayer: Your will be done. Confronted with death, the sentiments of Job should be our own: The Lord gave and the Lord took away. May his name be blessed! Let us repeat here and now what Job said, lest we turn out to be unlike him, when our time comes.

**Responsory** 1 Th 4:13-14; Jer 22:10

Concerning those who are asleep, do not be sad like men who have no hope;

* for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,

God will bring forth with Jesus all who have fallen asleep believing in him.

Do not weep for the dead,

do not mourn them with tears.

* for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,

God will bring forth with Jesus all who have fallen asleep believing in him.

**Prayer**

Listen kindly to our prayers, O Lord,

and, as our faith in your Son,

raised from the dead, is deepened,

so may our hope of resurrection for your departed servants

also find new strength.

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.

**Dismissal**

Let us praise the Lord.

* And give him thanks.

English translation of the Liturgy of Hours, Catholic Book Publishing Co., New York, 1975

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