

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O Lord, I trust in your merciful love.
My heart will rejoice in your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful
with me.

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

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, always pondering spiritual things,
we may carry out in both word and deed
that which is pleasing to you.
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 1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

So in the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him.

Then Abishai said to David, "Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike him twice." David answered Abishai, "Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and be without guilt?" David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one saw, no one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.

David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. David then called out, "Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 102

Response:

The Lord is compassion and love.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. (R.)
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and
compassion. (R.)
3. The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. (R.)
4. As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins.
As a father has compassion on his sons,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him.
(R.)

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 15:45-49

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

The first man, Adam, as scripture says,
became a living soul; but the last Adam has
become a life-giving spirit. That is, first the
one with the soul, not the spirit, and after
that, the one with the spirit. The first man,
being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the
second man is from heaven. As this earthly
man was, so are we on earth; and as the
heavenly man is, so are we in heaven. And
we, who have been modelled on the earthly
man, will be modelled on the heavenly man.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Open our heart, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 6:27-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus said to his disciples: "I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

"Be compassionate as your Father is

compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back."

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

As we celebrate your mysteries, O Lord,
with the observance that is your due,
we humbly ask you,
that what we offer to the honour of your
majesty
may profit us for salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

I will recount all your wonders,
I will rejoice in you and be glad,
and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that we may experience the effects of the
salvation
which is pledged to us by these mysteries.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



**COMPASSION
IS THE KEY**
(LUKE 6:27-38)

At the end of his version of the Beatitudes, Luke spoke about how the disciples should be glad when other people abuse them; in today's Gospel passage he shows Jesus telling them how to react in such cases.

The law of love is to be the bedrock of the disciples' moral code. This standard goes way beyond what might be expected; it is in fact rooted in the love of God towards human beings, the Lord who is "kind to the ungrateful and the wicked". It is not a case of virtue being its own reward; the disciples' reward will lie in thus being truly "children of the Most High", who reflect in their own lives, attitude and behaviour what the God in whom they believe is like.

Jesus tells his listeners to be "compassionate as your Father is compassionate". If they do not judge others, then God will not judge them. So it is we who set the standard for God's treatment of ourselves. If we are compassionate, if we feel involved in some way in the other person's situation and treat them accordingly, then God will be astonishingly generous towards us. What shopkeeper or merchant would force an overflowing amount of their stock on a bewildered customer? Yet that is the image Jesus gives of God's reaction to the person who forgives and refuses to judge or condemn others. The way the disciple treats others is the measure by which God will treat them. ■

REFLECT

Not many people will find today's Gospel reading comfortable. The usual standard, known as the 'Golden Rule' – 'Treat others as you would like them to treat you' – which we find in this extract, appears rather easier and more palatable than the demanding teaching of Jesus about loving enemies and doing good to those who hate you. Humanly speaking, that seems unreasonable.

But God and God's attitude are the norm by which we should gauge our own attitude and treatment of people. This is part of the covenant relationship which is summed up in the expression, "You will be my people and I will be your God". This relationship is not something abstract, it has to be lived out. The reason for the prophets' denouncing of the people's immoral behaviour was that it brought the Lord into disrepute among the heathen nations round about. The non-Israelite population would think, 'If this is how the people of Israel behave, what sort of God can they believe in?' It is the familiar problem about disciples not showing by their own lives the kind of Master they claim to follow. If we believe in an over-generous, loving and forgiving God, then that is the benchmark by which we should measure ourselves. The motive for living a moral life, then, would be gratitude for what God has done for us in history, on God's own initiative, in the person of Jesus, and which we celebrate in the Eucharist. ■

SAY

The Lord is compassion and love.

LEARN

The expression "Do not judge and you will not be judged" actually means "Do not judge and God will not judge you".

The idea of our setting the standard for God to judge us is found in the 'Our Father': "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" means "Forgive us to the same extent as we forgive others".

The teaching about loving enemies is shown in action by Jesus' praying for forgiveness for his executioners at the cross.

DO

Look at the news: how much of the trouble and strife is due to people being unwilling to forgive? Ask the Lord to help you not to add to the sum total of the negative atmosphere in the world and to contribute to the positive aspects of life.

