

The Readings for Great Lent
of the
Coptic Rite

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GREAT LENT

The Fast and Feast of Nineveh

Monday of the Fast of Nineveh

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 94:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

O come, let us rejoice in the Lord;
let us shout for joy to God our Saviour!
Let us come before His face with confession,
and shout for joy to Him with psalms.

Alleluia.

Luke 13:1-5

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

At that time, some [Jews] were present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no,

but unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way! Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell. Do you think that they were worse offenders than all those who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but, unless you repent, you will all perish as they did!" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Jonas 1:1-2:1

From the book of Jonas the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonas the son of Amathi, saying, "Arise, and go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach in it; for the cry of its wickedness has come up to me." But Jonas rose up to flee to Tharsis from the presence of the Lord. So he went

down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tharsis, and he paid his fare, and went on board to sail with them to Tharsis, away from the presence of the Lord.

But the Lord raised up a wind on the sea, and there was a great storm

on the sea, and the ship was in danger of breaking up. And the mariners were afraid and cried out, each one to his god. And they cast out the cargo of the ship into the sea, to be lightened of it. But Jonas had gone below into the hold of the ship, and was asleep, and snoring. And the captain came to him, and said to him, "Why are you snoring? Get up and call upon your God, that God may deliver us, so we do not perish."

And each man said to his neighbour, "Come, let us cast lots and find out for on whose account this calamity is upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonas. And they said to him, "Tell us, why is this calamity upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? And from what country and people are you?" And he said to them, "I am a servant of the Lord, and I worship the Lord, God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry *land*." Then the men feared greatly, and said to him, "What is this *that* you have done?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

And they said to him, "What should we do to you, so that the sea will calm itself for us?" For the sea continued to be tempestuous, and the waves rose up even higher. And Jonas said to them, "Pick me up, and throw me into the sea, and the sea will become calm to you, for I know that this great tempest is upon you because of me." And the men tried hard to return to land, and were not able, for the sea rose and grew even more tempestuous against them. And they cried out to the Lord, and said, "No way, O Lord, do not let us perish on account of this man's life, and do not bring righteous blood upon us, for You, O Lord, have done as You have willed." So they took Jonas, and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. And the men feared the Lord very greatly, and offered a sacrifice to the Lord, and vowed vows. Now the Lord had commanded a great sea creature to swallow Jonas, and Jonas was in the belly of the sea creature three days and three nights.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 102:1, 8

A Psalm of David.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.
The Lord is compassionate and merciful,
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
Alleluia.

Matthew 7:6-12

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Do not give what is holy to the dogs and do not throw your pearls before pigs, for fear that they might trample them under their feet, and then turn [against you] and tear you to pieces.

Ask, and it will be given you! Seek, and you will find! Knock, and it will be opened for you! For everyone who asks receives. He who seeks finds. To the one who knocks it will be opened. Who is there among you, who, if his

son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, who will give him a snake? If you then who are evil [still] know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! Therefore, whatever you desire other people to do for you, you shall also do for them! This is the law and the prophets. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 6:17-23

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But thanks be to God, that, although you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed. Having been released from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. Indeed, as you used to offer your members as servants of uncleanness and everincreasing wickedness, now offer your members as servants of righteousness for sanctification. For when you were

servants of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you obtain at that time by those things which now shame you? The end result of those things is death! But now, being made free from sin and having become servants of God,

you have your fruit of sanctification, and the result of eternal life. The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

Jude 1:1-13

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher Jude. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: May mercy, peace and love be multiplied to you.

Beloved, while I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I felt it needful to write to you in order to encourage you to fight hard for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For there are certain men who have secretly crept in, people whose condemnation was announced long ago. They are ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into indecency and they deny our only Master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Even though you already know this, I wish to remind you that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, later on destroyed those who did not believe! The angels who did not keep their first domain but deserted their own dwelling place, he has also kept in darkness and

eternal chains for the judgment of the great day. Likewise, Sodom, Gomorrah and the cities around them had given themselves over to sexual immorality and unnatural relations in the same way as these angels. They are presented as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire. Yet, these people do the same thing: in their delusion, they degrade the flesh, despise authority, and slander the glorious beings. But the archangel Michael, when he contend with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring against the devil an evil-speaking judgment, but said, "May the Lord rebuke you!" Yet, these people speak evil of things they know nothing about. What they do understand (by natural power, like the creatures without reason), these things will destroy them. Woe to them! They have followed the path of Cain and they have thrown themselves after the error of Balaam for the sake of money, and they have

perished in Korah's rebellion. These people are like hidden and rocky reefs in your agape meals, when they feast with you. They are shepherds who feed themselves without fear, clouds without water carried along by winds, autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted. They are wild waves

of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness has been reserved to the age.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 2:38-47

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are far away, even as many as the Lord our God will call to himself." With many other words, he was bearing witness and urging them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation!"

Then, those who gladly received his word were baptized, and about three thousand souls were added on that day.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to

the breaking of bread, and to the prayers. Fear came on every soul, and many wonders and signs were accomplished through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common. They sold their possessions and goods, and shared them with all, according to everyone's need. Day by day, they continued [to meet] with one accord in the temple, and broke bread at home, partaking of their food with gladness and simplicity of heart. They praised God and were held in esteem by all the people. Every day, the Lord added to the Church those who were being saved.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 129:3, 4, 6a

A Psalm of David.

If You, O Lord, should mark iniquities,

O Lord, who would stand?—

For there is atonement with You.

My soul hopes in the Lord

Alleluia.

Matthew 12:35-45

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

The good man brings out good things out of his good treasure, and the evil man brings out evil things out of his evil treasure. I tell you that for every idle word that people speak, they will give an account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.”

But Jesus answered, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given to this generation except for the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The people of Nineveh will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will

condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah. And behold, someone greater than Jonah is here! The queen of the south will stand up in the judgment with this generation and she will condemn it because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And behold, someone greater than Solomon is here!

After an unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he wanders through dry places seeking rest and does not find it. He then says, ‘I will return into my house from which I came out,’ and when he has come back, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order! Then, he goes [around] and brings with himself seven other spirits more evil than he, and they enter in and dwell there. And so, the last state of that person becomes worse than the first.

This is how it will be with this evil generation.” *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of the Fast of Nineveh

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Jonas 2:2-11

From the book of Jonas the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Jonas prayed to the Lord, his God, out of the belly of the sea creature, and said,

“I cried out to the Lord my God in my affliction,
and he heard me,
my cry, out of the belly of Hades,
You heard my voice.

You cast me into the depths of the heart of the sea,
and the floods surrounded me;
all Your billows and Your waves passed over me.

And I said, ‘I have been driven away from Your sight;

Will I again look toward Your holy temple?’

Water is poured over me as far as my life;

the deepest abyss surrounded me,

my head sank into the crevices of the mountains;

I descended into the earth,
whose bars are everlasting barriers;
yet let my life ascend from corruption, O Lord my God.

When my life was failing me, I remembered the Lord;

so may my prayer come to You, into Your holy temple.

They that follow vanities and lies have forsaken their own mercy.

But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of praise and confession;

all that I have vowed I will offer to You, the Lord of *my* deliverance.”

And the sea creature was commanded by the Lord, and it cast Jonas out upon the dry *land*.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 102:14b, 15a, 9, 10

A Psalm of David.

Remember[, O Lord] that we are dust!
As for man, his days are like grass.
He will not be angry to the end,
nor will He be wrathful forever.
He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor rewarded us according to our transgressions.

Alleluia.

Luke 13:6-9

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

He then said this parable. "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came to look for fruit on it, but found nothing. He said to the vine dresser, 'Behold, I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree for three years, and found none. Cut it

down! Why does it waste the soil?' The gardener answered, 'Lord, let it be for this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit, fine; but if not, after that, you can cut it down.'" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Colossians 1:21-29

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Colossians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

In the past, you were alienated and hostile in mind, doing in your evil works. But now, he has reconciled [you] in the body of his flesh through death, in order to present you holy, without blemish and blameless before him. This is [for you] if you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, not moved away from the hope of the Good News which you heard. I, Paul,

became a servant of this Good News that is being proclaimed throughout all creation under heaven.

Now, I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake and in my flesh, I complete what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his body which is the Church. I have become her servant, according to God's commission which was I received for you, in

order to fulfill the word of God. This is the mystery which was hidden for ages and generations. But now, it has been revealed to his saints. To them, God was pleased to reveal the glorious generosity of this mystery among the Gentiles. This mystery is Christ in you, the hope of glory. This

is what we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ Jesus. This is what I also work for, struggling with his energy which is powerfully at work in me.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 4:3-11

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

For we have spent enough of our past time fulfilling the desires of [non-believing] Gentiles. We used to live in indecency, lusts, excess drinking, orgies, riotous behavior and abominable idolatries. They think it is strange that you no longer run with them into the same abusive lifestyle, and they speak evil of you. But they will give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead! For this reason, the Good News was preached even to the dead, so that they might in the flesh undergo the judgment that faces all human beings but [then] live in the spirit as to God. The end of all things is near! Therefore, be clear-minded, self-controlled

and sober in prayer. Above all things, be committed to your mutual love, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another, without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve each other, as good stewards of the grace of God in its various forms. If anyone speaks, let it be as the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 17:30-34

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

In the past, God overlooked such ignorance, but now, he commands that all people everywhere should repent, because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising him from the dead.”

Now, when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked;

but others said, “We want to hear you again on this matter.”

Then Paul left their company. But certain men joined with him and believed. Among them was Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 84:3, 4

A Psalm of David.

You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people;

You have covered all their sins. *(Pause)*

You put a stop to all Your wrath;

You turned away the heat of Your anger.

Alleluia.

Luke 11:29-36

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, “This is an evil generation; it asks for a sign. No sign will be given to this generation except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah became a sign to the

Ninevites, the Son of Man will also be a sign to this generation. The Queen of the South will rise up in the judgment along with the people of this generation, and she will condemn them: for she came from the ends of

the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, someone greater than Solomon is here! The people of Nineveh will stand up in the judgment with this generation and they will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, someone greater than Jonah is here.

No one who has lit a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket! Instead, it is placed on a stand so that those

who come in may see the light. The lamp of the body is the eye! Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body is also full of light; but when it is evil, your body also is full of darkness. And so, see whether the light that is in you is not darkness. If your whole body is full of light, having no dark part, it will be completely full of light, as when the lamp with its bright shining gives you light.” *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of the Fast of Nineveh

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Jonas 3:1-4:11

From the book of Jonas the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the word of the Lord came to Jonas a second time, saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach in it according to the message which I previously spoke to you.” And Jonas arose, and went to Nineveh, as the Lord had said. Now Nineveh was a very great city to God, of about three days’ journey. And Jonas began to enter into the city, going about a day’s journey, and he proclaimed and said, “Three more days, and Nineveh will be overthrown!”

And the men of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. And the

word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and removed his robe, and put on sackcloth, and sat on ashes. And proclamation was made, and it was commanded in Nineveh by the king and his nobles, saying, “Let not men, cattle, oxen, and sheep, taste *anything*, or feed, or drink water.” So men and cattle were clothed with sackcloth, and they cried fervently to God; and they each turned from their evil ways, and from the iniquity of their hands, saying, “Who knows if God will repent, and turn from his fierce anger, and we will not perish?” And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways; and God

repented of the evil which He had said He would do to them; and He did not do *it*.

But Jonas was very deeply grieved, and he was confounded. So he prayed to the Lord, and said, “O Lord, were these not my words when I was yet in my land? That is why I saw the need to fled to Tharsis; because I knew that You are merciful and compassionate, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy, and willing to repent at calamities. And now, O Sovereign, Lord, take my life from me, for *it is* better for me to die than to live.”

And the Lord said to Jonas, “Are you exceedingly grieved?” And Jonas went out from the city, and sat down opposite the city, and made a tent for himself there, and he sat under its shade, until he might see what would happen to the city. And the Lord God commanded a gourd, and it came up over the head of Jonas, to be a shade over his head, to shade him from his discomforts. Jonas rejoiced with great joy because of the gourd.

But early the next morning, God commanded a worm, and it smote the gourd, and it withered up. And it happened, at the rising of the sun, that God commanded a burning east wind; and the sun beat down on the head of Jonas, and he became disheartened, and despaired of his life, and said, “*It is* better for me to die than to live.”

And God said to Jonas, “Are you very much grieved over the gourd?” And he said, “I am very much grieved, even to death.” And the Lord said, “You had consideration for the gourd, for which you had not suffered, and had not made to grow, which came up during the night, and perished before *the next* night, but shall not I spare Nineveh, the great city, in which dwell more than one hundred and twenty thousand human beings, who do not know their right hand from their left hand; and much livestock?

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 102:13, 12

A Psalm of David.

As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him,
as far as the East is from the West,
He has removed our iniquity from us.

Alleluia.

Matthew 11:25-30

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

At that time, Jesus exclaimed, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the learned and intelligent, and revealed them to infants! Yes, Father, this was well-pleasing in your sight. All things have been delivered to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except

the Son and the one to whom the Son desires to reveal him.

Come to me, all of you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest! Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Indeed, my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Ephesians 2:1-22

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Ephesians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

You were dead in transgressions and sins, and this was your lifestyle according to the age of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience. We used to live among them and we used to live in self-indulgence, doing the desires of the [fallen] flesh and mind, and we were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God who is rich in mercy, on account of his great love by which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved! God raised us up with him, and granted us to sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come, he might

show the overflowing treasure of his grace in kindness toward us, in Christ Jesus. Yes, by grace you have been saved through faith, not by yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one would boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance for us to walk in them.

Therefore, remember that you, the Gentiles in the flesh who are called "uncircumcision" by what is called "circumcision" (in the flesh, made by hands); remember, I say, that you used to be separated from Christ. You were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in

the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. He is our peace, he who made both [groups to be] one and tore down the wall of separation. He abolished in his flesh the enmity which is the law of commandments with its decrees, so that he might create in himself one new humanity instead of two, making peace. He reconciled both [groups] to God in one body, through the cross, by which he destroyed that enmity. He came and preached peace to you who were far off and also to those

who were near. Through him, we both have access to the Father in one Spirit. And so, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and member's of God's household, being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself is the chief cornerstone; in whom the whole building, fitted together, grows into a holy sanctuary in the Lord. In Christ, you too are built up into a dwelling-place of God in the Spirit.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 2:12-17

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

I write to you, children, because your sins are forgiven through his Name. I write to you, fathers, because you know the one who has existed from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

I have written to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong; and the word of God remains in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Do not love the world or the things that are in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; because everything that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, pride in possessions, is not from the Father but from the world. The world is passing away with its lusts, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 15:12:20

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

At this, the whole multitude kept silence. They listened to Barnabas and Paul report what signs and wonders God had accomplished among the nations through them. When they had finished, James said, “Brethren, listen to me! Simeon has reported how God first showed concern towards the Gentiles in order to take from them a people for his Name. This agrees with the words of the prophets. As it is written:

*‘After these things I will return.
I will again build the tabernacle of
David, which has fallen.
I will again build its ruins.
I will set it up,*

*That the rest of men may seek after
the Lord;*

*All the Gentiles who are called by
my Name,*

*Says the Lord, who does all these
things.*

*All his works are known to God
from eternity.’*

Therefore, I judge that we should not trouble those who turn to God from among the Gentiles. Instead, we should write to them to abstain from the pollution of idols, from sexual immorality, from what is strangled, and from blood.”

*The word of the Lord abides in this church and
in every church. Amen.*

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalms 31:1, 5cd

A Psalm of David.

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered.

I said, “I will confess to the Lord against myself, declaring my sin,”
and You forgave the ungodliness of my sin.

Alleluia.

Matthew 15:32-16:4

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus called his disciples and said, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have remained with me for three days now and they have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they might faint on the way."

The disciples said to him, "But where should we get so many loaves in a deserted place as to satisfy so great a multitude?" Jesus asked them, "How many loaves do you have?"

They replied, "Seven, and a few small fish."

Jesus then told the crowd to sit down on the ground and took the seven loaves and the fish. He gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples distributed [the food] to the multitudes. Everyone ate and was satisfied. They gathered up seven baskets full of the broken pieces that were left

over. Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. Then, Jesus sent the people away, got into the boat, and came to the borders of Magdala.

The Pharisees and Sadducees came and put Jesus to the test by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. But he answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'The weather will be pleasant because the sky is red.' In the morning, you say, 'The weather will be bad today because the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times! An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given to this generation, except the sign of the prophet Jonah." He left them and moved on. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Feast of Nineveh

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 29:11, 12

A Psalm of David.

The Lord heard and had mercy on me;
the Lord became my helper.
You have turned my mourning into dancing;
You have torn off my sackcloth
and clothed me with gladness.

Alleluia.

Mark 8:10-21

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Immediately, he got into the boat with his disciples and arrived into the region of Dalmanutha. The Pharisees came out and began to question him, seeking from him a sign from heaven, and putting him to the test. Jesus sighed deeply in his spirit, and said, "Why is this generation seeking a sign? Amen, I tell you: no sign will be given to this generation!"

He left them, and again entered into the boat and departed to the other side. But the disciples forgot to take bread and had only one loaf in the boat with them. Jesus warned them in these words, "Be watchful, beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod."

They reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have no bread!"

Jesus, perceiving this, said to them, "Why do you reason that it is because you have no bread [that I have said this]? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Is your heart still hardened? Having eyes, do you not see? Having ears, do not you hear? Do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you gather up?"

They told him, "Twelve!"

"And after the seven loaves had fed four thousand people, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you gather up?"

They replied, "Seven!"

Jesus asked them, "Do you still not understand?" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 10:4-18

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

For Christ is the fulfillment of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Moses writes about the righteousness of the law, "The one who does them will live by them." But the righteousness which is of faith speaks this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down); or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)" But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart;" that is, the word of faith, which we preach. If you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. With the heart, one believes, resulting in righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made, resulting in salvation. As the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed."

Indeed, there is no distinction between Jew and Greek because the

same Lord is Lord of all, and he is bountiful to all who call on him. For, "Whoever will call on the Name of the Lord will be saved." But how will they call on him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in him whom they have not heard? How will they hear without a preacher? And how will they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

*How beautiful are the feet of those
who preach the Good News of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!*

But they did not all listen to the Good News. For Isaias says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" And so, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, did they not hear? Yes, most certainly:

*Their sound went out into all the
earth,*

Their words to the ends of the world.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 3:17-22

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

It is better, if it is God's will, that you should suffer for doing what is

good rather than for doing what is evil.

Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that he might bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but [made] alive in the spirit, and thus he also went [down] and preached to the spirits in prison. In the past, those had been disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built. In this ark, a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. This is an

antitype of baptism, which now saves you. It is not the putting away of the impurity of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels, authorities and powers being subject to him.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 3:22-26

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Indeed, Moses indeed said to the fathers, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brethren. You shall listen to him in all that he tells you. And it shall be that every soul that will not listen to that prophet will be utterly cut off from among the people." In fact, all the prophets that have spoken, from Samuel to those who followed after [him], have also

announced these days. You are the children of the prophets, and [children] of the covenant which God made with our fathers when he said to Abraham, 'In your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.' God, having raised up [to life] his servant Jesus, sent him to you first, in order to bless you as everyone of you turns away from his wicked ways."

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 117:5, 18

A Psalm of David.

I called on the Lord in affliction,
and He heard me and brought me into a broad place.
The Lord chastened me with chastening,
but He did not give me up to death.

Alleluia.

John 2:12-25

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

After this, he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they did not stay there [more than] a few days.

Now, the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple, he found those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers sitting [at their booths]. So, he made a whip of cords and drove [them] all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; he also poured out the changers' money and overthrew their tables. To those who sold the doves, he said, "Take these things out of here! Do not make my Father's house a marketplace!" Then, his disciples remembered that it was written:

"Zeal for your house will consume me."

Therefore, the Jews declared, "What sign do you show us, since you do these things?"

Jesus answered and responded to them, "Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up!"

The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this sanctuary, and you will raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the sanctuary of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in his Name, observing the signs which he was performing. But Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew everyone, and because he did not need a witness about human nature, for he himself

knew what was in man. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Saturday of Pre-Lent Leave-Taking

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 16:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

Hear, O Lord, my righteousness; attend to my supplication.

Give ear to my prayer, [which is] from lips without deceit.

Let my judgment come forth from Your presence;

let my eyes behold uprightness.

Alleluia.

Luke 17:3-6

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Be careful! If your brother sins against you, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in the day, and comes back seven times, saying: 'I repent!' you must forgive him."

The apostles also said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

The Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you would tell this sycamore tree, 'Be uprooted and transplanted into the sea,' and it would obey you! *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 118:49, 52

A Psalm of David.

Remember Your word to Your servant,

by which You have given me hope.

I remembered Your judgments of old, O Lord,

and I was comforted.

Alleluia.

Mark 13:33-37

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time is.

It is like a man who journeyed to another country. He leaves his house, gives authority to his servants and to each one his task. He also commanded the doorkeeper to keep watch. Watch therefore, for you do not

know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning. But fear that coming suddenly, he might find you sleeping. What I tell you, I [also] tell everyone: keep watch!" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:16

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Do not be mismatched with unbelievers: what association is there between righteousness and wickedness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Belial? What sharing is there between a believer and an unbeliever? What agreement can there be between God's sanctuary and idols? For you are a sanctuary of the living God. Even as God said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they will be my people." Therefore:

'Come out from among them, and be separate,' says the Lord.

Touch no unclean thing.

I will receive you.

I will be a Father to you.

You will be to me sons and daughters,'

says the Lord Almighty."

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us purify ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, so that we may bring [our] holiness to completion in the fear of God. Open your hearts to us! We wronged no one, we corrupted no one, and we took advantage of no one. I say this not to condemn you, for as I have said before, you are in our hearts to die together and to live together. [But] great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf! I am filled with consolation, I overflow with joy in all our afflictions.

Indeed, even after arriving in Macedonia, our flesh had no relief; we were afflicted on every side. There was struggle on the outside and fear inside. Nevertheless, he who comforts the lowly, God, comforted us

with the arrival of Titus; and not just by his arrival but also by the encouragement he had received from you. He told us of your longing, your mourning, and your zeal for me; and I rejoiced even more.

Although I [know that I] made you feel bad with my [first] letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it for a while). I can see that my letter made you sorry, at least for a while. But now, I rejoice, not that you experienced distress, but that you were made sorry to repentance. Indeed, you experienced godly distress and thus you did not experience a loss because of us. For godly sorrow works repentance that leads to salvation, it does not bring regret. But on the other hand, the sorrow of the world is deadly. Consider what happened in this case: you experienced distress in a godly way and what serious reaction it worked in

you! Yes, what apology, anger, fear, longing, zeal, and vengeance [resulted]! In everything you have shown yourselves blameless in this matter. And so, although I wrote to you, it was neither for the sake of the offender nor for the one offended, but so that your devotion to us might be revealed in the sight of God. Therefore, we have been comforted. In our comfort, we rejoiced all the more on account of Titus's joy, because you had refreshed his spirit. I had boasted to him about you, and I was not disappointed! And just as we spoke all things to you in truth, likewise boasting to Titus [about you] was found to be the truth. His deep affection for you is even stronger as he remembers your obedience, how with fear and trembling you received him. I rejoice that concerning you, I can be confident in everything.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 1:1-12

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are living as exiles, scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. This is according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, so that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his

blood. Grace be to you and may peace be multiplied!

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy, became our father again. This is to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and

undefiled inheritance that does not fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are protected through faith for a salvation which is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this, you greatly rejoice, although for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials. This way, may the demonstration of your faith (which is more precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire), be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ! Even though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with unspeakable joy and glory. And so you are receiving the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. About this salvation,

the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you did much research and investigation. They were searching the person and time that the Spirit of Christ (which was in them) pointed to by predicting the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow them. They received revelation that they were servants of these things not for themselves but for you. These [things] have now have been announced to you by those who preached the Good News by the Holy Spirit sent out from heaven, and [even the] angels desire to gaze upon these things.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 21:1-14

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

After departing from them, we set sail and made a straight course to Cos. The next day, [we sailed] to Rhodes and from there to Patara. Having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and continued our journey. When we came in sight of Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre where the ship was to unload her cargo. Since we found

some disciples there, we stayed for seven days. Through the Spirit, these disciples told Paul that he should not go up to Jerusalem. When our time there was completed, we departed and went on our journey. All the disciples, with wives and children, escorted us on our way until we were out of the city. Kneeling down on the beach, we prayed. After saying

goodbye to each other, we boarded the ship and they returned home.

We continued the voyage from Tyre and arrived in Ptolemais. There, we greeted the brethren and spent the day with them. The following day, we, Paul's companions, left and arrived in Caesarea.

We went to the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now, this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. As we stayed there for a few days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming to us and taking Paul's belt, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, "Thus

says the Holy Spirit: 'Likewise, in Jerusalem, the Jews will bind the man who owns this belt and they will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

When we heard these things, both we and the disciples who lived there begged Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready, not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus."

Since he would not be persuaded, we became silent, except to say, "The Lord's will be done!"

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 94:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

O come, let us rejoice in the Lord;
let us shout for joy to God our Saviour!
Let us come before His face with confession,
and shout for joy to Him with psalms.

Alleluia.

Luke 13:1-5

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

At that time, some [Jews] were present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these

Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way! Or those

eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell. Do you think that they were worse offenders than all those

who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but, unless you repent, you will all perish as they did!" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Sunday of Pre-Lent Leave-Taking

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 45:11

A Psalm of David.

“Be still and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.”

Alleluia.

Mark 11:22-26

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus answered them, “Have faith in God! For amen, I tell you that if anyone tells this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ without doubt in the heart but believing that what he says is happening; he shall have whatever he says. Therefore, I tell you, whatever things you pray for and ask for, believe that you have

received them, and you shall have them. Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive; so that your Father who is in heaven may also forgive your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your transgressions.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 99:2, 3c

A Psalm of David.

Serve the Lord with gladness;
enter before Him with rejoicing.
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Alleluia.

Luke 17:3-10

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Be careful! If your brother sins against you, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in the day, and comes back seven times, saying: 'I repent!' you must forgive him."

The apostles also said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

The Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you would tell this sycamore tree, 'Be uprooted and transplanted into the sea,' and it would obey you!

But who is there among you, having a servant plowing or shepherd-

ing, that will say when that servant returns from the field, 'Come at once and sit down at the table.' Instead, will you not tell him, 'Prepare my supper, clothe yourself properly, and serve me while I eat and drink. Afterwards, you may eat and drink'? Does the master thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded? I think not! So you also, when you have done all those things which you are commanded [to do], say, 'We are unworthy servants, we have [only] done our duty!'" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Corinthians 11:16-28

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

I say it again: may you not think that I am fool! But if you do, receive me still as foolish, so that I also may boast a little. What I [now] speak, I do not speak according to the Lord, but in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. And since I see that many boast as humans do, I will also boast. Yes, since you are wise, you bear with the foolish gladly! In fact, you put up with someone who brings you into slavery, devours you, takes you captive, exalts himself, or strikes you on the face. I say this to our shame: we were too weak for that! However, if anyone is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am bold as well. Are they Hebrews? So am I! Are they Israelites? So am I! Are they Abra-

ham's seed? So am I! Are they Christ's servants? I am even more so (I speak as a fool)! I was in more labors, more in prisons, beaten countless times, often close to death. Five times, I was beaten with stripes (forty times minus one) from the Jews. Three times, I was beaten with rods. Once, I received a stoning. Three times, I suffered shipwreck and was for a night and a day in the open sea. I have been in travels often, in danger from rivers, robbers, from my countrymen, from the Gentiles; in danger in the city, in the wilderness, at sea, among false brothers; in toil and hardship, in vigils often, in hunger and thirst, often fasting, and in cold and nakedness.

Besides those things which are external, there is something that presses on me daily: anxiety for all the Churches.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

2 Peter 1:1-11

The Catholic Epistle from the Second Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a precious faith like ours, with us, in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

His divine power has granted us all that we need to live in godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and virtue. Though these things, he has granted to us his precious and tremendous promises, so that having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust, you may become partakers of the divine nature. For this very reason, do your utmost to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge. To knowledge, add self-control; and to self-control,

perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and in godliness add brotherly affection; and in brotherly affection, love. For if these things are yours and overflow, they will prevent you from being idle or unfruitful to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who lack these things are blind; they only see what is near and they have forgotten the cleansing from their old sins. Therefore, brethren, do all that you can to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never stumble. Thus, you will be richly granted the entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 21:15-26

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

After these days, we took up our baggage and went up to Jerusalem. Some of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, bringing an early disciple [named] Mnason of Cyprus, with whom we would be staying.

When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. The next day, Paul went with us to visit James, and all the presbyters were present. After greeting them, Paul reported in detail what God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. When they heard it, they glorified God. They told him, "You see, brother, that there are many thousands among the Jews who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law. They have been informed about you, that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to abandon Moses and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or to preserve the customs. What then? The Church must certainly

meet, for they will hear that you have come! Therefore, do what we tell you. We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them, join in their purification rites, and pay for their expenses, so that they may shave their heads. Then all will know that there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself also live in observance of the law. But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written our decision that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from food offered to idols, from blood, from strangled things, and from sexual immorality."

So Paul took the men, and the next day, he purified himself and went with them into the temple, declaring the fulfillment of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 2:11, 10

A Psalm of David.

Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice in Him with trembling.
And now, O kings, understand;
be instructed, all you rulers of the earth.

Alleluia.

Matthew 6:1-18

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Be careful not to make your charitable giving before other people, with the intention to be seen by them. If you do so, you have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Therefore, when you do merciful deeds, do not sound a trumpet before yourself, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets in order to receive glory from men. Amen, I tell you: they have [already] received their reward. But when you do merciful deeds, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your merciful deeds may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you openly.

When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Amen, I tell you: they have [already] received their reward! But you, when you pray, enter into your inner room, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret. Then your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard on account of their many words. Therefore, do not be like them, for your Father knows

what things you need even before you ask him. Pray like this:

*'Our Father who are in heaven,
hallowed be your Name.*

Your Kingdom come,

*Your will be done on earth as it is in
heaven.*

*Give us this day our bread of the
morrow**

*and forgive us our debts as we also
forgive our debtors.*

*And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.*

*For yours is the Kingdom, the power,
and the glory,*

now and unto ages of ages. Amen.'

For if you forgive people their offences, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive people their offences, neither will your Father forgive your offences.

Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites with their gloomy faces. For they disfigure their faces so that people may see that they are fasting. Amen, I tell you: they have received their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that people may not see that you are fasting. Only your Father who is in secret will see, and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. *Glory be to God forever.*

Monday of The Preparation Week of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 16:15

A Psalm of David.

Their stomachs are filled with Your hidden treasures,
they [have satisfied themselves with swine,
and have left] the surplus to their children.

Alleluia.

Luke 11:1-13

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

One day, when Jesus had finished praying in a certain place, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John also taught his disciples.”

Jesus said to them, “When you pray, say:

*‘Our Father in heaven,
May your Name be kept holy!
May your Kingdom come!
May your will be done on Earth, as
it is in heaven.
Give us day by day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves also forgive everyone
who is indebted to us;
and lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from the evil one.’*

He said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend. You go to this friend’s house at midnight and tell him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of

bread! A friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him. Then, the one inside answers and says, ‘Do not bother me! The door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’! I tell you, although he will not get up and give food to him because they are friends, yet because of the requester’s bold persistence, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

I tell you, keep asking, and it will be given you. Keep seeking, and you will find. Keep knocking, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives. Whoever seeks finds. To the one who knocks it will be opened.

Which of you fathers, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if a son asks for a fish, the father

will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if a son asks for an egg, the father will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to

your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Exodus 2:23-3:5

From the book of Exodus of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And in those days after a length of time, the king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel groaned because of their tasks, and cried out, and their cry rose up to God because of their tasks. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraam, and Isaac, and Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and became known to them.

And Moses was tending the flock of Jothor, his father-in-law, the priest of Madian; and he led the sheep near to the desert, and came to the mount of Choreb. And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in flaming fire

in the midst of the bush, and he saw that the bush burning with fire—but the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not consumed."

Now when the Lord saw him turn aside to look, the Lord called him from the midst of the bush, saying, "Moses! Moses!" And he said, "What is it?" And he said, "Do not come near here. Take your sandals off of your feet! For the place where you stand is holy ground."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 1:2-18

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Hear, O heaven, and listen, O earth, for the Lord has spoken:

"I have begotten and brought up children,

but they rejected me.

The ox knows its owner,

and the donkey its master's crib,

but Israel does not know Me,

and the people have not understood me."

Ah sinful nation,
a people full of sins,
an evil offspring,
lawless children,
you have forsaken the Lord,
and provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger!

Why should you be beaten *any-*
more

as you continue in lawlessness?

the whole head is pained,
and the whole heart sad.
From the feet to the head,
there is no soundness in them;
sores, and bruises, and festering
wounds,
there is no bandage to apply,
nor oil, nor salve.

Your land is desolate;
your cities are burned with fire;
strangers devour your land in
your presence,
and it is made desolate,
overthrown by foreign peoples.
The daughter of Zion will be for-
saken
like a tent in a vineyard,
like a garden-watcher's hut in a
cucumber field,
like a besieged city.
And if the Lord of Hosts
had not left us offspring,
we would have become like Sod-
om,
and been made like Gomorrah.

Hear the word of the Lord,
You rulers of Sodom!
Pay attention to the law of God,
you people of Gomorra!
“What is the multitude of your
sacrifices to Me?”
says the Lord;
“I am full of whole burnt offerings
of rams,
and I do not want the fat of
lambs,
or the blood of bulls and goats.

not even when you come to ap-
pear before me.

For who required these things at
your hands?

You will tread in my court no
more.

If you bring fine flour, *it is* futile;
incense is an abomination to me.

I cannot bear your new moons,
and your sabbaths,
and the great day. My soul hates
fasting, and holy days,
as well as your new moons, and
your feasts.

You have become loathsome to
Me;

I will no longer forgive your sins.

When you stretch out your hands
to Me,

I will turn My eyes away from you,
even if you make many petitions,
I will not listen to you,
for your hands are full of blood.

Wash yourselves; become clean;
remove your evil deeds from your
souls

before My eyes;
cease from your evil deeds;
learn to do good;
seek judgement;
redeem the wronged;
defend for the orphan,
and obtain justice for the widow.

Come, let us reason together,”
says the Lord:

“although your sins are like crim-
son,

I will make them white like snow,

and although they are like scarlet,
I will make *them* white like wool.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 6:2, 3

A Psalm of David.

O Lord, rebuke me[, but] not in Your anger;
and chasten me[, but] not in Your wrath.
Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak,
heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.

Alleluia.

Matthew 12:24-34

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

However, when the Pharisees heard this, they said, “This man can only cast out demons by {the authority of} Beelzebul, the prince of the demons!”

Knowing their thoughts, Jesus told them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? If it is by Beelzebul that I cast out demons, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can someone enter into the house of the strong man, and plunder his goods,

unless he first bind the strong man? Then he will [be able to] plunder his house.

Whoever is not with me is against me! Whoever does not gather with me scatters! Therefore, I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, neither in this age, nor in the one which is to come.

Make the tree good and its fruit [will be] good, or make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt, for the tree is known by its fruit. You offspring of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? Indeed,

words flow out of what fills the heart.

Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 1:26-2:7

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

For this reason, God gave them up to vile passions, for their women changed the natural function into what is against nature and the men likewise. They abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their lust toward one another, men doing what is inappropriate with men, and receiving in themselves the due penalty of their error. Even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting. They have become filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice. They are also full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil habits, secret slanderers, backbiters, hateful of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unforgiving, unmerciful; Knowing the ordinance of God, (that those who practice such things are worthy of death), they not

only do these [very] things but also approve of those who practice them.

Therefore, you are without excuse, if you are judging! For in passing judgment on another, you condemn yourself, because you pass judgment and yet practice the same things. We know that the judgment of God is according to truth and against those who practice such things. Do you think that you will escape the judgment of God if you judge those who practice such things and yet does the same? Or do you despise the riches of God's goodness, tolerance, and patience, not knowing that his goodness leads you to repentance? But according to your hardness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath, revelation, and of the righteous judgment of God. He "will pay back to everyone according to their works;" eternal life to those who by perseverance in good works seek glory, honor, and incorruptibility.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 2:1-13

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory with partiality. For if someone with a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your synagogue, and a poor man in filthy clothing also comes in, you pay special attention to the one who wears the fine clothing! To the rich you say, "Sit here in a good place," but you tell the poor man, "Stand over there," or "Sit by my footstool!" Have not you shown partiality among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose those who are poor in this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom which he promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor! Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you before the courts? Do they not blaspheme the honorable Name by which you

are called? However, if you fulfill the royal law found in the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. But if you discriminate, you commit sin and you are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point has become guilty of everything. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery" also said "Do not commit murder." Now, if you do not commit adultery but murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. And so, speak and act as people who are going to be judged by a law of freedom. For judgment is without mercy to those who have shown no mercy, but mercy triumphs over judgment.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 14:19-28

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Then, some Jews from Antioch and Iconium arrived and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking

that he was dead. But as the disciples stood around him, he got up and returned into the city. On the next day, he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

After preaching the Good News to that city and having made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. They strengthened the souls of the disciples and exhorted them to continue in the faith, [saying] that “we must go through many afflictions to enter the Kingdom of God.” After appointing presbyters for them in every Church, with prayer and fasting, Paul and Barnabas entrusted them to the Lord in whom they placed their trust.

They passed through Pisidia and arrived in Pamphylia. After preaching

the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there, they sailed to Antioch, from where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had now fulfilled. When they arrived, they gathered the Church and reported all that God had accomplished with them, and that he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. They stayed there with the disciples for some time.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 21:27

A Psalm of David.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
and those who seek the Lord will praise Him;
their hearts will live forever and ever.

Alleluia.

Mark 9:33-50

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus arrived in Capernaum, and when he was in the house, he asked his disciples, “What were you arguing among yourselves on the way?”

But they remained silent because on the way, they had argued with one another about who was the greatest.

He sat down, called the Twelve and told them, “If anyone wants to be

first, he shall be last of all, and the servant of all.” He took a little child and set him in their midst. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever receives such a little child in my Name, receives me; and whoever receives me, does not receive me, but the one who sent me.”

John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in your Name; and we forbade him, because he does not follow us!”

But Jesus said, “Do not forbid him, for no one who does a mighty work in my Name will be able to quickly speak evil of me. For whoever is not against us is on our side. Amen, I tell you that whoever will give you a cup of water to drink in my Name, because you belong to Christ, will not lose his reward. But if someone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for such a person to be thrown into the sea with a millstone hung around the neck”.

“If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than have your two hands and go into

Gehenna, the unquenchable fire ‘where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’ If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life lame, rather than having your two feet to be cast into Gehenna, the fire that will never be quenched, ‘where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’ If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out! It is better for you to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye, rather than with two eyes be cast into the Gehenna of fire, ‘where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’

Indeed, everyone will be salted with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, with what will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of The Preparation Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Isaias 1:19-2:3a

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

“If you are willing, and listen to me,

you will eat the good things of the land.

But if you are not willing, and do not listen to me,

a sword will devour you,”

for the mouth of the Lord has spoken these things.

How has the faithful city Zion
has become a prostitute!

It was once full of justice;
he righteous lodged in it,
but now murderers do!

Your silver is worthless;

your taverns mix the wine with water.

Your rulers are disobedient,
they are companions of thieves,
loving bribes,
and seeking after rewards;
they do not defend orphans,
or pay attention to the cause of widows.

Therefore, this is what the Master,
the Lord of Hosts, says,

“Woe to the mighty *ones* of Israel!

For My wrath against My adversaries will not cease,
and I will execute judgement on My enemies!

And I will bring my hand upon you,

and purge you completely.

I will destroy the disobedient,
and will remove the lawless from among you,
and humble the arrogant.

And I will establish your judges as before,

and your counsellors as at the beginning.

And after these things, you will be called the city of righteousness,
Zion, the faithful mother-city.”

For her captives will be saved
with judgement, and with mercy.

But the lawless and the sinners will be crushed together,

and those who forsake the Lord will come to an end.

For they will be ashamed of their idols they desired,

And the gardens which they longed for.

For they will be like a terebinth tree

that has lost its leaves,
and like a garden that has no water.

Their strength will be like a thread of flax,

and their works as sparks of fire,
and the lawless and the sinners will be burnt together,

and there will be no one to quench *them*.

The word, which came from the Lord to Isaias the son of Amos concerning Judea, and concerning Jerusalem.

For in the last days
the mountain of the Lord will be manifest,

and the house of God *will be* on the tops of the mountains,
and it will be exalted above the hills,

and all the nations will come to it.
And many nations will go and say,
“Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,

and to the house of the God of Jacob,

and He will proclaim us His way,
and we will walk in it.”*

For the law of the Lord will go forth from Zion,

and the word of the Lord from
Jerusalem.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Kitchener ends here.*

Zecharias 8:7-13

From the book of Zecharias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

“This is what the Lord Almighty says, ‘See, I *will* save my people from the land of the east, and from the land of the west country. And I will bring them in, and make *them* dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they will be to Me a people, and I will be to them a God, in truth and in righteousness.’

This is what the Lord Almighty says, ‘Let your hands be strong, *you who* hear in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets, from the day that the house of the Lord Almighty was founded, and from the time that the temple was built. For before those days the wages of men could not be profitable, and there could be no wages for cattle,

and because of affliction, there could be no peace to those going out and those coming in, and I will send forth all people, each against his neighbour. But now I *will* not do to the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘Rather, I will demonstrate peace, the vine will yield its fruit, and the land will yield its produce, and the heaven will give its dew, and I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of my people. And it will come to pass, as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Juda and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing; be of good courage, and strengthen your hands.’

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 22:1, 3ab

A Psalm of David.

The Lord is my Shepherd, and I will lack nothing.

He restores my soul;

He guides me on the paths of righteousness

Alleluia.

Matthew 9:10-15

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

It so happened that as Jesus was sitting in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw it, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

When Jesus heard it, he told them, "Those who are healthy have no need for a physician, but those who are sick do. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' for I did not come to call

the righteous but sinners to repentance."

Then, John's disciples came to Jesus, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"

Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then, they will fast. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 9:14-29

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

What then shall we say? That there is injustice with God? May it never be! For he said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." And so, it is not about someone willing or running, but it depends on God who has mercy. Thus, the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose, I caused you to be raised up, so that I might show in you my power, and that my Name might be proclaimed in all the earth." And so, God has mercy on whom he desires, and he hardens

whom he desires. You will then ask me, "Why does God still find fault? Who can resist his will?"

But who indeed are you, a human being, to argue with God? Will the thing formed ask him who formed it, "Why did you make me like this?" Does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one part a vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath and also to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and that he might

make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory? That is us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles? As he says also in Hosea:

I will call them 'my people,' which were not my people;

and her 'beloved,' who was not beloved.

It will be that in the place where it was said to them,

You are not my people,'

There they will be called 'children of the living God.'

Isaias cries concerning Israel:

If the number of the children of Israel are as the sand of the sea,

It is the remnant who will be saved;

For he will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness,

Because the Lord will make a short work upon the earth.

As Isaias has said before:

Unless the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed,

We would have become like Sodom,

And would have been made like Gomorrah.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 4:3-11

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

For we have spent enough of our past time fulfilling the desires of [non-believing] Gentiles. We used to live in indecency, lusts, excess drinking, orgies, riotous behavior and abominable idolatries. They think it is strange that you no longer run with them into the same abusive lifestyle, and they speak evil of you. But they will give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead! For this reason, the Good News was preached even to the dead, so that they might in the flesh undergo the judgment that faces all human beings but [then] live in the spirit as to God. The end of all things is near! There-

fore, be clear-minded, self-controlled and sober in prayer. Above all things, be committed to your mutual love, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another, without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve each other, as good stewards of the grace of God in its various forms. If anyone speaks, let it be as the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 5:34-42

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

But someone stood up in the council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was honored by all the people. He instructed that the apostles be put out for a while. He said to them, "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. Some time ago, Theudas arose, claiming to be someone. A number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves to him. He was [eventually] killed, all those who obeyed him were scattered, and it all came to nothing. After this man, Judas of Galilee arose during the days of the census, and he led some people to follow him. He also perished, and all those who obeyed him were scattered abroad. Now I tell

you: stay away from these men and leave them alone. If this plan or work is of human origin, it will be overthrown. But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow it, and you would find yourselves fighting against God!"

They agreed with him. Summoning the apostles, they had them flogged and ordered them not to speak in the Name of Jesus; then, they released them. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of his Name.

Every day, in the temple and at home, they never stopped teaching and preaching that Jesus is the Christ.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalms 24:16, 17a

A Psalm of David.

Look upon me and have mercy on me,
for I am an only son, and I am poor.
The afflictions of my heart are multiplied.
Alleluia.

Luke 12:41-50

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Peter said to him, “Lord, are you telling this parable [only] to us, or to everyone?”

The Lord replied, “Who, then, is the faithful and wise steward whom his master will set over his household to give [his people] their allowance of food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his lord will find doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will set this servant over all that he has. But what if the servant says in his heart, ‘My lord is late in returning’ and begins to beat his fellow-servants, both men and women, and also to eat, drink and become drunk? Then the lord of that servant will come in a day when he is not expecting him, and in an hour

that he does not know. He will cut the servant in two and assign him a place with the unbelievers. Such a servant, who knew his lord’s will and yet did not prepare or do what the master wanted will be beaten with many stripes. But a servant who did not know and did things worthy of punishment will be beaten with few stripes. From everyone to whom much is given, much will be required; and from whoever was entrusted with much, much will be asked.

I have come to bring fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already! But now I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished! *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of The Preparation Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Isaias 2:3-11

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And many nations will go and say,
“Come, and let us go up to the
mountain of the Lord,
and to the house of the God of
Jacob,
and He will proclaim us His way,
and we will walk in it.”

For a law will go forth from Zion,
and the word of the Lord from
Jerusalem.

And He will judge between the
nations,
and will rebuke many people,

and they will beat their swords
into plows
and their spears into pruning
hooks,
and nation will no long take up
sword against nation,
and they will not learn to wage war
anymore.

And now, O house of Jacob,
come, *and* let us walk
in the light of the Lord!
For he has abandoned his people,
the house of Israel,
for as from the beginning,
their country is filled with divina-
tions,
like the *land* of the foreigners
{Philistines},
and many children of foreigners
were born to them.
For their land is filled with silver
and gold,
and their treasures were countless;

their land is also filled with horses,
and their chariots were countless.
And the land is filled with abomi-
nations,
the works of their hands,
and they worshipped *the works*
which their fingers had made.
And so a man bowed down,
and the man was humbled,
and I will not forgive them!
Now [therefore] enter into the
rocks,
and hide yourselves in the earth,
from before the fear of the Lord,
and from the glory of his might,
when he will rise to crush the
earth.
For the eyes of the Lord are high,
but man is lowly,
and the haughtiness of man will be
brought low,
and the Lord will shall be exalted
in that day.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Joel 2:12-27

From the book of Joel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now, says the Lord your God,
“turn to me with all your heart,
with fasting, and with weeping,
and with mourning,
and tear your hearts, and not your
clothing.
and turn to the Lord your God,
for He is merciful and compas-
sionate,
longsuffering, and plenteous in
mercy,

and repents of evils.
Who knows if he will return, and
repent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
even a meat-offering and a drink-
offering
to the Lord your God?”

Sound the trumpet in Zion;
sanctify a fast,
proclaim a *solemn* service:
gather the people,

sanctify the congregation,
assemble the elders,
gather the nursing infants.
Let the bridegroom go out of his
bed-chamber,
and the bride out of her bridal
chamber.

Between the porch and the altar,
the priests that minister to the
Lord will weep, and say,
“Spare Your people, O Lord,
and do not give Your inheritance
to the reproach
of being ruled over by the nations,
lest they should say among the
nations,
“Where is their God?””

But the Lord was jealous for His
land,
and spared His people.
And the Lord answered and said
to his people,
“See, I *am* sending you
grain, and wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied with
them,
and I will no longer make you a
reproach among the nations.

And I will drive the [army] from
the north away from you,
and banish him to a parched land,
and I will drown his face in the
first sea,
and his rear in the last sea,
and his decay will rise up,
and his stink come up,

because he magnified his works.

Be of good courage, O land,
rejoice and be glad,
for the Lord has done great things!
Be of good courage, you animals
of the plain,
for the plains of the wilderness
have blossomed,
for the trees bear their fruit;
the fig tree and the vine have
yielded their full strength.

And you children of Zion,
rejoice then and be glad in the
Lord your God,
for he has given you food that is
right for you,
and he will rain on you with the
early and the late rain, as before.
The threshing floors will be filled
with grain,
and the presses will overflow with
wine and oil.

And I will recompense you for the
years
which the locust devoured,
and the grasshopper, and the cat-
erpillar, and the blight,
even for my great army, which I sent
against you.

And you will eat abundantly, and
be satisfied,
and will praise the Name of the
Lord your God
for the marvelous *things* He has
done with you.

And My people will never again be put to shame.

Then you will know that I am in the midst of Israel,

and *that* I am the Lord your God, and *that* there is no other but me.

And my people will never again be put to shame.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 24:6, 7a

A Psalm of David.

Remember Your compassions and Your mercies, O Lord,
for they are from all eternity.

Do not remember the sins of my youth, and my acts of ignorance.

Alleluia.

Luke 6:24-34

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

But woe to you who are rich!

For you have received your consolation.

*Woe to you, you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.*

*Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.*

*Woe to you when all men speak well
of you,*

*for their fathers did the same thing to
the false prophets.*

But I tell you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you. To the one who strikes you on the cheek, offer also the other

[cheek]. If someone takes away your cloak, do not refuse your coat also. Give to anyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

As you would like others to do to you, do the same to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them! If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same! If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive [back], what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive back as much.

Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 14:19-15:7

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And so, let us pursue things which cause peace, and things by which we may edify one another. Do not overthrow God's work for the sake of food! All things indeed are clean; however it is evil for someone to create a stumbling block by eating. It is good to not eat meat, drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles, is offended, or is made weak.

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Blessed is the one who does not judge himself in what he approves. But the one who doubts is condemned if by eating, it is not of faith. Whatever is not of faith is sin.

Now to him who is able to establish you according to my Good News and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret through long ages but is now revealed, and who by the Scriptures of the prophets (according to the commandment of the eternal God,) is

made known for obedience of faith to all the nations; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever! Amen.

Now, we who are strong should bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not {just} please ourselves. Let each one of us please our neighbor for what is good, to be edifying to him. Even Christ did not please himself. But, as it is written, "The insults of those who insulted you fell on me." For whatever things were written before were written for our instruction, so that through patience and through the Scriptures' encouragement we might have hope. Now, may the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to be together of the same mind according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord, you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, accept one another, even as Christ also accepted you, to the glory of God.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

2 Peter 1:4b-11

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust, you may become partakers of the divine nature. For this very reason, do your utmost to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge. To knowledge, add self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and in godliness add brotherly affection; and in brotherly affection, love. For if these things are yours and overflow, they will prevent you from being idle or unfruitful to the knowledge of our

Lord Jesus Christ. But those who lack these things are blind; they only see what is near and they have forgotten the cleansing from their old sins. Therefore, brethren, do all that you can to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never stumble. Thus, you will be richly granted the entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 10:9-20

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Now, on the next day, as they were on their way and approached the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray at about noon. He became hungry and desired to eat, but while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a great sheet let down on the earth by four corners and descending to him. In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, reptiles, and birds of the sky. Then a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat!"

But Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean!"

Again, a second time, the voice spoke to him, "What God has cleansed, you must not call unclean." This happened three times, and immediately the vessel was taken up into heaven. As Peter was very perplexed regarding the meaning of the vision, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius found where Simon's house was and stood at the gate. They called and asked whether Simon, who was called Peter, was lodging there. While Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. Arise and go downstairs! Accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them."

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 24:20, 16a

A Psalm of David.

O keep my soul and deliver me;
do not let me be ashamed, for I have hoped in You.
Look upon me and have mercy on me.*
Alleluia.

**Lacking in Kitchener*

Luke 6:35-38

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing back. Then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he is kind [even] to the ungrateful and evil.

*Therefore, be merciful,
even as your Father is also merciful.
Do not judge,
and you will not be judged.
Do not condemn,*

*and you will not be condemned.
Set free,
and you will be set free.*

Give, and it will be given to you: a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and overflowing will be given to you. For with the same measure you measure, it will be measured back to you.” *Glory be to God forever.*

Thursday of The Preparation Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Isaias 2:11c-19

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts will

come upon all who are insolent
and arrogant,
and upon all who are high and
lifted up,
and they will be humbled;
and upon every cedar of Lebanon,
high and towering,
and upon every oak of Basan,
and upon every mountain,
and upon every high hill,
and upon every high tower,
and upon every high wall,
and upon every ship of the sea,
and upon every sight of beautiful
ships.

And every person will be hum-
bled,
and the haughtiness of man will
fall,
and the Lord alone will be exalted
in that day.
And they will hide all *idols* made by
hands,
carrying *them* into the caves,
and into the clefts of the rocks,
and into the holes of the earth,
from before the fear of the Lord,
and from the glory of His might,
when He arises to crush the earth.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Zecharias 8:18-23

From the book of Zecharias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the word of the Lord Al-
mighty came to me, saying, “This is
what the Lord Almighty says, “The
fourth-month fast, and the fifth-
month fast, and the seventh-month
fast, and the tenth-month fast, shall
be to the house of Juda for joy and
gladness, and for good feasts. And
you will rejoice, and you will love
truth and peace.’

This is what Lord Almighty says,
‘Many peoples will come yet, and the
inhabitants of many cities. And the
inhabitants of five cities will come
together to one city, saying, “Let us

go to beseech the Lord, and to seek
the face of the Lord Almighty; I too
will go.” And many peoples and many
nations will come to seek the face of
the Lord Almighty in Jerusalem, and
to obtain favour of the Lord. This is
what the Lord Almighty says, “In
those days if ten men from all the
languages of the nations stop you—
even if they take hold of the hem of a
Jewish man, they will say, ‘We will go
with you, for we have heard that God
is with you.’””

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 23:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world and all who dwell in it.

He has set it firmly on the seas,
and prepared it on the rivers.

Alleluia.

Luke 8:22-25

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

On one of those days, he entered into a boat with his disciples and said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." And so, they launched out. But as they sailed, Jesus fell asleep. A wind storm came down on the lake, and they were taking on dangerous amounts of water. His disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, "Master, master,

we are dying!" He awoke, rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and they ceased, and it was calm. He said to them, "Where is your faith?" In fear and amazement, they said to one another, "Who is this, then, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him? *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

1 Corinthians 4:16-5:9

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

I beg you therefore, be imitators of me. For this reason, I have sent Timothy to you, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every Church. Now, some of you,

thinking that I am not coming to you, have become arrogant. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills! Then I will find out not so much what these arrogant people say, but what power they have. For the Kingdom of God is not in speech,

but in power. What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and a kind as does not even occur among the Gentiles, [namely] that someone has his father's wife! And you are arrogant! Should you not rather have mourned, so that whoever has done this would have been removed from among you? For I most certainly, as being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged the man who has done this thing! In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, you are to hand over such a

person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be delivered in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Your self-satisfaction is not good. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole lump? Purge out the old yeast, so that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed in our place. Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old yeast, neither with the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

I wrote to you in my letter to have no fellowship with those who are immoral*.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

*Other translations have "fornicators" for "pornos"

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 1:8-2:11

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous so that he will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.

My little children, I write these things to you so that you may not commit sin. But if someone does commit a sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the

righteous. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the whole world.

This is how we have come to know that we know him: if we keep his commandments. The one who says, "I know him," and yet does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in such a person. But if someone keeps God's word, God's love has most certainly been perfected in him. This is how we know that we are in him: whoever claims to

abide in him should also live just as he lived.

Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you. This is an old commandment which you have had since the beginning. This old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. Yet, in another way, it is a new commandment that I write to you; it is true in him and in you because the darkness is passing away and the true light already shines! Anyone who claims to

be in the light and hates his brother [or sister] is still in the darkness. Anyone who loves his brother [or sister] remains in the light, and there is no occasion for stumbling in such a person. But whoever hates a brother [or sister] is in the darkness and walks in the darkness; such a person does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 8:3-13

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

In the meantime, Saul ravaged the Church, entering into every house and dragging both men and women off to prison.

As a result, those who had been scattered abroad began to travel around, preaching the word. Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed Christ to them. When the people heard and saw the signs which Philip accomplished, they listened to what he preached with one accord. Indeed, unclean spirits were expelled from many of those who had them, and they came out shouting with a loud voice. Many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed, and there was great joy in that city.

But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who used to practice sorcery in the city. He amazed the people of Samaria, claiming to be a great one, and all listened to him, from the least to the greatest. They said, "This man is the power of God, of the great kind!" People listened to him because for a long time, he had amazed them with his sorceries. But when they believed Philip [who was] preaching the Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself also believed and after his baptism, he followed Philip closely. Seeing that signs and great

miracles were taking place, he was amazed.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 117:14, 18

A Psalm of David.

The Lord is my strength and my song,
and He has become my salvation.
The Lord chastened me with chastening,
but He did not give me up to death.

Alleluia.

Mark 4:21-29

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a basket or under a bed? Is not it placed on a stand? For there is nothing hidden that may not be made manifest, and nothing was made secret that should not come to light. Anyone who has ears for listening should listen!"

He also told them, "Pay attention to what you hear! With whatever measure you measure, it will be measured to you, and more will be given to those who hear. For whoever has will receive even more, but to the

one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God is as if a man would scatter seed on the ground, and then go to sleep. Night and day, whether he sleeps or rises, the seed springs up and grows, even if he does not know how. For the earth bears fruit: first the blade comes, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the fruit is ripe, at once the man pulls out his sickle, because the harvest has come."

Glory be to God forever.

Friday of The Preparation Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Deuteronomy 6:3-7:26

From the book of Deuteronomy of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Hear, therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do this, that it may be well with you, and you may be greatly multiplied, as the Lord God of your fathers has spoken, to give you a land flowing with milk and honey.

And these *are* the statutes and the judgments, which the Lord commanded the children of Israel in the wilderness, when they came out of the land of Egypt. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your mind, and with all your soul, and all your strength. And these words that I command you today shall be in your heart and in your soul. And you shall teach them to your children, and you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall bind them on your hand as a sign, and it shall be unshakable before your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your houses, and on your gates.

And it will come to pass, when the Lord your God brings you into the land He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you great and beautiful cities

that you did not build, and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and wells dug in the rock that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant, then when you have eaten and are full, beware that you do not forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall fear the Lord your God, and serve Him, and cling to Him, and swear by His Name. Do not go after other gods, the gods of the nations around you, for the Lord your God, Who is in the midst of you, *is* a jealous God, lest the anger of Lord your God be roused against you, and destroy you from the face of the earth.

You shall not tempt the Lord your God, as you tempted Him in the Temptation. You shall diligently keep the commands of the Lord your God, the testimonies, and the ordinances, which He commanded you. And you shall do what is pleasing and good before the Lord your God, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and inherit the good land, which the Lord swore to your fathers, to chase all your enemies from before your face, as the Lord said.

And it shall be, when your son asks you in the future, saying, "What are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments that the Lord our God has commanded us?" Then you shall say to your son, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought us from there with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm. And the Lord set great and evil signs and wonders afflicting Egypt, on Pharaoh and on his house, before us. And He brought us out from there to give us this land, which he swore to give to our fathers. And the Lord charged us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, that it may be well with us all our days, that we may live, at it is today. And there will be mercy to us, if we are watchful to keep all these commands before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.

And when the Lord your God brings you into the land you go to inherit, and removes great nations from before you, the Hittites, and Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canannites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations *more* numerous and stronger than you, and the Lord your God delivers them into your hands, then you will strike them, you will utterly destroy them. You will not make a covenant with them, or show them mercy. Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to his son, and

you shall not take his daughter to your son. For she will draw away your son from Me, and he will serve other gods; and the Lord will be very angry with you, and will utterly destroy you suddenly. But this is what you shall do to them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their pillars, and cut down their groves, and burn the carved images of their gods with fire.

For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; and the Lord your God chose you to be a peculiar people to Him, more than all the nations upon the face of the earth. It was not because you are more numerous than all *other* nations that the Lord preferred you and chose you, for you are the least in all the nations; but because the Lord loved you, and since He was keeping the oath that He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a strong hand, and the Lord has redeemed you from the house of slavery, out of the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know, therefore, that the Lord your God, he *is* God, the faithful God, who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him, and those who keep His commandments, and Who repays those Who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. And He will not be slack with them that hate Him; He will repay them to their face. Therefore, You shalt keep the commands, and the statutes, and

these judgments, which I command you today to do.

And it will come to pass, when you listen to these statutes, and keep them and do them, that the Lord your God will keep for you the covenant and the mercy, which he swore to your fathers. And He will love you, and bless you, and multiply you; and He will bless the offspring of your womb, and the fruit of your land, your grain, and your wine, and your oil, the herds of your oxen, and the flocks of your sheep, on the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to you. You will be blessed more than all the nations; there will not be an impotent or infertile one among you, or among your cattle. And the Lord your God will remove every illness from you, and He will not inflict all of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you have seen and that you have experienced, on you; but he will inflict them upon all that hate you. And you will eat all the spoils of the nations that the Lord your God gives to you; your eye will not have pity on them, and you shall not serve their gods; for that would be a snare to you.

But if you should say in your heart, "This nation *is* greater than I, how will I be able to destroy them?" you shall not be afraid of them; you shall remember all that the Lord your God did to Pharaoh, and to all the Egyptians: the great trials that your

eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders, the strong hand, and the outstretched arm by which the Lord your God brought you out. So will the Lord your God do to all the nations whose presence you fear. And the Lord your God will send the hornets against them, until those who are left, who hide from you, are destroyed. You will not be wounded before them, because the Lord your God in the midst of you *is* a great and powerful God. And the Lord your God will consume these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to consume them quickly, lest the land become desert, and the wild animals of the field multiply against you. And the Lord your God will deliver them into your hands, and you will destroy them with a great destruction, until He has utterly destroyed them. And He will deliver their kings into your hands, and you will destroy their name from that place; no one will be able to stand against you until you have utterly destroyed them. You will burn the carved images of their gods with fire. You shall not desire silver and gold from them, and you shall not take it for yourself, lest you stumble by it, for it is an abomination to the Lord your God. And you shall not bring an abomination into your house, lest you be an anathema like it. You shall utterly abhor it, for it is an anathema {accursed thing}.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 3:1-14a

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

See now, the Lord, the Lord of
hosts,
will take away from Judea and
from Jerusalem
the mighty man and mighty woman,
the strength of bread, and the
strength of water,
the great and mighty man, the man
of war,
both the judge and the prophet,
the diviner, and the elder,
the captain of fifty also,
and the wonderful counselor,
the skilled artisan,
and the intelligent listener {disciple}.
“And I will make youths their
rulers,
and mockers will rule over them.
And the people will collapse,
man upon man,
and *every* man upon his neighbour;
the child will stumble against the
elder,
and the vulgar against the honourable.”

For a man will take seize his
brother,
or one of his father’s household,
saying,
“You have clothing,
be our ruler,
and let my food
be supplied by you.”

And he will answer in that day,
and say,
“I will not be your ruler,
for I have no bread in my house,
nor clothing.
I will not be
the ruler of this people.”
For Jerusalem is ruined,
and Judea has fallen,
because their tongues are lawless,
and they are disobedient to the
Lord.

Therefore, their glory has now
been brought low.

And the shame of their face has
risen up against them;
they have proclaimed their sin like
that of Sodom,
and have made it manifest.
Woe to their soul!
For they have devised an evil
counsel against themselves,
saying, “Let us bind the just, for
he is burdensome to us.”

Therefore, they will eat the fruits
of their works.

Woe to the wicked!
Evil things will happen to him
according to the works of his
hands.

“O my people, your exactors strip
you,
and extortioners rule over you.

O my people, those who call you
blessed lead you astray,

and confuse the path of your feet.”

But now the Lord will stand up to judge,
and He will enter into judgement with his people.

The Lord Himself will enter into judgement

with the elders of the people, and with their rulers.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 29:2, 3

A Psalm of David.

I will exalt You, O Lord,
for You upheld me,
and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.
O Lord, my God, I cried to You,
and You have healed me.

Alleluia.

Luke 5:12-16

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

It happened, while he was in one of the cities, that there was a man full of leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell on his face, and begged him, saying, “Lord, if you want to, you can make me clean.”

Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, “I want to! Be made clean.”

Immediately the leprosy left him. Jesus commanded him to tell no one,

“But go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing according to what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” Still, the report concerning him spread much more, and great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed by him of their infirmities. But he withdrew himself into the desert and prayed. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 12:6-21

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

We have different gifts according to the grace given to us: if it is prophecy, let us prophesy according to the measure of our faith. If it is service, let us dedicate ourselves to service! He who teaches should do his teaching; or he who exhorts his exhorting. As for the one who gives, let the giving be done with generosity. He who rules should rule with diligence and the one who shows mercy should do so with joy.

Let your love be without hypocrisy. Reject with horror what is evil. Cling to what is good. In love for the brethren, be tenderly affectionate with one another; place the honor of others above your own. Do not fall back in zeal; be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in troubles, persevere in prayer; contribute to the needs of the saints; look for opportunities to be hospitable. Bless those who persecute

you; bless, and do not curse! Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep! Be of the same mind one toward another. Do not set your mind on exalted things, but associate with the humble. Do not think that you are wiser than you really are. Repay no one evil for evil. Show respect for what is honorable in the sight of all. If it is possible, as much as is in your power, be at peace with all people. Do not seek revenge, beloved, but let God's wrath follow its course. As it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord." Therefore:

If your enemy is hungry, feed him.

If he is thirsty, give him a drink;

In doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head.

Do not be overcome by evil; instead, overcome evil with good.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

3 John (all)

The Catholic Epistle from the Third Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

The presbyter to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth.

Beloved, I pray that you may flourish in all things and be healthy, even as your soul is flourishing. I

rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified about your truth, even as you walk in truth. I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are walking in truth.

Beloved, you do a faithful work in all that you accomplish for those who are brethren and strangers. They have borne witness to your love before the Church. You will do well to send them forward on their journey in a manner that God would approve, because it is for the sake of the Name that they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles. For this reason, we should receive such [brethren], so that we may be fellow-workers for the truth.

I wrote to the Church, but Diotrophes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. Therefore, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds and how he

unjustly accuses us with wicked words. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brethren. He also stops those who would do so and throws them out of the Church! Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. Whoever does good is of God, but whoever does evil has not seen God.

As for Demetrius, he has a good testimony from everyone and of the truth itself; yes, we also testify, and you know that our testimony is true.

I had many things to write to you, but I am unwilling to write to you with ink and pen. Instead, I hope to see you soon and we will speak face to face. Peace be to you! The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 2:42-3:9

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers. Fear came on every soul, and many wonders and signs were accomplished through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common. They sold their possessions and goods, and

shared them with all, according to everyone's need. Day by day, they continued [to meet] with one accord in the temple, and broke bread at home, partaking of their food with gladness and simplicity of heart. They praised God and were held in esteem by all the people. Every day, the Lord

added to the Church those who were being saved.

Peter and John would go up into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. A certain man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried. Every day, he was laid at the gate of the temple (the one which is called 'Beautiful') to ask alms from those entering the temple. Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. Then Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!" The man gave them attention,

expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have, I give to you. In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!" Peter took the man by the right hand and raised him up. At once, his feet and ankles received strength. Leaping up, the man stood up and began to walk! He entered with them into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God! When all the people saw him walking and praising God.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 12:6, 7

A Psalm of David.

But I hope in Your mercy;
my heart will rejoice in Your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord, my benefactor,
and I will praise the Name of the Lord Most High.

Alleluia.

Luke 11:1-10

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

One day, when Jesus had finished praying in a certain place, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John also taught his disciples."

Jesus said to them, "When you pray, say:

'Our Father in heaven,

May your Name be kept holy!

May your Kingdom come!

May your will be done on Earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us day by day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us;

*and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.*

He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend. You go to this friend's house at midnight and tell him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread! A friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him. Then, the one inside answers and says, 'Do not bother me! The door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'!

I tell you, although he will not get up and give food to him because they are friends, yet because of the requester's bold persistence, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

I tell you, keep asking, and it will be given you. Keep seeking, and you will find. Keep knocking, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives. Whoever seeks finds. To the one who knocks it will be opened. *Glory be to God forever.*

Saturday of The Preparation Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 118:57, 58

A Psalm of David.

You are my portion, O Lord;

I said that I would keep Your law.

I implored Your grace with all my heart;

have mercy on me according to Your saying.

Alleluia.

Matthew 5:25-37

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Find an agreement with your adversary as soon as possible, even as you are on your way to court, fearing that perhaps the prosecutor will deliver you to the judge, the judge to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. Amen, I tell you: you will not get out of there until you have paid the last penny.

You have heard that it was said to the ancients, 'You shall not commit adultery;' but I tell you that everyone who gazes at a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you! Indeed, it is more profitable for you that one

of your members should perish than for your whole body to be cast into Gehenna. If your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off, and throw it away from you! It is more profitable for you that one of your members should perish, than for your whole body to be cast into Gehenna.

It was also said, 'Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce,' but I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, (except for the cause of sexual immorality), makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a woman put away in this manner commits adultery.

Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not swear falsely; you must fulfill your vows to the Lord.' But I tell you: do not swear at all! Neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not even swear by your head because you cannot make a single hair white or black. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes' and your 'No' be 'No.' Whatever goes beyond these is from the evil one.
Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 12:1-21

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your rational offering of divine service. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God. By the grace that was given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you should! Instead, think [of yourselves] reasonably, as God has apportioned to everyone a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members do not have the same function, likewise we, who are many,

are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. We have different gifts according to the grace given to us: if it is prophecy, let us prophesy according to the measure of our faith. If it is service, let us dedicate ourselves to service! He who teaches should do his teaching; or he who exhorts his exhorting. As for the one who gives, let the giving be done with generosity. He who rules should rule with diligence and the one who shows mercy should do so with joy.

Let your love be without hypocrisy. Reject with horror what is evil. Cling to what is good. In love for the brethren, be tenderly affectionate with one another; place the honor of others above your own. Do not fall

back in zeal; be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in troubles, persevere in prayer; contribute to the needs of the saints; look for opportunities to be hospitable. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse! Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep! Be of the same mind one toward another. Do not set your mind on exalted things, but associate with the humble. Do not think that you are wiser than you really are. Repay no one evil for evil. Show respect for what is honorable in

the sight of all. If it is possible, as much as is in your power, be at peace with all people. Do not seek revenge, beloved, but let God's wrath follow its course. As it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord." Therefore:

If your enemy is hungry, feed him.

If he is thirsty, give him a drink;

In doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head.

Do not be overcome by evil; instead, overcome evil with good.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 1:1-12

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the Twelve tribes which are in the Dispersion: Greetings!

Consider it as all joy, my brethren, when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. Let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be perfect and whole, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let such one ask of God who gives to all abundantly and without finding fault; and it will be given to him. But ask in faith, without any doubting, for whoever doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. Such a person should not think that

anything will be received from the Lord. This is being double-minded, unstable in every way.

But let the brethren of humble circumstances glory in their high position. But the rich should rejoice in being made humble, because like the flower in the grass, they will pass away. For the sun arises with the scorching wind and withers the grass, its flower falls and the beauty of its appearance perishes. Likewise, the rich shall fade away in their pursuits.

Blessed is the one who endures temptation, for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to those who love him.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 21:27-39

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When the seven days were almost completed, Jews from Asia saw Paul in the temple. They stirred up the entire crowd and laid hands on him, shouting, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the {chosen} people, the law, and this place. Moreover, he also brought Greeks into the temple and defiled this holy place!" [They said this] because they had seen Trophimus, the Ephesian, with Paul in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

The entire city was in turmoil and the people came running. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the doors were shut. As they were trying to kill him, news came up to the commanding officer of the [Roman] troops that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Immediately, he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to the crowd. When they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, the Jews stopped beating Paul. Then, the commanding officer

came near and arrested him. He gave orders that Paul should be bound with two chains, and inquired who he was and what he had done. From the crowd, some shouted one thing and some another. Since the commander could not find out the truth because of the noise, he commanded that Paul be taken into the barracks.

When Paul reached the steps, he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd. The whole mob followed them and shouted, "Away with him!" As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he asked the commanding officer, "May I speak to you?"

The man said, "Do you know Greek? Then, are you not the Egyptian who recently stirred people up to rebellion and led the four thousand Assassins into the wilderness?"

But Paul replied, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city. I beg you, allow me to speak to the people."

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 5:2, 3ab

A Psalm of David.

Give ear to my words, O Lord,
hear my cry.

Attend to the voice of my supplication,
my King and my God.

Alleluia.

Matthew 5:38-48

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you: do not resist one who is evil, but to whoever strikes you on your right cheek, present the other cheek as well. If anyone sues you to take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. Whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him for two. Give to whoever asks you, and do not deny whoever desires to borrow from you.

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: love your enemies, bless those who curse

you, do good to those who hate you! Pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust. And so, if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you only greet your friends, what more do you do than others? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? Therefore, be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. *Glory be to God forever.*

The First Sunday of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 16:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

Hear, O Lord, my righteousness; attend to my supplication.

Give ear to my prayer, [which is] from lips without deceit.

Let my judgment come forth from Your presence;

let my eyes behold uprightness.

Alleluia.

Matthew 6:34-7:12

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Do not judge in order not to be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in someone else's eye, but do not consider the beam that is in your own eye? How can you tell someone, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye;' and behold, there is a beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! First remove the beam out of your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye.

Do not give what is holy to the dogs and do not throw your pearls

before pigs, for fear that they might trample them under their feet, and then turn [against you] and tear you to pieces.

Ask, and it will be given you! Seek, and you will find! Knock, and it will be opened for you! For everyone who asks receives. He who seeks finds. To the one who knocks it will be opened. Who is there among you, who, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, who will give him a snake? If you then who are evil [still] know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! Therefore, whatever you desire other people to do for you, you shall also do for them! This is the law and the prophets. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 17:2, 3ab

A Psalm of David.

I will love You, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my support, my refuge, and my deliverer;

My God is my helper, I will hope in Him.

Alleluia.

Matthew 7:22-29

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Many will tell me in that Day, 'Lord, Lord, did not we prophesy in your Name, cast out demons in your Name and do many deeds of power in your Name?' Then I will tell them, 'I never knew you! Depart from me, you who work iniquity.'

Everyone therefore who hears my words and does them, I will compare with a wise person who built his house on a rock. The rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew, beating hard on that house. Yet, it did not collapse, because it was

founded on the rock. But everyone who hears my words and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew, beating hard on that house; and it collapsed - and great was its fall."

It happened, when Jesus had finished saying these things, that the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them with authority, not like the scribes. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 13:1-14

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Let every human being be in subjection to the higher authorities because there is no authority except from God, and those who exist are ordained by God. Therefore, whoever opposes the authority opposes the

ordinance of God. Those who oppose will receive judgment upon themselves. Certainly, rulers are not a terror to the good deed, but to the evil [deed]! Do you desire to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is

good, and you will have praise [from the authority], because it is for you a minister of God for good. But if you do what is evil, then be afraid, because it does not bear the sword in vain; it is a servant of God, an avenger of wrath to anyone who does evil. Therefore, you need to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for the sake of conscience. For this reason, you also pay taxes, because the authorities are ministers of God's service, always taking care of this purpose. And so, give to everyone as you owe: taxes to whom taxes are due; revenues to whom revenues are due; respect to whom respect is due; honor to whom honor is due!

Do not owe anything to anyone, except to love one another; for whoever loves the other has fulfilled the law.

Indeed, these commandments ("You shall not commit adultery,"

"You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and whatever other commandments there are,) are all summed up in this very saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does not harm a neighbor. Love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

Do this, being aware of the time: it is already time for you to awaken from sleep, for salvation is now nearer to us than when we first believed! The night is far gone, and the day is near. Let us therefore throw off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk decently, as in the day; not in parties and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and lustful acts, and not in strife or jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ and do not think how to satisfy the flesh and its lusts.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 1:13-21

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

When temptations come, let no one say, "I am tempted by God," because God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. But a person is tempted when drawn away and enticed by his own lust. Then the lust, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is

full grown, results in death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren! Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom can be no variation or shifting shadow. He brought us forth of his own will by the word of truth, so that we should

be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

Know this, my beloved brethren: be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger! Anger does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore, putting away all [moral]

impurity and remains of wickedness, receive with humility the implanted word which is able to save your souls.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 21:40-22:16

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When the commander had given him permission, Paul, stood on the steps and motioned with his hand to the people. When there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying:

“Brothers and fathers, listen to the defense which I now make to you.”

When the people heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they were even more quiet.

Paul continued, “I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel. I was instructed according to the strict tradition of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as you all are this day. I persecuted this Way to death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, as the high priest and the entire council of the presbyters can testify. I even received letters for their brethren in Damascus and traveled there to bring these people in chains

to Jerusalem to be punished. It happened that, suddenly, as I was on my journey and approaching Damascus, at about noon, a great light shone from the sky around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ He said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute.’

Indeed, those who were with me saw the light and were afraid, but they did not understand the voice of him who spoke to me. I asked, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ The Lord said to me, ‘Arise, and go into Damascus. There, you will be told about what you are directed to do.’ Since I could not see because of the glory of that light, I was led by the hand of those who were with me and arrived in Damascus. Someone named Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well-spoken of by all the Jews who lived in Damascus, came to me.

Standing by me, he said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' At that very moment, I was able to see him! He said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. For you will

be a witness for him to all men, testifying to what you have seen and heard. Now why do you wait? Arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the Name of the Lord.'

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 24:1, 2ab, 4, 5a

A Psalm of David.

I lift up my soul to You, O Lord.
O my God, I trust in You;
do not let me be put to shame,
Make Your ways known to me, O Lord,
and teach me Your paths.
Guide me in Your truth and teach me.

Alleluia.

Matthew 6:19-33

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Do not store up treasures for yourselves on the earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal. Instead, store for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The lamp of the body is the eye! If therefore your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the

light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Mammon. Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious for your life: wondering what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? See the birds of the sky: they do not sow, or reap, or

gather into barns. Your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of much more value than they?

Which of you, by being anxious, can add one moment to his lifespan? Why then are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They do not toil or spin, yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not dressed like one of these! But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today exists and tomorrow is thrown

into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith?

Therefore, do not be anxious, saying: 'What will we eat?', 'What will we drink?' or, 'What will we wear?' It is the Gentiles who seek after all these things, but your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. *Glory be to God forever.*

Monday of First (Second) Week of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 47:11c, 12

A Psalm of David.

Your right hand is full of righteousness.

Let Mount Zion be glad,

and let the daughters of Judah rejoice,

because of Your judgments, O Lord.

Alleluia.

Luke 6:27-38

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

But I tell you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you. To the one who strikes you on the cheek, offer also the other [cheek]. If someone takes away your cloak, do

not refuse your coat also. Give to anyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

As you would like others to do to you, do the same to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is

that to you? Even sinners love those who love them! If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same! If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive [back], what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive back as much. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing back. Then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he is kind [even] to the ungrateful and evil.

Therefore, be merciful,

even as your Father is also merciful.

Do not judge,

and you will not be judged.

Do not condemn,

and you will not be condemned.

Set free,

and you will be set free.

Give, and it will be given to you: a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and overflowing will be given to you. For with the same measure you measure, it will be measured back to you.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Exodus 3:6-14

From the book of Exodus of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And God said to Moses, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses turned away his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Indeed, I have seen the affliction of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry *caused* by their taskmasters; for I know their affliction. And I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them out of that land, and to bring them into a good and spacious land, into a land flowing with milk and honey, into the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Gergesites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, look, the

cry of the children of Israel has come to me, and I have seen the affliction with which the Egyptians oppress them. And now come, I will send you to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and you will bring my people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt.”

And Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt?” And God spoke to Moses, saying, “I will be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I have sent you: when you have brought my people out of Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain.” And Moses said to God, “Look, I will go to the children of Israel, and I will say to them, “The God of your fathers has

sent me to you;” and they will ask me, “What is his Name? What will tell them?” And God said to Moses, “I am ‘The One Who Is.’” And he said,

“You will say this to the children of Israel, ‘The One Who Is has sent me to you.’”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 4:2-5:7a

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And in that day God will shine gloriously in counsel on the earth, to exalt and glorify the remnant of Israel. And it will happen *that* the remnant left in Zion and in Jerusalem, will be called holy, everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. For the Lord will wash away the filth of the sons and daughters of Zion, and will cleans the blood from their midst with a spirit of judgement and a spirit of burning. And He will come, a cloud will overshadow every site of Mount Zion and all that surrounds it by day, and it will be like smoke and like a light of fire burning by night, and it will be covered with glory. And it will serve as a shade from the heat, and as a shelter and a hiding place from inclement weather and rain.

“Now I will sing to *My Beloved*
a song of *My Beloved* concerning
My vineyard.

My beloved had a vineyard
on a high hill, in a fertile place.

And I made a hedge round it, and
fenced it in,
and planted a choice vine,
and built a tower in the midst of it,
and dug out a place for the wine-
vat in it;

and I waited *for it* to bring forth
grapes,

but it brought forth thorns.

And now, man of Judah
and dwellers in Jerusalem,
judge between Me and *My* vine-
yard.

What more might I do for *my*
vineyard,

that I have not done for it?

For I waited for it to bring forth
grapes,

but it has brought forth thorns.

But now I will tell you
what I will do to *My* vineyard.

I will take away its hedge,

and it will be plundered;

and I will pull down its walls,

and it will be trampled down.

And I will abandon *my* vineyard,

and it will not be pruned or culti-
vated,

and thorns will come up as on a
barren land,

and I will command the clouds
not to rain on it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of
hosts

is the house of Israel,

and the man of Judah is *his* beloved plant.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 39:12

A Psalm of David.

Do not remove then, O Lord,
Your compassion from me;
may Your mercy and Your truth
always support me.

Alleluia.

Mark 9:25-29

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to him, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!"

The spirit cried out, convulsed greatly and came out of the boy. He became as dead, so much that most

of the people said, "He is dead!" But Jesus took him by the hand, raised him up; and the boy arose.

When Jesus entered into the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not we cast it out?" He told them, "This kind can come out by nothing, except by prayer and fasting." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 1:18-25

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of those suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what is known of God is revealed in them, for God revealed it

to them. For since the creation of the world, his invisible things are clearly seen. They are perceived through created things, even his everlasting power and divinity. This is so that they may be without excuse, because

knowing God, they did not glorify him as God or gave [him] thanks. Instead, they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless heart was darkened.

Thinking themselves to be wise, they became fools! They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, of birds, of four-footed animals, and creeping things. There-

fore, God also gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to uncleanness, so that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves. Having exchanged the truth of God for a lie, they worshiped and offered divine service to the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

Jude 1-8

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher Jude. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: May mercy, peace and love be multiplied to you.

Beloved, while I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I felt it needful to write to you in order to encourage you to fight hard for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For there are certain men who have secretly crept in, people whose condemnation was announced long ago. They are ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into indecency and they deny our only Master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Even though you already know this, I wish to remind you that the Lord, having saved a people out of

the land of Egypt, later on destroyed those who did not believe! The angels who did not keep their first domain but deserted their own dwelling place, he has also kept in darkness and eternal chains for the judgment of the great day. Likewise, Sodom, Gomorrah and the cities around them had given themselves over to sexual immorality and unnatural relations in the same way as these angels. They are presented as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire. Yet, these people do the same thing: in their delusion, they degrade the flesh, despise authority, and slander the glorious beings.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 4:36-5:11

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Josef, who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles (which means ‘Son of Encouragement’) was a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race. He sold a field that he owned and brought the money, laying it at the apostles’ feet.

Now, a certain man named Ananias, along with his wife Sapphira, [also] sold a possession. He kept back part of the price (of which his wife was also aware) and brought the rest, laying it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has filled your heart so as to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? As long as you kept it, was it not still your own? And after it was sold, was it not [still] in your power? How is it that you have conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God!”

Upon hearing these words, Ananias fell to the ground and died. Great

fear came on all who heard these things. The young men got up, wrapped him up, and carried him out to be buried. About three hours later, his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in. Peter asked her, “Tell me, was this the price you sold the land for?”

She answered, “Yes, for that price.”

But Peter asked her, “How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out!”

At once, she fell down at Peter’s feet and died. The young men came in and found her dead; they carried her out and buried her next to her husband. Great fear came on the whole Church and on all who heard these things.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 28:1, 2a

A Psalm of David.

Bring to the Lord, O you sons of God,
bring to the Lord young rams;
bring to the Lord honour and glory.
Bring to the Lord glory due to His Name.
Alleluia.

Luke 18:1-8

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus also told them a parable [illustrating] that they must always pray and not give up, saying: "In a certain city, there was a judge who did not fear God and did not care [about anyone]. A widow lived in that city, and she often came to him, saying: 'Defend me from my adversary!' For a time, he would not [do anything], but after a while, he said to himself, 'Although I neither fear God nor care for anyone, yet because this widow is

bothering me, I will defend her, or else she will wear me out by her continual visits.'"

The Lord said, "Listen to what the unrighteous judge has to say! Will not God grant justice to his elect who are crying out to him day and night, although he exercises patience regarding them? I tell you that he will avenge them quickly! And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of First (Second) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Job 19:1-27

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Job answered and said, and destroy me with words?"
"How long will you weary my soul

Know only that the Lord has dealt
with me this way.

You speak against me; you shame-
lessly press hard against me.

Yes, indeed, I have truly erred,
my the error dwells with me,
in having spoken words that were
not right *to speak*,

and my words err, and are inap-
propriate.

But alas! You magnify
yourselves against me,
and attack me with disgrace.

Know then that it is the Lord that
has troubled *me*,

and has raised His stronghold
against me.

Look, I laugh at reproach, and I
will not speak;

I will cry not out, judgment is no-
where to be found.

I am fenced in all round, and can-
not escape,

for He has set darkness before my
face.

And He has stripped me of my
glory,

and has taken the crown from my
head.

He has torn me apart on every
side, and I am gone,

and He has cut down my hope like
a tree.

And he has dealt with me terribly
in anger,

and has counted me as an enemy.

His troops came against me with
one accord;

they surrounded me in my paths,
lying in ambush.

My brothers stood far from me;
they have recognized strangers
rather than me.

And my friends have become
merciless.

My nearest kin have not acknowl-
edged me,

and my close friends have forgot-
ten me.

As for my household, and my
maid-servants,

I was a stranger before them.

I called my servant, and he did not
respond,

though I begged him with my lips.

And I implored my wife,

and summoned the sons of my
concubines with flattery,

but they rejected me forever;

when I arise, they speak against
me.

My acquaintances detest me,

and those whom I had loved rose
up against me.

My muscles have decayed under
my skin,

and my bones are held in *my* teeth.

Pity me, pity me, O friends,

for it is the hand of the Lord that
has touched me.

Why do you persecute me as the
Lord *does*,

and are not satisfied with my
flesh?

For who would grant that my
words be written,
and that they were recorded in a
book forever,
with an iron pen and lead,
or be carved in rocks?
For I know that He who is about
to undo me on the earth is eternal,
May my skin, which has endured
these things, be raised up,

for these things have been accom-
plished for me by the Lord;
which I am conscious of,
which my eyes have seen, and not
those of another,
all that has been fulfilled for me in
my bosom.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 5:7-16

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

For the vineyard of the Lord of
hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the man of Judah
is His beloved plant;
I waited for *it* to produce justice,
and it brought forth lawlessness,
and not righteousness,
but a cry!
Woe *to those* who join house to
house,
and add field to field,
so that they may take something
from their neighbour!
Will you dwell alone upon the
land?
For these things have reached the
ears of the Lord of hosts;
for though many houses should be
built, many and fair houses will be
desolate,
and there will be no inhabitants in
them.
For where ten yoke of oxen will
work,

that land will yield one jarful,
and he that sows six bushels
will produce three measures.

Woe *to those* who rise early in the
morning,
and follow strong drink,
who continue *at it till* evening,
for the wine will inflame them.
For they drink wine with harp, and
lyre,
and drums, and pipes,
but they do not regard the works
of the Lord,
or consider the works of his
hands!
Therefore, my people have been
taken captive,
because they know not the Lord;
they have become a multitude of
corpses,
because of famine and of thirst for
water.

Hades has enlarged its appetite

and opened its mouth without
ceasing;

and her glorious ones, and great
ones,

and her rich and her pestilent men
shall go down *into it*.

A person will be brought low,
and a man will be dishonoured,

and the lofty eyes will be brought
low.

But the Lord of hosts will be ex-
alted in judgement,

and the holy God will be glorified
in righteousness.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 40:5, 14

A Psalm of David.

I said, "Lord, have mercy on me;
heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
from everlasting to everlasting.

Amen! Amen!

Alleluia.

Luke 12:22-31

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus said to his disciples, "There-
fore, I tell you not to be anxious
about your life, what you will eat; or
about your body, what you will wear.
Life is more than food and the body
is more than clothing! Consider the
ravens: they do not sow, they do not
reap, they do not have a warehouse or
barn and [yet] God feeds them. And
how much more valuable you are
than birds! Which one of you by
worrying can add a single day to his
life? If you are not able to accomplish
even the smallest things, why then are

you anxious about the rest? Consider
the lilies, how they grow. They do not
toil or spin; yet, I tell you that even
Solomon in all his glory was not
arrayed like one of these. But if this is
how God clothes the grass in the
field, which today exists and tomor-
row is thrown into the oven, how
much more will he clothe you, you of
little faith? Do not set your hearts on
what you will eat or drink; do not be
apprehensive. It is the pagan world
that runs after all these things, and
your Father understands that you

need them. Seek rather the Kingdom of God and all these things will be

added to you.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Let everyone give according to what he has determined in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that by having what is needed in everything, you may overflow in every good work. As it is written:

He has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor.

His righteousness remains forever.

Now, may he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food also supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. Thus, may you be

enriched in everything, so that you may be generous in all things, and through us, this brings thanksgiving to God. This ministry of giving which you perform does not only make up for what the saints are lacking; it also overflow into thanksgiving to God. Seeing that you prove yourselves by this service, the saints glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the Good News of Christ, and also for the generosity of your contribution to them and to all. As for them, with supplication on your behalf, they are devoted to you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 1:1-12

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the Twelve tribes which are in the Dispersion: Greetings!

Consider it as all joy, my brethren, when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. Let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be

perfect and whole, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let such one ask of God who gives to all abundantly and without finding fault; and it will be given to him. But ask in faith, without any doubting, for whoever doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. Such a person should not think that anything will be received from the Lord. This is being double-minded, unstable in every way.

But let the brethren of humble circumstances glory in their high position. But the rich should rejoice

in being made humble, because like the flower in the grass, they will pass away. For the sun arises with the scorching wind and withers the grass, its flower falls and the beauty of its appearance perishes. Likewise, the rich shall fade away in their pursuits.

Blessed is the one who endures temptation, for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to those who love him.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 4:13-22

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and untrained men, they marveled. They [also] recognized that they had been with Jesus. Seeing the man who was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to step aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, "What shall we do to these men? Indeed, a remarkable miracle has been accomplished through them, as can plainly be seen by all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But to prevent this from spreading any further among

the people, let us threaten them so that from now on, they will no longer speak to anyone in this Name." They called the apostles and ordered them not to speak at all or to teach in the Name of Jesus.

But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves! But we cannot help telling the things which we saw and heard!"

When they had further threatened the apostles, they let them go. They found no way to punish them on account of the people, because everyone glorified God for what had

been done. (Moreover, the man on whom this miracle of healing had been performed was more than forty years old).

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 40:2

A Psalm of David.

Blessed is he who considers the poor and needy;
the Lord will deliver him in an evil day.

Alleluia.

Mark 10:17-27

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

As Jesus was setting out on his journey, someone ran to him, knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do in order to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus replied, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except one: God. You know the commandments: 'Do not murder,' 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not give false testimony,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and mother.'"

The man said, "Teacher, I have observed all these things since my youth!"

Jesus looked at him and felt love for him. He then said, "You lack one thing. Go, sell whatever you have, and give to the poor. You will have a treasure in heaven; then come, follow me, taking up the cross."

However, the man was distressed when he heard this. He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it is for the wealthy to enter into the Kingdom of God!"

The disciples were amazed at his words. But again, Jesus said, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter into the Kingdom of God!"

They were extremely astonished and said to him, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and answered, "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for all things are

possible with God!” *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of First (Second) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Exodus 2:11-20

From the book of Exodus of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it happened in the course of many days, when Moses was grown, *that* he went out to his brethren, the sons of Israel. And as he observed their burdens, he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren, the children of Israel. And when he looked around this way and that way, and saw no one, he killed the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the next day, he saw two Hebrew men fighting, and he said to the one who was wrong, “Why are you hitting your neighbour?” And he replied, “Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Will you kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?” Then Moses was alarmed, and said, “Has this matter has become so well known?” And Pharaoh heard this matter, and sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh, and

dwelt in the land of Madian. When he came into the land of Madian, he sat on a well.

Then the priest of Madian had seven daughters, who fed the flock of their father Jethro; and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs, to water their father’s flock. Then the shepherds came, and were driving them away, but Moses rose up and rescued them, and drew water for them, and watered their sheep. When they came to Ragouel their father, and he said to them, “How is it that you have come so quickly today?” And they said, “An Egyptian delivered us from the shepherds, and drew water for us, and watered our sheep.” So he said to his daughters,” And where is he? Why have you left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 5:17-25

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And those who have been plundered will be fed like bulls

and lambs will feed on the wastelands of those who are taken away.

Woe *to those* who draw sins to
themselves as with a long rope,
and lawlessness as with a strap of
the cow's yoke:

who say, "Let him quickly hasten
what he will do,

that we may see *it*:

and let the counsel of the Holy
One of Israel come,

that we may know *it*!"

Woe *to those* who call evil good

and good evil,

who make darkness light,

and light darkness,

who make bitter sweet,

and sweet bitter!

Woe *to those* who are wise in their
own eyes,

and knowledgeable in their own
sight.

Woe to the your strong ones that
drink wine,

and the mighty *ones* who mix
strong drink,

who justify the ungodly for a
bribe,

and take away the righteousness of
the righteous!

Therefore, as stubble will be burnt
by a coal of fire,

and will be consumed by a violent
flame,

their root will be like fine dust,

and their flower will go up like
dust:

for they rejected the law of the
Lord of hosts,

and despised the word of the Holy
One of Israel.

And the Lord of hosts was furious
against His people,

and He laid His hand upon them,
and struck them;

the mountains were provoked,

and their carcasses became like
dung

in the midst of the road.

For all this His anger has not been
turned away,

but His hand is still raised high.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Malachi 1:6-3:6*

From the book of Malachi the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

"A son honours his father, and a
servant his master. If then I am a
father, where is My honour? And if I
am a master, where is My respect?"
says the Lord Almighty. "You priests
are the ones who despise My Name,
yet you say, 'how have we despised
Your Name?' By bringing defiled
bread to My altar; but you say, 'How

have we defiled it?' In that you say,
'The table of the Lord is contempti-
ble, and the food set on it is con-
temptible.' For if you bring some-
thing blind as a sacrifices, is it not
evil? And if you offer the lame and
the sick, is it not evil? Offer it then to
your ruler, and see if he will receive it,

if he will accept your person,” says the Lord Almighty.

“And now, entreat the face of your God, and pray to Him. These things have been done by your hands; will I receive you?” says the Lord Almighty. “For even among you the doors will be shut, and you will not kindle the fire of My altar in vain. I have no pleasure in you,” says the Lord Almighty, and I will not accept an offering from your hands. For from the rising of the sun even to its going down, My Name has been glorified among the nations; and in every place incense will be offered to My Name, and a pure offering, for My Name is great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty.

“But you profane it, in that you say, ‘The table of the Lord is defiled, and the food set upon it is contemptible.’ And you said, ‘These services are toilsome,’ therefore I have utterly rejected them with scorn,” says the Lord Almighty. “And you brought in things taken by violence, and lame, and sick, and when you bring an offering, should I accept them at your hands?” says the Lord Almighty. “And he who was able, who has a male in his flock, and who takes a vow, but sacrificed to the Lord what is blemished, is cursed—for I am a great King,” says the Lord Almighty, and My Name is glorious among the nations.

“And now, O priests, this commandment is to you. If you will not

listen, if you will not take it to heart, to give glory to My Name,” says the Lord Almighty, “then I will send a curse upon you, and I curse your blessing, yes, I will curse it, and I will scatter your blessing, and it will not exist among you, because you do not take this to heart. See, I am turning my back on you, and I will smear dung upon your faces, the dung of your feasts, and I will carry you away at the same time. And you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant might be with the sons of Levi,” says the Lord Almighty.

“My covenant of life and peace was with him, and I gave it to him that he might reverently fear Me, and that he might be awe-struck at My Name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips. He walked uprightly with me in peace, and he turned many from injustice. For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law from his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty.

“But you have turned aside from the way, and weakened many in the law, and you have corrupted the covenant of Levi,” says the Lord Almighty. “And I have made you despised and disregarded among all the nations, because you have not kept my ways, but have shown partiality in the law.”

Did God not create you? Do you not all have one father? Why, then, has each man forsaken his brother, to profane the covenant of your fathers? Judah has been forsaken, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah has profaned the holy things of the Lord, which he loved, and has gone after foreign gods. The Lord will utterly destroy the man that does these things, until he is humiliated from the tents of Jacob, and from among those who offer sacrifice to the Lord Almighty.

And you kept doing these things which I hated: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, and with weeping and groaning because of troubles. Is it worthy to look upon your sacrifice, or to receive anything from your hands as acceptable? And you said, "Why?" Because the Lord was a witness between you and the wife of your youth, whom you abandoned, though she is your companion, and the wife of your covenant. And did God not make them one, and sustained them for the spirit of life? But you said, "What does God seek but offspring?" But be vigilant in your spirit, and do not forsake the wife of your youth. "But if you should hate her and put her away," says the Lord God of Israel, "then ungodliness will cloud your thinking," says the Lord Almighty "So be vigilant in your spirit, and do not forsake her." You have provoked God with your

words, yet you say, "How have we provoked him?" In that you say, "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delights in them," and, "where is the God of justice?"

"Look, I am sending My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come into His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom you desire. See, He is coming," says the Lord Almighty. "And who will endure the day of His coming? Or who can withstand His appearance? For He is coming like a refiner's fire, and as the soap of the washer. He will sit, melting and purifying as it were silver, and as it were gold, and He will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver, and they will bring and offering to the Lord in righteousness. And the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old, as in the former years."

"And I will draw near to you in judgment, as a swift witness against sorcerers, adulterers, those who swear falsely by My Name, those who defraud hired workers, those who oppress widows, and afflict orphans, and those who turn aside justice for the foreigner, and those who do not fear Me," says the Lord Almighty. "For I am the Lord your God, and I have not changed. But you, the sons

of Jacob, have not refrained from the iniquities of your fathers.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

** Found in Southern United States. Lacking in Kitchener and Ottawa.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 17:18c, 19

A Psalm of David.

For they are too strong for me.

They overtook me in the day of my affliction,
but the Lord became my support.

Alleluia.

Matthew 5:17-24

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill! Amen, I tell you: until heaven and earth pass away, not even one smallest letter or one tiny pen stroke shall in any way pass away from the law, until all things are accomplished. Whoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments and teach others to do so shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall do and teach them shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. Indeed, I tell you that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

You have heard that it was said of old, 'You shall not murder;' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be in danger of the judgment.' But I tell you, whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. Whoever calls his brother 'Raca!' shall be answerable to the Sanhedrin; and whoever shall say, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of the fire of Gehenna.

If therefore you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there, before the altar. First, go your way and be reconciled to your brother, and then offer your gift. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 3:1-17

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And so, what advantage does the Jew have? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God! But what if some were without faith? Will their lack of faith nullify the faithfulness of God? May it never be! Yes, let God be found true, but every man a liar. As it is written,

That you might be justified in your words,

and might prevail when you come into judgment.

But if our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous if he inflicts wrath? (I speak like men do!) May it never be! For then, how will God judge the world? For if through my lie the truth of God overflowed to his [own] glory, why am I still judged as a sinner? Why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), "Let us do evil, that good may come?" Those

who say so are justly condemned. What then? Are we better than they? No, by no means! For we previously warned both Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin. As it is written,

There is no one righteous; no, not one.

There is no one who understands.

There is no one who seeks after God.

They have all turned aside.

They have together become worthless.

There is no one who does good, no, not, so much as one.

Their throat is an open tomb,

With their tongues they have used deceit.

The poison of vipers is under their lips;

Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

Their feet are swift to shed blood.

Destruction and misery are in their ways.

The way of peace, they have not known.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

2 John 8-13

The Catholic Epistle from the Second Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Watch yourselves, so that we may not lose what we have accomplished but receive a full reward. Whoever does not remain in the teaching of Christ but transgresses does not have God. But whoever remains in the teaching [of Christ] has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive or greet such a person. Whoever welcomes such people participates in their evil works.

Even though I have many things to write to you, I do not want to do so with paper and ink. Instead, I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that our joy may be complete. The children of your chosen sister greet you. Amen.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 5:3-11

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

But Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has filled your heart so as to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? As long as you kept it, was it not still your own? And after it was sold, was it not [still] in your power? How is it that you have conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God!”

Upon hearing these words, Ananias fell to the ground and died. Great fear came on all who heard these things. The young men got up, wrapped him up, and carried him out to be buried. About three hours later, his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in. Peter asked her,

“Tell me, was this the price you sold the land for?” She answered, “Yes, for that price.”

But Peter asked her, “How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out!”

At once, she fell down at Peter’s feet and died. The young men came in and found her dead; they carried her out and buried her next to her husband. Great fear came on the whole Church and on all who heard these things.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 17:2, 3ab

A Psalm of David.

I will love You, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my support, my refuge, and my deliverer;

My God is my helper, I will hope in Him.

Alleluia.

Matthew 15:32-38

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus called his disciples and said, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have remained with me for three days now and they have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they might faint on the way."

The disciples said to him, "But where should we get so many loaves in a deserted place as to satisfy so great a multitude?" Jesus asked them, "How many loaves do you have?"

They replied, "Seven, and a few small fish."

Jesus then told the crowd to sit down on the ground and took the seven loaves and the fish. He gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples distributed [the food] to the multitudes. Everyone ate and was satisfied. They gathered up seven baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over. Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. *Glory be to God forever.*

Thursday of First (Second) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Deuteronomy 5:15-22

From the book of Deuteronomy of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord

your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand, and an out-

stretched arm; therefore, the Lord your God instructed you to keep the Sabbath day and to sanctify it.

Honour your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you, that it may be well with you, and that you may live long upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not commit murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour's wife; you shall not covet your neighbour's house, his field, his male servant, his female maid, his ox, his donkey, his livestock, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

The Lord spoke these words to your whole assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire—*there was* darkness, blackness, storm, a loud voice—and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone, and He gave them to me.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 6:1-12

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and the house was full of His glory. Seraphim stood around Him; each one had six wings: with two they covered their face, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one cried unto another, and said, "Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts; the whole earth *is* full of his glory." And the door post was moved by the voice of whose who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said, "Woe *is* me! I am pierced to the heart; because I *am* a man, and have unclean lips, and I live among people of unclean lips, and I have seen the King, the LORD of hosts with my eyes!"

Then one of the seraphim was sent to me, and he had a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken from the altar with the tongs. And he touched my mouth, and said, "See, this has touched your lips. Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin are purified." I also heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?" Then said I, "Here I *am*, send me!" And He said, "Go, and tell this people,

You will indeed hear, but you will not understand,

and you will indeed see, but you will not perceive.

For the heart of this people has become insensitive,

and their ears hear with difficulty.

They have shut their eyes,

so that they might not see with
their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their heart,
and turn—and I would heal them.
Then I said, “how long,
O Lord?” And he answered,
“Until the cities are laid waste,

And without inhabitant,
and the houses are without people,
and the land is left desolate,
And after these things, God will
send the people far away,
and those left land will multiply on
the land.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Joshua 2:1-6:26*

From the book of Joshua the son of Nun, the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Joshua the son of Naue sent two young men from Sattin to spy out the land, saying, “Go and see the land, especially Jericho.” And the two young men went and entered Jericho, and they entered into the house of a prostitute named was Raab, and lodged there. And it was reported to the king of Jericho, saying, “Men of the sons of Israel have come here to spy out the land.” And the king of Jericho sent, and spoke to Raab, saying, “Bring out the men who entered your house tonight, for they have come to spy out the land.” And the woman took the men and hid them, and she spoke to the messengers, saying, “The men came to me, but when the gate was shut in the evening, the men went out. I do not know where they went. Pursue them, if you can overtake them.” But she had brought them up on the roof of the house, and hid them in the stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof. And the men pursued after

them on the road to the Jordan, to the fords, and the gate was closed.

And it happened, when the men who pursued them had gone out, and before the spies had gone to sleep, she too came up to them on the top of the house and said to them, “I know that the Lord has given you the land, for the dread of you has fallen upon us. For we have heard that the Lord God dried up the Red Sea before you when you came out of the land of Egypt, and what He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond Jordan, to Seon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And when we heard it we were amazed in our heart, and there was no spirit left in any of us because of you, for the Lord your god is God in heaven above, and on the earth below. And now swear to me by the Lord God that as I deal showed you mercy, so you will also be mercifully with the house of my father, and spare the house of my father, my mother, and my brethren, and all my house, and all

that they have, and deliver my soul from death.”

And the men said to her, “Our life for your life, even to death.” And she said, “When the Lord delivers the city to you, deal with me in mercy and truly.” And she let them down by the window. And she said to them, “Depart into the hill country, so that the pursuers do not come upon you. And you will be hidden there for three days, until those who pursue after you have returned, and afterwards you will depart on your way.”

And the men said to her, “We will be without fault regarding this oath of yours. Look, we will enter into a part of the city, and you will set a sign; you will hang this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you will gather to yourself and your father and mother, and your brethren, and all the family of your father into your father’s house. Whoever goes outside the door of your house, he will be responsible on his own account, and we will be free of this oath of yours. And we will be responsible for any who are with you in your house. But if anyone injures us, or reveals these words of ours, we will be free from this oath of yours.” And she said to them, “Let it be according to your word.” And she sent them away.

And they departed and went to the hill country, and remained there for three days; and the pursuers searched all the roads, but did not

find them. And the two young men returned and came down out of the mountain. And they crossed over to Joshua the son of Naue, and told him everything that had happened to them. And they said to Joshua, “The Lord has delivered all the land into our hand, and everyone who inhabits that land cowers because of us.

And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and departed from Sattin; and they came as far as the Jordan, and lodged there before they crossed over. And it happened after three days, that the scribes went through the camp and commanded the people, saying, “When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God, and our priests and the Levites carrying it, you will depart from your places, and you will go after it. But let there be a distance between you and it. You will stand as much as two thousand cubits from it. Do not come near it, that you may know the way to go; for you have not gone this way before.” And Joshua said to the people, “Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.” And Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and go before the people.” And the priests took up the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and went before the people.

And the Lord said to Joshua, “Today I am beginning to exalt you before all the children of Israel, so

they will know that I will be with you as I was with Moses. And now command the priests who carry the ark of the covenant, saying, ‘As soon as you enter a part of the water of the Jordan, then you will stand in Jordan.’” Joshua then said to the children of Israel, “Come here and hear the word of the Lord our God. By this you will know that the living God is among you, and will utterly destroy from before our face the Cananites, and the Chettites and Pherezites, and the Hevites, and the Amorites, and the Gergesites, and the Jebusites. Look, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passes through the Jordan. Choose for yourselves twelve men from the sons of Israel, one from each tribe. And it will happen that when the feet of the priests that carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth rest in the water of the Jordan, the water of the Jordan will cease, and the water coming down will stand still.”

And the people left their tents to cross over the Jordan, and the priests carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord before the people. And when the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord were entering the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord were dipped into part of the water of the Jordan—now the Jordan overflowed all its banks about the time of wheat harvest—then the

upstream waters stopped, and a solid wall of water formed over a great distance, as far as the region of Kariathiarim, and the lower part came down to the sea of Araba, the salt sea, until it completely ceased. And the people stood opposite Jericho. And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood on dry land in the midst of the Jordan; and all the children of Israel crossed on dry land, until all the people had crossed the Jordan.

And when all the people had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying, “Take men from the people, one from each tribe, and command them, saying, ‘take twelve stones that are on hand out of the midst of the Jordan, and when you have carried them over with you, place them in your camp, where you will encamp for the night.’” And when Joshua had called twelve men of honour among the children of Israel, one from each tribe, he said to them, “Advance before me in the presence of the Lord into the midst of the Jordan, and let each take up a stone from there, and carry it on his shoulders, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, so that these may be an appointed sign for you continually, so that when your son asks you tomorrow, saying, ‘What are these stones to you?’ then you will explain to your son, saying, ‘The river Jordan dried up before the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole

earth, when it crossed over,' and these stones will be for a memorial for you, for the children of Israel forever."

And the children of Israel did so, as the Lord commanded Joshua. And they took up twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, (as the Lord commanded Joshua, when the children of Israel had completely crossing over,) and carried these stones with them into the camp, and laid them down there. And Joshua also set another twelve stones in the Jordan itself, in the place walked on by the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord. And there they are to this day.

And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant stood in the Jordan, until Joshua had finished all that the Lord commanded him to tell the people. And the people hurried, and crossed over. And it happened, as soon as the people had crossed over, that the ark of the covenant of the Lord crossed over, and the stones in front of them. And the sons of Ruben, and the sons of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasse crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses commanded them. Forty thousand men armed for battle crossed over before the Lord to war against the city of Jericho. On that day the Lord magnified Joshua before all the people of Israel, and they feared him as long as he lived, as they did Moses.

And the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying, "Command the priests who carry the ark of the covenant of the testimony of the Lord, to come up out of the Jordan." And Joshua commanded the priests, saying, "Come up out of Jordan." And it happened that as soon as the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord came up out of the Jordan, and set their feet on the land, that the water of Jordan rushed headlong into place, and went as before over all its banks.

And the people went up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and the children of Israel encamped in Galgala in the region eastward from Jericho. And Joshua set those twelve stones, which he had taken out of the Jordan in Galgala, saying, "When your sons ask you, saying, 'What are these stones?' tell your sons, that Israel crossed the Jordan on dry land; that the Lord our God dried up the water of the Jordan from before them until they had all crossed over, as the Lord our God did to the Red Sea, which the Lord our God dried up from before us until we crossed over; that all the nations of the earth might know that the power of the Lord is mighty, and that you might worship the Lord our God in every age.

And it happened, when the kings of the Amorites, who were beyond the Jordan, and the kings of Phoenicia by the sea heard that the Lord

God had dried up the river Jordan from before the children of Israel when they crossed over, that their hearts failed, and they were panic-stricken, and there was no sense in them because of the children of Israel.

And about this time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make stone knives for yourself of sharp rock, and sit down and circumcise the sons of Israel." And Joshua made sharp stone knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the place called "the Hill of Foreskins." And in this manner Joshua purified the sons of Israel, as many as were born along the way, and as many as were uncircumcised of those who came out of Egypt, Joshua circumcised all these. Israel wandered in the desert of Madbaritis for forty-two years, therefore, most of the fighting men who came out of the land of Egypt, and who disobeyed the commandments of God, were uncircumcised. Concerning these, He also determined that they should not see the land, which the Lord swore to give to their fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey. And in their place, he raised up their sons, whom Joshua circumcised, because they were born during the journey, and thus uncircumcised. And when they had been circumcised, they rested there and stayed in the camp until they were healed. And the Lord said to Joshua the son of Naue, "Today I have removed the reproach of Egypt

from you." And he called the name of that place Galgala.

And the children of Israel kept the Pascha on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, to the westward of Jericho, across the Jordan in the plain. And they ate of the grain of the earth unleavened and new grain. On this day the manna ceased, after they had eaten of the grain of the land, and the children of Israel no longer had manna, for they enjoyed the fruit of the land of the Phoenicians in that year.

And it happened, when Joshua was in Jericho, that he looked up with his eyes and saw a man standing before him with a drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua came near and said to him, "Are you for us, or on the side of our adversaries?" And he said to him, "I am now come, the chief captain of the host of the Lord." And Joshua fell on his face on the earth, and said to him, "Master, what do you command your servant?" And the captain of the Lord said to Joshua, "Loose the sandals from off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy."

And Jericho was enclosed and fortified, and no one went out of it, and no one came in. And the Lord said to Joshua, "Look, I am delivering Jericho into your control, and its king in it, and its mighty men. Place your soldiers around it, and when you sound the trumpet, let all the people will shout together. And when they

shout, the walls of the city will fall by themselves; and all the people will enter, each rushing headlong into the city.”

And Joshua the son of Naue went to the priests, and spoke to them, saying, “Command the people to go around, and surround the city, and let the men of war pass by armed before the Lord. And let seven priests holding seven sacred trumpets likewise pass by before the Lord, and let them signal vigorously. And let the ark of the covenant of the Lord follow after them. Let the men of war go before, and let the priests bring up the rear behind the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as they walk, and sound the trumpets.” And Joshua commanded the people, saying, “Do not shout, or let anyone hear your voice, until He Himself tells you to shout, and then shout.” And the ark of the covenant of God went around the city, it immediately returned to the camp, and lodged there.

And on the second day Joshua rose in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the covenant of the Lord. And the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went on before the Lord. The armed men followed after with the rest of the multitude, behind the ark of the covenant of the Lord. And the priests sounded the trumpets, and the rest of the multitude surrounded the city from close by, and went back again to the camp. They did this for six days.

And on the seventh day they rose up early in the morning, and marched around the city seven times. And on the seventh circuit the priests blew the trumpets, and Joshua said to the children of Israel, “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city. And the city will be devoted, it and all things that are in it, to the Lord of Hosts. Only keep safe Raab the prostitute, and whatever is in her house. But keep yourselves well away from what is accursed, so that you do not covet and take what is accursed, and you make the camp of the children of Israel accursed, and destroy us. And all the silver, gold, bronze, or iron, will be holy to the Lord, it will be carried into the treasury of the Lord.”

And the priests sounded the trumpets, and when the people heard the trumpets, they all shouted at together with a great and mighty shout. And the entire wall fell round about, and all the people went into the city. And by the edge of the sword, Joshua devoted it, and all that was in the city, man and woman, young man and old, and calf and draft animal. And Joshua said to the two young men who had acted as spies, “Go into the house of the woman, and bring her out from there, and whatever she has.” And the two young men who had spied out the city entered into the house of the woman, and brought out Raab the prostitute, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and her

kindred, and all that she possessed. And they set her outside the camp of Israel. And the city was set on fire, but the silver, gold, bronze, and iron, they brought to the treasury of the Lord.

And Joshua kept Raab the prostitute alive, and all the house of her father, and caused her to dwell in Israel until this day, because she hid the spies that Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. And Joshua adjured Israel before the Lord that day, saying,

“Cursed be the man
who rebuilds that city.

he will lay its foundation
at the cost of his firstborn,
and he will set up its gates
at the cost of his youngest son.”

And so did Ozan of Baithel; he laid the foundation at the cost of Abiron, his firstborn, and set up the gates of it at the cost his youngest, although he escaped.

And the Lord was with Joshua, and his name was known throughout all the land.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Found in Southern United States. Lacking in
Kitchener and Ottawa.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 27:9

A Psalm of David.

Save Your people and bless Your inheritance;
shepherd them and raise them up forever.

Alleluia.

Matthew 11:20-30

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

He then began to rebuke the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent.

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in

sackcloth and ashes! But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you! You, Capernaum, who [thought that you] were exalted to heaven, you will go down to hades! For if the deeds of power which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this

[very] day. But I tell you: on the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, than for you.”

At that time, Jesus exclaimed, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the learned and intelligent, and revealed them to infants! Yes, Father, this was well-pleasing in your sight. All things have been delivered to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father,

and no one knows the Father except the Son and the one to whom the Son desires to reveal him.

Come to me, all of you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest! Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Indeed, my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 16:17-27 or Romans 16:17-24, 14:24-26*

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now I beg you, brethren, watch out for those who are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which you learned. Stay away from them! Such people do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. By their smooth and flattering speech, they deceive the hearts of the innocent.

Indeed, your obedience has become known to all and I rejoice over you. I desire to have you wise in what is good, but innocent in what is evil. And the God of peace will quickly crush Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

Timothy, my fellow-worker, greets you, as do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my relatives. I, Tertius, who write the letter, greet you in the Lord.

Gaius, my host and host of the whole Church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, as does Quartus, the brother. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Amen.

Now to him who is able to establish you according to my Good News and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret through long ages but is now revealed, and who by the Scriptures of the prophets (according to the commandment of the eternal God,) is made known for obedience of faith to all the nations; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever! Amen.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

**The order of these verses varies. TR places them as they*

are seen here. PT and EOB place the last paragraph as the end of chapter 14.

The Catholic Epistle

James 3:1-12

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Not many of you should be teachers, my brothers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. In many things, we all stumble. Anyone who does not stumble in word is perfect, even able to bridle the whole body! Indeed, we put bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey us, and thus, we guide their whole body. Or consider the ships: although they are very large and driven by fierce winds, they are guided by a very small rudder as the pilot desires. Likewise, the tongue is a little member but it boasts great things! See how a small fire can spread to a large forest! The tongue is also a fire! Among all our members, the tongue is a world of iniquity which defiles the whole body. It sets on fire the course of nature and it is

set on fire by the fires of hell. Every kind of animal, bird, reptile and sea creature is tamed, and has been tamed by mankind. But nobody can tame the tongue! It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the image of God. From the same mouth comes forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, this should not be! Does a spring pour forth fresh and salty water from the same opening? My brethren, can a fig tree produce olives, or [can] a vine [produce] figs? Likewise, salt water cannot produce fresh water.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 12:12-23

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

After pondering on this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together

and praying. When Peter knocked at the outer gate, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so

overjoyed that she did not open the door. Instead, she ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.

But they said to her, “You are crazy!” When she insisted that it was so, they said, “It is his angel!” Meanwhile Peter continued knocking. When they opened [the door], they saw him and were amazed. But he motioned them with his hand to be silent and told them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. He said, “Tell these things to James, and to the brethren.” Then he departed, and went to another place.

As soon as day came, there was no small commotion among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. When Herod had Peter looked for and could not find him, he examined

the guards and ordered that they should be put to death. Meanwhile, Peter went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

At that time, Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. With one accord, they came to him, and, having befriended Blastus (the king’s personal aide), they asked for peace because their country depended on the king’s country for food. On an appointed day, Herod dressed himself in royal clothing, sat on the throne, and gave a speech to them. The people shouted, “The voice of a god, not of a man!” Immediately, an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 47:11c, 12

A Psalm of David.

Your right hand is full of righteousness.

Let Mount Zion be glad,

and let the daughters of Judah rejoice,
because of Your judgments, O Lord.

Alleluia.

Matthew 19:16-30

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Behold, a man came to him and asked, "Good teacher, what good thing shall I do in order to have eternal life?"

Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but one, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

The man said to him, "Which ones?"

Jesus replied, "'You shall not murder.' 'You shall not commit adultery.' 'You shall not steal.' 'You shall not bear false witness.' 'Honor your father and mother;' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

The young man then said to him, "All these things I have observed from my youth! What do I still lack?"

Jesus replied, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have, give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, and follow me!" But when the young man heard these words, he went away sad because he was a person with great possessions. Jesus said to his disciples, "Amen I say to you, it will be

hard for someone who is rich to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven! Indeed, I tell you that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."

When the disciples heard this, they were extremely astonished and said, "Who then can be saved?"

Looking at them, Jesus answered, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible!"

Then Peter said, "Behold, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?"

Jesus said to them, "Amen, I tell you that you who have followed me, at the regeneration, when the Son of Man will sit on the throne of his glory, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the Twelve tribes of Israel. Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, or lands for my Name's sake will receive a hundred times [more] and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first!" *Glory be to God forever.*

Friday of First (Second) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Deuteronomy 8:1-9:4

From the book of Deuteronomy of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

"You must be watchful to perform all the commands that I command you today, that you may live

and be multiplied, and go in and inherit the land, which the Lord your God swore to your fathers. And you

shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God led you in the wilderness, so that He might afflict you, and try you, and make manifest the things in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. And He distressed you and weakened you with hunger, and fed you with manna, which your fathers did not know; that he might teach you that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God shall man live. Your clothes did not wear out on you; your feet did not become callused, for forty years. And you shall know in your heart, that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God will discipline you. And you shall keep the commands of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good and extensive land, where torrents of waters, and springs of bottomless depth flow through the plains and through the mountains; a land of wheat and barley, *of* vines, figs, pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where you will not eat your bread in poverty, and upon which you will not want for anything; a land whose stones are iron, and from whose mountains you can dig copper. And you will eat and be filled, and bless the Lord your God on the good land that He has given you.

Watch yourself, that you do not forget the Lord your God, so as not to keep His commands, and His

judgments, and His statutes, which I command you today, lest, when you have eaten and are full, and have built fine houses, and lived in them, and when your oxen and sheep have multiplied, and when silver and gold have been multiplied to you, and when all your possessions have been multiplied to you, you should become exalted in heart, and forget the Lord your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, Who led you through that great and fearful wilderness, where *there was* the biting serpent and scorpion, and thirst, where there was no water, Who brought a spring of water for you out of flint rock, Who fed you with manna in the wilderness, which your fathers did not know, that He might distress you, and thoroughly test you, htat you might do well at your end. Then, do not say in your heart, “My strength and the power of my hand have gained for me this great power.” But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He that gives you strength to gain power, that He may establish His covenant, which the Lord swore to your fathers, as it is today. And it will come to pass, if by forgetting you forget the Lord your God, and go after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I bear witness against you today, that you will surely perish. As the remaining nations, which the Lord is destroying before your face, so you will perish,

because you did not listen to the voice of the Lord your God.

Hear, O Israel! You are crossing the Jordan today, to go in to inherit nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and walled up to heaven, a great, numerous, and tall people, the sons of Anak, whom you know, and of whom you have heard it *said*, “Who can stand against the sons of Anak?” And you shall know today, that the Lord your God—He goes before you; He is a consuming fire;

He will destroy them, and He will turn them back before you, and will destroy them utterly, as the Lord has said to you. Do not say in your heart, after the Lord your God has destroyed these nations before you, “Because of my righteousness the Lord brought me in to inherit this good land;” but because of the ungodliness of these nations the Lord will destroy them from before you

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

1 Samuel 17:16-54, 18:6-9 or 1 Kings 17:1-18:4

From the book of Samuel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Philistine gathered their armies for battle, and they were gathered at Sochoh of Judah, and they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah in Ephremem. And Saul and the men of Israel gathered and encamped in the valley; they formed battle ranks opposite the Philistines. The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. And a mighty man named Goliath, from Gath, came out from the ranks of the Philistines. He was six feet and nine inches tall. And he had a helmet on his head, and wore a coat of chain mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass and iron. And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a bronze shield between his shoulders. And the shaft of his spear

was like the beam of a loom, and his spear weighed six hundred shekels, and a shield-bearer went before him. And he stood and shouted to the armies of Israel, and said to them, “Why do you come out to line up for battle against us? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not Hebrews of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight against me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I am able to kill him, then you will be our servants, and subject to us.” And the Philistine said, “Look! Today, on this very day, I challenge the ranks of the armies of Israel. Give me a man, and the two of us will fight in single combat.” When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

But David said to Saul, "Do not let the heart of my lord fall reading him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "No, you are not able to go against the Philistine to fight him, since you are a boy, and he has been a man of war from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending the flock for his father, and when a lion and or a bear would come and take a sheep from the flock, I would go after it, and strike it, and pull the sheep from its mouth, and if it arose against me, then I caught it by its throat and struck it, and killed it. Your servant would kill both lion and bear, and the uncircumcised Philistine will be line one of them to me. Shall I not go and kill him today, and take away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised one who challenges the ranks of the living God? The Lord, Who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He Himself will deliver me from the hand of this uncircumcised Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord will be with you!"

So Saul clothed David with armor, and put a bronze helmet on his head, and clothed David with his sword over his armor. David tried walking once and twice, and he grew tired. And David said to Saul, "I am not able to go with these, for I am not experienced." And they removed them. Then David took his staff in

his hand, and chose five smooth stones for himself from the brook and put them in his shepherd's bag to store away, and with his sling in his hand he advanced against the Philistine.

And when Goliath saw David, he disdained him, for he was a boy, ruddy with a good face. So the Philistine said to David, "Am I like a dog, that you come against me with a staff and stones?" And David said, "No, worse than a dog!" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of heaven, and to the beasts of the field!" And David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword, and a spear, and a shield, but I come to you in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have reproached today. And today the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will kill you and take your head from you, and I will give your carcass and the carcasses of the camp of the philistines to the birds of heaven and the wild beasts of the earth, and all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel, and all this assembly will know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and the Lord will deliver you into our hands."

And the Philistine arose and came to meet David, and David put his hand in his bag and took out one

stone. He slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone penetrated through his helmet into his forehead, and he fell to the ground on his face. And David ran, and stood over him, and took his sword and put him to death, cutting off his head.

And the Philistines saw that their mighty one was dead, and the fled. And the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued them as far as the entrance of Gath, and to the gates of Ashkelon. And the wounded of the Philistines fell on the way to the gates, even as far as Gath and Ashkelon. And then men of Israel returned from pursuing the

Philistines, and plundered their camp. And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, and put his armor in his tent.

And dancers came to meet David from all the cities of Israel, with drums, and rejoicing with cymbals. And the women began a song, and sang, "Saul killed thousands, and David ten thousands." These words seemed evil in the eyes of Saul, and he said to David, "They ascribe ten thousands to you, and they only ascribe thousands to me." And Saul eyed David with suspicion from the day forward.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 7:1-14

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it happened in the days of Achaz *the son* of Joatham, the son of Ozias, king of Judah, that King Rason of Syria, and Phakee son of Romelias, king of Israel, came up against Jerusalem to war against it, but they could not take it. And it was reported to the house of David, saying, "Syria's forces have conspired with Ephraim." And [Achaz's] soul and the soul of his people were agitated, as a tree in the woods is shaken by the wind. And the Lord said to Esaias, "Go out to meet Achaz, you and the one who is left, Jasub your son, to the pool on the upper road of the Fuller's Field. And you will say to him, 'Take care to be

quiet, and do not fear, or let your soul be discouraged because of these two logs of smoking firebrands, for when My fierce anger is over, I will heal again. And *as for* the son of Syria, and the son of Romelias, because as they have plotted evil against you, *saying*, 'We will go up against Judah, and having talked with them, we will turn them to our side, and we will make the son of Tabeel king of it;' thus says the Lord of hosts, 'This counsel will not remain, nor will it come to pass. But the head of Syria is Damascus; and yet within sixty-five years the kingdom of Ephraim will cease from *being* a people. And the head of

Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria the son of Romelias. But if you do not believe this, neither will you understand.”“

And the Lord again spoke to Achaz, saying, “Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God, in the depth or in the height.” And Achaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I tempt the Lord.” And Esias said,

“Hear now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to provoke a fight with men? How then do you provoke a fight with the Lord? Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Look! The virgin will conceive, and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Emmanuel.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 11:1-20

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Sophar the Minite answered and said,

“He who speaks much should also listen in turn,

or does the eloquent speaker think himself to be right?

Blessed *is* the short lived offspring of woman.

Do not be a speaker of many words,

for there is no one to reply to you.

For example, do not say, ‘I am pure in my works,

and blameless before Him.’

In that case, how could the Lord would speak to you?

He will open His lips against you!

Then He will declare the power of wisdom to you,

for it will be double what you have.

And then you will know that what has come upon you from the Lord is equal to your sins.

Will you find the Lord’s foot-prints?

Or have you come to the end *of what* the Almighty has made?

The heaven *is* high, and what will you do?

And there are deeper things than those in Hades; what do you know?

Do you know those dimensions that are longer than the measure of the earth,

or the breadth of the sea?

And if he should overthrow all that is,

who will say to Him, ‘What have You done?’

For He knows the works of the lawless,

and when He sees wrongs, He will not overlook *them*.

But man vainly swims in words,

and a mortal born of a woman *is* like a donkey in the desert.

For if you have made your heart pure,

and lift up *your* hands towards Him—

if there is any lawlessness in your hands, put it far away from you,
and let no wrongdoing lodge in your dwelling.

For in this way, your face will shine again, like pure water,
and you will cleanse away the filth,
and you will not fear.

And you will forget trouble,
like a wave that has passed by,
and you will not be terrified.

And your prayer *will be* like the morning star,

and at midday life will arise to you.
And you will be confident, because you have hope;
and peace will dawn to you out of anxiety and care.

For you will be at ease,
and there will be no one to fight against you;
instead many will repent, and entreat your favour.

But deliverance will fail them,
for their hope is destruction,
and the eyes of the ungodly will waste away.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 114:7, 8a first half of b

A Psalm of David.

Return, O my soul, to your rest,
for the Lord has shown you kindness,
for He has delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears.

Alleluia.

Matthew 15:39-16:12

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then, Jesus sent the people away, got into the boat, and came to the borders of Magdala.

The Pharisees and Sadducees came and put Jesus to the test by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. But he answered them, “When it is evening, you say, ‘The

weather will be pleasant because the sky is red.’ In the morning, you say, ‘The weather will be bad today because the sky is red and threatening.’ Hypocrites! You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times! An evil and adulterous genera-

tion seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given to this generation, except the sign of the prophet Jonah.”

He left them and moved on. The disciples came to the other side and had forgotten to take bread. Jesus then said to them, “Take heed and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!”

At this, they reasoned among themselves, saying, “We brought no bread!”

Perceiving this, Jesus said, “Why do you reason among yourselves, you of little faith, ‘because you have brought no bread?’ Do you still not

understand or remember the five loaves that fed the five thousand and how many baskets you gathered up? Or do you not remember the seven loaves for the four thousand and how many baskets you took up? How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about {physical} bread? But beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!”

Then, they understood that he had not told them to beware of the yeast of bread but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Hebrews 12:28-13:16

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Hebrews. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, since we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be grateful and so offer divine service to God acceptably, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Keep on loving each other as brethren. Do not forget to be hospitable to strangers, for in doing so, some have welcomed angels without knowing it! Remember those who are in chains, as chained with them, and also those who are ill-treated, as if you too were suffering in the body. Marriage must be held in honor among all and the [marriage] bed

[kept] undefiled: but God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers.

Be free from the love of money and be satisfied with what you have. As God has said, “I will in no way leave you, neither will I in any way forsake you.” And so, we say with good courage:

The Lord is my helper, I will not fear.

What can man do to me?

Remember your leaders, men who proclaimed the word of God to you. Considering the results of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried away

by all sorts of strange teachings. It is good that the inner person should be strengthened by grace, not by food which is of no profit to those who are so preoccupied by it!

We have an altar from which those who offer divine service [in] the holy tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside of the camp. This is why Jesus suffered outside of the gate, so that he might

sanctify the people through his own blood. Let us therefore go out [of the city] to him who is outside of the camp and let us bear his disgrace. For we do not have here [below] an enduring city, but we seek the one that is to come. Through him, [Jesus], let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of our lips which confessed his Name. But do not forget to do what is good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 4:7-16

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

The end of all things is near! Therefore, be clear-minded, self-controlled and sober in prayer. Above all things, be committed to your mutual love, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another, without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve each other, as good stewards of the grace of God in its various forms. If anyone speaks, let it be as the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.

Beloved, do not be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you and that is testing you. It is not as if something strange was happening to you. But because you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice, so that at the revelation of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. If you are insulted for the Name of Christ, you are blessed because the divine Spirit of glory is resting upon you. On their part, Christ is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evil doer or a meddler in other people's matters. However, if one of you suffers for being a Christian, there is no reason to be

ashamed but {instead let such a one} glorify God in this matter.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 15:22-31

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Then it seemed good to the apostles and the presbyters, along with the whole Church, to choose some of their own men and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, leading men among the brethren. Through their hands, they wrote:

“The apostles, the presbyters, and the brethren; to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: greetings! We have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words and unsettled your souls by saying: ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’, although they had no such commission from us. Having assembled with one accord, it has seemed good to us to select men and to send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and

Paul, men who have risked their lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, we have sent Judas and Silas, who will also tell you the same things by word of mouth. It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose no greater burden on you than what is necessary: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. If you abstain from these things, it will be well with you. Farewell!”

Accordingly, the men were sent off and arrived in Antioch where they gathered the community and delivered the letter. The people read it and rejoiced over the encouragement.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 28:10b, 11

A Psalm of David.

The Lord sits enthroned as King forever.
The Lord will give strength to His people;
the Lord will bless His people with peace.

Alleluia.

Luke 6:39-49

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

He spoke a parable to them. "Can the blind guide the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above his teacher, but after being fully trained, everyone will be like their teacher. Why do you see the speck of chaff that is in your brother's eye but do not consider the beam that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck of chaff that is in your eye,' when you do not see the beam that is in your own eye? You hypocrites! First, remove the beam from your own eye, and then you will be able to see clearly in order to remove the speck of chaff that is in your brother's eye. For there is no good tree that brings forth rotten fruit, or any rotten tree that produces good fruit. Indeed, each tree is known by its own fruit! People do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick up grapes from a bramble bush. Out of

the good treasure of his heart, a good person brings out what is good, but out of the evil treasure of his heart, one who is evil brings out what is evil. For out of the overflowing of the heart, the mouth speaks.

Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? I will show you what the person is like who comes to me, hears my words and does them. He is like a man building a house who dug and went deep, and laid a foundation on the rock. When a flood arose, the water rushed against that house but could not shake it, because it was founded on the rock. But the one who hears and does not practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The stream rushed against it, and at once it fell down; and the ruin of that house was great."

Glory be to God forever.

Saturday of First (Second) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 24:7bc, 8a, 11

A Psalm of David.

Remember me in Your mercy,
because of Your goodness, O Lord.
The Lord is good and upright;
For Your Name's sake, O Lord,
[You will] pardon my sin, for it is great.

Alleluia.

Mark 9:43-50

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

“If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than have your two hands and go into Gehenna, the unquenchable fire ‘where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’ If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life lame, rather than having your two feet to be cast into Gehenna, the fire that will never be quenched, ‘where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’ If your eye causes you to

stumble, pluck it out! It is better for you to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye, rather than with two eyes be cast into the Gehenna of fire, ‘where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’

Indeed, everyone will be salted with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, with what will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 14:1-18

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Accept the one who is weak in faith, but not to enter into arguments over disputable matters. One has faith to eat all things while the weak eats only vegetables. The one who eats [everything] should not look down on the one who does not eat. The one who does not eat should not judge the one who eats because God has accepted him. Who are you who judge someone else's servant? He stands or falls to his own master! Yes, that one will be made [able] to stand, because God has the power to make someone stand.

One person considers that a [particular] day is more important [than the others]. Another thinks that every day is alike. Let each in his own mind be fully convinced. The one who observes the day should observe it 'to the Lord'; and the one who does not observe it should do so 'to the Lord'. The one who eats should eat 'to the Lord' because he gives thanks to God! Likewise, the one who does not eat should do so 'to the Lord' because such he [also] gives thanks to God! Indeed, we do not live selfishly and we do not die for ourselves. In fact, if we live, we live 'to the Lord;' or if we die, we die 'to the Lord'. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. It is for this purpose that Christ died, rose, and lived again, so

that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

But [as for] you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. As it is written:

'As I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow to me;

Every tongue will confess to God.'

And so, each of us will give a personal account to God. Therefore, let us not judge one another any more. Instead, resolve that no one should put a stumbling block in his brother's way, or an occasion for falling.

In the Lord Jesus, I know and I am convinced that nothing is unclean of itself. But to the one who considers anything to be unclean, to such a one it is unclean! Yet, if because of food your brother is grieved, you no longer walk in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. Thus, do not let what is good to you become a cause of evil things being said, because the Kingdom of God is not [about] eating and drinking, but [it is about] righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Certainly, whoever serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by all.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 1:22-27

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Be 'doers of the word'; not only hearers who delude themselves! For if anyone is a 'hearer of the word' and not a doer, such a person is like someone looking at his natural face in a mirror. Seeing himself and going away, he immediately forgets what kind of person he was. But whoever looks into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres [in it], not being a hearer who forgets but a doer of the work, will be blessed in doing so.

If anyone among you considers himself to be religious but does not bridle his tongue, such a one deceives his heart and his religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their afflictions and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 22:17-30

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

It happened that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance. I saw the Lord saying to me, 'Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not receive testimony concerning me from you.' I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those who believed in you. When the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I too was standing by, consenting to his death and

guarding the garment of those who killed him.'

Then he said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you out far from here to the Gentiles.'"

They listened to him until he said that; then they lifted up their voice, and shouted, "Rid the earth of this fellow, for he is not fit to live!"

As they cried out, throwing off their cloaks and dust into the air, the commanding officer ordered him to be brought into the barracks. He commanded that Paul should be

examined under scourging, so that he might find out for what crime the people shouted against him in such a way. When they had tied him up with straps, Paul asked the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman [citizen] and uncondemned?"

When the centurion heard this, he went to the commanding officer and told him, "Do you realize what you are about to do? This man is a Roman [citizen]!"

Then the commanding officer came and asked Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman?"

Paul replied, "Yes!"

The commanding officer answered, "I bought my citizenship for a great price!"

"But I was born a Roman," Paul replied.

Immediately those who were about to examine him left him, and even the commanding officer was afraid when he realized that he had bound Paul, Roman [citizen], in chains. But on the next day, desiring to know the truth about why he was accused by the Jews, he freed him from the bonds, and commanded the chief priests and all the Sanhedrin to come together. He then brought Paul down and set him before them.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 117:19, 20

A Psalm of David.

Open the gates of righteousness to me;
I will enter by them and confess the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous will enter through it.

Alleluia.

Matthew 7:13-21

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. How narrow is

the gate, and how pressing is the way that leads to life! Few are those who find it.

Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing. Inwardly they are ravenous wolves! By their fruits you will recognize them. Do you gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree produces good fruit, but the corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, and neither can a corrupt tree

produce good fruit. Every tree that does not grow good fruit is cut down, and thrown into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits you will know them. It is not everyone who tells me, 'Lord, Lord' who will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Second Sunday of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 50:3,

A Psalm of David.

Have mercy on me, O God,
in Your great mercy;
and according to the abundance of Your compassion,
[You will] blot out my transgression.
Turn Your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

Alleluia.

Mark 1:12-15

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

At once, the Spirit drove him out into the desert. He was there, in the desert for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals and the angels were serving him.

Now, after John had been arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled! The Kingdom of God is at hand! Repent and believe in the Good News." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 56:2

A Psalm of David.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me,
for my soul trusts in You;
and I will hope in the shadow of Your wings
until iniquity passes away.

Alleluia.

Luke 4:1-13

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. For forty days, he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing in those days and afterward, when they were completed, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread!"

Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

Leading him up on a high place, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. The devil said to him, "I will give you all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me and I give it to whomever I want. If you therefore will worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered him, "Get behind me Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and to him only shall you offer divine service.'"

The devil led him to Jerusalem, set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down from here, for it is written,

'He will put his angels in charge of you, to guard you;'

and,

'On their hands they will bear you up, lest perhaps you dash your foot against a stone.'

In reply, Jesus said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

When the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him until another time. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 14:19-15:7

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And so, let us pursue things which cause peace, and things by which we may edify one another. Do not overthrow God's work for the sake of food! All things indeed are clean; however it is evil for someone to create a stumbling block by eating. It

is good to not eat meat, drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles, is offended, or is made weak.

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Blessed is the one who does not judge himself in

what he approves. But the one who doubts is condemned if by eating, it is not of faith. Whatever is not of faith is sin.

Now to him who is able to establish you according to my Good News and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret through long ages but is now revealed, and who by the Scriptures of the prophets (according to the commandment of the eternal God,) is made known for obedience of faith to all the nations; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever! Amen.

Now, we who are strong should bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not {just} please ourselves. Let each

one of us please our neighbor for what is good, to be edifying to him. Even Christ did not please himself. But, as it is written, "The insults of those who insulted you fell on me." For whatever things were written before were written for our instruction, so that through patience and through the Scriptures' encouragement we might have hope. Now, may the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to be together of the same mind according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord, you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, accept one another, even as Christ also accepted you, to the glory of God.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 2:1-13

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory with partiality. For if someone with a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your synagogue, and a poor man in filthy clothing also comes in, you pay special attention to the one who wears the fine clothing! To the rich you say, "Sit here in a good place," but you tell the poor man, "Stand over there," or "Sit by my footstool!" Have not you shown partiality among

yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose those who are poor in this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom which he promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor! Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you before the courts? Do they not blaspheme the honorable Name by which you are called? However, if you fulfill the

royal law found in the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well. But if you discriminate, you commit sin and you are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point has become guilty of everything. For he who said, “Do not commit adultery” also said “Do not commit murder.” Now, if you do not commit adultery

but murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. And so, speak and act as people who are going to be judged by a law of freedom. For judgment is without mercy to those who have shown no mercy, but mercy triumphs over judgment.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 23:1-11

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Looking straight at the Sanhedrin, Paul said, “Brothers, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day.” Then Ananias, the high priest, ordered those who stood by him to strike Paul on the mouth.

At this, Paul said to him, “God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit to judge me according to the law, and [yet] command me to be struck contrary to the law?”

Those who stood by said, “Do you insult God’s high priest?”

Paul said, “I did not know, brothers, that he was high priest. For it is written, ‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.’” But when Paul realized that some were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Men and brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees!

And I am being judged concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead!”

When he said this, an argument arose between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, angel, or spirit; but the Pharisees believe in all of these things. A great uproar began, and some of the teachers of the law who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up. They strongly argued, “We find no evil in this man! But if a spirit or angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God!”

The dispute became so fierce that the commanding officer feared that they would tear Paul to pieces. He then ordered the soldiers to go down and to forcefully remove Paul from

the assembly, and to bring him into the barracks.

The following night, the Lord stood by him, and said, "Rejoice,

Paul! For as you have borne witness to me at Jerusalem, you must also bear witness in Rome."

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 26:8c, 9acd

A Psalm of David.

O Lord, will I seek after Your face.

Do not turn Your face from me.

Be my helper, do not utterly cast me away;

Do not forsake me, O God, my Saviour.

Alleluia.

Matthew 4:1-11

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus was then led by the Spirit [to go] into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. When he had fasted forty days and forty nights, Jesus was hungry. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

But Jesus answered, "It is written:

'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city. He placed him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'He will put his angels in charge of you' and [also],

On their hands they will bear you up, And so, that you do not dash your foot against a stone.'

Jesus replied, "But it is also written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God to the test.'"

The devil took him to an extremely high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. The devil said to Jesus, "I will give you all of these things if you will fall down and worship me."

Then Jesus said to him, "Get behind me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and

to him only shall you offer divine service.””

Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him. *Glory be to God forever.*

Monday of Second (Third) Week of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 40:1

A Psalm of David.

Blessed is he who considers the poor and needy;
the Lord will deliver him in an evil day.

Alleluia.

Luke 4:1-13

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. For forty days, he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing in those days and afterward, when they were completed, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread!”

Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’”

Leading him up on a high place, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. The devil said to him, “I will give you all this authority and their

glory, for it has been delivered to me and I give it to whomever I want. If you therefore will worship me, it will all be yours.”

Jesus answered him, “Get behind me Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and to him only shall you offer divine service.’”

The devil led him to Jerusalem, set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down from here, for it is written,

‘He will put his angels in charge of you, to guard you;’

and,

‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest perhaps you dash your foot against a stone.’

In reply, Jesus said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”

When the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him until another time. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 1:20-33

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Wisdom sings in the streets,
and speaks boldly in the squares,
and she preaches on the top of the walls,

and waits at the gates of princes,
and at the gates of the city she boldly says,

“As long as the simple hold on to righteousness,
they will not be ashamed;
but the fools, since they are lovers of pride,
having become ungodly, they hated knowledge,
and have become subject to reproofs.

See, I will bring forth to you
the utterance of my breath,
and I will teach you my word.
Since I called, and you did not listen,

and I spoke at length, and you paid no attention,
but you made my counsels invalid,
and disregarded my reproofs,
therefore I will laugh at your destruction,
and I will rejoice when ruin comes upon you.

Yes, when confusion comes upon you unexpectedly,
and destruction arrives like a whirlwind,

and when affliction and anguish come upon you,
and when ruin comes upon you.

For it will be that when you call upon me,

I will not listen to you;
evil people will seek me,
but will not find *me*,
for they hated wisdom,
and did not choose the fear of the Lord,

nor would they pay attention to my counsels,
but despised my reproofs.

Therefore, they will eat the fruits of their own way,
and will be filled with their own ungodliness.

For since they wronged the simple, they will be killed,
and an inquiry will ruin the ungodly.

But he who listens to me will live in hope,

and will be at ease, without fear of any evil.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaia 8:13-9:7

From the book of Isaia 8 the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Sanctify the Lord Himself, and He will be your fear. And if you trust in Him, He will be your sanctuary, and you will not come against *Him* as against a stumbling-stone, nor as a falling caused by a rock, but the houses of Jacob is in a trap, and those who dwell in Jerusalem *are* in a pit. Therefore, many among them will be powerless, and fall, and be crushed, and those who are in safety will come near and be taken.”

Then those who seal the law so that they might not learn it will be made manifest. And *one* will say, “I will wait for God, Who has turned His face away from the house of Jacob, and I will trust in Him, see, I and the children God has given me.” This will be *for* signs and wonders in the house of Israel from the Lord of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion. And if they should say to you, “Seek those who that utter sounds from the earth, and are ventriloquists, who speak from their belly,” should not a nation diligently seek their God? Why do they seek *out* the dead concerning the living? For He has given the law for a help, *so* that they might not speak such a word as this, concerning which there are no gifts to offer with it. And a harsh famine will come

upon you, and it will happen, *that* when you become hungry, you will be grieved, and you will speak badly of your ruler and your idol. And they will look up to heaven above, and they will look on the earth below, and look, affliction, distress, and darkness—affliction, and darkness so that *one* cannot see—and the one who is in anguish will not be perplexed *only* for a time.

Do this first, and do it quickly, O country of Zabulon, land of Nephthalim by the sea, and the rest *dwelling along* the seacoast, and *the* land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Nations, the parts of Judea.

O you people who walk in darkness,
see a great light!

O you who dwell in the country of *the* shadow of death,
a light will shine on you!

The multitude of the people,
whom You have brought back in your joy,

will also rejoice before You
like those who rejoice in harvest
and like those who divide the spoils,

because the yoke that was placed on them is taken away,
and the rod on their neck;

for the Lord has broken the rod of
the exactors,
as in the day of Madiam,
for they will repay with reconcilia-
tion
for every garment and cloak ac-
quired by deceit,
and they will be willing,
even if they were burned by fire.
For a child is born to us,
and a son is given to us,
whose government is upon His
shoulder,
and His Name is called “the Angel
of great counsel,”

for I will bring peace upon the
rulers,
peace and health to Him.
His sovereignty will be great,
and His peace has no end.
His peace will be upon the throne of
David, and *upon* His kingdom,
to establish it, and to support *it*
with righteousness and with
judgement,
from that time forward and unto
ages of ages.
The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will
perform this.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 31:1, 2a

A Psalm of David.

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not take into account.

Alleluia.

Luke 19:11-28

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

As the people heard these things,
he went on to tell [them] a parable
because he was near Jerusalem, and
they supposed that the Kingdom of
God would be revealed immediately.
He said therefore, “A certain noble-
man went into a far country to receive
a kingdom for himself, and then
return. So he called ten of his slaves

and gave them ten mina coins, and
told them, ‘Trade [with these] until I
come.’ But his subjects hated him,
and they sent a delegation after him,
to say: ‘We do not want this man to
reign over us.’

It so happened that when he re-
turned, after receiving the kingdom,
that he commanded these servants to

whom he had given the money to be called to him, so that he might know what they had earned by conducting business. The first came before him, saying: 'Lord, your mina has made ten more minas!'

The king said to him, 'Well done, you good servant! Because you were found faithful with very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'

The second came, saying: 'Your mina, Lord, has made five minas!'

And so, the king said to him, 'And you are to be set over five cities.' Another came, saying: 'Lord, behold, your mina, which I kept laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a strict man! You take up what you did not lay down, and you reap what you did not sow.'

The king said to him, 'Out of your own mouth will I judge you, you wicked servant! You knew that I was

a severe man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not deposit my money on deposit, and at my coming, I would have collected it with interest on it?' He then said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.'

Now, they said to the master, 'Lord, he [already] has ten minas!' 'For I tell you that to everyone who [already] has, more will be given; but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. As for those enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them here, bring them here and kill them before me.'"

Having said these things, Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.
Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

1 Corinthians 5:9-6:5

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

I wrote to you in my letter to have no fellowship with those who are immoral; yet I did not mean with the immoral people of this world, or with those who are greedy, dishonest, or idolaters; or else you would have to leave the world! But as it is, I wrote to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother who is a sexual sinner, or greedy, or an idolater, or a

slanderer, or a drunkard, or someone dishonest. [In fact], do not even eat with such a person! For what do I have to do with judging

those who are outside? Do you not judge those who are within? But those who are outside, God judges.

"Put away the wicked man from among yourselves!"

Now, how can any of you dare go to court before the unrighteous (and not before the saints) when there is a matter against a neighbor? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is [to be] judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more, then, things that pertain to this life?

And now, if you need to judge things pertaining to this life, why do you place yourselves under judges who are of no account in the Church? I say this to move you to shame. Is there not even one wise man among you who would be able to decide between his brothers?

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 1:3-12

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy, became our father again. This is to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that does not fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are protected through faith for a salvation which is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this, you greatly rejoice, although for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials. This way, may the demonstration of your faith (which is more precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire), be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ! Even though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do

not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with unspeakable joy and glory. And so you are receiving the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. About this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you did much research and investigation. They were searching the person and time that the Spirit of Christ (which was in them) pointed to by predicting the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow them. They received revelation that they were servants of these things not for themselves but for you. These [things] have now have been announced to you by those who preached the Good News by the Holy Spirit sent out from heaven, and [even the] angels desire to gaze upon these things.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 17:10-14

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

At once, the brethren sent Paul and Silas away by night to Beroea. When they arrived, they went into the Jewish synagogue.

Now, the Beroeans were more open-minded than the people in Thessalonica: they received the word with great eagerness of the mind and examined the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were true. As a result, many of them believed, as well

as some Greek women of high standing, and a fair number of Greek men. But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that Paul was also proclaiming the word of God at Beroea, they came there to stir up the crowds. Then, the brethren immediately led Paul away to the coast, while Silas and Timothy remained there.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 31:5

A Psalm of David.

I made my sin known to You,
and no longer hid my iniquity.

I said, "I will confess to the Lord against myself, declaring my sin,"
and You forgave the ungodliness of my sin.

Alleluia.

Luke 11:33-36

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

No one who has lit a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket! Instead, it is placed on a stand so that those

who come in may see the light. The lamp of the body is the eye! Therefore, when your eye is good, your

whole body is also full of light; but when it is evil, your body also is full of darkness. And so, see whether the light that is in you is not darkness. If your whole body is full of light,

having no dark part, it will be completely full of light, as when the lamp with its bright shining gives you light.” *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of Second (Third) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 2:1-15

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

My son, if you will receive the words of my commandment,
and hide them within yourself,
your ear will listen to wisdom,
and you will apply your heart to understanding,

and you will apply it to the instruction of your son.

For it you call upon wisdom,
and raise your voice for understanding;

and if you seek it like silver,
and search for it like treasure,
then you will understand the fear of the Lord,

and you will find the knowledge of God.

For the Lord gives wisdom,
and knowledge and understanding come from His presence,

and he stores up salvation for the upright;

He will protect their journey,
that He might guard the righteous ways,

and He will protect the way of those who reverence Him.

Then you will understand righteousness and judgement,

and you will direct all your course straight.

For if wisdom comes into your mind,

and discernment seems pleasing to your soul,

then good counsel will guard you,
and holy insight will guard you,
in order to rescue you from an evil way,

and from the man who speaks nothing trustworthy.

Woe to those who abandon right paths

to walk in ways of darkness,
who rejoice in evil,
and delight in wicked perverseness,

whose ways are crooked,
and whose paths are devious.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 10:12-20

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it will happen, when the Lord
has finished doing all things on
Mount Zion and Jerusalem, *that* He
will bring His wrath against the
arrogant of heart, upon the ruler of
the Assyrians, and upon his boastful
haughty looks. For he said,

“I will act in my strength,

and by the wisdom of *my* under-
standing

I will remove the boundaries of
nations,

and will plunder their strength.

And I will shake inhabited cities

and I will take with my hand the
whole world like a nest

and I will take them like eggs that
have been forsaken,

and there is no one that will es-
cape me, or contradict me.”

Shall an axe glorify itself without
the one who cuts with it?

Or will the saw exalt itself without
the one who pulls it?

It is likewise if one should lift a
rod, or a piece of wood.

But it will not be so!

Rather the Lord of hosts

will send dishonour upon your
honour,

and burning fire will be kindled on
your glory.

And the light of Israel will become
a fire,

and He will sanctify him with
burning fire,

and it will devour the wood like
grass.

On that day the mountains, the
hills, and the forests will be con-
sumed,

and *fire* will consume *both* soul and
body,

and he who flees will be
like one fleeing from burning
flame.

And those who are left from them
will be a *small* number,

and a child will write them down.

And it will happen in that day, *that*
the remnant of Israel, and those of
Jacob who were saved, will never
again trust in those who harmed
them; but they will trust in God, the
Holy One of Israel, in truth.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Joshua 7:1-26*

From the book of Joshua, the son of Nun, the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But the children of Israel commit-
ted a great offence, and appropriated
for themselves part of what was
accursed. And Achar the son of

Charmi, the son of Zambri, the son
of Zara, of the tribe of Judah, took
from what was accursed, and the

Lord was very angry with the children of Israel.

And Joshua sent men to Gai, which is by Bethel, saying, "Spy out Gai." And the men went up and spied out Gai. And they returned to Joshua, and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and take the city by siege. Do not lead up the whole people there, for the enemy are few." And about three thousand men went up, and they fled before the men of Gai. And the men of Gai killed thirty-six of them, and pursued them from the gate, and crushed them on the steep slope. And the hearts of the people were terrified and became like water.

And Joshua tore his clothes, and fell to the ground on his face before the Lord until evening, both he and the elders of Israel, and they put dust on their heads. And Joshua said, "I pray, Lord, why has Your servant brought this people across the Jordan, to deliver them to the Amorite to destroy us? If only we had remained and settled beyond the Jordan. And what will I say, since Israel has turned his back before his enemy? And when the Chananites, and all the inhabitants of the land hear this, they will surround us, and destroy us from off the land. Then what will You do for Your great Name?"

And the Lord said to Joshua, "Rise up. Why have you fallen upon your face? The people has sinned, and

transgressed the covenant that I made with them; for they have stolen from the what was cursed, and put it among their possessions. And the children of Israel will not be able to stand before their enemies. They will turn their back before their enemies, because they have become what is accursed thing; I will no longer be with you, until you remove what is cursed from among you. Rise up and sanctify the people; and tell them to sanctify themselves for tomorrow. This is what the Lord God of Israel says, 'The accursed thing is among you. You will not be able to stand before your enemies, until you have removed the cursed thing from among you. In the morning you shall all be gathered together by your tribes, and it will happen that the tribe that the Lord shows, you will bring family by family. And the family that the Lord shows, you shall bring household by household. And the household that the Lord shows, you shall bring man by man. And the man who is pointed out, shall be burnt with fire, along with and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the Lord, and has committed lawlessness in Israel.'

And Joshua rose up early, and brought the people by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was pointed out. And it was brought by their families, and family of Zara was pointed out. And it was brought man by man, and Achar the son of

Zambri, the son of Zara, was pointed out. And Joshua said to Achar, "Give glory to the Lord God of Israel today, and make confession. Tell me what you have done, and do not hide it from me." And Achar answered Joshua, and said, "Truly I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel. Thus and so have I done: I saw a beautiful, multi-coloured garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of fifty shekels of gold in the spoil, and I desired them and took them. And, look, they are hidden in my tent, and the silver is hidden under them." And Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent in the camp. And these things were hidden in his tent, and the silver was under them. And they brought them out of the tent, and brought them to Joshua and the elders of Israel, and they placed them before the Lord.

And Joshua took Achar the son of Zara, and brought him to the Valley of Achor, along with his sons, and his daughters, and his calves, and his donkeys, and all his sheep, and his tent, and all his property—and all the people were with him. And he brought them to the Valley of Achor. And Joshua said to Achar, "Why have you destroyed us? May the Lord destroy you as well today." And all Israel stoned him with stones. And they set up a great heap of stones over him, and the Lord ceased from His fierce anger. Therefore, he called the place "the Valley of Achor" until this day.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Found in Southern United States. Lacking in Kitchener and Ottawa.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 31:10

A Psalm of David.

Many are the scourges of the sinner,
but mercy surrounds him who hopes in the Lord.
Alleluia.

Luke 12:54-59

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus also said to the multitudes, the west, you immediately say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it happens.

When a south wind blows, you say, 'There will be a scorching heat,' and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and sky, but how is it that you do not interpret this [present] time? Why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? For when you are going with your adversary before the magistrate, as you are on

the way, do your utmost to be released from him, for fear that perhaps he will drag you to the judge, and the judge might deliver you to the officer, and the officer might throw you into prison. I tell you, you will by no means get out of there, until you have paid the very last penny." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 4:1-8

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

What then will we say that Abraham (our forefather according to the flesh) gained? Certainly, if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, although not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness." Now to the one who works, the reward is not considered as a grace but as something owed. But to one who does not work but

believes in him who justifies the ungodly, it is faith that is accounted for righteousness. Even as David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whom the Lord will by no means charge with sin.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 2:1-11

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

My little children, I write these things to you so that you may not commit sin. But if someone does commit a sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. He is the atoning sacrifice

for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the whole world.

This is how we have come to know that we know him: if we keep his commandments. The one who says, "I know him," and yet does not keep his commandments is a liar, and

the truth is not in such a person. But if someone keeps God's word, God's love has most certainly been perfected in him. This is how we know that we are in him: whoever claims to abide in him should also live just as he lived.

Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you. This is an old commandment which you have had since the beginning. This old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. Yet, in another way, it is a new commandment that I write to you; it is true in him and in you because the darkness

is passing away and the true light already shines! Anyone who claims to be in the light and hates his brother [or sister] is still in the darkness. Anyone who loves his brother [or sister] remains in the light, and there is no occasion for stumbling in such a person. But whoever hates a brother [or sister] is in the darkness and walks in the darkness; such a person does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 27:9-12

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

A great deal of time had been lost and the voyage was now dangerous because the Fast was now already passed. Paul gave them this warning: "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will result in injuries and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also of our lives!" However, the centurion gave more heed to the master and to

the owner of the ship than to what Paul was saying. Since the haven was not suitable to spend the winter, the majority was in favor of continuing and to do our utmost to reach Phoenix and winter there. This is a port of Crete which faces both the northeast and the southeast.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 31:2, 3a

A Psalm of David.

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not take into account,
and in whose mouth there is no deceit.

[Because] I kept silent, my bones grew old.

Alleluia.

John 8:31-39

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus therefore said to those Jews who had believed him, "If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!"

They answered him, "We are Abraham's seed and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free?'"

Jesus answered them, "Amen, amen, I tell you; everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin! A slave does not live in the house forever, [but] a son remains forever.

If therefore the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed! I know that you are Abraham's seed, yet you seek to kill me, because my word finds no place in you. I say the things which I have seen with my Father; and you also do the things which you have seen with your father."

They answered him, "Our father is Abraham!"

Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of Second (Third) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Exodus 4:19b-6:13

From the book of Exodus of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord said to Moses in Madian, "Go, return to Egypt, for all that sought your life are dead." And Moses took his wife and his children, and mounted them on the beasts of burden, and returned to Egypt, and Moses took the rod of God in his hand. And the Lord said to Moses, "When you back to Egypt, see—all the wonders I have put in your hand, you will work before Pharaoh. But I will harden his heart, and he will not send the people away. Then you will say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the Lord says, "Israel *is* my first-born son. So I say to you, 'Send my people away so that they may serve me.' But if you will not send them away, see then, I will kill your firstborn son.'" "

And it happened on the way, at the inn, that the Angel of the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. And Sephora took a stone and cut off the foreskin of her son, and fell at his feet and said, "The blood of the circumcision of my son is staunched." And he departed from him, because she said, "The blood of the circumcision of my son is staunched."

And the Lord said to Aaron, "Go into the desert to meet Moses." And he went and met him at the mount of God, and they kissed each other. And Moses reported to Aaron all the words of the Lord that He had sent, and all the things that He had commanded him. Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spoke

all these words, which God had spoken to Moses, and performed the signs before the people. And the people believed and rejoiced, because God had visited the children of Israel, and because He had seen their affliction. Then the people bowed and worshipped.

And after this Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they said to him, "This is what the Lord God of Israel, says, "Send My people away so that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the desert." And Pharaoh said, "Who is He that I should obey His voice, to send the children of Israel away? I do not know the Lord, and I will not send Israel away!" And they say to him, "The God of the Hebrews has called us to Him. We will therefore travel a three days' journey into the desert in order to sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest at any time death or slaughter meet us." And the king of Egypt said to them, "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, turn the people from their works? Each of you, go back to your work." And Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now very numerous; let us then give them no rest from their work." Then Pharaoh gave orders to the task-masters of the people and their clerks, saying, "You will no longer give straw to the people for brick-making as it was yesterday and the third day. Let them go and collect straw for themselves. And you will impose a quota of brick-making on

them, which they are to do each day. You will not remove anything, for they are idle; therefore, they cry out, saying, 'Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.' Let the works of these men be oppressive, and let them be preoccupied with this, and do not let them be preoccupied with empty words."

And the taskmasters and the clerks urged them, and spoke to the people, saying, "This is what Pharaoh says, 'I *will* no longer give you straw. Go yourselves, gather straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, for nothing is reduced from your workload.'" So the people were dispersed throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. And the taskmasters forced them to hurry, saying, "Fulfill your daily quota, as when straw was given to you." And the clerks from the race of the children of Israel, who were set over them by the taskmasters of Pharaoh, were beaten and questioned, "Why have you not fulfilled your quota of brickmaking just as yesterday and the third day, today as well?"

Then the clerks of the children of Israel went in and cried to Pharaoh, saying, "Why are you acting like this with your servants? Straw is not given to your servants, and they tell us to make brick; and look, your servants have been beaten, you will therefore injure your people." And he said to them, "You are idle, you are men of leisure! Therefore you say, 'Let us go

and offer sacrifice to our God.' Now then, go and work, for straw will not be given to you, yet you will deliver the quota of bricks." And the clerks of the children of Israel saw themselves in trouble, with *men* saying, "You will not fail to deliver the daily quota of the brick-making."

And they departed from Pharaoh, and met Moses and Aaron, coming to meet them. And they said to them, "The Lord look upon you and judge you, for you have made our smell loathsome before Pharaoh, and before his servants, to put a sword into his hands to kill us."

And Moses turned to the Lord, and said, "O Lord, why have You brought affliction on this people? And why have You sent me? From the time that I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your Name, he has afflicted this people, and You have not delivered Your people."

And the Lord said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh; for by a mighty hand he will send them forth, and with an outstretched arm he will drive them out of his land."

And God spoke to Moses and said to him, "I *am* the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, being their God, but I did not reveal My Name, 'Lord,' to them. And I established my covenant with them, to give them the land of the Canaanites, the land of their sojourn, in which they lived as strangers. And I have heard

the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians enslave, and I remembered your covenant. Go! speak to the children of Israel, saying, 'I *am* the Lord; I will bring you out from the tyranny of the Egyptians, and I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great judgments. And I will take you as My people, and be your God. And you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the tyranny of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land for which I stretched out my hand to give it to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it you for an inheritance: I

am the Lord.'" And Moses spoke this to the sons of Israel, and but did not listen to Moses because of their discouragement and their hard tasks.

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Go in, tell Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to send away the children of Israel from his land." And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, "look, the children of Israel have not listened to me. How will Pharaoh listen to me? I am not eloquent." And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, and gave them instructions for Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he should send the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Joel 2:21-26

From the book of Joel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Be of good courage, O land,
rejoice and be glad,
for the Lord has done great things!
Be of good courage, you animals
of the field,
for the plains of the wilderness
have blossomed,
for the trees have borne their fruit,
the fig tree and the vine have
yielded their full potency.

Rejoice then and be glad
In the Lord your God,
you children of Zion,
for He has given you food in full-
ness,

and He will send you the early and
the later rain, as before.

The threshing floors will be full of
wheat,
and the presses will overflow with
wine and oil.

And I will repay you for the years
that the grasshopper and the lo-
cust,

and the blight, and the caterpillar
devoured,

my great army, which I sent
against you.

And you will eat abundantly, and
be satisfied,

And will praise the Name of the
Lord your God
for the marvelous things He has
done with you.

And My people will never again be
put to shame.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 9:8-10:4

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And all the people of Ephraim,
and those who dwelt in Samaria
will know it,
who say in pride and arrogance of
heart,

“The bricks have fallen down,
but come, let us hew stones,
and cut down sycamores and ce-
dars,
and we will build ourselves a tow-
er.”

And God will strike down those
who rise up against them on mount
Zion,

and He will scatter their enemies:
Syria from the rising of the sun,
and the Greeks from the setting of
the sun,
those who devour Israel with open
mouth.

For all this, *His* anger is not turned
away,
but His hand is still uplifted.

But the people did not turn back
until they were struck,

yet they did not seek the Lord.
So the Lord took away head and
tail from Israel,

great and small in one day—
the elder, and those who admire
persons, this is the head;

and the prophet who teaches un-
lawful things, he is the tail.

And those who bless this people
lead them astray;

and they mislead them in order to
destroy them.

Therefore, God will not take
pleasure in their young men,
nor have mercy on their orphans
and widows.

For they are all lawless and evil,
and every mouth speaks injustices.
For all this *His* anger has not
turned away,
but *His* hand is still uplifted.

And the transgression will burn
like a fire,
and will be consumed like dry
grass,

and it will burn in the thickets of
the forest,
and devour everything around the
hills.

The whole land is burned up
because of the fierce anger of the
Lord,

and the people will be completely
burned by fire.

No man will have compassion on
his brother,

but *will* turn aside to the right be-
cause he is hungry,
and he will eat on the left,
but no man will be satisfied,
even by eating the flesh of his own
arm.

For Manasseh will devour Ephra-
im,
and Ephraim Manasseh,
for they will besiege Judah togeth-
er.

For all this *His* anger is not turned
away,
but *His* hand is still uplifted.

“Woe to those who write evil!
For when they write, they write
trouble,
turning aside the cause of the
poor,

and robbing judgement from the
needy of My people,
so that a widow may be their prey,
and an orphan a spoil.

What will they do in the day of
visitation?

For affliction will come to you
from far away,
and to whom will you flee for
help,
and where will you leave your
glory,
that you may not fall into captiv-
ity?”

For all this *His* and is not turned
away,
but *His* hand is still uplifted.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 12, 13, 14

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Job answered and said,
“So then are you *alone* men,
and wisdom will die with you?
But I too have a heart, as well as
you.

A righteous and blameless man
has become a laughingstock.
For it had been ordained that he
should fall
under others at the appointed
time,
and that his houses should be
plundered by the lawless.

However, do not let anyone trust
that,
being evil, he will be *held* innocent,

as many as provoke the Lord,
as if there were indeed to be no
trial for them.

But ask now the four-footed ani-
mals, if they may speak to you,
And the birds of the air, if they
may report it to you.

Tell the earth, if it should interpret
it to you,
and the fish of the sea will explain
to you.

Who among these does not know
that the hand of the Lord has
made them?

That the life of all living things is
in his hand,

and the breath of every man?
For the mind discerns words,
and the palate tastes food.
Wisdom comes with much time,
and knowledge with much living.
With Him are wisdom and power,
counsel and understanding are
His.

If He tears down, who can build
up again?

If He closes a door against man,
who can open it?

If He withholds the water, He will
dry the earth,

but if He lets it loose, He will
overthrow and destroy it.

With Him are strength and power,
knowledge and understanding are
His.

He leads counsellors away captive,
and makes fools of the judges of
the earth.

He sets kings upon thrones,
and ties their waist with a belt.

He sends priests away into captiv-
ity,
and overthrows the mighty ones
of the earth.

He changes the lips of the faithful,
and He knows the understanding
of the elders.

He pours dishonour upon rulers,
and heals the humble.

He reveals deep things out of
darkness,

He has brought the shadow of
death into light.

He leads the nations astray and
destroys them.

He overthrows the nations, and
leading them *away*.

He changes the hearts of earthly
rulers

and leads them astray in a way,
they have not known,

saying, "Let them grope *in* darkness
without light

and let them wander about like a
drunken man.

Look, my eye has seen these
things,

and my ear has heard *them*.

What you know, I know as well;

I do not have less understanding
than you.

Nevertheless I will speak to the
Lord,

and I will reason before Him, if
He wills.

But you are all bad physicians and
wrongful healers.

But O that you would be silent,
for it would lead you to wisdom.

Hear the refutation of my mouth,
and heed the judgment of my lips.

Do you not speak before the
Lord,

and utter deceit before Him?

Will you draw back?

Go ahead, become judges your-
selves!

For it would be good, if He were
to thoroughly search you;

for if, doing everything *in your*
power, you will join yourselves to Him,

He will still convict you if you
secretly show partiality.

Will His terror not make you dizzy,
and His fear all upon you?

In the end, your arrogance will
prove to be like ashes,
and your body *like* clay.

Be silent, that I may speak,
and put my anger to rest,
having taken my flesh in my teeth,
and put my life in my hand.

Though the Mighty One should
lay His hand upon me,
and has already begun,

I will speak, and argue my case
before Him.

And this will turn for me to salvation,
for deceit cannot enter before
Him.

Hear, hear my words,
for I will declare them in your
hearing.

Look, I am near my judgment:

I know that I will be shown to be
righteous.

For who is there that will find
fault with me,

that I should now be silent, and
expire?

But grant me two things:

then I will not hide myself from
Your face:

Withdraw *Your* hand from me,
and do not let Your fear terrify
me.

Then You will call, and I will listen
to you;

or You will speak, and I will give
You an answer.

How many are my sins and my
transgressions?

Teach me what they are.

Why do You hide Yourself from
me,

and regard me as Your enemy?

Will You be wary *of me*, as *of* a
windblown leaf?

Or will You set Yourself against
me, one like windborne grass?

For You have written evil things
against me,

and You have surrounded me with
the sins of my youth.

And You have put my foot in the
stocks,

and watched all my works,

and penetrated into the bottoms
of my feet,

which have become old like a
wineskin,

or like a moth-eaten garment.

For a mortal born of a woman
is short-lived, and full of wrath.

He falls like a flower that has
bloomed,

and he departs like a shadow, and
cannot continue.

Have You not taken account of
him,

and brought him into judgment
before You?

For who will be pure from un-
cleanness? None, not one!

Even if his life should be *but* one
day upon the earth,

and his months are counted out to
him,

You have appointed a time for
him,

and he cannot exceed *it*.

Depart from him, that he may
have quiet,

and take pleasure in his life, like a
hired labourer.

For there is hope for a tree, even
if it is cut down,

it will sprout again, and its tender
shoots will not fail.

For though its root may grow old
in the earth,

and its stump die in the rocky
ground,

it will bud at the scent of water,

and will produce a crop like one
newly planted.

But a man who has died is utterly
gone,

and when a mortal has fallen, he is
no more.

For the sea diminishes with time,

and a river fails and is dried up.

And a man that lays down *in death*
will never rise again

until the heaven is dissolved,

and they will not be roused from
their sleep.

For if only You had kept me in
the grave,

and had hidden me until Your
wrath had ceased,

and that You would appoint me a
set time

in which You would remember
me!

For if a man lives again
after he completes the days of his
life, and dies,

I would endure until I would arise
again.

Then You would call, and I would
answer You.

But do not reject the work of
Your hands.

But You have numbered my pur-
suits,

and not one of my sins will escape
You.

And You have sealed up my
transgressions in a bag,

and marked it down if I have
transgressed unknowingly.

Truly a mountain falls and crum-
bles away,

and a rock wears out of its place.

Waters wear away stones,

and overflowing torrents wash
away mounds of the earth,

and You destroy human endur-
ance.

You pushed him to an end, and he
is gone.

You set Your face against him,
and sent him away.

And though his children are mul-
tiplied, he does not know *it*,

and if they become few, he is not
aware.

Because his flesh is in pain, and
his soul grieves.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 26:4abcd

A Psalm of David.

One thing I ask of the Lord,
and seek after,
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life.

Alleluia.

Luke 13:18-22

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus said, "What is the Kingdom of God like? To what shall I compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed which someone picked up and planted in his own garden. It grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air found shelter in its branches."

Again he said, "To what shall I compare the Kingdom of God? It is like yeast, which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."

Jesus was on his way through cities and villages, teaching and traveling onward to Jerusalem. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Thessalonians 2:9-17

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Thessalonians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

The coming [of the lawless one] is according to Satan's operation with all kinds of power, miracles and lying wonders, and with all deception of wickedness aimed at those who are being lost, because they did not receive the love of the truth so that they might be saved. Because of this,

God sends them a strong delusion so that they should believe a lie and those who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness shall all be judged.

But we must always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from

the beginning for salvation through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. Indeed, he called you through our Good News to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so, brethren, stand firm and keep the traditions which we taught you, whether by word or by letter.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good work and word.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

2 Peter 2:9-15

The Catholic Epistle from the Second Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly from temptation and how to hold the wicked for their punishment on the day of judgment, especially those who follow the desires of their corrupt human nature and have no respect for [angelic] authority. Daring and self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of the glorious ones, whereas angels, although greater in might and power, do not bring a slanderous judgment against them before the Lord. But these people act as creatures without reason, as natural animals [that are meant] to be taken and destroyed. They speak evil in matters about which they are ignorant and in their attempt to destroy they

will surely be destroyed, receiving the wages of unrighteousness. These are people who consider it pleasurable to revel in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, amusing themselves in their deceit while they feast with you. Their eyes are full of adultery and they cannot break away from sin. They entice unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed and they are children of cursing. Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray by following the path of Balaam the son of Beor who loved being paid for doing evil.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 28:7-11

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Now, in the vicinity of that place were lands belonging to the leader of the island, [a man] named Publius who welcomed us and courteously entertained us for three days. It also happened that Publius' father was bedridden, sick with fever and dysentery. Paul went to see him, prayed, and laying his hands on him,

healed him. After this had taken place, the rest of the people who had diseases in the island also came, and they were cured. They honored us in many ways, and when we sailed off, put on board the things that we needed.

Three months later, we set sail.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 26:7, 8a

A Psalm of David.

Hear, O Lord, my voice when I cry;
have mercy on me and hear me,
[for] my heart speaks to You.

Alleluia.

Luke 4:1-13

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. For forty days, he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing in those days and afterward, when they were completed, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of

God, command this stone to become bread!"

Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

Leading him up on a high place, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of

time. The devil said to him, "I will give you all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me and I give it to whomever I want. If you therefore will worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered him, "Get behind me Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and to him only shall you offer divine service.'"

The devil led him to Jerusalem, set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son

of God, cast yourself down from here, for it is written,

'He will put his angels in charge of you, to guard you;'

and,

'On their hands they will bear you up, lest perhaps you dash your foot against a stone.'

In reply, Jesus said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

When the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him until another time. *Glory be to God forever.*

Thursday of Second (Third) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Genesis 18:17-19:29*

From the book of Genesis of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham, My servant, what I intend to do? But Abraham will become a great and populous nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed. For I know that he will instruct his sons and his house after him, and they will keep the ways of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring all things upon Abraham that He has spoken to him. Then the Lord said, "The outcry concerning Sodom and Gomorrah has been completed, and their sins are very great. There-

fore, I will go down and see whether or not they are carrying out the outcry that comes to me concerning them, that I may know."

Then the men turned away from there and went to Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord. And Abraham drew near and said, "Would you destroy the righteous with the ungodly? Will the righteous be as the ungodly? If there should be fifty righteous in the city, will You destroy them? Will You not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous, if they are in it? By no

means will You do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the ungodly, so that the righteous will be as the wicked! By no means! Will not You, Who judges the whole earth do what is right?" And the Lord said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, I will spare the whole place for their sakes. And Abraham said in reply, "Now I who am earth and ashes have begun to speak to my Lord. But if the fifty righteous should be diminished to forty-five, will You destroy the whole city on account of five?" And He said, "I will not destroy it, if I find forty-five there." And he continued to speak to Him, and said, "But if forty should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of forty." And he said, "Pardon, Lord, if I should speak, but if thirty are found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of thirty." And he said, "Since I am able to speak to the Lord, what if twenty are found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it, if I should find twenty there." And he said, "Pardon, Lord, if I speak once more, but if there ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten." And the Lord departed, when He had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

Now the two angels came to Sodom at evening, and Lot was sitting beside the gate of Sodom. And when

Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed with his face to the ground, and said, "Here, lords, turn aside to your servant's house, and rest, and wash your feet; then you may rise early in the morning and depart on your way." And they said, "No, but we will find lodging in the street." And he insisted strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house, and he made a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate." But before they went to sleep, the men of the city, the Sodomites, both young and old, all the people together, surrounded the house. And they called Lot out, and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we may have relations with them." And Lot went out to the doorway to them, and he shut the door after himself, and said to them, "By no means, brethren, do not act wickedly. I have two daughters, who have not known a man. I will bring them out to you, and you can use them as you wish, only not do anything to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shelter of my roof." And they said to him, "Stand aside! You came to reside as an alien, was it also to judge? Now then we will do worse to you than to them." And they pressed hard against the man, Lot, and nearly broke down the door. And the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door

of the house. And they struck the men at the door of the house with blindness, from the smallest to the greatest, and they became exhausted trying to find the door.

And the men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone here, sons-in-law, or sons or daughters? Or if you have any other friend in the city, bring them out of this place. For we are going to destroy this place, because the outcry concerning them has been raised before the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it." Then Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Rise, and get out of this place, for the Lord is about to destroy the city." But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.

Now when dawn was breaking, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife, and your two daughters you have, and get out, lest you also be destroyed with the lawlessness of the city." And they were thrown into confusion, and the angels took his hand, and his wife's hand, and his two daughters' hands, and the Lord spared him.

And it happened, when they had brought them outside, that they said, "Save your own life! Do not look back, or stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be overtaken together with them." And Lot said to them, "I pray, O Lord, since Your servant has found mercy before You, and you have magnified

Your righteousness, which You showed me by saving my life, but I will not be able to escape to the mountain, for fear the disasters overtake me and I die. Look, this city, which is small, is near enough for me to flee to for refuge, and I will escape there. Is it not little? And my soul will live! And He said to him, "See, I have indulged you also in this matter, in that I will not overthrow this city, which you have spoken of. So hurry to escape there, for I will not be able to do anything until you arrive there." Therefore he called the name of that city, Segor.

The sun rose upon the earth, when Lot entered into Segor. And the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew these cities, and all the region around them, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and all that grew upon the earth. And his wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

And Abraham rose early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the Lord. And he looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and towards the region around them, and he saw, and see, a flame went up from the land, like the smoke of a furnace. And it happened that when God destroyed all the cities of the surrounding region, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the destruction, when

the Lord overthrew those cities in which Lot had lived.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Found in Southern United States. Lacking in Kitchener and Ottawa.*

Proverbs 2:17-3:4

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

My son, do not let evil counsel
overtake you,
that which forsakes the instruction
of your youth,
and has forgotten the divine covenant.

For it establishes its house near
death,
and its paths near Hades, with the
dead;

all those who journey there do not
return,

nor do they lay hold of straight
paths,

for they do not comprehend the
years of life.

For if they had walked in good
paths,

they would have found the
smooth paths righteousness.

The upright will inhabit the earth,

and the innocent will be left in it,
for the upright will encamp on the
earth

and the holy will be left in in it;
The ways of the ungodly will per-
ish from the earth,

and transgressors will be banished
from it.

My son, do not forget My laws,
but let your heart keep my words;
for length of days, and years of
life,

and peace, will be add to you.

Do not let almsgiving and faith-
fulness forsake you,

but fasten them on your neck,

and you will find favour,

and provide good things in the
sight of the Lord, and of men.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 11:10-12:2

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And in that day there will be a
Root of Jesse, the One Who will arise
to rule the nations; the nations will
trust in Him, and His rest will be
glorious.” And it will come to pass in
that day, *that* the Lord will again show
His hand to be zealous for the
remnant that is left of the people: left

by the Assyrians, and *by* Egypt,
Babylon, and Ethiopia, and by the
Elamites, and from where the sun
rises, and out of Arabia.

And He will lift up a sign for the
nations,

and He will gather the lost ones of
Israel,

and He will gather the dispersed
of Judah
from the four corners of the earth.
And the envy of Ephraim will be
taken away,
and the enemies of Judah will per-
ish;
Ephraim will not envy Judah,
and Judah will not afflict Ephraim.
But they will all fly away in the
ships of foreigners,
and together they will plunder the
sea,
and those *who come* from the east,
and Edom.
And they will lay their hands on
Moab first,
but the children of Ammon will
obey *them* first.
And the Lord will make the sea of
Egypt desolate,
and He will lay his hand on the
river with a violent wind,

and He will strike the seven chan-
nels,
so that men might pass across it in
sandals.
And there will be a passage
for the remnant of My people in
Egypt,
and it will be for Israel
as the day when he came out of
the land of Egypt.

And in that day, you will say,
“I *will* bless You, O Lord,
for You were angry with me,
and You turned away Your wrath,
and had mercy on me.
Look, the Lord is my God, my
Saviour;
I will trust in Him, and will not be
afraid,
for the Lord is my glory and my
praise,
and He has become my salvation.”
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 9:12, 13a

A Psalm of David.

Sing to the Lord Who dwells in Zion.

Declare His ways among the nations,
for while avenging blood, He remembers them.

Alleluia.

Luke 20:20-26

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

They watched him and sent out spies who pretended to be righteous in order to trap him in something he said, in order to deliver him up to the power and authority of the governor. They asked him, "Teacher, we know that you say and teach what is right, and that you are not partial to anyone but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

But Jesus perceived their trickery and said to them, "Why are you

testing me? Show me a denarius! Whose image and inscription are on it?"

They answered, "Caesar's."

So Jesus said to them, "Then, give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and [give] to God what belongs to God!"

And they were not able to ensnare him in his words before the people. They marveled at his answer and remained silent. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 4:6-11

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Even as David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whom the Lord will by no means charge with sin.

Is this blessing then pronounced on the circumcised {only}, or on the uncircumcised as well? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham as righteousness. How then was faith

taken into account? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised! He received the sign of circumcision, (a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was still uncircumcised), so that he might be the father of all those who believe, even if they are uncircumcised, so that righteousness might also be accounted to them.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 4:1-10

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

These wars and conflicts among you, where do they come from? Is it not from your desires that wage war

in your members? You lust, and do not have! You kill, covet, and [still] cannot obtain! You fight and make

war. You do not have because you do not ask! You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, in order to spend it for your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility with God? Whoever wants to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God! Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The spirit which dwells in us longs to envy"? But he has given a greater, as the Scripture says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to

the humble." Therefore, submit yourselves to God, but resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you who are double-minded. Lament, mourn, and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 28:1-6

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Once safe on the shore, we learned that the island was called Malta. The natives showed us unusual kindness; they kindled a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. But as Paul was gathering a bundle of sticks and placing them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said one to another, "There is no

doubt that this man is a murderer! He has escaped from the sea but Justice has not allowed him to live." However, Paul shook off the creature into the fire and remained unharmed. Nevertheless, they expected that he would have swollen or suddenly fallen down dead. After watching for a long time and seeing nothing bad happen to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god!

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 9:8, 9a

A Psalm of David.

But the Lord continues forever;

He has prepared His throne for judgment.

He will judge the world in righteousness.

Alleluia.

John 12:44-50

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus cried aloud, "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in the one who sent me! Whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as a light into the world, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in the dark. If anyone listens to my sayings and does not believe, I do not judge this person. For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world! Whoever rejects me and

does not receive my sayings has a judge [already]: the word that I spoke is what will judge such a person in the last day. For I did not speak from myself; instead, the Father who sent me has given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. I know that his commandment is eternal life. And therefore what the Father has told me is what I speak." *Glory be to God forever.*

Friday of Second (Third) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Deuteronomy 9:7-10:11

From the book of Deuteronomy of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Remember, do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God in the desert. From the day you came out of Egypt, until came into this place, you

continued to be disobedient to the Lord. Also at Choreb you provoked the Lord, and the Lord was angry enough with you to destroy you,

when I went up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant, which the Lord established with you; and I stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water. And the Lord gave me the two stone tables written with the finger of God, and on them had been written all the words that the Lord had spoken to you at the mountain in the day of the assembly. And it happened, after forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant. And the Lord said to me, "Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have acted lawlessly; they have turned aside quickly from the way that I commanded them; they have made themselves a molten image." And the Lord said to me, "I have spoken to you once, and twice, saying, 'I see this people, and indeed, they are a stiff-necked people. Let Me destroy them utterly, and I will blot out their name from under heaven, and I will make of you a great and strong nation, more numerous than this one.'"

And I turned and went down from the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire; and the two tablets *were* in my two hands. And when I saw that you had sinned against the Lord your God, and had made a molten image for yourself, and had gone astray from the way that the

Lord had commanded you, then I took hold of the two tablets, and threw them down with my two hands, and broke them before you. And I made my petition before the Lord a second time, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, on account of all your sins that you had sinned by doing what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, to provoke Him. And I was terrified because of the anger, and the wrath, because the Lord was provoked by you utterly to destroy you. But the Lord listened to me at this time also. And the Lord was very angry with Aaron, and would have utterly destroyed him, and I prayed also for Aaron at that time. And your sin which you had committed, the calf, I took it and burnt it with fire, and crushed it, and ground it down until it was as fine as dust, and I threw the dust into the brook that descended from the mountain.

Also at the Burning, and the Temptation, and at the Graves of Lust, you provoked the Lord your God. And when the Lord sent you from Kades Barne, saying, "Go up and inherit the land that I am giving you," then you disobeyed the word of the Lord your God, and did not believe Him, or listen to His voice. You were disobedient in the things relating to the Lord from the day in which He became known to you.

And I prayed before the Lord, forty days and forty nights, I kept praying, for the Lord said that He would utterly destroy you. And I prayed to God, and said, "O Lord, Lord, King of the gods, do not destroy Your people and Your portion, whom You redeemed, whom You brought out of the land of Egypt by Your great strength, and with Your mighty hand, and with Your outstretched arm. Remember Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob Your servants, to whom You swore by Yourself; do not look upon the stubbornness of this people, and upon their impieties, and upon their sins, lest the inhabitants of the land from which You have brought us out speak, saying, 'Because the Lord could not bring them into the land of which He spoke to them, and because He hated them, He brought them out to kill them in the desert.' And these *are* Your, people and Your portion, whom You brought out of the land of Egypt by Your great strength, and with Your mighty hand, and with Your outstretched arm."

At that time the Lord said to me, "Carve for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and come up to Me on the mountain, and make yourself an ark of wood. And I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke, and you will put them into the ark." So I made an ark of boards of wood that would not decay, and I

carved the two tablets of stone like the former ones, and I went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hands. And He wrote the Ten Commandments on the tablets, in accordance with the first writing, which the Lord spoke to you in the mountain, from the midst of the fire, and the Lord gave them to me. And I turned and came down from the mountain, and I put the tablets into the ark I had made; and they were there, as the Lord commanded me.

(And the children of Israel departed from Beroth of the sons of Jakim to Misadai. Aaron died there, and there he was buried, and Eleazar his son became priest instead of his. From there they departed to Gadgad, and from Gadgad to Ietebatha, a land with torrents of water. At that time, the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and bless in His Name, to this day. Therefore, the Levites have no portion or inheritance among their brethren; the Lord Himself is their inheritance, as He said to him.)

And I stayed on the mount forty days and forty nights. And the Lord listened to me at that time also, and the Lord chose not to destroy you. And the Lord said to me, "Go, lead this people, and let them go in and inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give to them."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

1 Kings 23:25-24:23 or 1 Samuel 23:26-24:22

From the first book of Samuel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Saul and his men went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. And David was hiding himself to escape from Saul, and Saul and his men encamped against David and his men to capture them. And a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come here, for the Philistines have invaded the land!" So Saul turned back from pursuing David, and went to meet the Philistines; therefore, that place was called the Divided Rock.

And David went up from there, and stayed in the narrow passes of Engaddi. And it happened, when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, it was reported to him, saying, "David *is* in the wilderness of Engaddi." And he took with him three thousand men, chosen from all Israel, and went to seek David and his men in front of Sadaïem. And he came to the flocks of sheep that were by the road, and there was a cave there, and Saul went in to prepare himself, and David and his men were sitting in the inner part of the cave. And David's said to him, "Look! this *is* the day of which the Lord spoke to you, that he would deliver your enemy into your hands, and you will do to him as *it is* good in your eyes." So David arose and secretly cut a corner of Saul's

cloak. Then it happened that David's heart troubled him, because he had cut off a corner of his cloak. And David said to his men, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should do this to my lord, the anointed of the Lord, to lift my hand against him, for he is the anointed of the Lord." So David persuaded his men by *his* words, and did not permit them to rise up and kill Saul. And got up arose and went his way.

And David got up *and went* after him out of the cave, and David cried out after Saul, saying, "My lord, O king!" and Saul looked behind him, and David bowed with his face to the ground, and prostrated himself. And David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of the people who say, 'Look, David seeks your life?' See, today your eyes have seen that the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave, and I was not willing to kill you, but spared you, and said, 'I will not lift up my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed.' And look, the corner of your cloak *is* in my hand, I cut off the corner, and did not kill you. Know then and see today that there is no evil, impiety, or rebellion in my hand. I have not sinned against you, yet you hunt for my life to take it. The Lord judge between you and me, and may the

Lord avenge me of you, but my hand will not be upon you. As the ancient proverb says, ‘wrongdoing will come forth out of lawlessness, but my hand will not be upon you.’ And now after whom do you come forth, O king of Israel? After whom do you pursue? After a dying dog, or after a flea? Let the Lord be judge and jury between you and me; may the Lord look upon my cause and judge, and rescue me from your hand.”

And it happened, when David finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, “*Is* this your voice, O son David?” And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And Saul said to David, “You *are* more righteous than I, for you have repaid me with good, but I have repaid you with evil. Today

you have made known how you dealt with me, how the Lord delivered me into your hands today, and you did not kill me. And if anyone should find his enemy in distress, and should send him out in a good way, then the Lord will reward him good, just as you have done today. And now, look, I know that you will reign, and the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands. Now then swear to me by the Lord, that you will not destroy my seed after me, that you will not blot out my name from the house of my father. So David swore to Saul, and Saul departed to his place, and David and his men went up to the stronghold of Messara.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 13:2-13

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Lift up a sign on the mountain of the plain;

Lift up your voice to them; do not fear;

encourage them with your hand;

open *the gates*, O you rulers.

I command, and I lead them.

They are consecrated, and I lead them.

Mighty ones come to fulfil My anger,

rejoicing and insulting at the same time.

A voice of many nations on the mountains,

like *that* of many nations!

a voice of kings

and of nations gathered together!

The Lord of hosts has command-

ed

a heavily armed nation

to come from a distant land,

from the end of heaven—

the Lord and His warriors—

to destroy the whole world.

Wail, for the day of the Lord is near,

and destruction will come from God.

Therefore, every hand will become
weakened,

and every man's soul will be
afraid.

The elders will be troubled,
and pangs will seize them, as of a
woman in labour.

And they will wail one to another,
and will be amazed,

and will change their face like a
flame.

For look! The day of the Lord is
coming,

A day which cannot be averted
a day of wrath and anger,
to make the whole world desolate,
and to destroy the sinners from it.

For the stars of heaven, and Ori-
on,

and all the ornament of heaven
will not give light,
and it will be dark at sunrise,

and the moon will not give her its.
And I will command evils for the
whole world,

and *for the* ungodly, because of
their sins,

and I will destroy the pride of
transgressors,

and will bring low the pride of the
arrogant.

And those that are left will be
more precious than gold tried in the
fire,

and a man will be more precious
than the stone from Souphir.

For the heaven will be enraged,
and the earth will be shaken from
its foundations

because of the fierce anger of the
Lord of hosts,

in the day His wrath comes *upon it*.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 15:1-35

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Eliphaz the Thaimanite an-
swered and said,

“Will a wise man give a *mere* breath
of wisdom for answer?

And does he satisfy the pain of his
belly,

arguing with sayings that are be-
side the point,

and with unprofitable words?

Have you not also cast off fear,

and exhausted such words before
the Lord?

You are guilty because of the
words of your mouth,

and have not discerned the words
of the mighty.

May your mouth convict you, and
not I,

For your lips will testify against
you.

What? Are you the first man that
was born?

Or were you established before
the hills?

Have you heard the plan of the Lord,

and has wisdom come *only* to you?

For what do you know that, we know not know?

Or what do you understand that we do not as well?

Both the aged and the very old are among us,

more advanced in days than your father.

You have only been punished for a few of your sins;

you have spoken haughtily *and* extravagantly.

What has your heart dared,

or what have your eyes *set themselves upon*,

that you have vented *your* anger before the Lord,

and delivered such words from *your* mouth?

For who, being a mortal, can be blameless?

Or, *who that is* born of a woman can be righteous,

Since He does not trust His holy ones,

and the heaven is not pure before Him?

Alas then, man is detestable and unclean,

drinking injustices like water!

But I will tell you, listen to me;

I will tell you what I have now seen,

what wise men say;

they have not hidden anything received from their fathers.

The earth was given to them alone,

and no stranger came upon them.

All the life of the ungodly *is spent* in anxiety,

and the years given to the mighty are numbered.

Fear is in his ears,

and when he at last seems to be at peace,

his destruction comes.

Do not let him believe that he will return from darkness,

for he has been already been given over to the power of the sword.

And he has been appointed to be food for vultures,

and he knows within himself that he lives in a dead body;

and a dark day will carry him away like a whirlwind.

Distress and anguish will take hold of him;

he will be like a general falling in the first rank.

For he has lifted his hands against the Lord,

and he has stiffened his neck against the Almighty Lord,

and ran with the insolent,

with the thickness of his wide shield.

For he has covered his face with his fat,

and made it a band on his thighs.

May he lodge in desolate cities,

and enter uninhabited houses;

and what they prepared, others will carry away.

He will never grow rich, and his possessions will not last.

He will not cast a shadow on the earth,

nor will he in escape the darkness.

Let the wind wither his blossom,
and let his flower fall off.

Do not let him believe that he will endure,

for emptiness will be his lot.

His harvest will perish before its time,

and his branch will provide no cover.

May he be gathered prematurely,
like the unripe grape,

and may fall off, as the blossom of the olive tree.

For death is the witness of the ungodly man,

and fire will burn the houses of those who take bribes.

And he will conceive sorrows,

and his lot will turn out to be emptiness,

and his belly will carry deceit.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Sirach 2:1-3:4

From the book of the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

My son, if you come to serve the Lord,

prepare your soul for temptation.

Set your heart aright, and be steadfast,

and do not be hasty in a time of distress.

Cling to Him, and do not depart away,

that you may be strengthened at your end.

Accept whatever is brought upon you,

and be patient when you are humiliated,

for gold is tried in the fire,

and acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation.

Believe in Him, and He will help you;

make your way straight, and hope in Him.

You who fear the Lord, wait for His mercy,

and do not turn aside, lest you fall.

You who fear the Lord, believe Him,

and your reward will not fail.

You who fear the Lord, hope for good things,

and for everlasting gladness and mercy.

Look at the ancient generations, and see:

Who believed in the Lord and was put to shame?

Or who held fast to the fear of Him and was forsaken?

Or called upon Him, and was despised?

For the Lord is compassionate and merciful,
longsuffering, and very pitiful,
He forgives sins, and saves in the time of affliction.

Woe to timid hearts, and weakened hands,
and the sinner who walks on two paths!

Woe to the fainthearted, for it does not have faith;
therefore it will not be sheltered.

Woe to you that have lost endurance!

What will you do when the Lord visits you?

Those who fear the Lord will not disobey His words,
and those who love Him will keep His ways.

Those who fear the Lord will seek His approval,

and those who love Him will be filled with the law.

Those who fear the Lord will prepare their hearts,
and humble their souls in before Him,

Saying, "We will fall into the hands of the Lord,
and not into the hands of men!

For as His majesty is, so is His mercy.

Listen to me, your father, O children,

and do what I tell you, so that you may be safe.

For the Lord has given the father honour over the children,

and has confirmed a mother's judgement over sons.

He who honours his father atones for his sins,

And he who honours his mother is like one who stores up treasure.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

() Some books end the reading here.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 15:10, 11a

A Psalm of David.

For You will not leave my soul in Hades,
nor allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

You made the ways of life known to me.

Alleluia.

Luke 20:27-38

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Some of the Sadducees came to him, people who deny that there is a resurrection. They asked him, "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man dies having a wife and without a child, his brother should take the wife and raise up a posterity for his brother. There were therefore seven brothers: the first took a wife and died childless. The second took her as wife, and he [also] died childless. The third took her, and likewise all seven [brothers] left no children and died. Afterwards, the woman also died. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as a wife."

Jesus replied to them, "The children of this age get married and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead do not marry or are given in marriage. For they cannot die any more, because they are like the angels, and they are children of God, being children of the resurrection. But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the [story of the burning] bush, when he called the Lord 'The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' Now, he is not the God of the dead, but of the living, because all are alive to him!" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Hebrews 11:1-8

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Hebrews. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now, faith is the personal foundation of things hoped for, certainty about things that cannot be seen. By this, those of old obtained approval. By faith, we understand that the universe was formed by the word of God, so that what is visible was made from what is invisible.

By faith, Abel offered to God a sacrifice more excellent than Cain, and through this a testimony was given to him that he was righteous.

God testified about his gifts, and although Abel is now dead, he still speaks. By faith, Enoch was taken away in order not to see death: he was not found because God had translated him. He too had received a testimony that before his translation, he had been well-pleasing to God.

Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

By faith, Noah, being warned about things not yet seen was moved with godly fear. He prepared a ship to save his household and by this means he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is

according to faith. By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and left the place which he was supposed to receive as his inheritance. He left, not knowing where he was going.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

Jude 17-25

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher Jude. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

But you, beloved, remember the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you that “in the last time there will be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts.” These are these ones who cause divisions, because they are sensual, deprived of the Spirit. But you, beloved, keep on building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ [that leads] to eternal life. Have compassion on some of them,

making a distinction. You can save some of them, snatching them out of the fire with fear, yet hating even the clothing stained by what is carnal.

Now, to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory in great joy, to God our Savior who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever and unto all ages. Amen.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 23:6-11

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

But when Paul realized that some were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Men and brothers, I am a Pharisee, a

son of Pharisees! And I am being judged concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead!”

When he said this, an argument arose between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, angel, or spirit; but the Pharisees believe in all of these things. A great uproar began, and some of the teachers of the law who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up. They strongly argued, "We find no evil in this man! But if a spirit or angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God!"

The dispute became so fierce that the commanding officer feared that they would tear Paul to pieces. He then ordered the soldiers to go down and to forcefully remove Paul from the assembly, and to bring him into the barracks.

The following night, the Lord stood by him, and said, "Rejoice, Paul! For as you have borne witness to me at Jerusalem, you must also bear witness in Rome."

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 15:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

Keep me, O Lord, for I hope in You.
I said to the Lord, "You are my God;
You have no need of my goods."

Alleluia.

Luke 11:14-26

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus was casting out a demon which was mute, and when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke and the people were amazed. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of the demons!" Others put him to the test and asked from him a sign from heaven. But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every

kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation. A house divided against itself falls. If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul! But if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges. However, if it is by the finger

of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come to you!

When a strong man is fully armed and guards his own house, his goods are safe. But when someone stronger attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.

Whoever is not with me is against me! Whoever does not gather with me scatters!

When an unclean spirit has gone out of a person, he passes through dry places, seeking rest. But finding no rest, the unclean spirit says, 'I will return to my house from which I came out.' When he returns, he finds it swept and put in order. He then goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. The last state of that person becomes worse than the first." *Glory be to God forever.*

Saturday of Second (Third) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 129:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

I cry to You, O Lord, out of the depths;
O Lord, hear my voice!

Let Your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplication!

Alleluia.

Mark 10:17-27

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

As Jesus was setting out on his journey, someone ran to him, knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do in order to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus replied, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except one: God. You know the commandments:

'Do not murder,' 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not give false testimony,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and mother.'"

The man said, "Teacher, I have observed all these things since my youth!"

Jesus looked at him and felt love for him. He then said, "You lack one thing. Go, sell whatever you have, and give to the poor. You will have a treasure in heaven; then come, follow me, taking up the cross."

However, the man was distressed when he heard this. He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it is for the wealthy to enter into the Kingdom of God!"

The disciples were amazed at his words. But again, Jesus said, "Chil-

dren, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter into the Kingdom of God!"

They were extremely astonished and said to him, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and answered, "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for all things are possible with God!" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Corinthians 7:2-11

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Open your hearts to us! We wronged no one, we corrupted no one, and we took advantage of no one. I say this not to condemn you, for as I have said before, you are in our hearts to die together and to live together. [But] great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf! I am filled with consolation, I overflow with joy in all our afflictions.

Indeed, even after arriving in Macedonia, our flesh had no relief; we were afflicted on every side. There was struggle on the outside and fear inside. Nevertheless, he who comforts the lowly, God, comforted us with the arrival of Titus; and not just by his arrival but also by the encouragement he had received from you.

He told us of your longing, your mourning, and your zeal for me; and I rejoiced even more.

Although I [know that I] made you feel bad with my [first] letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it for a while). I can see that my letter made you sorry, at least for a while. But now, I rejoice, not that you experienced distress, but that you were made sorry to repentance. Indeed, you experienced godly distress and thus you did not experience a loss because of us. For godly sorrow works repentance that leads to salvation, it does not bring regret. But on the other hand, the sorrow of the world is deadly. Consider what happened in this case: you experienced distress in a godly way and

what serious reaction it worked in you! Yes, what apology, anger, fear, longing, zeal, and vengeance [result-

ed]! In everything you have shown yourselves blameless in this matter.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 2:14-26

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

What good is it, my brethren, if someone claims to have faith but has no works? Can faith save such a person? If a brother or sister is in rags and lacking daily food, and one of you tells them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled" and not give them what the body needs, what good is that? Likewise faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself. Yes, someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works!" Show me your faith without works, and by my works, I will show you my faith.

You believe that God is one! You do well! The demons also believe, and they shudder. Fool! Will you not recognize that apart from works, faith is dead? Was not our father Abraham justified by works, by offering up his

son Isaac on the altar? You can see that [his] faith was working with his works, and that by works, faith was perfected. Thus, the Scripture which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness" was fulfilled, and he was called the friend of God. You see, then, that one is justified by works, and not only by faith. In the same way, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works, by receiving the messengers and sending them out another way? For just as the body is dead apart from the spirit, so is faith dead apart from works.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 23:12-35

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When day came, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they

would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. There were more than forty people who joined this conspir-

acy. They came to the chief priests and the presbyters, and said, "We have bound ourselves under a great curse, to eat nothing until we

have killed Paul. Now then, you with the Sanhedrin should petition the commanding officer to bring him down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to judge his case more exactly. We are ready to kill him before he comes near!"

But Paul's nephew heard of their ambush. He came and entered into the fortress and told Paul. Calling one of the centurions, Paul said, "Bring this young man to the commanding officer, for he has something to tell him."

Accordingly, the centurion took Paul's nephew and brought him to the commanding officer, saying, "Paul, the prisoner, called me and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to tell you."

The commanding officer took Paul's nephew by the hand, and going aside, asked him privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?"

He replied, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though intending to inquire somewhat more accurately concerning him. But to not give in to their request, for more than forty men lie in wait for Paul, and they have bound themselves under a curse neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him. They are ready

now, waiting for you to grant their request."

And so, the commanding officer let the young man go with this instruction, "Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me." He called to himself two of the centurions, and said, "Prepare two hundred soldiers to leave at the third hour of the night for Caesarea, along with seventy horsemen, and two hundred men armed with spears." He asked them to provide animals in order set Paul on one, and to bring him safely to Felix the governor. He wrote a letter like this:

"Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings!

This man was seized by the Jews, and was about to be killed by them, when I came with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman [citizen]. Desiring to know why they accused him, I brought him to their council. I found him to be accused about questions of their law, but not to be charged with anything worthy of death or imprisonment. When I was told that the Jews were about to ambush this man, I immediately sent him to you. I also instructed his accusers to bring their accusations against him before you. Farewell."

And so, the soldiers, carrying out their orders, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. But on the next day, they left the horsemen to continue with him and returned to

the barracks. When they arrived in Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and also presented Paul to him. After reading the letter, the governor asked what province Paul was from. Having learned that he was

from Cilicia, he said, "I will hear you fully when your accusers also arrive." He then commanded that Paul should be held in Herod's palace.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 26:6d, 7, 8a

A Psalm of David.

I will sing and praise the Lord.

Hear, O Lord, my voice when I cry;

have mercy on me and hear me,

[for] my heart speaks to You.

Alleluia.

Matthew 18:23-35

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a king who wanted to settle his accounts with his servants. When he began the settlement, someone was brought who owed him ten thousand talents. But because the servant could not pay, his lord gave orders that he be sold, with his wife, children, and all that he had, so that payment may be made. At this, the servant fell down on his knees before him, saying: 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will repay you all!' The lord of that servant, moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

But that servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him one hundred denarii. He grabbed him and took him by the throat, saying: 'Pay me what you owe!'

And so, his fellow-servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying: 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you!' But the first man would not [have compassion] but went off and had him cast into prison, until he should pay back what was due. When his [other] fellow-servants saw what had been done, they were extremely distressed and came to their lord to report all that had taken place. Then, his lord

summoned the [first] servant and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should not you also have had mercy on your fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on you?' His lord

was angry and delivered him to the jailers until he would pay all that was due. This is how my heavenly Father will also treat you if you do not each forgive each other from your hearts." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Third Sunday of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 87:2, 3

A Psalm of David.

O Lord, God of my salvation,
I cry before You day and night.
Let my prayer come before You;
incline Your ear to my supplication.

Alleluia.

Matthew 15:1-20

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Pharisees and scribes then came to Jesus from Jerusalem, saying: "Why do your disciples disobey the tradition of the presbyters? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

Jesus answered them, "Why do you also disobey the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever speaks evil of father or mother should be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever may tell his father or his mother, 'Whatever support you might otherwise have received from me is now a gift devoted to God,' is not bound to honor his father or mother.' Thus, you have made the commandment of God void because of your tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah

prophesied about you quite well when he said:

'These people draw near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrine rules made by men.'

Jesus gathered the crowds and said to them, "Hear, and understand. What enters into the mouth does not defile a person, but what comes out of the mouth, this is what defiles a person."

Then, the disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?"

But Jesus answered, "Every plant which my heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted. Leave them alone! They are blind guides of the

blind; and if the blind guide the blind, both will fall into a pit.”

Peter said to him, “Explain the parable to us.”

And so, Jesus answered, “Do you still fail to understand? Do not you understand that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the belly and then out of the body? But the things which come out of the mouth come

from the heart, and they defile the person. Indeed, it is from the heart that evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies come forth. These are the things which defile a person; but to eat with unwashed hands does not make anyone impure.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 54:2, 17

A Psalm of David.

Give ear, O God, to my prayer,
and do not despise my supplication.
But I cried to God,
and the Lord heard me.

Alleluia.

Matthew 20:1-16

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

“The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who was the master of a household and who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a [salary of one] denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. [Later], he went out when it was about the third hour and saw other men standing idle in the marketplace. He told them, ‘You too should go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ And so, they went their way. Again, he went out when it was about the sixth and the ninth

hour, and did the same thing. About the eleventh hour, he went out and still found others standing idle. He told them, ‘Why do you stand here all day, doing nothing?’

They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us!’

The master told them, ‘You too should go into the vineyard, and you will receive whatever is right.’ When evening came, the lord of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning from the last to the first.’

When those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came, they each received a denarius. Now, when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more, but they each likewise received one denarius. When they received it, they grumbled against the master of the household, saying: "These last [workers] have spent one hour, and yet you have made them equal to us, who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat!"

But the master answered to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for one denarius? Take what is yours, and go your way. It is my desire to give to this last one just as much as to you! Is not it lawful for me to do what I want to with what I own? Or is your eye evil, because I am good?' And so, the last will be first, and the first last! Indeed, many are called, but few are chosen." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Corinthians 6:2-13

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

For he says,

At an acceptable time I listened to you,

in a day of salvation I rescued you.

Behold, now is the acceptable time! Behold, now is the day of salvation! We give no occasion for stumbling in anything, so that our service may not be blamed. Instead, we seek to be approved as servants of God in everything, in great endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in labors, in vigils, in fastings; in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in sincere love, in the word of truth, and in the power of God. There is also the armor of righteous-

ness on the right hand and on the left, glory and dishonor, evil report and good report; being thought to be deceivers, and yet true; unknown, and yet well-known; dying, and behold, we live; punished, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; thought to have nothing even though we possess all things!

We have spoken freely to you, O Corinthians, and our heart is open wide. We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us! In return, I speak to you as to my children: be open [to what we have to say].

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 3:1-12

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Not many of you should be teachers, my brothers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. In many things, we all stumble. Anyone who does not stumble in word is perfect, even able to bridle the whole body! Indeed, we put bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey us, and thus, we guide their whole body. Or consider the ships: although they are very large and driven by fierce winds, they are guided by a very small rudder as the pilot desires. Likewise, the tongue is a little member but it boasts great things! See how a small fire can spread to a large forest! The tongue is also a fire! Among all our members, the tongue is a world of iniquity which defiles the whole body. It sets on fire the course of nature and it is

set on fire by the fires of hell. Every kind of animal, bird, reptile and sea creature is tamed, and has been tamed by mankind. But nobody can tame the tongue! It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the image of God. From the same mouth comes forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, this should not be! Does a spring pour forth fresh and salty water from the same opening? My brethren, can a fig tree produce olives, or [can] a vine [produce] figs? Likewise, salt water cannot produce fresh water.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 24:1-23

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Five days later, the high priest, Ananias, came down with a group of presbyters and a professional speaker named Tertullus, and they informed the governor of their charges against Paul. Paul was then called in and

Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, "We have enjoyed much peace under you, and we see that excellent reforms are being carried out for this nation. Most Excellent Felix, we acknowledge this always and every-

where, with utmost gratitude. But, that I may not delay you, I entreat you to bear with us and hear a few words. As it is, we have found this man to be a plague, an instigator of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. He even tried to profane the temple, and we arrested him, desiring to judge him according to our own laws. However, the commanding officer, Lysias, arrived and with much violence took him out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself, you will be able to verify for yourself the truth of our accusations.”

The Jews also joined in the deposition, affirming that these things were true. When the governor had motioned for him to speak, Paul answered, “Because I know that you have been a judge of this nation for many years, I gladly make my defense. As you can see, it has been no more than twelve days since I went up to worship at Jerusalem. In the temple, they did not find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city. Moreover, they cannot prove to you the accusations they are making against me now. But I do admit this to you, that after the Way which they call a sect, so do I offer divine service

to the God of our fathers. I believe all things which are according to the law and which are written in the prophets. I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both upright and wicked. And so, I strive to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men. Now, after some years, I came to bring to my people gifts for the needy, and to present offerings. This is how certain Jews from Asia found me in the temple, ritually purified, with no mob or turmoil. But there are some Jews from Asia who should have been here before you to present their accusations if they had anything against me. Otherwise, let these men explain what injustice they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin. Or perhaps it is for what I cried out while standing among them, ‘I am being judged before you today regarding the resurrection of the dead!’”

But Felix, being better informed concerning the Way, adjourned the case, stating, “When Lysias, the commanding officer, comes down, I will decide your case.”

He ordered the centurion that Paul should be kept in custody and that he should have some privileges: none of his friends should be forbidden from serving him or visiting him.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 78:8, 9a, half of b

A Psalm of David.

Do not remember our transgressions of old;
let Your compassion overtake us quickly,
for we have become very poor.
Help us, O God, our Saviour;
...for the [sake of the] glory of Your Name.

Alleluia.

Luke 15:11-32

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus said, "A certain man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that will come to me.' And the father divided his livelihood between them. A few days later, the younger son gathered all that he had and traveled to a far country. There, he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place in that country, and he began to be in need. He went and hired himself to one of the citizens of that country who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. He wanted to feed himself with the husks that the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough to spare, and I am dying with hunger! I will get up, go to my father,

and tell him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you! I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired servants.'"

So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still at a distance, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. He ran, and embraced his son, and kissed him. Then the son said, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you! I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the first robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet! Bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this, my son, was dead, and he is alive again! He was lost and [now he] is found!' And they began to celebrate.

Now, his elder son was in the field. As he came near to the house, he heard music and dancing. Calling one of the servants, he asked what was going on. The servant replied, 'Your brother has returned! Your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and healthy.' But the elder son became angry and he would not go in. Therefore, his father came out and begged him. But he answered his father, 'Behold, for so many years I have served you, and I have never

disobeyed a commandment of yours. But you never gave me a goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this, your son, arrived, he who has devoured your living with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.'

The father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours! But it was fitting to celebrate and to rejoice, for this, your brother, was dead, and is alive again. He was lost and is found!'" *Glory be to God forever.*

Monday of Third (Fourth) Week of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 29:2, 3, 4a

A Psalm of David.

I will exalt You, O Lord,
for You upheld me,
and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.
O Lord, my God, I cried to You,
and You have healed me.
O Lord, You have brought up my soul from Hades.
Alleluia.

Matthew 21:28-32

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

"But what do you think? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' The son answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his

mind, and went. The father came to his second son, and said the same thing. The son answered, 'I will go, sir,' but he did not go. Which one of

the two sons did the will of his father?”

They replied, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “Amen, I tell you that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering into the Kingdom of God before you! For John came to

you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. After seeing this, you did not even repent and you did not believe him. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Genesis 27:1-41a

From the book of Genesis of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now it happened, when Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, that he called Esau, his older son, and said to him, “My son.” And he answered, “Here I am”. And he said, “See, I have grown old, and I do not know the day of my death. Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the plain, and hunt game for me, and make me the savoury food that I like, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you, before I die.”

Now, Rebecca heard Isaac speaking to his son Esau. And Esau went into the plain to hunt game for his father. And Rebecca spoke to Jacob her younger son, saying, “Look, I heard your father speaking to your brother Esau, saying, ‘Bring me game and make savoury food for me, that I may eat and bless you in the presence of the Lord before I die.’ Now then, my son, listen to me, as I command you, and go to the flocks and take two kids, tender and good, and I will make savoury food for your father, as he likes. And you will bring them in

to your father, and he will eat it and bless you before he dies.”

And Jacob said to his mother Rebecca, “My brother Esau is a hairy man, and I a smooth-skinned man. Perhaps my father will feel me, and I will be like a scorner before him, and I will bring a curse upon myself, and not a blessing.” But his mother said to him, “Your curse be upon me, my son; only listen to my voice, and go and bring *them* for me.” So he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savoury food, as his father liked. Then Rebecca took the fine clothes of her elder son, Esau which were with her in the house, put them on Jacob, her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids on his arms the, and on the exposed part of his neck. And she gave the savoury food and the bread she had prepared into the hands of her son Jacob.

And he brought *them* to his father, and said, “Father.” And he said, “Here I am; who are you, son?” And Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau

your firstborn; I have done as you told me; arise, sit, and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.” And Isaac said to his son, “What is this that you have quickly found, my son?” And he said, “That which the Lord your God delivered up before me.” And Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near to me, that I may feel you, son, if you are my son Esau or not.” And Jacob went near to his father Isaac, and he felt him, and said, “The voice *is* Jacob’s voice, but the hands *are* Esau’s hands.” And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like the hands of his brother Esau; and he blessed him. Then he said, “Are you my son Esau?” and he said, “I *am*.” And he said, “Bring it to me, and I will eat of your game, son, that my soul may bless you.” And he presented it to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. And Isaac his father said to him, “Come near to me, and kiss me, son.” And he came near and kissed him, and smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him, and said,

“See, the smell of my son
is like the smell of an abundant
field that the Lord has blessed.

And may God give you of the dew
of heaven,

and of the fatness of the earth,
and an abundance of grain and
wine.

And let nations serve you,
and princes bow down to you,

and be lord over your brother,
and the sons of your father will
bow down to you.

Accursed is he that curses you,
and blessed is he that blesses you.”

And it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing his son Jacob, it happened just as Jacob had gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savory food and brought it to his father, and said to his father, “Let my father arise and eat of his son’s game, that your soul may bless me.” And Isaac his father said to him, “Who are you?” And he said, “I am your firstborn son Esau.” And Isaac was amazed, and with very great amazement he said, “Who then hunted game for me, and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I have blessed him, and indeed—he shall be blessed.” When Esau heard the words of his father Isaac, he cried out with a great and very bitter cry, and said, “Bless me, also me, father.” And he said to him, “your brother has come with deceit, and taken your blessing.” And Esau said, “His name was rightly called Jacob, for he has supplanted me now this second time; he has taken both my birthright, and now he has taken my blessing.” and Esau said to his father, “Do you not have a blessing left a for me, father?” And Isaac answered and said to Esau, “I have made him your lord, and have made all his brethren his servants, and

have sustained him with grain and wine, what shall I do for you, my son?” And Esau said to his father, “Have you *only* one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, father. And Isaac was troubled, Esau cried aloud and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said to him,

Look, your dwelling will be of the fatness of the earth,

and of the dew of heaven from above.

And you will live by your sword, and you will serve your brother; and there will be *a time* when you will break his yoke from your neck.”

And Esau was angry with Jacob because of the blessing, with which his father had blessed him.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaiah 14:24-32

From the book of Isaiah the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is what the Lord of hosts says,

“As I have said,
so it shall be,
and as I have planned,
so *it* shall remain:
to destroy the Assyrians from my land, and from my mountains.
And they will be trampled,
and their yoke will be removed from them,
and their renown will be removed from their shoulders.”

This is the purpose the Lord has purposed upon the whole earth,
and this the hand that is raised up
against all the nations of the world.

For what the Holy God has purposed, who will frustrate?

And who will turn back His uplifted hand?

In the year that King Ahaz died, this word came,

“Do not rejoice, all you foreigners, for the yoke of him who struck you is broken,

for out of the seed of serpents will come forth the young asps,
and their offspring will come forth as flying serpents.

And the poor will be fed by him,
and the poor men will rest in peace,

but he will destroy your offspring with famine,
and will destroy your remnant.

Wail, O city gates;
let the troubled cities cry out, *even* all the foreigners,

for smoke is coming from the north, and there is no *way to live*.”

And what will the kings of the nations answer?

For the Lord has founded Zion,
and the humble of the people will be saved by Him.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 16, 17

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Job answered and said,
“I have heard many such things;
you are all bad comforters.
What? Is there any reason in vain
words?
Or what troubles you, that you
answer so?
I also will speak as you *do*:
If your live were indeed in the
place of mine,
then I would attach you with
words,
and I would shake my head at you.
But may there be strength in my
mouth,
then I would not spare the move-
ment of my lips!
For if I speak, I will not feel the
pain of my wound,
and even if I remain silent, how
will I be less wounded?
But now He has made me weary,
and a worn-out fool,
and you have laid hold of me.
My falsehood has become a testi-
mony,
and has risen up against me,
it has confronted me to my face.
In His wrath He has cast me
down;
He gnashed at me with His teeth;
His raiders’ arrows fell upon me.
He attacked me with the sharp
darts of His eyes;

He struck me on the cheek with
his sharp *spear*;
and they ran at me with one ac-
cord.
For the Lord has delivered me
into the hands of the unjust,
and has cast me to the ungodly.
When I was at peace, He scattered
me;
He took me by the hair of my
head, and pulled it out.
He set me up like a target.
They surrounded me with spears,
aiming at my mind {kidneys};
without sparing *me* they poured
out my gall upon the ground.
They threw me down, with fall
upon fall;
they ran at me with all their
strength.
I sewed sackcloth upon my skin,
and my strength is spent on the
ground.
My belly is on fire from weeping,
and there is a shadow on my eye-
lids.
Yet there was nothing unjust in
my hands,
and my prayer is pure.
O earth, do not cover up the
blood of my flesh,
or let my cry have no place.
And now, look, my witness is in
the heavens,
and my corroborator is on high.

May my supplication come before
the Lord,

and may my eyes weep before
Him.

May a man plead before the Lord,
even *as* a son of man with his
neighbour!

But my years are numbered, and
their end has come,

and I will go the way of no return-
ing.

I perish, carried away by the wind,
and I beg for burial, and do not
obtain *it*.

I entreat wearily, and what have I
achieved?

Strangers have stolen my posses-
sions.

Who is this? let him join hands
with me.

For You have hidden their heart
from discernment;

therefore, You will not exalt them.

He will report evils to *his* party,

but *my* eyes have failed because of
my children.

But You have made me a byword
among the nations,

and I have become a laugh-
ingstock to them.

For my eyes have turned to stone
because of Your wrath;

I am greatly besieged by all.

The truthful are seized by wonder
at this,

and let the just rise up against the
transgressor,

and let the faithful hold to his own
way,

and let those who have clean
hands take courage.

Nevertheless, you all strengthen
yourselves,

and come now, for I find nothing
true in you.

My days have passed in groaning,

and my heartstrings are broken.

They have turned night into day;
the light is near to darkness.

For if I endure, Hades is my
home:

and my bed is made in darkness.

I have called upon death to be my
father,

and decay *to be* my mother and
sister.

Where then is my hope?

Or *where* will I see my good things?

Will they go down with me to
Hades,

or will we go down together to the
tomb?

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 54:2, 26:7b, 8a

A Psalm of David.

Give ear, O God, to my prayer,
and do not despise my supplication.
Have mercy on me and hear me
[for] my heart speaks to You.
Alleluia.

Luke 14:7-15

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

When Jesus noticed how people chose the best seats, he told the guest a parable, saying, “When you are invited by anyone to a marriage feast, do not sit in the best seat. It could be that someone more honorable than you might have been invited by the host, and he who invited both of you would come and tell you, ‘Make room for this person.’ Then, with shame, you would proceed to take the lowest place. Instead, when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place. And so, when the host comes, he may tell you, ‘Friend, move up higher!’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

Jesus also said to the one who had invited him, “When you make a dinner or a supper, do not call your friends, brothers, kinsmen or rich neighbors because they might return the favor and pay you back. Instead, when you give a feast, ask the poor, the maimed, the lame, or the blind [to come]. Then, you will be blessed, because they do not have the means to pay you back. For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous.”

When one of those who sat at the table with him heard these things, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the one who will feast in the Kingdom of God!”
Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 8:12-26

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And so, brethren, we are not in debt to the flesh that we should live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, then you will live! As many as are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. You did not receive the spirit of bondage to [live in] fear again, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God; and if [we are] children, then [we are] heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if indeed we suffer with him, so that we may also be glorified with him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed toward us. As it is, the creation waits with eager expectation for the revelation of

God's children. Indeed, creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that creation will also be delivered from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole of creation groans and labors in pain until now. Moreover, so do we who have the first fruits of the Spirit! We groan within ourselves, awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body. We were saved in hope, but hope that is seen is not hope. Indeed, who hopes for what can be seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Also, the Spirit helps our weaknesses, because we do not know how to pray as we should. But the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 5:16-20

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Confess your offenses to one another and pray for one another in order to be healed. The insistent

prayer of a righteous person is powerfully effective! Elias was a man with a nature like ours, and when he

prayed earnestly that it might not rain, it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months! When he prayed later on, the sky gave rain and the earth brought forth its fruit.

Brethren, if someone among you wander from the truth and is brought

back by another, know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save a soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 11:2-18

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When Peter returned to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision criticized him, saying, “You went into the house of uncircumcised people and ate with them!” But Peter began to speak and explained things to them in order: “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision: a certain containerlike a great sheet was let down from heaven by four corners, descending and coming down as far as me. When I had looked intently at it and examined [it], I saw the four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, creeping things, and birds of the sky. I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter, kill and eat!’ But I said, ‘Not so, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered into my mouth!’ But a voice out of heaven answered me the second time, ‘What God has cleansed, do not call unclean.’ This was done three times, and everything was drawn back into heaven. At that very

moment, three men stood before the house where I was staying, having been sent to me from Caesarea. The Spirit told me to go with them, without discriminating. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered into the man’s house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying to him, ‘Send [messengers] to Joppa, and get Simon, who is called Peter. He will speak to you the words by which you will be saved, you and your entire household.’ As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, even as on us at the beginning. I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John indeed baptized in water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit.’ And so, if God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to oppose God?”

When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified

God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles the repent-

ance [that leads] to life!”

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 54:17, 18bc

A Psalm of David.

I cried to God,
and the Lord heard me.
I will declare,
and He will hear my voice.

Alleluia.

Luke 16:1-9

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus also said to his disciples, “There was a certain rich man who had a manager. An accusation was made to him that this man was wasting his possessions. He called his manager and told him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give an accounting of your stewardship, for you can no longer be [my] steward.’

The manager said within himself, ‘What will I do, seeing that my lord is taking away the management position from me? I do not have strength to dig! I am ashamed to beg! I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’ Calling each one of his lord’s debtors to him, he said to the first, ‘How

much do you owe to my lord?’ The man replied, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ The manager said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly and write fifty.’ Then he said to another, ‘How much do you owe?’ That one said, ‘A hundred cors of wheat.’ The manager said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’

His master praised the dishonest manager because he had acted wisely, for the children of this world are wiser than the children of the light in [dealing with] their own kind. I tell you, make for yourselves friends by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when it fails you, you may be received into the eternal dwellings. *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of Third (Fourth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Genesis 28:10-22

From the book of Genesis of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Jacob departed from the Well of the Oath, and went to Charran. And came to a certain place and slept there, for the sun had set. And he took *one* of the stones of the place and put it at his head, and lay down to sleep in that place. And he dreamed, and see, a ladder was set firmly on the earth, and its top reached to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood upon it, and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham, and the God of Isaac. Do not fear, I will give to you the land on which you lie, and to your offspring. And your offspring will be like the sand of the earth, and it will spread about to the sea, and to the south, and to the north, and to the east, and all the tribes of the earth will be blessed in you and in your offspring. And see, I am with you to preserve you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done all that I have spoken to you."

And Jacob woke from his sleep, and said, "The Lord is in this place, and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And Jacob arose in the morning, and took the stone he had put by his head, and he set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it. And Jacob called the name of that place, the House of God; and the name of the city was previously Oulam-luz.

And Jacob made a vow, saying, "If the Lord God will be with me, and guard me throughout on this journey, on the way I am going, and give me bread to eat, and clothing to put on, and bring me back in safety to my father's house, then the Lord will be my God. And this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be a house of God to me, and of all You give me, I will give a tithe to You."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 25:1-26:9a

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

O Lord my God,

I will glorify You; I will sing
hymns to Your Name,

for You have done wonderful
things—

an ancient *and* true counsel. May it
be so, O Lord!

For You have made cities a heap,
fortified cities, so their founda-
tions might fall;

the city of the ungodly will not be
built forever.

Therefore, the poor people will
bless You,

and the cities of the wronged will
bless You.

For You have been a helper to
every humble city,

and a shelter to those who are
disheartened because of poverty;

You will deliver them from evil
men,

and be a shelter for the thirsty,
and a breath to the wronged,

like faint-hearted men thirsting in
Zion,

because of the ungodly,
to whom You delivered us.

And the Lord of hosts will make *a*
feast for all the nations on this mount:

they will drink gladness;

they will drink wine;

they will anoint themselves with
ointment in this mountain.

Deliver all these things to the na-
tions,

for this is *God's* counsel for all the
nations.

Death has prevailed and swal-
lowed *then* up,

but the Lord God has taken away
every tear from every face;

He has taken away the disgrace of
His people from all the earth;

for the mouth of the Lord has
spoken it.

And on that day they will say,

“See, this is our God, in whom we
have hoped,

and we rejoiced; and we will be
glad in our salvation.”

God will give us rest on this
mountain,

and the Moabites will be trampled
down,

as they tread a threshing floor with
wagons.

And He will spread forth his
hands,

even as He also brings down *man*
to destroy *him*,

and He will bring low his pride—
things on which he has laid his
hands.

And He will bring down the
height of the refuge of your wall,

and it will come down all the way
to the ground.

On that day they will sing this
song in the land of Judah:

“See a strong city;

and We will make salvation
its wall and its outer wall.

Open the gates;

let a people enter that keeps right-
eousness,

and that keeps truth,
that lays hold of truth,

and that keeps peace,
for in You, O Lord,
they have hoped forever—
the great, the eternal God,
Who has humbled and brought
down
those who dwell in lofty places;
You will cast down strong cities,
and bring them to the ground,
And the feet of the meek and
humble

will trample them.
The way of the godly is made
straight;
the way of the godly has also pre-
pared.
For the way of the Lord is judge-
ment;
we have hoped in Your Name,
and in the remembrance *of You*,
which our soul longs for.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 18:1-21

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Baldad the Sauchite an-
swered and said,
“How long will you continue?
Hold back, so that we also may
speak.
Why have we been silent before
you
like four-footed beasts?
Anger has possessed you.
What if you should die? Would *the*
earth under heaven be uninhabited?
Or would the mountains be over-
thrown from their foundations?
The light of the ungodly will go
out,
and their flame will not go up.
His light *will be* darkness in *his*
dwelling,
and his lamp will be put out with
him.
May the least of men chase down
his possessions,
and may his counsel trip *him* up.

His foot has also been caught in a
snare,
and may he be entangled in a net.
May snares come upon him!
He will strengthen those who
thirst for his destruction.
His snare is hidden in the ground,
and the means of his capture by
the path.
May pains destroy him on every
side,
and may many *enemies* come about
him
with sever famine.
An extraordinary destruction has
been prepared for him.
May the toes of his feet be de-
voured,
and death will consume his beauty.
May health be torn from his dwell-
ing,
and may distress seize him by roy-
al decree.
It will dwell in his tent in his night;

his good appearance will be sown
with brimstone.

His roots will be dried up from
below,

and his crop will fall off above.

His memorial will perish from the
earth,

and his name will no longer be
remembered.

May he be driven from light into
darkness.

He will not be known among his
people,

nor will his house be preserved on
the earth;

but others will live in what is his.

The last groaned for him,

and wonder seized the first.

These are the houses of the un-
righteous,

and this is the place of those who
do not know the Lord.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Sirach 8:1-10:1

From the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Do not content with a mighty
man,

lest you fall into his hands.

Do not quarrel with a rich man,

lest he overweigh you;

for gold has destroyed many,

and has perverted the hearts of
kings.

Do not contend with a talkative
man,

and do not heap wood on his fire.

Do not jest with a rude man,

lest your ancestors be disgraced.

Do not reproach a man that turns
away from sin,

but remember that we are all wor-
thy of rebuke.

Do not dishonour a man in his old
age,

for some of us, too, are growing
old.

Do not rejoice over any dead per-
son,

but remember that we all must die.

Do not despise the discourse of
the wise,

but acquaint yourself with their
proverbs,

for you will learn instruction from
them,

and how to serve noblemen.

Do not miss out on the discourse
of the elders,

for they also learned of their fa-
thers,

and from them you will learn un-
derstanding,

and how to give an answer in time
of need.

Do not kindle the coals of a sin-
ner,

lest you be burnt with the flame of
his fire.

Do not rise up in anger

at the presence of an insolent per-
son,

lest he lie in wait to entrap you in
your words.

Do not lend to a person that is
stronger than yourself,

and if you do, consider it lost.

Do not give surety above your
power pay,

and if you give surety, take care to
pay it.

Do not go to law against a judge,
for they will decide for him be-
cause of his reputation.

Do not travel on the road with a
reckless person,

lest he weigh you down,

for he will do according to his
own will,

and you will perish with him
through his folly.

Do not fight with an angry man,
and do not go with him into a
solitary place,

for bloodshed is nothing in his
sight,

and he will strike you down where
there is no help.

Do not consult with a fool,
for he cannot keep matters confi-
dential.

Do nothing confidential before a
stranger,

for you do not know what he will
bring forth.

Do not open your heart to every
man,

lest he repay you with a shrewd
turn.

Do not be jealous over the wife of
your bosom,

and so teach an evil lesson about
yourself.

Do not give your soul to a woman
to let her trample on your
strength.

Do not meet with a female escort,
lest you fall into her snares.

Do not associate with a dancing-
girl,

lest you become caught in her
endeavours.

Do not gaze at a virgin,

lest you stumble, and pay damages
to her.

Do not give your soul to prosti-
tutes,

Lest you destroy your inheritance.

Do not look round in the streets
of the city,

and do not wander in its deserted
places.

Turn your eye away from a shape-
ly woman,

and do not look gaze at beauty
belonging to another;

many have been led astray by the
beauty of a woman,

for from it love is kindled as a fire.

Never sit down with another
man's wife,

and do not feast with her with
wine,

lest your heart turn aside to her,

and so slip by desire and fall into
destruction.

Do not forsake an old friend,

for the recent one is not comparable to him;

a new friend is as new wine,
you will drink it with pleasure only
after it has aged.

Do not envy the honour given to
a sinner,

for you do not know what his end
will be.

Do not delight in the pleasure of
the ungodly,

but remember they will not be
deemed righteous even to Hades.

Keep far from a man who has
power to kill,

so you will not be anxious of the
fear of death,

but if you come near him, do not
offend,

lest he take away your life.

Recognize that you are stepping in
the midst of snares,

and walking upon the battlements
of a city.

Evaluate your neighbour as well as
you can,

and consult with the wise.

Let your discussion be with the
wise,

and let all your communication be
in the law of the Most High.

Let righteous men be your dinner
companions,

and let your boasting be in the fear
of the Lord.

A work will be praised for the skill
of the artisans,

and the wise ruler of the people
for his words.

A talkative man is feared in his
city,

and he who is reckless in his
speech will be hated.

A wise judge will instruct his peo-
ple,

and the rule of an intelligent man
is well ordered.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 16:1

A Psalm of David.

Hear, O Lord, my righteousness; attend to my supplication.

Give ear to my prayer, [which is] from lips without deceit.

Alleluia.

Matthew 21:28-32

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

“But what do you think? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard.’ The son answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind, and went. The father came to his second son, and said the same thing. The son answered, ‘I will go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which one of the two sons did the will of his father?”

They replied, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “Amen, I tell you that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering into the Kingdom of God before you! For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. After seeing this, you did not even repent and you did not believe him. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Ephesians 4:1-16

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Ephesians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is why, I, being the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and humility, with patience, bearing with one another in love; being eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you also were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all. But grace has been granted to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore, he says, “When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” Now, what does “he ascended” mean, if not that he first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the [same] one who

also ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.

He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for a work of ministry, to build up of the body of Christ. This is until we all attain to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, having reached the very fullness of Christ. The goal is that we may no longer be children, tossed back and forth and carried about by every wind of doctrine through human trickery, according to clever deceits and mistaken schemes. Instead, speaking the truth in love, may we grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ. From him, the whole body, being fitted and knit

together, as every joint supplies and according to the participation of each

part, grows and builds itself in love.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

2 Peter 2:2-8

The Catholic Epistle from the Second Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Many will follow their immoral ways and as a result, the way of the truth will be brought into disrepute. They will exploit you greedily with deceptive words. Their sentence, pronounced long ago, does not linger, and their destruction does not slumber.

For God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them down to Tartarus and committed them to pits of darkness to be reserved for judgment. He did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah (a preacher of righteousness) with seven others when he brought a flood on

the world of the ungodly. He also turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction and made them an example to those who would lead ungodly lives. He delivered the righteous Lot who was very distressed by the lustful behavior of these wicked people; that righteous man was living among them and was tormented every day in his righteous soul when he saw and heard lawless deeds.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 27:1-3

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When it was determined that we should sail for Italy, the authorities delivered Paul and other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, of the Imperial regiment. We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to sail to various places on the coast

of Asia and put to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, traveled with us. The next day, we landed at Sidon. Julius treated Paul with kindness and gave him permission to visit his friends and to be cared for.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 16:6

A Psalm of David.

I cried out, O God, and You heard me;
incline Your ear to me, and hear my words.

Alleluia.

Luke 9:57-62

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

As they went on the way, a certain man said to him, "I want to follow you wherever you go, Lord!"

Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

He said to another, "Follow me!" But the man said, "Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father."

But Jesus replied, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But you go and announce the Kingdom of God."

Another also said, "I want to follow you, Lord, but first allow me to say goodbye to those who are at my house!"

But Jesus said to him, "No one who has put his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God." *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of Third (Fourth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Exodus 7:14-8:15

From the book of Exodus of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord said to Moses, "The heart of Pharaoh is hardened so that he will not let the people go. Go to Pharaoh early in the morning. Look, he is going to the water, and you will

meet him by the bank of the river, and you will take the rod that was turned into a serpent in your hand. And you will say to him, 'The Lord God of the Hebrews has sent me to

you, saying, "Send My people away, so that they may serve Me in the desert," and, look, you have not listened to this so far. This is what the Lord says, "By this you will know that I am the Lord. Look, I strike the water in the river with the rod in my hand, and it will be change into blood. And the fish that are in the river will die, and the river will stink, and the Egyptians will not be able to drink water from the river."''' And the Lord said to Moses, "Say to Aaron your brother, 'Take your rod in your hand, and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, their ponds, and all their standing water, and it will become blood.'" And there was blood in all the land of Egypt, in vessels of wood and of stone.

And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded them. And Aaron lifted up *his hand* with his rod, and struck the waters in the river in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and all the water in the river changed into blood. And the fish in the river died, and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink water from the river, and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. And the Egyptians enchanters did likewise with their sorceries; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the Lord said. And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not fix his attention even on this thing. And all the

Egyptians dug round the river, so that they might drink water, for they could not drink water from the river. And seven days were completed after the Lord struck the river.

And the Lord said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh, and you will say to him, 'This is what the Lord says, "send away my people so that they may serve me. And if you will not send them away, look, I will strike all your borders with frogs; and the river will vomit frogs, and they will go up and enter into your houses, and into your bedrooms, and on your beds, and into your servants' houses, and your people's houses, and in your bread dough, and in your ovens. The frogs will come up on you, and your servants, and your people.'"'" And the Lord said to Moses, "Say to your brother Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your rod over the rivers, the canals, and the pools, and cause the frogs to come.'" And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and brought up the frogs, and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. And the Egyptian enchanters did likewise with their sorceries, and brought up the frogs on the land of Egypt.

And Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron, and said, "Pray for me to the Lord, and let Him take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will send them away, and they will sacrifice to the Lord." And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Appoint me *a time*

when I will pray for you, and for your servants, and for your people, to make the frogs disappear from you, and from your people, and from your houses. They will only remain in the river.” And Pharaoh said, “tomorrow.” Moses said therefore, “As you have said, so that you may know that there is no other but the Lord. And the frogs will be taken away from you, and from your houses, and from the villages, and from you servants, and from you people; they will only remain in the river.” And Moses and Aaron departed from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the Lord about the restricting of the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. And the Lord did as Moses said, and the frogs died from the houses, the villages, and the fields. And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. And when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, his heart was hardened,

and he did not listen to them, as the Lord said.

And the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your rod with your hand and strike the dust of the earth, and there will be lice on men, and on four-footed animals, and throughout all the land of Egypt.’” So Aaron stretched out his rod with his hand, and struck the dust of the earth; and the lice were on men and on four-footed animals, and in all the dust of the earth there were lice. And the enchanters also did so with their sorceries, to bring forth the lice, and they could not. And the lice were on both the men and on the four-footed animals. So the enchanters said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the Lord said.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Joel 2:28-32

From the book of Joel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it will come to pass after these things,
that I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
and your old men will dream dreams,
and your young men will see visions.

And on my servants and handmaids

I will pour out of my Spirit in those days.

And I will give wonders in heaven and on the earth, blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes to pass. And it will be *that* whoever calls

upon the Name of the Lord will be saved, for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem will be the ones who have escaped, as the Lord has said, and

they will have Good News announced to them, whom the Lord has called.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 1:1-22

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

There was a certain man in the land of Ausitis, whose name *was* Job, and that man was true, blameless, righteous, *and* godly, abstaining from every evil thing. And he had seven sons and three daughters, and his livestock consisted of seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys in the pastures; he also had very many servants, and he had extensive activity on the earth, and that man was the *most* noble of all the *men* of the East.

And his sons used to visit one another and prepared a banquet every day, taking their three to eat and drink with them. And when the days of the banquet were completed, Job sent and purified them; rising up in the morning, and offered sacrifices for them, according to their number, and one calf for a sin-offering for their souls. For Job said, "Lest my sons have thought evil in their minds against God." So Job did this continually.

And it happened one day, that look, the angels of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and the devil came with them. And

the Lord said to the devil, "Where have you come from?" And the devil answered the Lord, and said, "I have come from going around the earth, and walking about under heaven." And the Lord said to him, "Have you considered my servant Job, since there is none like him on the earth, a blameless, true, godly, man, abstaining from every evil thing?" Then the devil answered, and said before the Lord, "Does Job worship the Lord for no reason?" Have You not made a hedge around him, and around his household, and around all his possessions? And have You not blessed the works of his hands, and multiplied his cattle upon the land? But stretch out Your hand, and touch all that he has, surely he will curse You to *Your* face!" Then the Lord said to the devil, "See, I give into your hand all that he has, but do not touch him." So the devil went out from the Lord.

And it happened on a certain day, when Job's sons and daughters were drinking wine in the house of their elder brother. And, look, a messenger came to Job, and said to him, "The yokes of oxen were ploughing, and the female donkeys were feeding near

them; and raiders came and took them captive, and killed the servants with the sword; and I alone have escaped, and I came to tell you.” While he was still speaking, another messenger came, and said to Job, “Fire has fallen from heaven, and burnt up the sheep, and likewise consumed the shepherds; and I alone have escaped, and I came to tell you.” While he was still speaking, another messenger came, and said to Job, “Horsemen formed three companies against us, and surrounded the camels, and took them captive, and killed the servants with the sword; and I alone escaped, and I came to tell you.” While he was still speaking, another messenger came, and said to Job, “While your sons and daughters

were eating and drinking with their elder brother, suddenly a great wind came from the desert and struck the four corners of the house, and the house fell upon your children, and they died; and I alone have escaped, and I came to tell you.”

So Job arose, tore his clothes, shaved the hair of his head, and fell on the ground, and worshipped, saying, “I came naked from my mother’s womb, and naked will I return; the Lord gave, the Lord has taken away. As it seemed good to the Lord, so it has come to pass. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.”

In all these things that happened him, Job did not sin at all before the Lord, or charge God with folly.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 26:21-27:9

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

For look, the Lord is bringing
wrath

from *his* holy place upon those
who dwell on the earth;

the earth will disclose its blood,
and will not cover the slain.

In that day God will bring *His*
holy and great and strong sword upon
the dragon, the fleeing serpent—upon
the dragon, the crooked serpent, and
He will destroy the dragon.

In that day there will be
a beautiful vineyard,
and a desire to begin *a hymn* about
it.

I am a strong city, a besieged city;
I will water it in vain,
for it will be taken by night,
and by day the wall will fall.

There is no city that has not taken
hold of it;

who will set me to watch stubble
in the field?

I have rejected it because of this
enemy.

The Lord has done all that He
appointed on for that very reason.

I am burned up.

Those who dwell in it will cry out,
“Let us make peace with Him,

let us make peace!”
Those who are coming are the
children of Jacob;
Israel will bud and blossom,
and the world will be filled with its
fruit.
Will he not be struck even as him-
self has struck;
will he not be killed even as he
himself has killed?
Fighting and reviling, he will send
them away.
Did you not think with a harsh
spirit

to kill them in a spirit of anger?
Therefore, the iniquity of Jacob
will be taken away;
and this is his blessing, when I
remove his sin,
when they make all the stones of
the altars
beaten like fine dust,
and their trees will not remain,
and their idols will be cut down,
like a distant forest.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 17:38, 41

A Psalm of David.

I will pursue my enemies and overtake them;
and I will not turn back until they fail.
And You have made my enemies to turn their backs to me,
and utterly destroyed those who hate me.
Alleluia.

Luke 14:16-24

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

But Jesus replied, “A certain man gave a great banquet and invited many people. At supper time, he sent out his servant to tell those who were invited, ‘Come, for everything is ready now!’ But they all began to make excuses.

The first told him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please have me excused!’

Another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen and I must go try them out. Please have me excused!’

Another said, ‘I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come!’

That servant came back and reported these things to his lord. At this, the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the city, and bring in the poor, the maimed, the blind, and the lame.’

The servant said, ‘Lord, it is done as you commanded, and there is still room!’

The lord then told the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled! For I tell you that none of those who were invited will taste of my supper.’”

Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Ephesians 4:17-32

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Ephesians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, I say and testify in the Lord that you no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind. They are darkened in their understanding, cut off from God’s life because of their ignorance and because of the hardening of their hearts. Having become hardened, such people gave themselves up to lust and they pursue what is impure with greed. But you did not learn Christ that way, except if you failed to hear him and to be taught in him, since truth is in Jesus. You were [supposed] to put away the old self which belongs to your former way of life, since it becomes ever more corrupt after the lusts of deceit. And you are to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new self who in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Therefore, putting away what is false, speak the truth to each other, for we are members of one another. “Be angry, and do not sin.” Do not let the sun go down on your wrath and do not leave any room for the devil. Those who used to steal should steal no more, but rather work hard, even with their own hands to what is good, so that they may have something to give to those who have need. Do now allow any decadent speech to come out from your mouth, only what is good to build up as is needed, in a way that gives grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, shouting and slander be put away from you, along with evil thoughts. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each

other just as God also forgave you in Christ.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 3:13-4:4

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let such a person show by a good conduct that his deeds are done in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast and do not lie against the truth. This 'wisdom' is not the one that comes down from above! It is earthly, sensual, and demonic. Where there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there is confusion and every evil deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy. Now, the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

These wars and conflicts among you, where do they come from? Is it not from your desires that wage war in your members? You lust, and do not have! You kill, covet, and [still] cannot obtain! You fight and make war. You do not have because you do not ask! You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, in order to spend it for your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility with God? Whoever wants to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God!

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 11:26b-12:2

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

So it was that for a whole year, they assembled with the Church and taught many people. The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Now, in these days, prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named Agabus, stood up and predicted through the Spirit that a great famine

would take place all over the world, and it happened in the days of Claudius. According to their ability, each one of the disciples determined to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea. This is indeed what they did, sending their gift to the presbyters through the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

About that time, King Herod took actions to oppress some of the [members of the] Church. He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 17:18, 19a

A Psalm of David.

He will deliver me from my powerful enemies,
and from those who hate me,
for they are too strong for me.

They overtook me in the day of my affliction.

Alleluia.

Mark 4:35-41

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

That day, when evening came, Jesus said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." Leaving the crowd behind, his disciples took him with them in the boat, just as he was; and there were also other small boats with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so much that the boat was already filling. But Jesus was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. They woke him up and told

him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

Jesus awoke and rebuked the wind, saying to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" The wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He then asked his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? How is it that you have no faith?"

They were greatly afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" *Glory be to God forever.*

Thursday of Third (Fourth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Genesis 32:2-30

From the book of Genesis of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Jacob departed for his journey, and looking up, he saw the hosts of God encamped, and the angels of God met him. And when he saw them, Jacob said, "This is the encampment of God;" and he called the name of that place, Encampments.

And Jacob sent messengers ahead to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, in the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, "Speak this to my lord Esau, 'This is what your servant Jacob is saying, 'I have sojourned with Laban and stayed there until now. I have oxen, donkeys, sheep, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord Esau, so that your servant might find grace in your sight.''" And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you and four hundred men are with him." And Jacob was greatly afraid, and was perplexed. And he divided the people that were with him, and the cows, and the camels, and the sheep, into two companies. And Jacob said, "If Esau should come to one company, and

destroy it, the other company will escape."

And Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, O Lord Who said to me, 'Depart quickly to the land of your birth, and I will deal well with you,' it is sufficient to me because of all the righteousness and truth You have worked with your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. Deliver me from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid of him, lest he should come and attack me, and the mother with the children. But You said, 'I will surely deal well with you, and will make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which will not be numbered for multitude.'"

And he slept there that night, and took gifts from the things that he was bringing, and sent out to his brother Esau two hundred female goats, twenty male goats, two hundred sheep, twenty rams, thirty milk camels and their foals, forty cows, ten bulls, twenty female donkeys, and ten colts. And he gave them to the control of his servants, *each* flock separately, and

he said to his servants, "Go on before me, and put some distance between each drove." And he commanded the first, saying, "If my brother Esau meets you, and he ask you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose are these going before you?' You will say, 'Your servant Jacob's; he has sent gifts to my lord Esau, and look, he is behind us.'" And he commanded the first, the second, and the third, and all that went before him after these flocks, saying, "This is how you will speak to Esau when you find him, and say, 'Look, your servant Jacob is coming after us.'" For he said, I will propitiate his face with the gifts going before him, and afterwards I will see his face, for perhaps he will accept me." So the gifts went on before him, but he himself stayed that night in the encampment.

And he arose that night, and took his two wives and his two maid-servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbah. And

he took them and crossed over the torrent, and brought over all his possessions. And Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until the morning. And He saw that He did not prevail against him, and He touched the flat part of his thigh, and the flat part of Jacob's thigh became numb as he wrestling with him. And He said to him, "Let Me go, for the day has dawned." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me." And he said to Him, "What is your name?" And he answered, "Jacob." And He said to him, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have prevailed with God, and will be mighty with men." And Jacob asked and said, "Tell me Your Name." and He said, "Why do you ask after My Name?" And He blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of that place, the Form of God, "for I have seen God face to face, and my life has been preserved.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 28:14-22

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, hear the word of the Lord, you afflicted men,
and you rulers of this people that is in Jerusalem.

Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with Hades,
and agreements with death,
if a rushing storm passes through,

it will not come upon us;
we have made falsehood our hope,
and we will be protected by falsehood."

Therefore, this is what the Lord is saying,

"See I lay a costly stone for the foundations of Zion,

a choice and precious cornerstone
for its foundations,

and whoever believes *in him* will
not be put to shame.

And I will turn judgement into
hope,

and my mercy to be for *a* standard
measure,

and you that trust vainly in false-
hood,

a tempest will by no means pass
you by,

except it also take away your cov-
enant of death.

And your hope in Hades will not
stand;

if a rushing storm comes,

you will be beaten down by it.

When it passes by, it will take you;

For morning by morning it will
pass by in the day,

and by night there will be an evil
hope.

Learn to hear,

you who are distressed.

We cannot fight, and we ourselves
are too weak to gather ourselves
together.

The Lord will rise up as a moun-
tain of ungodly *men*,

and will be in the valley of Gaba-
on;

He will perform His works with
wrath, a work of bitterness,

And His wrath will deal strangely,

and His bitterness shall be strange.

So do not be glad,

nor let your bonds become strong,

for I have heard from the Lord of
hosts

of works finished and cut short,

which He will perform upon the
whole earth.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 20:1-29

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Sophar the Minite answered
and said,

“I did not suppose that you would
answer like this,

nor do you understand more than
I.

I will hear the instruction of my
shameful,

and the spirit of my understanding
answers me.

Have you *not* known these things
of old,

from the time that man was put
on the earth?

But the merriment of the ungodly
ends with a great fall,

and the joy of transgressors in
destruction.

Although his gifts should go up to
heaven,

and his sacrifice reaches the
clouds.

Just when he seems to be firmly
established,

then he will utterly perish;
and those who knew him will say,
“Where is he?”

Like a dream that has fled away,
he will not be found;
and he has fled like a vision of the
night.

An eye caught a glimpse of him,
but will not *see him* again,
and his place will see him no long-
er.

May *his* inferiors destroy his chil-
dren,
and his hands kindle the fire of
sorrow.

His bones were full with his
youthful vigor,
which will lie down with him in
the dust.

Though evil is sweet in his mouth,
and he will hide it under his
tongue,

though he will not spare it, and
will not leave it,

but will hold it in the middle of his
throat,

yet he will not be able to help
himself,

for the gall of an asp is in his belly.

His wealth, unjustly collected, will
be vomited up,

a messenger will drag him out of
his house.

May he suck the poison of ser-
pents,

and let the serpent’s tongue kill
him.

May he not see the milk of the
pastures,

nor his supplies of honey and but-
ter.

He has laboured unprofitably and
in vain,

for wealth of which he will not
taste;

for it is like tough meat that he
cannot chew.

For he has crushed the houses of
many weak people,

and he has seized a dwelling,
though he did not build *it*.

There is no security to his posses-
sions;

he will not be saved by what he
desired.

Nothing is left for him to eat;

Therefore, his goods will not
flourish.

But when he at last seems to be
satisfied, he will be afflicted,

and every distress will come upon
him.

If somehow he should fill his bel-
ly,

let *God* send the fury of wrath
upon him,

let Him bathe him in pains.

And he will not escape from the
power of the sword;

may a bronze bow wound him.

May an arrow pierce through his
body,

and may lighting strike his dwell-
ing.

May terrors come upon him.

May total darkness await him.

A fire that does not burn out will
consume him.

May a stranger plague his house.
May the heaven uncover his lawless acts,
and may the earth rise up against him.
May destruction bring his house to an end,

and may a day of wrath come upon him.

This is the portion of an ungodly man from the Lord,

and the possession of his goods *appointed to him* by the One who watches him.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Daniel 6:1-27

From the book of Daniel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it pleased Darius, and he set one hundred and twenty governors over the kingdom, so that they might be throughout his kingdom, and over them three administrators, one of whom was Daniel, so the governors might give account to them, so that the king might not be troubled. And Daniel was over them, for *there was* an excellent spirit in him, and the king set him over his entire kingdom. Then the administrators and governors sought to find some charge against Daniel, but they did not find any charge against him, nor wrongdoing, nor fault, because he was faithful. And the administrators said, "We will not find a charge against Daniel, except in the laws of his God."

Then the administrators and governors approached the king, and said to him, "King Darius, live forever! All who preside over your kingdom, captains and governors, chiefs and local governors, have counseled together, to establish a royal statue and a firm decree, that whoever

petitions any god or man for thirty days, except from you, O king, will be thrown into the den of lions. Now then, O king, establish the decree, and publish it in writing, so the decree of the Persians and Medes cannot be changed." Then king Darius commanded the decree to be written.

And when Daniel knew that the decree had been published, he entered his house, and his windows facing Jerusalem were open in his upper rooms, and he knelt down on his knees three times a day, and prayed to and gave confession to his God, just as he had done before. Then those men watched, and found Daniel praying and making supplication to his God. And they came and said to the king, "O king, have you not made a decree, that any man who asks a petition from any god or man for thirty days, except from you, O king, will be thrown into the den of lions?" And the king said, "The word is true, and the decree of the Medes and Persians will not pass away."

Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel one of the sons of the captivity of Judea, has not submitted to your decree, and he makes his requests of his God three times a day." Then the king, when he heard the charge, was greatly grieved for Daniel, and he agonized himself for Daniel to deliver him, and until the evening he kept agonizing himself to deliver him. Then those men said to the king, "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians says that we must not change any decree of statue which the king makes." Then the king spoke, and they brought Daniel, and threw him into the den of lions. But the king said to Daniel, "Your God, whom you continually serve, He will deliver you!" And they brought a stone, and laid it on the mouth of the pit, and the king sealed *it* with his ring, and with the ring of his nobles, so that the case might not be changed against Daniel. And the king went to his house, and slept, fasting, and they brought him no food, and sleep fled from him. But God shut the mouths of the lions, and they did not trouble Daniel.

Then the king arose early in the morning, at daybreak, and hurried to the den of lions. And as he came near to the den, he cried with a loud voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you continually serve, been able to deliver you from the mouth of the lions?" And Daniel

said to the king, "O king, live forever! My God has sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me, because uprightness was found in me before Him, and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong." Then the king was rejoiced greatly over him, and he said to bring Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was brought up out of the den, and there not any harm found on him, because he believed in his God. And the king commanded, and they brought the men that had accused Daniel, and they were thrown into the den of lions, they and their children and their wives. And they did not reach the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones to pieces.

Then king Darius wrote to all nations, tribes, *and* languages, who inhabit all the earth, "Peace be multiplied to you! A decree has been established by me in every dominion of my kingdom, that *people should* tremble and fear before the God of Daniel,

for He is the living God and endures unto ages of ages.

And His kingdom will not be destroyed,

and his dominion will continue unto the end.

He helps and rescues,
and He works signs and wonders
in the heaven and on earth;

He rescued Daniel
from the power of the lions."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 11:8

A Psalm of David.

You, O Lord, will guard us,
and preserve us from this generation and forever.

Alleluia.

Mark 3:7-12

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus withdrew to the sea with his disciples, and a great crowd followed him from Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumaea beyond the Jordan, and also from around Tyre and Sidon. Hearing what great things Jesus was doing, a great multitude of people came to him. Jesus instructed his disciples to have a little boat stay near him because of the crowd, so that they

would not press on him. For he had healed many people, so that as many as had diseases pressed on him in order to touch him. The unclean spirits, whenever they saw him, fell down before him and cried, "You are the Son of God!" He sternly warned them that they should not make him known. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

1 Corinthians 12:31-14:1

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But earnestly desire the best gifts. Moreover, I [will] show you a most excellent way.

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and

have all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to move mountains, but if I do not have love; I am nothing. If I give out all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

Love is patient and is kind; love does not envy. Love does not brag, it is not proud, it does not behave inappropriately, it does not seek its own way. [Love] does not take offence and does not keep track of evil, it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. [Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know [only] in part, and we prophesy [only] in part; but when what is complete comes,

then what is incomplete will be done away with. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child. Now that I have become full-grown, I have put away childish things. For now, we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we shall see face to face. Now, I know [only] in part, but then, I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. But now, faith, hope, and love remain: these three, and the greatest of these is love.

Pursue love, and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially so that you may prophesy.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 4:11-5:3

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Do not speak against one another, brethren. Whoever speaks against one of the brethren and judges speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge! Only one is the lawgiver, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge another?

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we will go into this city, spend a year there, do business and make a profit." But do you not know what your life will be like tomorrow! Truly, what is your life? You are a

mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." But now, you boast and brag! All such boasting is evil. If someone knows how to do what is good and yet does not do it, it is a sin.

Listen, you who are rich: weep and howl for the miseries that are coming on you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are eaten by moths. Your gold and silver are rusted and their rust will be a testimony against you and it will eat your flesh like fire.

You have laid up your treasure in the last days.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 4:19-31

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves! But we cannot help telling the things which we saw and heard!"

When they had further threatened the apostles, they let them go. They found no way to punish them on account of the people, because everyone glorified God for what had been done. (Moreover, the man on whom this miracle of healing had been performed was more than forty years old).

After being released, the apostles came to their own [company], and reported everything that the chief priests and the presbyters had said to them. When they heard it, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, you are God who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who by the mouth of your servant, David, said,

'Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth take a stand, and the rulers take council together, against the Lord, and against his Christ.'

For truly, in this city, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed. They did whatever your hand and counsel had foreordained to happen. And now, Lord, consider their threats and grant your servants to speak your word with complete boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal, and may signs and wonders may be accomplished through the Name of your holy servant Jesus."

When they had prayed, the place where they were gathered was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they proclaimed the word of God with boldness.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 47:11c, 12

A Psalm of David.

Your right hand is full of righteousness.
Let Mount Zion be glad,
and let the daughters of Judah rejoice,
because of Your judgments, O Lord.

Alleluia.

Luke 18:35-43

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

As he came near Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the road, begging. Hearing a crowd going by, he asked what this meant. People told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. He cried out, "Jesus, you son of David, have mercy on me!" Then, those who led the way rebuked him, ordering him to be quiet. But the blind man cried out all the more, "You son of David, have mercy on me!"

Standing still, Jesus commanded that the blind man be brought to him.

When the man had come near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do?"

The man replied, "Lord, that I may see again!" Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has healed you."

Immediately, the man received his sight and began to follow Jesus, glorifying God. When all the people saw this, they praised God. *Glory be to God forever.*

Friday of Third (Fourth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Deuteronomy 10:12-11:28

From the book of Deuteronomy of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to

fear the Lord your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and

to serve the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his statutes that I commanded you today, that it may be well with you? Look, the heaven and the heaven of heavens belong to the Lord your God, the earth and everything in it. Yet the Lord chose your fathers to love them, and he chose their offspring after them, you, above all nations, as it is this day. Therefore, circumcise the hardness of your heart, and do not be stiff necked any longer. For the Lord your God, He *is* God of gods, and the Lord of lords, the great, and mighty, and awesome God, who show partiality, or accept bribes. He administers justice for the stranger, orphan, and widow, and He loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. And you shall love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the Lord your God, and serve Him, and hold fast to Him, and swear by His Name. He *is* your boast and your God, who did these great and glorious things in the midst of you, which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down into Egypt with seventy-five souls, but the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude.

Therefore, you shall love the Lord your God, and keep His orders, and His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, always. Know this day, I do not speak to your children,

who do not know and have not seen the discipline of the Lord your God, His wonderful works, His strong hand, His outstretched arm, His miracles, and His wonders, which He worked in the midst of Egypt upon Pharaoh king of Egypt, and all his land; and what He did to the host of the Egyptians, to their chariots, their cavalry, and their host; how He made the water of the Red Sea to flow over them as they pursued you, and the Lord destroyed them to this day; and all the things that He did for you in the desert until you came into this place; and all the things that He did to Dathan and Abiron the sons of Eliab the son of Ruben, how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up with their households, their tents, and all their possessions that were with them, in the midst of all Israel: but your eyes have seen all the mighty works of the Lord, that He worked among you today.

And you shall keep all his commandments that I have command you today, that you may live, and be multiplied, and go in and inherit the land, into which you are crossing the Jordan to inherit, that you may live long upon the land, which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them, and to their offspring after them, a land flowing with milk and honey. For the land into which you are entering to inherit it, is not like the land of Egypt, from which you came, where they sow the seed, and water it

with their feet like a garden of herbs: but the land into which you are entering to inherit it, is a land of hills and plains, it will drink water of the rain of heaven, a land which the Lord your God looks upon, the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

Now if you will indeed listen to all the commands that I command you today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your heart, and with all your soul, then He will give you the early and latter rain in its season for your land, that you may gather your corn, and your wine, and your oil. And He will give food in your fields to your cattle; and when you have eaten and are full, take care to yourself, that your heart does not become puffed up, and you transgress and serve other gods, and worship them, and the Lord become angry with you, and shut up the heaven, so that there will be no rain, and the earth will not yield its fruit, and you will perish quickly from the good land, which the Lord has given you.

And you shall store these words in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be fixed before your eyes. And you shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. And

you shall write them on the door posts of your houses, and on your gates, that your days and the days of your children may be long in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them, like the days of heaven on earth. And it will happen that if you will indeed listen to all these commands, which I commanded you to observe today, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him, then the Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you will inherit great nations, stronger than yourselves. Every place where the sole of your foot treads will be your: from the desert and Anti-Lebanon, and from the great river Euphrates, even to the Western Sea will be your borders. No one will stand before you, and the Lord your God will put the fear of you and the dread of you on the face of all the land where you tread, as He told you.

See, I set before you today the blessing and the curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commands of the Lord your God, all that I command you today; and the curse, if you do not listen to the commands of the Lord your God, which I command you today, but go astray from the way I have commanded you, to go to serve other gods, which you do not know.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 29:13-23

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord said,
“These people draw near to Me
and honour Me with their lips,
but their heart is far from Me,
and they worship Me in vain,
teaching the commandments and
doctrines of men.

Therefore look, I will proceed
to remove this people.

I will remove them and I will de-
stroy the wisdom of the wise,
and I will hide the discernment of
the wise.

Woe to those who deepen their
counsel,

but not through the Lord!

Woe to those who take counsel in
secret,

and whose works are in darkness!

And they say, “Who has seen us?

And who will know us or what we
do?”

Will you not be regarded as the
clay of the potter?

Will what is formed say to the one
that formed it,

“You did not form me?”

Or what is made to the one who
made it,

“You did not make me wisely?”

Is it not yet a little while,

and Lebanon will be changed like
Mount Chermel,

and Mount Chermel will be con-
sidered a forest?

On that day the deaf will hear
the words of the book,
and those who are in darkness,
and those who are in a fog,
the eyes of the blind will see.

And the poor will rejoice with joy
because of the Lord,

and those who had no hope
among men will be filled with joy.

The lawless has failed,
and the arrogant has perished,
and those who transgress wickedly
have been utterly destroyed:

even those who cause men to sin
by a word.

And they will make all those who
condemn at the gates an offence,
because they have turned aside the
righteous with the unrighteous.

Therefore this is what Lord is
saying concerning the house of Jacob,
which He set apart from Abraham,

Now Jacob will not be ashamed,
neither will Israel now change his
face.

But when their children see my
works,

they will sanctify My Name for My
sake,

and will sanctify the Holy One of
Jacob,

and will fear the God of Israel.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 21:1-34

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Job answered and said,
“Listen, listen to my words,
that I may not have this consolation from you.

Raise me, and I will speak;
then you will not laugh me to scorn.

What? Is my argument with man?
And why should I not be angry?

Look at me, and marvel,
laying your hand on your cheek.

For even when I remember, I am alarmed,

and pains seize my flesh.

Why do the ungodly live, and
grow old even in wealth?

Their offspring is according to
their desire,

and their children are before their eyes.

Their houses are prosperous, and
they have no cause for fear,

and there is no scourge from the
Lord upon them.

Their cow does not miscarry,
and their pregnant *animal* is safe,
and does not miscarry.

And they remain as an unfailing
flock,

and their children play before *them*,
taking up the psaltery and harp;
and they rejoice at the sound of a
song.

And they finish their life in wealth,

and fall asleep in the rest of
Hades.

Yet *such a man* says to the Lord,

“Depart from me; I do not wish
to know Your ways.

What is the Mighty One, that we
should serve Him?

And what profit is there that we
should approach Him?”

For their good things were in *their*
hands,

but He does not regard the works
of the ungodly.

Nevertheless, the lamp of the un-
godly will also be put out,

and destruction will come upon
them,

and sharp pains will seize them,
because of wrath.

And they will be like chaff before
the wind,

or like dust that the storm has
sucked up.

May his possessions fail his chil-
dren,

God will repay him, and he will
know it.

May his eyes see his own slaugh-
ter,

and may he not be saved by the
Lord.

For his desire is in his house with
him,

and the number of his months has
been cut off.

Is it not the Lord who teaches
understanding and knowledge?

And does He not judge murders?

One will die in the strength of his
simplicity,

and wholly at ease and prosperous.

And his inwards are full of fat,

and his marrow is dispersed.

And another dies in bitterness of
soul,

not eating any good thing.

But they lie down together in the
earth,

and decay covers them.

So I know you, that you presumptuously
attack me.

You will say, "Where is the house
of the ruler?

And where is the shelter of the
dwelling of the ungodly?"

Ask those who pass by the way,

and do not overlook their signs.

For the evil man makes light of
the day of destruction,

but they will be led away in the
day of His destruction.

Who will tell him his way to his
face?

He acted, who will repay him?

And he has been carried away to
the tombs,

and watch is kept over the bier.

The pebbles of the valley have
been sweet to him,

and every man will depart after
him,

and *there are* innumerable before
him.

How then do you comfort me
with empty words,

since I have no rest from you?

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Daniel 14:2-42 (Bel and the Serpent 2-42)

From the book of Daniel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Daniel was a confidant of the
king, and was honoured above all his
friends.

Now the Babylonians had an idol,
whose name was Bel, and they spent
twelve great bushels of fine flour,
forty sheep, and six vessels of wine
on him every day. And the king
adored it and went daily to worship it;
but Daniel worshipped his own God.
And the king said to him, "Why do
you not worship Bel?" Daniel
answered and said, "Because I do not
worship idols made with hands, but

the living God Who created heaven
and earth, and has dominion over all
flesh."

Then the king said to him, "Do
you not think that Bel is a living God?
Do you not see how much he eats
and drinks every day?" Then Daniel
smiled, and said, "O king, do not
deceived, for it is but clay inside and
bronze outside, and has never eaten
or drunk anything."

So the king was very angry, and
called for his priests, and said to
them, "If you do not tell me who it is

that devours these provisions, you will die. But if you can prove to me that Bel devours them, then Daniel will die, for he has spoken blasphemy against Bel." And Daniel said unto the king, "Let it be according to your word."

Now there were seventy priests of Bel, beside their wives and children, and the king went with Daniel into the temple of Bel. Then Bel's priests said, "Look, we will go out, but you, O king, set out the food and prepare the wine, then shut the door and seal it with your own signet. And tomorrow when you come in, if you do not find that Bel has eaten it all, we will suffer death—or else Daniel will die, who speaks lies against us." They were unconcerned, for they had made a secret entrance under the table through which they always came in and consumed the provisions.

So when they had all gone, the king set out the food before Bel. Now Daniel had commanded his servants to bring ashes, and they scattered them throughout the temple in the presence of the king alone. Then went they out, and shut the door, and sealed it with the king's signet, and departed. During the night came the priests with their wives and children, as they usually did, and ate and drank everything.

The king arose early in the morning, and Daniel with him. And the king said, "Daniel, are the seals unbroken?" And he said, "Yes, O

king, they are whole." And as soon as he had opened the door, the king looked at the table, and cried with a loud voice, "You are great, O Bel, and there is no deceit with you at all."

Then laughed Daniel, and restrained the king from going in, and said, "Look at the floor, and notice whose footprints these are." And the king said, "I see the footprints of men, women, and children." And then the king was angry, and took the priests with their wives and children, who showed him the secret doors, where they came in and consumed such things as were set on the table. Therefore the king killed them, and gave Bel over into Daniel's power, who destroyed him and his temple.

And there was a great serpent which the people of Babylon worshipped. And the king said to Daniel, "Will you also say that this is made of bronze? Look, he lives, eats and drinks—you cannot say that he is not a living god. Therefore, worship him."

Then said Daniel to the king, "I will worship the Lord my God: for He is the living God. But give me permission, O king, and I will slay this serpent without sword or staff." The king said, "I give you permission." Then Daniel took pitch, fat, and hair, and boiled them together, and made cakes, and he put them in the serpent's mouth. And after eating them, the serpent open, and Daniel said,

“Look, these are the things you worship.”

When the people of Babylon heard what had happened, they were indignant and conspired against the king, saying, “The king is become a Jew; he hath destroyed Bel, slain the serpent, and put the priests to death.” So they came to the king, and said, “Deliver Daniel to us, or else we will destroy you and your house.” Now when the king saw that they pressed him hard, he handed Daniel over to them under compulsion. They throw him into the lions’ den, where he stayed for six days. And there were seven lions in the den, and they had given to them two carcasses and two sheep every day, which were then not given to them, so that they might devour Daniel.

Now there was a prophet named Habakkuk in Judea, who had made stew and had broken bread into a bowl, and was going to the field to take it to the reapers. But the angel of the Lord said to Habakkuk, “Go, carry the dinner that you have to Babylon, to Daniel, who is in the lions’ den.” And Habakkuk said, “O

Lord, I have never seen Babylon, and I do not know where the den is.” Then the angel of the Lord took him by the crown of his head, and carried him by the hair of his head, and with the speed of the wind set him in Babylon over the den. And Habakkuk cried out, saying, “O Daniel, Daniel, take the meal that God has sent you.” And Daniel said, “You have remembered me, O God, and You have not forsaken those who love You.” So Daniel arose and ate. And the angel of the Lord immediately returned Habakkuk to his own place again.

Now on the seventh day, the king went to mourn Daniel, and when he came to the den, he looked in, and there was Daniel, sitting. Then the king cried with a loud voice, saying, “You are great, O Lord God of Daniel, and there is no other besides You.” And he drew him out, and cast those who were responsible for attempting his destruction into the den, and they were devoured in a moment before his face.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 27:6, 7a, half of b

A Psalm of David.

Blessed be the Lord, for He has heard
the voice of my supplication.
The Lord is my helper and my protector;
my heart hopes in Him.
Alleluia.

Luke 4:31-37

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. He was teaching them on the Sabbath day, and they were astonished at his teaching because his word was with authority. In the synagogue, there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, "Ah! What have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know you who you are: the Holy One of God!"

Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" When the demon had thrown the man among them, he came out of him, having done him no harm.

Amazement came on all, and they spoke together, one with another, saying, "What is this word? For he commands the unclean spirits with authority and power, and they come out!" News about him went out into every place of the surrounding region.
Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Hebrews 13:7-16

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Hebrews. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Remember your leaders, men who proclaimed the word of God to you. Considering the results of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus

Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried away by all sorts of strange teachings. It is good that the inner person should be

strengthened by grace, not by food which is of no profit to those who are so preoccupied by it!

We have an altar from which those who offer divine service [in] the holy tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside of the camp. This is why Jesus suffered outside of the gate, so that he might sanctify the people through his own

blood. Let us therefore go out [of the city] to him who is outside of the camp and let us bear his disgrace. For we do not have here [below] an enduring city, but we seek the one that is to come. Through him, [Jesus], let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of our lips which confessed his Name. But do not forget to do what is good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 4:7-16

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. This is how God's love was revealed in us: that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also should love one another. No one has seen God at any time, but if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love has come true in us.

By this, we know that we remain in him and he in us, because he has given us [as share] of his Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son, the Savior of the world. God remains in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they remain in God. We know and we believed in the love which God has for us: God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 22:17-24a

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

It happened that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance. I saw the Lord saying to me, 'Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not receive testimony concerning me from you.' I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those who believed in you. When the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I too was standing by, consenting to his death and guarding the garment of those who killed him.'

Then he said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you out far from here to the Gentiles.'

They listened to him until he said that; then they lifted up their voice, and shouted, "Rid the earth of this fellow, for he is not fit to live!"

As they cried out, throwing off their cloaks and dust into the air, the commanding officer ordered him to be brought into the barracks. *[He commanded that Paul should be examined under scourging, so that he might find out for what crime the people shouted against him in such a way.]*

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

* [] lacking in Kitchener

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 27:2

A Psalm of David.

Hear, O Lord, the cry of my supplication
when I pray to You,
when I lift up my hands
towards Your holy temple.

Alleluia.

Matthew 15:21-31

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus then left that area and withdrew into the region of Tyre and Sidon. Behold, a Canaanite woman came out from those borders, and cried out, "Have mercy on me, Lord, you son of David! My daughter is severely demonized!"

But Jesus did not answer her a word.

His disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away! She is shouting after us!"

However, Jesus answered, "I was not sent to anyone but the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Still, the woman came forward and worshiped him, saying, "Lord, help me."

But he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

But she replied, "Yes, Lord, but even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done to you even as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Jesus departed and came near the sea of Galilee. He went up into the mountain and sat there. Great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, blind, mute, crippled, and many others; and they put them down at his feet. He healed them, and the crowds were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel. *Glory be to God forever.*

Saturday of Third (Fourth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 141:6, 8ab

A Psalm of David.

I cried to You, O Lord,
I said, "You are my hope,
my portion in the land of the living."
Bring my soul out of prison,
that I may confess Your Name.

Alleluia.

Luke 16:19-31

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Now, there was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, feasting in luxury every day. A certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Yes, even dogs came and licked his sores. It happened that the beggar died and that he was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried. In hades, he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far off, and Lazarus in his bosom. He cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue! For I am in agony in this flame.'

But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime, you received your good things, and Lazarus, in the same way, bad things.

But now, he is comforted here and you are in anguish. Besides all this, between us and you a great gulf is fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot [do so], and that no one may cross over from there to us.'

He said, 'I ask you therefore, father, that you would send Lazarus to my father's house; for I have five brothers, that he might bear witness to them, so that they would not also come to this place of torment.'

But Abraham replied to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets! Let them listen to them!'

But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

Then Abraham said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone rises from the dead.'" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Philippians 4:4-9

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Philippians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, rejoice! Let your kindness be known to all. The Lord is at hand! Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are commendable, if there is any virtue or any praise, think about these things. What you learned, received, heard, and saw in me: practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 3:13-4:6

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let such a person show by a good conduct that his deeds are done in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast and do not lie against the truth. This 'wisdom' is not the one that comes down from above! It is earthly, sensual, and demonic. Where there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there is confusion and every evil deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy. Now, the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

These wars and conflicts among you, where do they come from? Is it not from your desires that wage war

in your members? You lust, and do not have! You kill, covet, and [still] cannot obtain! You fight and make war. You do not have because you do not ask! You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, in order to spend it for your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility with God? Whoever wants to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God! Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The spirit which dwells in us longs to envy"? But he has given a greater, as the Scripture says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 24:24-25:12

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

A few days later, Felix came with his wife Drusilla who was Jewish. He sent for Paul and granted him a

hearing concerning the faith in Christ Jesus. As Paul discoursed about righteousness, self-control, and the

judgment to come, Felix became alarmed and said, "Go your way for this time. When it is convenient for me, I will summon you [again]." Meanwhile, he also hoped that Paul would offer him money for his release. For this reason too, he sent for him more often and discussed with him. But after two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul imprisoned.

Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. Then the high priest and the leaders of the Jewish people presented to him an [accusatory] report against Paul. They begged him and asked for his support against Paul, asking that he would transfer the prisoner [back] to Jerusalem, plotting to kill him on the way. However, Festus replied that Paul would be kept in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself would leave shortly. He said, "Those who have authority among you should go down with me! And if the man has done anything wrong, let them accuse him."

Having stayed among them more than ten days, Festus returned to

Caesarea. The following day, he sat on the judgment seat and ordered that Paul be brought in. When Paul arrived, the Jews who had traveled from Jerusalem stood around him and hurled against him many grave accusations which they could not prove. Paul then said in his [own] defense, "I have not sinned in any way, against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against Caesar!"

Then, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Festus asked Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem in order to be judged by me there concerning these matters?"

But Paul replied, "I am standing before Caesar's judgment seat, where I should be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also know very well. Now, if I have done wrong and committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die! But if none of those things they accuse me of are true, then no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

At this, and after conferring with his advisers, Festus answered, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you shall go!"

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 60:2, 6bc

A Psalm of David.

Hear my supplication, O God;
attend to my prayer.
You give an inheritance
to those who fear Your Name.
Alleluia.

Matthew 21:33-46

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Hear another parable. There was a man who was the owner of a household. He planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, built a tower and leased it out to farmers. He then left for another country. When the season for the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the farmers, to receive his fruit. But the farmers took his servants, beat one, killed another, and stoned yet another. Again, the owner sent other servants, even more than the first time; and they treated them in the same way. Then, he sent his son to them, saying: "They will respect my son!" But the farmers, when they saw the son, said to each other, "This is the heir! Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance." And so, they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore,

when the lord of the vineyard returns, what will he do with those farmers?"

They told him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and he will lease out the vineyard to other farmers who will give him the fruit in its season."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

'The [very] stone which the builders rejected was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord and it is marvelous in our eyes?'

Therefore, I tell you that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and it will be given to a people bringing forth its fruit. Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and whoever it will fall on will be scattered as dust."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he had spoken about

them. They began to look for a way to arrest him, but they feared the crowds because the people consid-

ered him to be a prophet. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Fourth Sunday of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 26:14, 13

A Psalm of David.

Wait on the Lord,

have courage, and let your heart be strong;
and wait on the Lord!

I believe that I will see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.

Alleluia.

Luke 12:22-31

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore, I tell you not to be anxious about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food and the body is more than clothing! Consider the ravens: they do not sow, they do not reap, they do not have a warehouse or barn and [yet] God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Which one of you by worrying can add a single day to his life? If you are not able to accomplish even the smallest things, why then are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow. They do not

toil or spin; yet, I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if this is how God clothes the grass in the field, which today exists and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith? Do not set your hearts on what you will eat or drink; do not be apprehensive. It is the pagan world that runs after all these things, and your Father understands that you need them. Seek rather the Kingdom of God and all these things will be added to you." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 30:25, 24ab

A Psalm of David.

Take courage and let your heart be strong,
all you who hope in the Lord.
Love the Lord, all you His Saints,
for the Lord requires truth.

Alleluia.

Matthew 22:1-14

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus now addressed them with another parable, saying: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a king who planned a wedding feast for his son. He then sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they refused to come. Again, the king sent out other servants, saying: 'Tell those who are invited, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner! My cattle and my fatted calves have been killed and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!"' But those who were invited made light of it and went off, one to his own farm, another to his merchandise, and the others seized the king's servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. When the king heard about it, he was furious. He sent out his soldiers to destroy those murderers and to burn their city.

Then, the king said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the crossroads of the highways, and as many people as you may find, invite to the wedding feast.'

Those servants went out into the highways and gathered as many people as they could find, both good and bad. Thus, the wedding [hall] was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man who was not wearing a wedding garment. He asked him, 'Friend, how did you come in here, not wearing a wedding garment?' And the man was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and throw him into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.' For many are called, but few chosen." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Ephesians 6:10-24

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Ephesians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Finally, be strong in the Lord, with the strength of his power. Put on the complete armor of God, so that you may be able to resist the devil's tactics. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the principalities, powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness and against the evil spiritual forces of the supernatural realms. Therefore, put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to resist when the evil day comes. Having accomplished all things, may you stand your ground! Yes, stand [firm], having the belt of truth around your waist, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, having fitted your feet so as to be ready in the Good News of peace. Above all, take up the shield of faith which will enable you to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. Take also the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is what God has said.

Pray at all times in the Spirit with intercessions and requests; never get tired of this and persevere in your requests for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that I may be given an opportunity to proclaim with boldness the mystery of the Good News. For this cause, I am an ambassador in chains; so pray that I may proclaim it boldly, as I should.

I also want you to know my affairs, how I am doing. Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, to let you know about our condition and to comfort your hearts.

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. May grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, even with unfading love. Amen.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 4:7-17

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, submit yourselves to God, but resist the devil, and he will

flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your

hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you who are double-minded. Lament, mourn, and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Do not speak against one another, brethren. Whoever speaks against one of the brethren and judges speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge! Only one is the lawgiver, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge another?

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we will go into this city,

spend a year there, do business and make a profit." But do you not know what your life will be like tomorrow! Truly, what is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." But now, you boast and brag! All such boasting is evil. If someone knows how to do what is good and yet does not do it, it is a sin.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 25:13-26:1a

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

A few days later, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived in Caesarea and greeted Festus. Since Agrippa was spending some time there, Festus presented Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a certain man who was left as a prisoner by Felix. When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the presbyters of the Jews presented an [accusatory] report about this man, asking me to condemn him. I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans to condemn anyone to death before the accused has met his

accusers face to face and has had opportunity to make his defense in the case against him. Then, since they had come together here, I did not delay. On the following day, I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in. When the accusers stood up, they did not bring any of the charges I was expecting. Instead, they had some dispute against him dealing with their own religion, and about a certain Jesus who was dead, and who Paul affirms to be alive. I was puzzled as how to

investigate such things and asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. But Paul appealed that his case be reserved for the decision of the emperor, and so I gave orders that he be detained until I could send him to Caesar.”

Agrippa said to Festus, “I too would like to hear this man!”

“Tomorrow,” Festus replied, “you shall hear him.”

On the next day, after Agrippa and Bernice had made their entry with great pomp, they went to the place of hearing with the commanding officers and the leaders of the city. At the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. Festus said, “King Agrippa, and all who are here present with us, you see this man. The entire

Jewish community, both in Jerusalem and here, petitioned me about him, clamoring that he should not live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and as he himself had appealed to his Imperial Majesty, I decided to send him {to Rome}. I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning this man! Therefore, I have brought him forth before you [all], and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after examination, I may have something to write. For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner without also specifying the charges against him.”

Agrippa said to Paul, “You may speak for yourself.”

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 104:3b, 4, 5

A Psalm of David.

Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord be glad.

Seek the Lord and be strengthened;

continually seek His face.

Remember the wonders He has done,

His miracles and the judgments of His mouth.

Alleluia.

John 4:1-42

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then, when the Lord learned that the Pharisees had heard, “Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John” (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples), he left Judea and departed into Galilee. Now, he needed to pass through Samaria. And so, he arrived at a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph; and Jacob’s well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me [something] to drink.” (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food).

The Samaritan woman then said to him, “How is it that you, being a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water!”

The woman said to him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw [water] with, and the well is deep! Where then do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well and drank of it himself, as did his children and his livestock?”

Jesus replied, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again! But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never

be thirsty again. Not only this, the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or come all the way here to draw [water]!”

Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.”

The woman answered, “I have no husband!”

Jesus replied, “You said well, ‘I have no husband,’ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband. This you have said truthfully.”

The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet! Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where people should worship.”

Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, a time is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming,” (he who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.”

Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you." Just then, his disciples arrived. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What are you looking for?" or, "Why do you speak with her?" Then, the woman left her water jar, went away into the city, and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I have done! Could this be the Christ?"

The people [then] went out of the city, and were coming to him. Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, saying, "Rabbi, eat!"

But he told them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

The disciples then said one to another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?"

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, 'There are yet four months until the harvest comes?' Behold, I tell you, lift up your eyes and look at

the fields! They are already white for the harvest! [Already], he who reaps is receiving his wages and gathering fruit to eternal life; so that both the one who sows and the one who reaps may rejoice together! For in this, the saying is true, 'One sows, and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored. Others have labored, and you have entered into [the rewards of] their labor."

Many of the Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the word of the woman who had testified, "He told me everything that I did!" For this reason, when the Samaritans came to him, they begged him to stay with them. So, he stayed there two days, and many more believed because of his word. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, but because we have heard for ourselves and [we] know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." *Glory be to God forever.*

Monday of Fourth (Fifth) Week of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 31:10, 11

A Psalm of David.

Many are the scourges of the sinner,
but mercy surrounds him who hopes in the Lord.
Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O you righteous ones,
and glory, all you upright in heart.

Alleluia.

John 4:19-24

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet! Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where people should worship."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, a time is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship

what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 3:5-18b

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Trust in God with all your heart,
and do not exalt in your own wisdom.

In all your ways acquaint yourself
with her,
that she may make your paths
straight,
and your foot will not stumble.

Do not be wise in your own eyes,
but fear God, and turn away from
every evil.

Then there will be healing for your
body,
and treatment for your bones.

Honour the Lord with your just
labours,
and offer Him the firstfruits of
righteousness

that your storehouses may be
filled with an abundance of grain,

and your presses may gush with
wine.

My son, do not despise the discipline of the Lord,
or faint when you are rebuked by
Him.

For whom the Lord loves, he disciplines,
and He punishes every son
He receives.

Blessed is the man who has found
wisdom,
and the mortal who knows discernment.

For it is better to trade for her
than
for treasures of gold and silver.

And she is more valuable than
precious stones;
no evil thing will resist her;
she is well known to all who come
near to her,

and no precious thing is equal to her in value.

For length of days and years of life are in her right hand,

and in her left hand are wealth and glory;

righteousness proceeds from her mouth,

and she carries law and mercy upon her tongue.

Her ways are good ways,
and all her paths are peaceful.

She is a tree of life for all those who lay hold of her,

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 37:33-38:6

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, this is what the Lord is saying concerning the king of the Assyrians, "He will not enter into this city, nor cast a weapon against it, nor bring a shield against it, nor make a rampart around it. But by the way he came, by the same he will return" This is what the Lord is saying, "I will protect this city, to save it for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake."

And the Angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and they arose in the morning and discovered all the dead bodies. And Sennacherim, king of the Assyrians departed and returned to Nineveh, and dwelt there. And while he was worshipping in the house of Nasarach, his country's god, his sons Adramelech and Sarasar killed him with swords; and they escaped into Armenia, and his son Asoradan reigned instead of him.

And it happened at that time, *that* Ezekias was sick and near. And Esaias the prophet, the son of Amos went to him, and said to him, "This is what the Lord is saying, 'Make arrangements concerning your house, for you will die, and not live.'" And Ezekias turned his face towards the wall, and prayed to the Lord, saying, "Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before You in truth, with a true heart, and have done what was pleasing in Your sight." And Ezekias wept bitterly. And the word of the Lord came to Esaias, saying, "Go, and say to Ezekias, 'This is what the Lord is saying, the God of David your father, "I have heard your prayer, and seen your tears. Look, I *will* add fifteen years to your time. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of the Assyrians, and I will defend this city.'""

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 22:1-30

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Eliphaz the Thaimanite answered and said,

“Is it not the Lord Who teaches understanding and knowledge?

For what does it matter to the Lord

if you were blameless in *your* works?

Or is it profitable that you should make your ways plain?

Will He argue with you, though you plead your case?

And will He enter into judgment with you?

Is your wickedness not abundant, and are your sins innumerable?

For you have taken pledges of your brethren for no reason,

and have taken away the clothing of the naked.

Neither have you given the thirsty water to drink,

but withheld a morsel from the hungry.

And you have shown favour to some,

and established them on the land.

But you sent widows away empty, and mistreated orphans.

Therefore, snares have surrounded you,

and a disastrous war has troubled you.

The light has proved to be darkness to you,

and water has covered you while you slept.

Does not He Who dwells on high observe?

And has He not humbled the proud?

And you have said, ‘What does the Mighty One know?’

Will He judge down in the darkness?

A cloud is His hiding-place, and He will not be seen;

and He passes through the circle of heaven.’

Will you keep the old way, which unjust men have walked, who were seized before their time?

Whose foundations *are* a flooding river;

who say, ‘What will the Lord do to us?’

or ‘what will the Almighty bring upon us?’

Yet He filled their houses with good things;

but the counsel for the ungodly is far from Him.

The righteous have seen *it*, and laughed,

and the blameless mocked *them*.

Surely their substance has been destroyed,

and the fire will devour what is left.

Be firm, if you would endure;

then your fruit will prosper.
And receive a declaration from
His mouth,
and lay up His words in your
heart.

And if you turn and humble your-
self before the Lord,
you have removed unrighteous-
ness far from your dwelling.

You will lay up *treasure* for yourself
in a heap on the rock;
and as though a rock of a torrent
of water of Ophir.

So the Almighty will be your help-
er from enemies,
and He will render pure as silver
tried by fire.

Then you will speak freely before
the Lord,

looking up cheerfully to heaven.
And He will hear you when you
pray to Him,
and He will grant you to pay your
vows.

And He will restore righteousness
to your dwelling,
and there will be light on your
paths.

You will say, ‘man behaved proud-
ly,
but he humbled himself;
and He will save him who bows
down his eyes.’

He will deliver the innocent,
and save yourself by the purity of
your hands.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 87:3b, 4, 5a

A Psalm of David.

Incline Your ear to my supplication[, O Lord].
For my soul is full of troubles,
and my soul draws near to Hades;
I am counted among those who go down into the pit.

Alleluia.

Luke 12:16-21

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then Jesus told them a parable, saying, “The ground of a certain rich man produced in abundance. He thought to himself, ‘What will I do? I

do not have room to store my crops!’ Then the man said, “This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns, build bigger ones, and there I will store all

my grain and my goods. Then I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods stored up for many years. Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry!"

But God said to him, 'You fool! Tonight your soul is demanded of

you. The things which you have prepared - whose will they be?' This is how it is when someone amasses treasure for himself but is not rich toward God." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Philippians 2:1-16

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Philippians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, if there is any exhortation in Christ, any consolation of love, any communion of the Spirit, any tender mercies and compassion, make my joy full, by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind. Do nothing through rivalry or conceit, but in humility, consider others better than yourselves. Do not just look after you own selfish interests but each one of you should consider the interests of others.

Let the following be in your mind, which was also in [the mind of] Christ Jesus. He who existed in the form of God did not consider equality with God something to be exploited. Instead, he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to [the point of] death, even death on the cross! Therefore, God highly exalted him,

and gave him the Name which is above every name; so that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

And so, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you both to will and to work, according to his good purpose. Do all things without murmurings and disputes in order to become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom you are seen as lights in the world. Uphold the word of life, so that I may have a reason to glory in the day of Christ: that I did not run or labor in vain.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 3:10-18

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

For:

*Whoever would love life,
and see good days,
should keep his tongue from evil,
and his lips from speaking deceit.
Let him turn away from evil, and do
good.
Let him seek peace, and pursue it.
For the eyes of the Lord are on the
righteous,
and his ears open to their prayer;
but the face of the Lord is against
those who do evil.*

Now, who will harm you, if you become imitators of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear, and do not be troubled." Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be

ready to give a verbal defense to everyone who asks you an explanation for the hope that is in you; [and do so] with humility and fear. Have a good conscience, so that even while some speak against you as evildoers and curse your good way of life in Christ, they may be disappointed. It is better, if it is God's will, that you should suffer for doing what is good rather than for doing what is evil.

Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that he might bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but [made] alive in the spirit.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 10:25-35

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When Peter entered, Cornelius met him, fell down at his feet, and worshiped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up! I am also a man!" As he talked with Cornelius, he went in and found many people assembled. Peter said to them, "You

yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or visit someone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. Therefore, I have come without complaint

when I was sent for. And so, I ask, why did you send for me?"

Cornelius replied, "Four days ago, I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour, I was praying in my house. And behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and he said, 'Cornelius, your prayer is heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. Therefore, send [messengers] to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is staying in the house of Simon a tanner, by the

seaside. When he comes, he will speak to you.' And so, I sent for you at once, and it was good of you to come! Now, we are all here present in the sight of God to hear everything that God has commanded you."

Peter opened his mouth and said, "Truly, I perceive that God does not show favoritism; but in every nation, whoever fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 85:3, 4

A Psalm of David.

Have mercy on me, O Lord,
for I will cry to You all day long.
Gladden the soul of Your servant,
for I lift my soul to You, O Lord.

Alleluia.

Luke 9:12-17

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Late in the afternoon, the Twelve came to him and said, "Send the people away, so that they may go into the surrounding villages and farms to find lodging and get food, for we are here in a deserted place."

But Jesus said to them, "You give them something to eat."

They replied, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless

we go and buy food for all these people." (For they were about five thousand men).

Jesus then said to his disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each." They did so, and made them all sit down. He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and broke them, and gave them

to the disciples to set before the multitude. Everybody ate, and all were satisfied. The disciples gathered

up twelve baskets of broken pieces that were left over. *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of Fourth (Fifth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Numbers 10:34-11:35

From the book of Numbers of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it happened when the ark set out, that Moses said,

“Arise, O Lord, and let Your enemies be scattered;

let all who hate You flee!”

And when the ark rested, he said,

“Return, O Lord, to the thousands and tens of thousands in Israel!”

And the cloud overshadowed them by day, when they set out from camp.

And the people grumbled evilly before the Lord, and the Lord heard *them* and was provoked to anger. And fire was kindled among them from the Lord, and devoured part of the camp. And the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire was quenched. And the name of that place was called Burning, for a fire was kindled among them from the Lord.

And the mixed multitude among them craved with desire, and they and the children of Israel sat down and wept, and said, “Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish that we ate freely in Egypt, and the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the

garlic, and the onions. But now our soul is dried up; there is nothing before our eyes but the manna.” And the manna is like coriander seed, and the appearance of it the appearance of ice pellets. And the people went through the field, and gathered, and ground it in the mill, or pounded it in a mortar, and baked it in a pan, and made cakes of it; and its flavour was like the taste *of* cakes made with oil. And when the dew came on the camp at night, the manna descended upon it.

And Moses heard them weeping throughout the tribes, everyone at his door; and the Lord was very angry, and Moses was displeased. And Moses said to the Lord, “Why have You afflicted Your servant? Why have I not found grace in Your sight, that You lay the weight of this people on me? Have I conceived all this people, or have I born them, that You should say to me, “Take them to your bosom, as a nurse would take her nursing child, into the land that You swore to their fathers? From where am I to get meat to give to all these

people? For they weep to me, saying, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' I will not be able to bear this people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. And if this is how You are going to treat me, kill me, slay me, if I have found favour with You, that I may not see my affliction."

And the Lord said to Moses, "Gather to Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you yourself know to be elders of the people and are their scribes; and you shall bring them to the tent of witness, and they will stand there with you. And I will descend and speak with you there. And I will take of the spirit that is upon you, and will put it upon them; and they will help you bear the burden of the people, that you may not bear it alone. And to the people you will say, 'Purify yourselves for tomorrow, and you will eat flesh, for you have wept before the Lord, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt."' And the Lord will give you meat to eat, and you will eat meat. You will not eat one day, or two, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days, but you will eat for a full month, until *it* come out of your nostrils, and becomes nausea to you, because you disobeyed the Lord, who is among you, and wept before Him, saying, "Why did we come out of Egypt?"' And Moses said, "The people I am among are six hundred thousand footmen, and You said, 'I will give them meat

to eat, and they will eat it for a whole month.' Will sheep and oxen be slaughtered for them, and will it be enough for them? Or will all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, and will it be enough for them?" And the Lord said to Moses, "Will the hand of the Lord not be sufficient? Now you will know whether or not My word will overtake you or not."

And Moses went out and spoke the words of the Lord to the people, and he gathered seventy men from the elders of the people, and he set them around the tent. And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy men who were elders. And when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, though they never did again. And there were two men left in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other was Modad, and the spirit rested upon them. And these were among those that were enrolled, but they did not come to the tent, and they prophesied in the camp. And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, "Eldad and Modad prophesy in the camp." And Joshua the son of Nun, who attended on Moses, the chosen one, said, "Lord Moses, forbid them." And Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, when the Lord puts his spirit upon

them.” And Moses returned to the camp, both he and the elders of Israel.

And a wind went forth from the Lord, and brought quails from over from the sea; and it brought them down upon the camp, about a day’s journey on this side, and a day’s journey on the other side, all around the camp, as it were three feet above the ground. And the people stayed up all day, and all night, and all the next day, and gathered quails; he who gathered the least, gathered ten

measures [of 220 liters]; and they spread the meat around about the camp to dry. The meat was still between their teeth, before it was hardly dead, when the Lord was angry with the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague. And the name of that place was called the Graves of Lust, because they buried there the people who lusted. The people set out from the Graves of Lust to Haseroth, and they camped at Haseroth.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 3:19-4:9

From the book of Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

God by wisdom founded the earth,

and He prepared the heavens with discernment.

By perception the depths were broken up,

and the clouds poured dew.

My son, do not be careless,

but keep my counsel and understanding,

that your soul may live,

and grace may be around your neck.

And it will be healing to your flesh,

and safety to your bones,

that you may walk confidently in peace in all your ways,

and that your foot may not stumble.

For if you sit down, you will be without fear,

and if you lie down, you will sleep pleasantly.

And you will not be afraid of intimidation when it comes upon you,

nor of the attacks of the ungodly when they come upon you.

For the Lord will be over all your ways,

and will plant your foot firmly that you may not be shaken.

Do not withhold doing good to the needy,

whenever your hand can help *him*.

Do not say, “Go, come back tomorrow and I will give,”

when you are able to do good,

for you do not know what the next day will bring.

Do not devise evil against your friend

who lives near you and trusts you.

Do not be ready to quarrel with a man without a cause,

lest he do you some harm.

Do not acquire the reproaches of evil men,

Nor desire their ways;

for every transgressor is unclean before the Lord,

and does not sit among the righteous.

The curse of God is in the houses of the ungodly,

but the dwellings of the righteous are blessed.

The Lord resists the proud,

but He gives grace to the humble.

The wise will inherit glory,

but the ungodly have exalted dishonour.

Listen, children, to the instruction of a father,

and pay attention that you might know his understanding.

For I offer you a good gift;

Do not forsake my law.

For I was also a son, and was obedient to *my* father,

and beloved in the sight of *my* mother,

who spoke and instructed me, *saying*,

“Let our words be fixed in your heart,

guard *our* commandments,

do not forget them,

and do not disregard the words of my mouth,

nor forsake it, and it will cling to you;

love it, and it will guard you.

Secure it, and it will exalt you;

honour it, that it may embrace you,

and give your head a crown of graces,

and cover you with a crown of delight.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 40:1-8

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

“Comfort, yes, comfort my people,” says God.

“Speak, O priests, to the heart of Jerusalem; comfort her,

for her humiliation has been fulfilled,

her sin has been done away with,

for she has received from the Lord’s hand

double *for* her sins.”

The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

“Prepare the way of the Lord,

make straight the paths of our God.

Every valley will be filled,

and every mountain and hill will be brought low;

and all the crooked *ways* will become straight,
and the rough *places* will become plains.

And the glory of the Lord will appear,

and all flesh will see the salvation of God,

for the Lord has spoken.”

The voice of one saying, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”
All flesh is grass,
and all the glory of man like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, and the flower fades,

but the word of our God remains forever.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 25:1-26:14

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Baldad the Sauchite answered and said,

“What beginning or fear is His—

He Who makes all things in the highest?

For may no one think that there is a respite for robbers,

and upon whom will there not come ambush from Him?

How will a mortal be righteous before the Lord?

Or who that is born of a woman can purify himself?

If He gives an order to the moon, then it shines not,

and the stars are not pure before Him.

But alas! Man is decay, and the son of man is a worm.”

But Job answered and said,

“To whom are you devoted,

or whom are you going to assist?

is it not He Who *has* great strength,

and *He* Who has a strong arm?

To whom have you given counsel?

Is it not to Him who has all wisdom?

Whom will you follow?

is it not He who has the greatest power?

To whom have you uttered words?

And whose breath is it that has come forth from you?

Will giants be born under the water

and the inhabitants thereof?

Hades is naked before Him,

and destruction has no covering.

He stretches out the north wind over nothing,

and He hangs the earth upon nothing.

Binding water in His clouds,

and the cloud is not torn open under it.

He grasps the face of His throne,

and spreads His cloud over it.
He encompassed the face of the
water by a decree,
until the end of light and darkness.
The pillars of heaven were spread
all over
and astonished at His rebuke.
He calmed the sea with *His* might,
and by knowledge He struck down
the sea-creature.

And the bars of heaven fear him,
and by a command He has slain
the rebellious dragon.
Look, these are parts of His way,
and we will listen to Him at the
least of his words.
But who knows when He will
employ the strength of his thunder?
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 85:5, 6

A Psalm of David.

For You, O Lord, are kind and gentle,
and abounding in mercy to all who call on You.
Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer,
and attend to the cry of my supplication.
Alleluia.

Mark 9:14-24

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Returning to the [other] disciples, Jesus saw a great crowd around them and scribes questioning them. At once, when all the people saw him, they were greatly amazed and rushed to greet him. Jesus asked the scribes, "What are you asking them about?"

In the crowd, someone said, "Teacher, I brought you my son who has a mute spirit. Wherever the spirit seizes him, it throws him to the ground and my son foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes

rigid. I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they were not able."

Jesus answered him, "Unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to me."

They brought the son to him, and when he saw Jesus, the spirit immediately convulsed the boy who fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"

“From childhood”, he answered. Often, it has thrown him both into the fire and into water, in order to destroy him. But if you are able to do anything, have compassion on us and help us!”

Jesus said to the man, “If you are able! All things are possible to the one who believes!”

Immediately the father of the child cried out with tears, “I believe! Help my unbelief!” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Philippians 2:22-26a

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Philippians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But you know how he has proved himself; as a child serves a father, he has served with me to spread the Good News. Therefore, I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how things are going with me [here]. As it is, I trust in the Lord that I too

will be able to come shortly. But I deemed it necessary to send you Epaphroditus who is my brother, fellow-worker, fellow-soldier, and your apostle and the servant of my need. He longed for you all.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 3:2-11

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Beloved, we are already God’s children, but what we will be is not yet revealed. But when he is revealed, we know that we will be like him; for we will see him just as he is! Everyone who has this hope set on him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

Everyone who sins breaks the law and in fact, sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away our sins, and in him there is no sin. Whoever remains in him does not continue in sin, but whoever practices

sin has not seen him and does not know him.

Little children, let no one lead you astray. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. Whoever lives in sin belongs to the devil, since the devil has been a sinner from the beginning. This was the purpose of the manifestation of the Son of God, to undo the work of the devil. Those who have been born of God do not keep on sinning because God’s seed abides in them.

They cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. This is how the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother [or sister].

For this is the message which you heard from the beginning: that we should love one another!

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 24:10-23

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When the governor had motioned for him to speak, Paul answered, "Because I know that you have been a judge of this nation for many years, I gladly make my defense. As you can see, it has been no more than twelve days since I went up to worship at Jerusalem. In the temple, they did not find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city. Moreover, they cannot prove to you the accusations they are making against me now. But I do admit this to you, that after the Way which they call a sect, so do I offer divine service to the God of our fathers. I believe all things which are according to the law and which are written in the prophets. I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both upright and wicked. And so, I strive to always have a conscience without offense toward God

and men. Now, after some years, I came to bring to my people gifts for the needy, and to present offerings. This is how certain Jews from Asia found me in the temple, ritually purified, with no mob or turmoil. But there are some Jews from Asia who should have been here before you to present their accusations if they had anything against me. Otherwise, let these men explain what injustice they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin. Or perhaps it is for what I cried out while standing among them, 'I am being judged before you today regarding the resurrection of the dead!'"

But Felix, being better informed concerning the Way, adjourned the case, stating, "When Lysias, the commanding officer, comes down, I will decide your case."

He ordered the centurion that Paul should be kept in custody and

that he should have some privileges:
none of his friends should be forbid-

den from serving him or visiting him.

*The word of the Lord abides in this church and
in every church. Amen.*

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 85:17ab

A Psalm of David.

Work a sign for good in my midst,
and let those who hate me see it and be ashamed.

Alleluia.

John 8:12-20

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."

At this, the Pharisees said to him, "You bear witness to yourself! Your testimony is not true!"

Jesus answered them, "Even if I bear witness to myself, my testimony is true, because I know where I came from and where I am going. But you do not know where I came from or where I am going. You judge according to the flesh. I judge no one. Even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for I am not alone, but I am with the

Father who sent me. It is also written in your law that the testimony of two people is truthful. I am one who testifies about myself, and the Father who sent me [also] bears witness to me."

At this, they asked him, "Where is your Father?"

Jesus answered, "You do not know me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also." Jesus spoke these words in the treasury, as he taught in the temple. Yet no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come. *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of Fourth (Fifth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Exodus 8:20-9:35

From the book of Exodus of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh. Look, he will go out to the water, and you will say to him, 'This is what the Lord is saying, "Send my people away, so that they may serve Me in the desert. And if you will not send My people away, look, I will send the dog-fly upon you, and your servants, and on your people, and your houses. And the houses of the Egyptians will be filled with the dog-fly, even into the land that they are on. And on that day I will distinguish gloriously the land of Gesem, in which My people dwell, in which the dog-fly will not be, so that you may know that I am the Lord the God of all the earth. And I will put a difference between My people and your people, and tomorrow this will be on the land.'"" And the Lord did so, and the dog-fly came in great numbers into the houses of Pharaoh, and into the houses of his servants, and into all the land of Egypt; and the land was destroyed by the dog-fly.

And Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, saying, "Go and sacrifice to the Lord your God in the land!"

And Moses said, "It cannot be so, for we would be sacrificing the abominations of the Egyptians to the Lord our God. For if we sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians before them, they will stone us. We will go three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as He told us." And Pharaoh said, "I *will* send you away—sacrifice to your God in the desert, but do not go very far away; pray then for me to the Lord." And Moses said, "Then I will go out from you and pray to God, and the dog-fly will depart from you, and from your servants and your people tomorrow. Do not deceive again, Pharaoh, so as to not send the people away to sacrifice to the Lord."

And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and prayed to God. And the Lord did as Moses said, and removed the dog-fly from Pharaoh, his servants, and his people, and not one remained. And Pharaoh hardened his heart, on this occasion too, and he would not send the people away.

And the Lord said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, and you will say to him, 'This is what the Lord God of the

Hebrews is saying, “Send my people away so that they may serve Me. But if you will not send My people away, and still hold them, look, the hand of the Lord will be on your livestock in the fields, on the horses, on the donkeys, and on the camels, oxen, and sheep—a very great death. And I will distinguish gloriously between the livestock of the Egyptians, and the livestock of the children of Israel: nothing will die from all that is of the children of Israel.””

And God set a limit, saying, “Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land.” And the Lord did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of the Egyptians died, but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one. And when Pharaoh saw that of all the livestock of the children of Israel not one was dead, Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he did not send the people away.

And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of ashes from a furnace, and let Moses scatter it toward heaven before Pharaoh, and before his servants. And let it become dust over all the land of Egypt, and it will cause boils to break out in sores on men and on beasts, in all the land of Egypt.” So he took of the ashes from a furnace before Pharaoh, and Moses scattered it toward heaven, and it caused boils to break out in sores on men and on beasts. And the sorcerers could not stand before Moses because of the sores, for the

sores were on the sorcerers, and in all the land of Egypt. And the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not listen to them, as the Lord had said to Moses.

And the Lord said to Moses, “Rise early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘This is what the Lord God of the Hebrews is saying, “Send My people away, so that they may serve Me. For at this time I will send all my plagues into your heart, and the heart of your servants and of Your people, so that you may know that there is not another such as I in all the earth. For now I will stretch forth My hand and strike you, and kill your people, and you will be destroyed from off the earth. And you have been preserved for this reason, that I might display My strength in you, and that My name might be declared in all the earth. Still then, you hold on to My people, so as not to send them away. Look, tomorrow, at this time I, will cause a very great hail to rain, such as has not been in Egypt from its founding until today. Now then, hurry to gather your livestock, and all that you have in the fields, for the hail will come down on all the men and livestock, everything that is found in the fields, and does not enter a house, will die.”’” He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh gathered his livestock into the houses. And he that did not pay attention with his mind to

the word of the Lord left the livestock in the fields.

And the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand to heaven, and there will be hail in all the land of Egypt, both on men and on livestock, and on every herb in the land." And Moses stretched out his hand to heaven, and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran about on the ground, and the Lord rained hail on all the land of Egypt. So there was hail and flashing fire mingled with the hail. And the hail was very great, such as had not occurred in Egypt from the time people came to be upon it. And throughout the land of Egypt, the hail struck both man and animals, and all the grass in the field, and the hail broke all the trees of the field. Only in the land of Gesem, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.

And Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are impious. Therefore, pray for me to the Lord, and let Him cause the

thunder of God to cease, and the hail and the fire, and I will send you forth and you will remain no longer." And Moses said to him, "As soon as I leave the city, I will stretch out my hands to the Lord, and the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail and the rain, so that you may know that the earth is the Lord's. But as for you and your servants, I know that you have not yet feared the Lord." And the flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was ripe, and the flax was going to seed. But the wheat and the rye were not ruined, for they were late. And Moses went out from Pharaoh, out of the city, and stretched out his hands to the Lord, and the thunder ceased, and the hail and the rain were not poured on the earth. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder ceased, he continued to sin, and hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not send away the children of Israel, as the Lord said to Moses.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 41:4-14

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Who has worked and done these things?

He has called *righteousness*, He who called it from the generations of old;

I God, am the first,

and I AM into to *all* the future.

The nations saw, and feared;
the ends of the earth drew near
and came together,
each one judging for his neighbor,
to assist his brother.
And one will say,

“The artisan has become strong,
and the metalworker who strikes
with the hammer,
at the time of forging.”

Sometimes he will say, “It is well
joined,
they have fastened it with nails;
they will set them up, and they
shall not be moved.”

But you, Israel, are My servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, whom I
have loved,

whom I have taken you from the
ends of the earth,

and I have called you from the
high places of it,

and said to you, “You are My
servant;

I have chosen you, and I have not
forsaken you.”

Do not fear, for I am with you;
do not go astray, for I am your
God,

Who has strengthened you,

and I have helped you,
and established you
with My righteous right hand.

See, all your adversaries
will be put to shame and dis-
graced,

for they will be as though they did
not exist,

and all your adversaries will perish.

You will seek them,

but you will not find

the men who rage against you,

for they will be as though they did
not exist,

and those who war against you
will not be.

For I am your God,

Who holds your right hand,

Who says to you, “Do not fear,

O Jacob, *and* O Israel, few in
number,

I have helped you,” says God,

Who redeems you, O Israel.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Joel 3:9-21

From the book of Joel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Proclaim these things among the
nations:

“Prepare for war;

arouse the warriors;

draw near and go up,

all you men of war.

Beat your ploughs into swords,

and your sickles into spears.

Let the weak say, “I am strong.”

Assemble together, and come,

all your nations round about,

and gather yourselves there.

Let the gentle become a fighter.

Let all the nations rouse them-
selves

and come up to the valley of Josa-
phat,

for there will I sit to judge

all the nations round about.

Send forth sickles,
for the harvest has come.
Go in, tread *the grapes*,
for the winepress is full,
the vats overflow,
because their wickedness is multiplied.

Noises have resounded
in the valley of judgment,
for the day of the Lord is near
in the valley of judgment.
The sun and the moon will become dark,
and the stars will withdraw their light.

And the Lord will cry out of Zion,
and will give His voice from Jerusalem;
and the heavens and the earth will be shaken.
But the Lord will spare His people,
and will strengthen the children of Israel.

And you will know that I am the Lord your God,
Who dwells in Zion on My holy mountain.

And Jerusalem will be holy,
and strangers will no longer pass through her.

And it will happen in that day
that the mountains will drip sweetness,
and the hills will flow with milk,
and all the brooks of Judah will flow with water,
and a fountain will go forth from the house of the Lord
and will water the valley of rushes.

Egypt will be a desolation,
and Idumea will be a desolate plain,
because of the wrongs against the children of Judah,
because they have shed righteous blood in their land.
But Judah will be inhabited forever,
and Jerusalem to all generations.
And I will avenge their blood, and I will not let it go unpunished.
And the Lord will dwell in Zion.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 28:12-28

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But where has wisdom been discovered?
And what is the place of understanding?
No mortal knows its way,

and it is not discovered among men.
The deep said, "It is not in me;"
and the sea said, "It is not with me."

One cannot give fine gold instead of it,

and silver cannot be weighed in exchange for it.

It cannot be compared with gold of Ophir,

with the precious onyx and sapphire.

Gold and crystal cannot equal it,
nor can vessels of gold be its exchange.

Coral and fine pearl shall not be mentioned,

but you must esteem wisdom above the most precious things.

The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it;

it cannot be compared with pure gold.

Where then has wisdom been discovered?

And what is the place of understanding?

No mortal knows its way,

and has been hidden from the birds of the air.

Destruction and Death said,
“We have heard of its fame.”

God has established well its way,
and He knows the its place.

For He observed the all that is under heaven,

knowing all the things in the earth,
which He has made—

the weight of the winds, and the measures of the water.

When He made them, He saw and numbered them,

and made a way for the claps the thunder.

Then He saw wisdom, and declared it;

He prepared it and traced it out.

And He said to man, “See, the fear of God is wisdom,

and to abstain from evil is understanding.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 4:10-19

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Listen, *my* son, and receive my words,

and the years of your life will be increased,

that the resources of your life may be many.

For I teach you the ways of wisdom,

and I set you in straight paths.

For when you walk, your steps will not be confined;

and when you run, you will not grow weary.

Take hold of my instruction; do not let it go,

but guard it for yourself as your life.

Do not go in the ways of the ungodly,

nor covet the ways of transgressors;

In whatever place they encamp, do not go there,

but turn aside from them, and pass by.

For they cannot sleep unless they have done evil;

their sleep is taken away, and they do not rest.

For they eat the bread of ungodliness,

and are drunk with wine of lawlessness.

But the ways of the righteous shine like a light;

they go on and shine until day is fully dawned.

But the ways of the ungodly are dark;

they do not know how they stumble.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

1 Kings 1:1-2:21 or 1 Samuel 1:1-2:21*

From the book of the First Kings of Samuel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

There was a man of Harmathaim Siphah, from the mountain of Ephraim, and his name was Elkana the son of Jeremeel, the son of Elias, the son of Thoke, in Nasib Ephraim. And he had two wives; the name of the one was Anna, and the name of the second, Phennana. And Phennana had children, but Anna had no child.

And each year the man went up from his city of Harmathaim to worship and sacrifice to the Lord God of Hosts in Shiloah. And Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phinees, the priests of the Lord, went there as well. And the day came, and Elkana sacrificed, and gave portions to his wife Phennana and her children. And to Anna he gave a one portion, since she had no child. However, Elkana loved Anna more than the other one, but the Lord had closed her womb. Since the Lord did not give her a child in her affliction, and during to

the discouragement of her affliction, she was becoming broken-hearted because of this, that the Lord had closed her womb, and did not give her a child. So year by year she went up to the house of the Lord, and she was broken-hearted, and wept, and did not eat.

And Elkana her husband said to her, “Anna.” And she said to him, “Here I am, my lord.” And he said to her, “What troubles you that you weep? And why do you not eat? And why does your heart strike you? Am I not better to you than ten children?”

And Anna arose after they had eaten in Shiloah, and stood before the Lord. And Eli the priest was sitting on a seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. And she was deeply distressed in spirit, and prayed to the Lord, and wept greatly. And she vowed a vow to the Lord, saying, “O Lord, my God of Hosts, if You

are indeed looking, look on the humiliation of Your handmaiden, and remember me, and give to Your handmaiden a male child, then will I dedicate Him to You until the day of his death. And he will not drink wine or strong drink, and no razor will come upon his head.”

And it happened, while she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli the priest watched her mouth. And she was speaking in her heart, and her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore, Eli thought she was drunk. And the servant of Eli said to her, “How long will you remain drunken? Put away your wine, and go out from the presence of the Lord!” And Anna answered and said, “No, my lord, I am a woman for whom this is a difficult day, and I have not drunk wine or strong drink, but I pour out my soul before the Lord. Do not count your handmaiden a pestilent woman, just because of the abundance of my idle words I have put forth.” And Eli answered and said to her, “Go in peace, may the God of Israel grant you all your petition, which you have asked of Him.” And she said, “Your handmaiden has found favour in your eyes.” And the woman went her way, and entered into her lodging, and ate and drank with her husband, and her face was no longer sad.

And they rose early in the morning, and worship the Lord, and went on their way back to Elkana’s house

at Armathaim. And he knew his wife Anna, and the Lord remembered her, and she conceived. And it happened when the time had come, that she bore a son, and called his name Samuel, and said, “Because I asked him from the Lord God of Hosts.”

And the man Elkana and all his house went up to Shiloh to offer the yearly sacrifice, his vows, and all the tithes of his land. But Anna did not go up with him, for she said to her husband, “I will not go up until the child goes up, when I have weaned him he will appear in the presence of the Lord, and he will stay there continually.” And Elkana her husband said to her, “Do what is good in your eyes, wait until you have weaned him; but may the Lord confirm what comes out of your mouth.” And the woman stayed, and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

And she went up with him to Shiloh with a three-year-old calf, loaves of bread, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and she entered into the house of the Lord in Shiloh, and the child was with them. And they brought him before the Lord, and his father slaughtered the offering that he offered yearly to the Lord. And he brought the child, and slaughtered the calf. And Anna, the mother of the child, brought him to Eli. And she said, “My lord, as your soul lives, I am the woman who stood in your presence while praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord

has granted me my request, which I asked of Him. And I lend him to the Lord all his days that he lives, a loan to the Lord.

And she said,

“My heart is made firm in the Lord,

my horn is exalted in my God.

My mouth is made wide over my enemies;

I have rejoiced in Your salvation.

For there is none holy besides the Lord,

and there is none righteous like our God,

no one is holy but You.

Do not boast, or speak of high things;

do not let high-sounding words come from your mouth,

for the Lord is a God of knowledge,

and God prepares his own ways.

The bow of the mighty has become weak,

and the weak have girded themselves with strength.

Those who were full of bread were made empty,

and the hungry have forsaken the land.

For the barren woman has born seven,

and she who has many children has become feeble.

The Lord kills and makes alive;

He brings down to Hades, and raises up.

The Lord makes poor, and makes rich;

He brings low, and lifts up.

He raises the poor from the earth, and lifts the needy from the dung-hill,

to seat him with the princes of the people,

and make them to inherit a throne of glory.

Granting the prayer to him who prays,

He blesses the years of the righteous,

for man cannot prevail by strength.

The Lord will weaken his adversary;

the Lord is holy.

May the wise man not boast in his wisdom,

and may the mighty man not boast in his strength,

and may the rich man not boast in his wealth.

But let him that boasts boast in this,

to understand and know the Lord,

and to work justice and righteousness in the midst of the earth.

The Lord has ascended to the heavens and thundered.

He will judge the earth's ends.

He gives strength to our kings,

and will exalt the horn of his Christ.”

And they left him there before the Lord, and departed to Armathaim,

and the child served in the presence of the Lord before Eli the priest.

And the sons of Eli the priest were evil sons, not knowing the Lord. And the custom of the priests for the people who sacrificed was for the priest's servant came when the meat was in boiling, with a three-pronged meat-hook in his hand. And he thrust it into the great caldron, or into the brazen vessel, or into the pot, and whatever came up with the meat-hook, the priest took for himself. So they did this to all the Israelites that came to sacrifice to the Lord at Shiloah. And before the fat was burnt for a sweet savour, the servant of the priest would come and say to the man that sacrificed, "Give meat to roast for the priest, and I will not take any of your boiled meat out of the caldron." And if the man that sacrificed said, "First he should burn the fat, as it is fitting, and then take for yourself as much as your soul

desires," then he would say, "No, you will give it to me now, and if not I will take it by force." So the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for they made the offering of the Lord nothing.

And Samuel was serving before the Lord, as a young boy, clothed with a linen ephod. And his mother made him a little robe, and brought it to him each year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. And Eli blessed Elkana and his wife, saying, "May the Lord repay you with a seed from this woman, in return for the loan that you have loaned to the Lord." And the man returned to his place. And the Lord visited Anna, and she bore three more sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Found in Southern United States. Lacking in Kitchener and Ottawa.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 54:2, 3a

A Psalm of David.

Give ear, O God, to my prayer,
and do not despise my supplication.

Attend to me, and hear me.

Alleluia.

Mark 10:1-12

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus then left that place and arrived to the borders of Judea and beyond the Jordan. Again, crowds were gathering around him. As he usually did, he taught them again. Pharisees came to test him, asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

Jesus answered, "What instructions did Moses give you?"

They replied, "Moses allowed a certificate of divorce to be written, and to divorce her."

But Jesus said to them, "It was because of your hardness of heart that Moses wrote this law for you.

But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother, and will join to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. Thus, they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no one tear apart!"

In the house, his disciples asked him again about the same matter. He told them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 4:14-5:5

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

However, if those who are of the law are heirs, then faith is made void, and the promise is made of no effect. As it is, the law brings about wrath; but where there is no law there is no transgression either. This is why the promise is to faith, so that it comes as a free gift and it is secure for all the descendants, not only for those who rely on the Law but also for all those others who rely on the faith of Abraham, the father of us all. As it is written, "I have made you a father of

many nations." This is in the presence of the one whom Abraham believed: even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence what does not yet exist. Hoping against hope, Abraham believed that he would become "the father of many nations", according to what had been spoken, "And so will your seed be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body which was already worn out, (he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of

Sarah's womb. Yet, looking to the promise of God, he did not waver through unbelief but grew strong through faith, giving glory to God. Abraham was fully convinced that what God had promised, he was also able to accomplish. Therefore, it also was "credited to him for righteousness." Now, it was not written that "it was accounted to him" for his sake alone. It was [written] also for our sake; faith will be credited to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered up for our sins, and was raised for our justification.

Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God! Not only this, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering works perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 4:12-19

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Beloved, do not be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you and that is testing you. It is not as if something strange was happening to you. But because you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice, so that at the revelation of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. If you are insulted for the Name of Christ, you are blessed because the divine Spirit of glory is resting upon you. On their part, Christ is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evil doer or a meddler in other people's matters. However, if one of you suffers for being a

Christian, there is no reason to be ashamed but {instead let such a one} glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins first with us, what will happen to those who do not obey the Good News of God? "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?" Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God in doing good entrust their souls to him who is a faithful Creator.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 11:12-18

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

The Spirit told me to go with them, without discriminating. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying to him, 'Send [messengers] to Joppa, and get Simon, who is called Peter. He will speak to you the words by which you will be saved, you and your entire household.' As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, even as on us at the beginning. I remembered the

word of the Lord, how he said, 'John indeed baptized in water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit.' And so, if God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Chris, who was I to oppose God?"

When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles the repentance [that leads] to life!"

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalms 85:13, 14a

A Psalm of David.

Your mercy towards me is great,
and You have rescued my soul from the deepest Hades.
O God, the transgressors have risen against me.
Alleluia.

Luke 13:6-9

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

He then said this parable. "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came to look for fruit

on it, but found nothing. He said to the vine dresser, 'Behold, I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree for

three years, and found none. Cut it down! Why does it waste the soil?' The gardener answered, 'Lord, let it be for this year also, until I dig

around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit, fine; but if not, after that, you can cut it down.'" *Glory be to God forever.*

Thursday of Fourth (Fifth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Isaias 42:5-16

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is what the Lord,
Who made the heaven, and established it,
Who made the earth firm, and the things in it,
and Who gives breath to the people on it,
and spirit to those who walk on it, is saying,
"I the Lord God have called You in righteousness,
and will hold Your hand, and will strengthen You:
and I have given You as the covenant for a race,
for a light to the nations,
to open the eyes of the blind,
to bring the prisoners out from bonds,
and those who sit in darkness out of the prison house.
I am the Lord God; this is My Name.
I will not give My glory to another,
nor my praises to engraved images.

Look, the ancient things have come to pass,
and *so will* the new things which I declare;
yes, before they spring forth,
I will tell you of them."

Sing a new song to the Lord,
you, His dominion!
Glorify His Name from the end of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and sail upon it,
you islands, and those who inhabit them.

Rejoice, O desert, and its villages,
the homesteads, and those inhabiting Kedar.

Those who dwell in Petra will rejoice,
they will shout from the tops of the mountains.

They will give glory to God,
and proclaim His praises in the islands.

The Lord God of powers will go forth,
and crush the war;

He will stir up jealousy,
and will shout mightily against His
enemies.

“I have been silent,
will I always be silent and hold
back?

I have endured like a woman in
labour.

I will amaze and wither at once.

I will turn rivers into islands,
and will dry up the marshlands;

And I will lead the blind
by a road that they did not know,
and I will make them walk paths
that they have not known.
I will turn darkness into light for
them,

and make crooked places straight.

I will do these things,
and will not forsake them.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 4:20-27

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

My son, pay attention to my word,
and incline your ear to my words,
that your fountains may not fail
you.

Keep them in *your* heart,
for they are life to those who find
them,
and healing to all *their* flesh.

Keep your heart with all vigilance,
for from these words are the is-
sues of life.

Remove from yourself a crooked
mouth,
and remove unjust lips far away
from yourself.

Let your eyes look straight ahead,
and let your eyelids assent *to just*
things.

Make straight paths for your feet,
and straighten your ways.

Do not turn aside to the right or
to the left,

but turn your foot away from an
evil way,

*[for God knows the ways on the
right hand,

but those on the left are twisted;
and He will make your paths
straight,

and will guide your steps in peace.

]*

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**[] lacking in Oattawa and Southern United
States. Found in Kitchener.*

Job 29:2-20

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Who might put me in a month of
former days,
when God protected me!

As when His lamp shone over my
head,

when by His light I walked
 through darkness,
 as when I steadfastly pursued my
 ways,
 when God would visit my house,
 when I was very had great sub-
 stance,
 and my children were around me,
 when my roads were flowing with
 butter,
 and the hills flowed with milk,
 when I would go out early into the
 city,
 and my seat was placed for me in
 the square.
 The young men saw me, and hid,
 and all the old men stood up.
 And the great men stopped talk-
 ing,
 and put their finger to their
 mouth.
 And those who heard *me* blessed
 me,
 and their tongues stuck to their
 throats.
 For the ear heard, and blessed me,
 and the eye saw me, and turned
 aside.
 For I saved the poor from the
 hand of the oppressor,

and helped the orphan, who had
 no helper.

Let the blessing of the perishing
 man come upon me,

And the widow's mouth blessed
 me.

Yes, I put on righteousness,
 and clothed myself with judgment
 like a cloak.

I was the eye of the blind, and the
 foot of the lame.

I was the father of the helpless,
 and I searched out the cause that I
 did not know.

And I broke the molars of the
 unrighteous,

and plucked the spoil from the
 midst of their teeth.

And I said, "My age will continue
 as the stem of a palm tree;

I will live a long while."

My root was spread out by the
 waters,

and the dew would settle on my
 crop.

My glory was fresh within me,
 and my bow prospered in its hand.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

1 Kings 3:1-20 or 1 Samuel 3:1-20*

From the book of the First Kings of Samuel the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the boy Samuel ministered to
 the Lord before Eli the priest, and the
 word of the Lord was precious in
 those days; there was no discerning
 vision. And it happened at that time

that Eli was laying down in his place,
 and his eyes began to grow heavy, and
 could not see, and it was before the
 lamp of God was trimmed and
 replenished, and Samuel slept in the

temple, where was the ark of God. And the Lord called, "Samuel, Samuel!" And he said, "Here I am!" And he ran to Eli, and said, "Here am I, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call you; go back, lay down," and he returned and lay down. And the Lord called again, "Samuel, Samuel!" And he went to Eli the second time, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call you; go back, lie down." And this was before Samuel knew the Lord, and before the word of the Lord was revealed to him. And the Lord called Samuel again for a third time, and he arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the boy. And he said, "Go, child, lay down; and it will happen, if He calls you, that that you will say, 'Speak for Your servant is listening.'" And Samuel went and lay down in his place.

And the Lord came, and stood, and called him as before. And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant is listening." And the Lord said to Samuel, "Look, I will carry out My words in Israel, and whoever hears them, both his ears will tingle. In that day, I will raise up against Eli everything that I have spoken against his house; I will begin, and I will finish it.

And I have told him that I will be avenged on his house forever for the iniquities of his sons. For his sons reviled God, and even so he did not correct them. I have sworn to the house of Eli, saying, "the iniquity of the house of Eli will not be atoned by incense or sacrifices forever."

And Samuel lay there until morning, and rose early in the morning. he opened the doors of the house of the Lord, and Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision. And Eli said to Samuel, "Samuel, my son." And he said, "Here I am." And he said, "What was the word that was spoken to you? Do not hide it from me. May God do these things to you, and also more, if you hide any thing of all the words that were spoken to you in your ears from me." And Samuel reported all the words, and did not hide them from him. And Eli said, "He is the Lord. He will do what is good in His sight."

And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and not one of his words fell to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was faithful to the Lord as a prophet.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Found in Southern United States. Lacking in Kitchener and Ottawa.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 85:14

A Psalm of David.

O God, the transgressors have risen against me,
and an assembly of violent men have sought my soul,
and did not set You before them.

Alleluia.

Luke 9:37-43b

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great multitude met him. A man from the crowd called out, saying, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. Behold, when a spirit seizes him, he suddenly cries out and it convulses him so that he foams [at the mouth]. It scarcely ever leaves him and is breaking him. I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not."

Jesus answered, "Faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here."

While the boy was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him violently. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. And they were all astonished at the majesty of God.

[And all marveled at all that Jesus did.]*

Glory be to God forever.

*Based on the Arabic. EOB reads "But while all were marveling at all that Jesus did, he said to his disciples,"

The Pauline Epistle

1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak [to you] as to people that have common sense. Judge what

I say: The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break,

is not it a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf of bread, we, who are many, are one body because we all partake of the one loaf of bread. Consider Israel according to the flesh: is it not true that those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?

What am I saying then: that something sacrificed to idols is meaningful, or that an idol is anything? [No], but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and also from the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of demons as well. Or do we [want to] provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are profitable. “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things build up. We should not seek our own good, but our neighbor’s good.

You may eat whatever is sold at the market, asking no question for the

sake of conscience, for “the earth is the Lord’s, and its fullness.” If you are invited for a meal by an unbeliever (and if you are inclined to accept), eat whatever is set before you, asking no questions for the sake of conscience. But if anyone says to you, “This was offered to idols,” do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for the sake of conscience, for “the earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness.” I say conscience, not your own, but the other’s conscience. But why is my freedom judged by someone else’s conscience? If I partake with gratefulness, why am I denounced for what I give thanks for? And so, whether you eat, or drink, or whatever [else] you do, do it all to the glory of God. Give no occasions for stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the Church of God; even as I also [attempt to] please everyone in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, so that they may be saved.

Be my imitators, even as I imitate Christ.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 1:2c-8

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Grace be to you and may peace be multiplied!

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy, became our father

again. This is to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that does not fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are protected through faith for a salvation which is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this, you greatly rejoice, although for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials. This way, may the demonstration of your faith (which is more

precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire), be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ! Even though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with unspeakable joy and glory.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 21:5-14

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

When our time there was completed, we departed and went on our journey. All the disciples, with wives and children, escorted us on our way until we were out of the city. Kneeling down on the beach, we prayed. After saying goodbye to each other, we boarded the ship and they returned home.

We continued the voyage from Tyre and arrived in Ptolemais. There, we greeted the brethren and spent the day with them. The following day, we, Paul's companions, left and arrived in Caesarea.

We went to the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now, this man had four virgin daughters who

prophesied. As we stayed there for a few days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming to us and taking Paul's belt, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit: 'Likewise, in Jerusalem, the Jews will bind the man who owns this belt and they will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

When we heard these things, both we and the disciples who lived there begged Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready, not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus."

Since he would not be persuaded,
we became silent, except to say, "The

Lord's will be done!"

*The word of the Lord abides in this church and
in every church. Amen.*

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 85:17

A Psalm of David.

Work a sign for good in my midst,
and let those who hate me see it and be ashamed,
because You, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Alleluia.

Luke 13:10-17

*Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel,
according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and
King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.*

Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath day. Behold, there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten herself up. When Jesus saw her, he called her, and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity!" He laid his hands on her and immediately, she stood up straight and glorified God.

But the ruler of the synagogue was indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. He said to the crowd, "There are six days in which people should work! Therefore, come on

those days and be healed, not on the Sabbath day!"

Then, the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each one of you free his ox or his donkey from the stall on the Sabbath, and lead it out to water? Should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham who was bound by Satan for eighteen years, be freed from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame and all the people rejoiced over all the glorious things that were done by him. *Glory be to God forever.*

Friday of Fourth (Fifth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Deuteronomy 11:29-12:27

From the book of Deuteronomy of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it will come to be, when the Lord your God has brought you into the land you are crossing over into to inherit, that you will give the blessing on mount Garizin, and the curse on mount Gaibal. Look, are they not across the Jordan, toward the setting sun, in the land of Chanaan, which lies toward the west, near Golgol, by the high oak? For you are crossing over the Jordan, to go in and inherit the land, which the Lord your God is giving to you to inherit for all days, and you will live in it. And you will be careful to do all His ordinances, and these judgments, as many as I have set before you today.

And these *are* the ordinances and the judgments that you shall be careful to observe in the land that the Lord God of your fathers is giving you for an inheritance, all the days which you live upon the earth.

You shall utterly destroy all the places in which the nations whose land you will inherit served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills, and under the grove of trees. And you shall destroy their altars, and break their pillars in pieces, and you

shall cut down their groves, and burn their engraved images of their gods with fire, and you shall destroy their name out of that place. You shall not do so to the Lord your God. But in the place that the Lord your God will choose in one of your cities to name His Name there, and to be called upon there, you shall go and seek *Him* there. And you shall carry your whole burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your firstfruits, your vowed-offerings, your freewill-offerings, offerings of thanksgiving, and the first-born of your herds, and of your flocks there. And you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all the things to which you put your hand, you and your households, as the Lord your God has blessed you.

You will not at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever is pleasing in his own sight—for have not yet come into the rest and the inheritance, which the Lord your God gives you. And you shall cross over the Jordan, and live in the land that the Lord your God is giving you to inherit; and He will give you rest from all your enemies around

you, and you will live in safely. And there will be a place that the Lord your God will choose for His Name to be called there, and you will bring all things that I command you today there: your whole burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the firstfruits of your hands, and your choice gifts that you vow to the Lord your God. And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your sons, and your daughters, and your male and female servants, and the Levite who is at your gates (since he has no portion or inheritance with you).

Take care to yourself that you do not offer your whole burnt offerings in any place that you see; but in the place that the Lord your God will choose, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your whole burnt offerings, and there you shall do all things that I command you today.

But you will kill according to your every desire, and will eat meat according to the blessing of the Lord your God, which He has given you in every city; the unclean and the clean may eat of it together, of the gazelle or the deer. Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. You may not eat the tithe in your cities: of your grain, wine, or olive oil, of the firstborn of your oxen and your sheep, and any vow you have vowed, and your thank-offerings, and the firstfruits of your hands. But these you shall eat

before the Lord your God, in the place that the Lord your God will choose for Himself, you, and your son, and your daughter, your male and female servants, and the stranger that is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, in whatever you will put your hand. Take care to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live upon the earth.

Now if the Lord your God enlarges your borders, as He told you, and you say, "I will eat meat," because you desire to eat meat, you may eat as much meat according as your soul desires. But if the place the Lord your God chooses for Himself, for His Name to be called there, is far from you, then you may slaughter from oxen and sheep that the Lord gave you as I commanded you, and you shall eat in your cities according to your soul's desire. Just as the gazelle and deer are eaten, so you will eat it; the unclean among you and the clean will eat it in like manner. Take diligent care to eat no blood, for blood *is* the life; the life shall not be eaten with the meat. You shall not eat *it*; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. You shall not eat it, that it may be well with you and with your sons after you, if you do what is good and pleasing before the Lord your God. But you shall take your holy things, whatever you have, and your vowed-offerings, and come to the place which the Lord your God will choose

to have his Name called upon it. And you shall offer your whole burnt offerings, you shall offer the meat upon the altar of the Lord your God; and you shall pour out the blood of

your sacrifices at the foot of the altar of the Lord your God; but you shall eat the meat.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

3 Kings 17:2-24 or 1 Kings 17:2-24

From the Third book of Kings.

And the word of the Lord came to Elias, *saying*, “Depart and go eastward, and hide by the brook of Chorrath, which is before Jordan. And it will be *that* you will drink water of the brook, and I will command the ravens to feed you there.” And Elias did according to the word of the Lord, and he stayed by the brook of Chorrath before the Jordan. And the ravens brought him loaves in the morning, and meat in the evening, and he drank water from the brook. And it happened after some time, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain on the land.

And the word of the Lord came to Elias, *saying*, “Arise, and go to Sarepta of the Sidonia *land*; look, I have there commanded a widow there to feed you. And he arose and went to Sarepta, and came to the gate of the city, and, look, there was a widow there gathering sticks, and Elias cried after her, and said to her, “Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink.” And she went to get it, and Elias cried after her, and said, “Please bring me a piece of the bread that is in your hand. And the woman

said, “*As* the Lord your God lives, I do not have any bread, but only a handful of flour in the pitcher, and a little oil in a jar, and, you see, I am going to gather two sticks, and I will go and prepare it for myself and my children, and we will eat it and die.” And Elias said to her, “Be of good courage; go in and do as you say, but make me a small cake from it first and bring *it* to me. Afterwards you will make *some* for yourself and your children. For this is what the Lord says, “The pitcher of flour will not be used up, and the jar of oil will not diminish until the day that the Lord gives rain on the earth.”” And the woman went and did *so*, and she, he, and her children ate. And the pitcher of flour was not used up, and the jar of oil was not diminished, according to the word of the Lord that He spoke by the hand of Elias.

And it happened after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, was sick; and his sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elias, “What do I have to do with you, O man of God? Have you

come to me to bring my sins to remembrance, and to kill my son?" And Elias said to the woman, "Give me your son." And he took him from her bosom, and carried him up to the chamber where he himself was staying, and laid him on the bed. And Elias cried aloud, and said, "Alas, O Lord, the witness of the widow with whom I lodge, You have done evil by killing her son." And he breathed on the child three times, and called on

the Lord, and said, "O Lord my God, let, the soul of this child return to him." And it happened, and the child cried out. And he brought the child down from the upper room of the house, and gave him to his mother; and Elias said, "See, your son lives." And the woman said to Elias, "See, I know that you *are* a man of God, and the word of the Lord in your mouth *is* true."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 5:1-12

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

My son, pay attention to my wisdom,
and incline your ear to my words,
that you may guard good thinking,
and I command you with the perception of my lips.
Pay no attention to a worthless woman,
for honey drops from the lips of a prostitute,
who for a season pleases your taste,
but afterwards you will find her more bitter than gall,
and sharper than a two-edged sword.
For the feet of folly lead those
who deal with her down to Hades with death,
and her footsteps are not planted,
for she does not travel the ways of life,

but her paths are slippery, and not easy to discern.
Now then, *my* son, listen to me,
and do not make my words invalid.
Make your way far from her;
do not go near to the doors of her house,
lest you give away your life to others,
and your living to the merciless,
lest strangers be filled with your strength,
and your labours go into the houses of strangers.
And you will repent at the end,
when the flesh of your body is consumed,
and you will say, "How I hated discipline,
and my heart turned away from reproofs!"

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 43:1-9

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And now this is what Lord God
Who made you, O Jacob,
Who formed you, O Israel, is say-
ing,

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed
you,

I have called you *by* your name;
you are Mine.

And if you should pass through
water, I am with you,

and the rivers will not overflow
you,

and if you should go through fire,
you will not be burned;

the flame will not consume you,
for I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, Who saves
you.

I have made Egypt and Ethiopia
your ransom,

and *given* Soene for on your behalf.

Because you have become pre-
cious in My sight,

you have become glorious, and I
have loved you;

and I will give many men on your
behalf,

and rulers for your life.

Do not fear not, for I am with
you:

I will bring your offspring from
the east,

and will gather you from the west.

I will say to the north, “Bring
them,”

and to the south, “Do not keep
them back,

bring My sons from a faraway *land*,
and My daughters from the ends
of the earth—

all who are called by My Name.

For I have prepared him for My
glory,

and I have formed him and made
him.

And I have brought forth the
blind people,

for *their* eyes are likewise blind,

and they are deaf, though they
have ears!

All the nations are gathered to-
gether,

and the rulers will be gathered
from among them.

Who will declare these things?

Or who will declare to you
things from the beginning?

Let them bring forth their wit-
nesses,

and be justified, and let them
speak the truth.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 30:9-32:5

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

“But now I am their lyre,
and they have me as a by-word.
They abhorred me, standing far
off,
and did not spare my face their
spit.

For He has opened his quiver and
afflicted me.

They have cast off the restraint in
my presence.

They have risen up against *me* on
the right hand of *their* offspring;
they stretched out their foot,
and directed their ways of destruc-
tion against me.

My paths are ruined, for they have
stripped off my garment.

He has shot at me with His ar-
rows,

and He has treated me as He
wishes;

I am overwhelmed with pains.

My pains return upon *me*;
my hope is gone like the wind,
and my safety like a cloud.

Even now my life will be poured
forth upon me,
and days of anguish seize me,
by night my bones are set afire,
and my sinews are dissolved.

He has taken hold of my garment
with great force,

He surrounds me like the collar of
my coat.

And you regarded me like clay in
the earth,
and my portion is in dust and ash-
es.

And I have cried to You, but You
do not hear me.

They stood, and observed me.

You attacked me without mercy;

You have scourged me with a
strong hand,

and you have appointed pains for
me,

and You have cast me away from
safety.

For I know that death will destroy
me,

for the earth is the house for every
mortal.

Oh that I might be able to lay
hands on myself,

or at least ask another, and he
should do this for me.

But I wept over every helpless
man;

I groaned when I saw a man in
distress.

But I, when I was intent on good
things,

look, days of evils came upon me
all the more.

My belly boiled, and will not be
still;

the days of poverty outran me.

I have gone about, groaning with-
out restraint,

and I have stood and cried out in
the assembly.

I have become a brother of sirens,
and a companion of ostriches.

And my skin has been greatly
blackened,

and my bones are burned with
heat

My lyre has also been turned into
mourning,

and my song into my weeping.

I made a covenant with my eyes,
and I will not think upon a virgin.

And what inheritance has God
given from above?

and is there an inheritance of the
Mighty One from the highest?

Do destruction not belong to the
unrighteous,

and rejection to those who work
iniquity?

Will He not see my way, and
count all my steps?

But if I had walked with scorners,
and if too my foot has hurried to
deceit,

then may He weigh me in a just
balance,

for the Lord knows my innocence.

If my foot has turned aside from
the way,

or if my heart has followed my
eyes,

or if I have touched gifts with my
hands,

then may I sow, and others eat.

Yes, let me be uprooted on the
earth.

If my heart has followed after
another man's wife,

if I laid wait at her doors,

then let my wife also please another,
and let my children be humiliated.

For the rage of anger is uncontrollable
in defiling *another* man's wife.

For it is a fire burning on every
side,

and whoever it comes upon, it
destroys root and branch.

And if I have despised the judgment
of my male or female

when they pleaded with me,

what then will I do if the Lord
should put me on trial?

And if He too visits me, what answer
can I give?

Were they too not formed in the
womb, just like me?

But the weak did not miss whatever
they needed,

and I did not cause the eyes of the
widow to fail.

And if too I ate my morsel alone,

and did not share it with the orphan

(for I nourished *them* as a father
from my youth

and gave guidance from my mother's womb.)

And if too I overlooked a naked
person as he was perishing,

and did not clothe him;

and if the powerless did not bless
me,

and their shoulders were *not*
warmed with the fleece of my lambs,
if I raised my hand against an orphan,

trusting that my strength was far
superior *to his*,

then let them my shoulder fall
from the collarbone,

and let my arm be torn from its
socket.

For the fear of the Lord controlled me,

and I cannot endure because of
his burden.

If I made gold my strength,
or trusted the precious stone,
and if too I rejoiced when my
wealth was great,

and if too I laid my hand on
countless *treasures*

(do I not see the shining sun
eclipsed,

and the moon waning? For they
do not have *power to continue*);

and if my heart has been secretly
deceived,

and if I have laid my hand upon
my mouth and kissed it,

then let this too be reckoned to
me as the greatest iniquity,

for I have lied against the Lord
Most High.

And if too I was glad at the fall of
my enemies,

and my heart said, "Good!

Then let my ear hear my curse,

and let me be a byword among my
people in my affliction.

And if too my handmaids have
often said,

"Who might grant us his meat to
be satisfied?

(Though I was very kind,
and no stranger lodged outside,
and my door was opened to everyone who came);

or if too having sinned unintentionally, and I hid my sin,

(for I did not stand in awe of a
great multitude,

so as not to confess boldly before
them);

and if too I permitted a poor man
to go out of my door

with empty pockets,
(Who might hear me?)

And if I had not feared the hand
of the Lord,

I would place the document I had
against someone

As a crown on my shoulders and
read it,

and if I did not tear it up and return it,

having taken nothing from the
debtor;

if at any time the land groaned
against me,

and if its furrows wept together
and if I ate its strength alone,
without payment,

and if I too grieved the heart of
the owner of the land

by taking from *him*,

then let the nettle come up to me
instead of wheat,

and a bramble instead of barley."

And Job ceased speaking.

And his three friends also ceased answering Job, for Job was righteous before them. Then Elious the son of Barachiel, the Buzite, of the family of Ram, of the country of Ausitis, became angry; and he was very angry with Job, because he justified himself before the Lord. And he was also very angry with *his* three friends, because they were unable to give

answers to Job, yet made him out to be an ungodly man.

But Elious had wated to give an answer to Job,

because they were older than he.

And Elious saw that there was no answer

on the lips of the three men,

and his anger was inflamed.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 85:9, 10a

A Psalm of David.

All the nations[, which] You have made,
will come and worship You, O Lord,
and they will glorify Your Name.

For You are great, and work wonders.

Alleluia.

Mark 12:28-34

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

One of the scribes came and heard them debating. Knowing that Jesus had answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the greatest of all?”

Jesus answered, “The greatest is, ‘Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one: you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. The

second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

The scribe said to him, “It is well, teacher, that you have said truly that he is one, and there is none other but he, and to love him with the whole heart, and with the whole mind, with the whole soul, and with the whole strength; and to love one’s neighbor as oneself. It is more important than

any whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.”

When Jesus saw that the scribe had answered wisely, he said to him,

“You are not far from the Kingdom of God!”

No one dared to ask him any [other] question after that. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Hebrews 12:5b-16

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Hebrews. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

My child, do not take lightly the chastening of the Lord, do not faint when you are reproved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he also chastens, and he disciplines every son whom he receives.

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children, for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are not getting this discipline, (as you are), this makes you illegitimate, not children! Moreover, we had biological fathers to chasten us, and we respected them. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of {our} spirits, and live? Our fathers punished us for a few days as seemed good to them; but God does so for our benefit, so that we may be partakers of his holiness. For the present moment, all discipline seems to be

painful rather than joyful, but afterwards, it produces the peaceful fruit of righteousness for those who have been trained by it. Therefore, lift up your drooping hands and your feeble knees. Make straight paths for your feet, so what is lame may not be dislocated but rather healed.

Pursue peace with everyone, and also sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. Be careful, for fear that anyone might fall short of the grace of God or that any root of bitterness should trouble you; many are poisoned by this. Be careful that there is no sexually immoral or profane person [among you], like Esau who sold his birthright for a meal.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 4:15-5:5

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evil doer or a meddler in other people's matters. However, if one of you suffers for being a Christian, there is no reason to be ashamed but {instead let such a one} glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins first with us, what will happen to those who do not obey the Good News of God? "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?" Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God in doing good entrust their souls to him who is a faithful Creator.

I exhort the presbyters among you, as the fellow-presbyter and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and as one who will also share in the

glory that is to be revealed. Be shepherds to the flock of God which is in your care. Do not oversee the flock under compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but with eagerness. Do not act as lords over those entrusted to you but become examples to the flock. When the chief shepherd is revealed, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Likewise, you younger ones, be subject to those who are older. Yes, all of you should clothe yourselves with humility and subject yourselves to one another, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 15:36-16:3

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

After some time, Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us revisit our brethren in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, to see how they are doing!" Barnabas planned to take John (who was called Mark) along with them. But Paul did not think that it was a good idea to take with them someone who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued

with them in the work. Then, the disagreement became so intense that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas and having been entrusted by the brethren to the grace of God, they departed. Paul went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the Churches.

Paul then came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple named Timothy lived there. He was the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. This disciple was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and

Iconium. Paul wanted to have Timothy along on the journey, so he took and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, since all knew that his father was a Greek.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 137:1, 2a

A Psalm of David.

I will confess You, O Lord, with all my heart,
and I will sing to You in the presence of the angels,
for You heard the words of my mouth.

I will bow down toward Your holy temple.

Alleluia.

John 8:21-27

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then, Jesus spoke to them again, “I am going away; you will seek me, and you will die in your sins. Where I go, you cannot come.”

At this, the Jews said, “Will he kill himself, since he says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come?’”

Jesus said to them, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you therefore that you will die in

your sins; for unless you believe that I am {he}, you will die in your sins.”

Therefore, they asked him, “Who are you?” Jesus said to them, “Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning! I have much to say concerning you and [much] to condemn. these [things] I say to the world.”

They did not understand that he spoke to them about the Father. *Glory be to God forever.*

Saturday of Fourth (Fifth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 64:3, 4a

A Psalm of David.

Hear my prayer [O God]!

All flesh will come to You.

The words of the ungodly have overwhelm us.

Alleluia.

Luke 15:3-10

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

So Jesus told them this parable. "Which one of you, if you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that was lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he carries it on his shoulders, rejoicing! Coming home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, telling them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than

over ninety-nine righteous who need no repentance.

Or what woman, if she had ten drachma coins and lost one, would not light a lamp, sweep the house, and look hard until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying: 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the drachma coin which I had lost!' Likewise, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Galatians 5:16-6:2

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Galatians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

I say this: walk by the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. What the [fallen] flesh desires is

against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh! Yes, these are in opposition to one another, so that

you may not do the things that you desire. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Now, the works of the flesh are obvious. They are: adultery, sexual immorality, impurity, lust, idolatry, the practice of magic, hatred, strife, selfish ambitions, outbursts of anger, rivalries, divisions, heresies, envyings, murders, excess drinking, orgies, and similar things. About these, I warn you, as I have done in the past: those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,

kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law! Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit! Let us not become arrogant, challenging and envying one another.

Brethren, even if someone is caught in some fault, you who are spiritual must restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness. But watch out for yourself in order not to be tempted. Bear each others' burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 5:7-11

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receives the early and late rain. You also should be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

Brethren, do not grumble against one another, so that you will not be judged. Behold, the judge stands at the door! Brethren, consider as an

example of suffering and patience the prophets who spoke in the Name of the Lord. Behold, we call them blessed who endured. You have heard of the patience of Job and you have seen the Lord in the outcome, how the Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 26:1b-18

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Then Paul held up his hand and made his defense. “I consider myself blessed, King Agrippa, that today, I am able to make my defense before you in response to all the accusations of the Jews, especially because you are an expert in all customs and debates which take place among the Jews. Therefore, I beg you to hear me patiently.

Indeed, all the Jews know about my way of life from my youth up, which was from the beginning among my own nation and in Jerusalem. Since they have known me from the beginning, they could testify that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion. And now, I stand here on trial because of the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers! This is what our twelve tribes hope to attain as they constantly offer divine service night and day. It is concerning this hope that I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa! Why is it judged incredible that God raises the dead?

As for myself, I certainly thought that it was my duty to oppose the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. I also did this in Jerusalem: having received authority from the chief priests, I had

many of the saints imprisoned, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Often I went to all the synagogues to have them punished and I tried to make them blaspheme. Filled with rage against them, I even persecuted them in foreign cities.

Then, as I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission from the chief priests, at noon, O king, I saw on the way a light from the sky. It was brighter than the sun and shone around me and those who were traveling with me. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads!’

I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

He replied, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting! But arise and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you a servant and a witness both of what you have seen and of what I will reveal to you. I will rescue you from the [Jewish] people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the

power of Satan to God, and receive remission of sins as well as an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 142:1, 2a

A Psalm of David.

O Lord, hear my prayer;
give ear to my supplication in Your truth;
Hear me in Your righteousness,
and do not enter into judgment with Your servant.

Alleluia.

Matthew 23:13-39

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and as a pretense you make long prayers. Therefore, you will receive a greater condemnation.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you shut the Kingdom of Heaven in the face of people and you yourselves do not enter! And those who would enter, you prevent from doing so. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel around by sea and land to make one convert; and when one is converted, you make him twice as much of a son of Gehenna as yourselves.

Woe to you, you blind guides, who say, 'If someone swears by the

sanctuary, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound.' You blind fools! Which is greater, the gold, or the sanctuary that sanctifies the gold? You say, 'If someone swears by the altar, it is nothing; but if someone swears by the gift that is placed on it, he is bound?' You blind fools! Which is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore, whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. Whoever swears by the sanctuary swears by it and by the one who was living in it. Whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by the one who sits on it.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill,

and cumin, but you have not fulfilled the truly significant matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faith. It is these you should have practiced, without neglecting the others. You are blind guides who filter out a fly and yet swallow a camel!

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but inside, they are full of greed and excess. You blind Pharisees, first clean the inside of the cup and platter, so that the outside may also become clean.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like white-washed tombs which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside, they are full of dead bones and all [kinds of] impurity. Likewise, you also appear righteous to men in appearance, but inside, you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the tombs of the righteous, saying, 'If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have partaken with them in the blood of the prophets.' Therefore, you testify to your-

selves that you are children of those who killed the prophets! Fill up, then, the measure [of sin] of your forefathers. You serpents, offspring of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna? Therefore, behold, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes. Some of them, you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from city to city. Thus all the righteous blood shed on the earth will come upon you, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah whom you killed between the sanctuary and the altar. Amen, I tell you: all these things will come upon this generation.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often have I desired to gather your children, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings; but you were not willing! Behold, your house is left to you in a desolate state. For I tell you, you will not see me from now on until [the day when] you are saying, 'Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord!'"

Glory be to God forever.

The Fifth Sunday of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 38:13

A Psalm of David.

“Hear my prayer, O Lord,
and give ear to my supplication;
do not be silent at my tears.
For I am a sojourner before You,
and a stranger, as all my fathers were.”

Alleluia.

Luke 18:1-8

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus also told them a parable [illustrating] that they must always pray and not give up, saying: “In a certain city, there was a judge who did not fear God and did not care [about anyone]. A widow lived in that city, and she often came to him, saying: ‘Defend me from my adversary!’ For a time, he would not [do anything], but after a while, he said to himself, ‘Although I neither fear God nor care for anyone, yet because this widow is

bothering me, I will defend her, or else she will wear me out by her continual visits.’”

The Lord said, “Listen to what the unrighteous judge has to say! Will not God grant justice to his elect who are crying out to him day and night, although he exercises patience regarding them? I tell you that he will avenge them quickly! And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 101:2, 3a, 13

A Psalm of David.

O Lord, hear my prayer,
and let my cry come to You.
Do not turn Your face from me;
But You, O Lord, remain forever,
and Your remembrance is from generation to generations.

Alleluia.

Matthew 21:33-46

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Hear another parable. There was a man who was the owner of a household. He planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, built a tower and leased it out to farmers. He then left for another country. When the season for the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the farmers, to receive his fruit. But the farmers took his servants, beat one, killed another, and stoned yet another. Again, the owner sent other servants, even more than the first time; and they treated them in the same way. Then, he sent his son to them, saying: 'They will respect my son!' But the farmers, when they saw the son, said to each other, 'This is the heir! Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' And so, they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard returns, what will he do with those farmers?"

They told him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and he will lease out the vineyard to other farmers who will give him the fruit in its season."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

'The [very] stone which the builders rejected was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord and it is marvelous in our eyes?'

Therefore, I tell you that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and it will be given to a people bringing forth its fruit. Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and whoever it will fall on will be scattered as dust."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he had spoken about them. They began to look for a way to arrest him, but they feared the crowds because the people consid-

ered him to be a prophet. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Thessalonians 2:1-17

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Thessalonians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering to him, we ask you not to be quickly shaken in your mind. Do not be troubled by a prophecy, report or letter allegedly from us, saying that the day of Christ has come. Let no one deceive you in any way! This will not take place unless the apostasy comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of destruction. He opposes and exalts himself over all that is called God or that is an object of religion, so that he sits as God in the sanctuary of God, presenting himself up as God! Do you not remember that, when I was still with you, I told you these things? Now, you know what is restraining him, so that he may be revealed in his own time. The mystery of lawlessness is already at work! But now, there is one who restrains, until he is taken out of the way. Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will kill with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the manifestation of his coming. The coming [of the lawless one] is according to Satan's operation with all kinds of power, miracles and

lying wonders, and with all deception of wickedness aimed at those who are being lost, because they did not receive the love of the truth so that they might be saved. Because of this, God sends them a strong delusion so that they should believe a lie and those who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness shall all be judged.

But we must always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. Indeed, he called you through our Good News to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so, brethren, stand firm and keep the traditions which we taught you, whether by word or by letter.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good work and word.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

2 Peter 3:1-18

The Catholic Epistle from the Second Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is now, beloved, the second letter that I have written to you and in both of them, I stir up your sincere mind by reminding you that you should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets and the commandments of us who are the apostles of the Lord and Savior. First of all, know that in the last days, mockers will come, walking after their own lusts. They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? Since the days that our forefathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But they willfully forget that in the old days, there were the heavens and the earth, formed out of water and through water by the word of God. By means of water, the world of old was flooded with water and perished. But by the same word, the heavens and the earth that exist now have been reserved for the fire of the day of judgment and for the destruction of those who are ungodly. Beloved, do not forget that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day! The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some people think that he is. Instead, he is patient with us, not wishing that any

should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night and in this day, the heavens will pass away with a rushing noise, the elements will be dissolved by intense heat, and the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Therefore, since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be in terms of holy living and godliness! You should look for and eagerly desire the coming of the day of God, which will cause the burning heavens to be dissolved and the elements to melt with intense heat! But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, as you look for these things, to your utmost to be found in peace, without blemish and blameless in his sight. Consider the patience of our Lord as salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom given to him. He does so in all his letters, speaking of these things. But his letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they also do to

with the other Scriptures. Beloved, since you know these things in advance, be careful and fear that being carried away with the error of the wicked, you might fall from your own secure position. Instead, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord

and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, both now and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 26:19-27:8

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. I first proclaimed this to the people of Damascus, Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea. Then, I also proclaimed it to the Gentiles; that they should repent, turn to God, and do works worthy of [their] repentance. For this reason, the Jews arrested me in the temple and tried to kill me. Yet, having obtained God's help, I stand to this day and bear witness to small and great alike. I only say what the prophets and Moses said would happen, how the Christ must suffer, and how, by the resurrection of the dead, he would be first to proclaim light both to the [Jewish] people and to the Gentiles."

As Paul was presenting this defense, Festus exclaimed with a loud voice, "Paul, you are crazy! Your great learning is driving you insane!"

But Paul replied, "I am not crazy, Most Excellent Festus, but boldly

declare words of truth and good sense. Indeed, the king is aware of these things and I will also speak freely to him. For I am convinced that none of this is hidden from him, for this has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe!"

Agrippa then said to Paul, "With a little persuasion, are you trying to make me a Christian?"

Paul answered, "I pray to God, that whether with little or with much, not only you but also all that hear me today might become as I am, except for these chains."

The king rose up with the governor, along with Bernice and those who sat with them. After retiring, they talked together and agreed, "This man has done nothing worthy of death or imprisonment." Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been

set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

When it was determined that we should sail for Italy, the authorities delivered Paul and other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, of the Imperial regiment. We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to sail to various places on the coast of Asia and put to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, traveled with us. The next day, we landed at Sidon. Julius treated Paul with kindness and gave him permission to visit his friends and to be cared for. Putting to sea from there, we sailed

under [the shelter of] Cyprus because the winds were contrary. After sailing across the open sea off [the coasts of] Cilicia and Pamphylia, we arrived in Myra, a city of Lycia. There, the centurion found a ship sailing from Alexandria to Italy, and he put us on board. After sailing slowly for many days, we arrived with difficulty near Cnidus. The wind did not allow us to go further [on course], we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone. We sailed along the coast and arrived at a place called ‘Fair Havens’, near the city of Lasea.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 32:5, 6

A Psalm of David.

He loves mercy and justice;
the earth is full of the Lord’s mercy.
By the Word of the Lord the heavens were established,
and by the breath of His mouth, all their hosts.

Alleluia.

John 5:1-18

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

After these things, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem, by the sheep gate, there is a pool with five porches called in Hebrew “Bethesda”. Under these laid a great

multitude of people who were sick, blind, lame, or paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at certain times into the pool, and stirred up the water. Then whoever stepped in first after the

stirring of the water was made whole of whatever disease he had. A certain man was there, who had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that the man had been sick for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to be made well?"

The sick man replied, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, someone else steps down before me!"

Jesus said to him, "Arise, take up your mat, and walk!"

Immediately, the man was made well; he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now, it was the Sabbath on that day. And so, the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the Sabbath! It is not lawful for you to carry the mat!"

The man answered them, "He who made me well, that one said to me, 'Take up your mat, and walk.'"

Then they asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your mat, and walk'?"

But the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn in the crowd that was there.

Later, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "Behold, you have become well. Sin no more, so that nothing worse may happen to you!"

The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. For this reason, the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill him because he did these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father is still working, and I am also working." Because of this, the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, not only because he broke the Sabbath, but also because he called God his own Father, making himself equal with God. *Glory be to God forever.*

Monday of Fifth (Sixth) Week of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 141:2, 3

A Psalm of David.

I cried to the Lord with my voice,

I prayed with my voice to the Lord.

I will pour out my prayer before Him;

I will declare my affliction in His presence.

Alleluia.

Matthew 9:1-8

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus entered into a boat, crossed over [the lake] and came into his own city. Behold, some people brought him a man who was paralyzed, lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer! Your sins are forgiven!"

At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man blasphemes!"

Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil [thoughts] in your hearts? Which is

easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or, 'Get up, and walk?' But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" (then he said to the paralytic), "Get up, take up your mat, and go up to your house."

The man got up and departed to his house. But when the crowds saw this, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such authority to men. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 8:1-11

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

You will proclaim wisdom,
that understanding may obey you;
for she is on lofty summit,
and stands in the midst of the ways.

For she sits beside the gates of princes,
and sings at the entrances, *saying*,
"You, O men, I exhort,
and I utter my voice to the sons of me;

O you simple ones, understand subtlety,
and you that are untaught, take heart.

Listen to me, for I will speak of serious things,

and I will bring forth what is right from my lips.

For my mouth will declare truth,
and false lips are an abomination before me.

All the words of my mouth are in righteousness;

there is nothing in them crooked or twisted.

They are all straightforward to those who understand,
and right to those who find knowledge.

Seize instruction, and not silver,
and knowledge rather than tried gold.

For wisdom is better than precious stones,

and no valuable thing is worthy of her.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 43:10-28

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

“Be My witnesses,
and I *too am* a witness,” says the
Lord God,

“and My servant whom I have
chosen,

that you may know, and believe,
and understand that I am *He*.

Before Me there was no other
God,

and there will be none after Me.

I am God, and besides Me there is
no one who saves.

I have declared, and have saved; I
have reproached,

and there was no foreign *god*
among you.

You are My witnesses,
and I too am a witness”, says the
Lord God.

“Even from the beginning
there is no one that can deliver
from My hands;

I will work, and who will reverse
it?”

This is what Lord God Who re-
deems you,

the Holy One of Israel, is saying,

“for your sakes I will send to Bab-
ylon,

and I will stir up all those who are
fleeing,

and the Chaldeans will be bound
in ships.

I am the Lord God, your Holy
One,

Who has appointed your king, O
Israel.”

This is what the Lord,
Who makes a way in the sea,
and a path in the mighty water,
Who has brought out chariots and
horse,

and a mighty multitude—
but they have lain down, and will
not rise;

they have been extinguished like a
wick his quenched—says:

“Do not remember the former
things,

or consider the things of old.

Look, I am doing new things that
will now spring forth,

and you will know them,
and I will make a way in the de-
sert,

and rivers in the dry land.

The wild animals will praise Me,
the owls and young ostriches,
because I have given water in the
desert,

and rivers in the dry land,

to give drink to My chosen race,

My people whom I have preserved
to declare My excellences.

I have not called you now, O Ja-
cob,

nor have I made you weary, O
Israel.

You have not brought Me the
sheep of your whole burnt offering,

nor have you glorified Me with
your sacrifices,
nor have I wearied you with frank-
incense,
nor have you purchased sweet
incense for Me with silver,
nor have I desired the fat of your
sacrifices,
but I have set before you
your sins and your iniquities.

I AM, I AM,
the One Who blots out your
transgressions and your sins,

and I will not remember *them*.
But as for you, remember, and let
us judge *together*,
you tell your transgressions first,
so that you may be justified.
Your fathers first,
and your rulers have transgressed
against Me.
And the rulers have defiled My
holy things,
so I gave Jacob destruction,
and Israel for reproach.”
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 32:6-16

From the book of the Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Elious the son of Barachiel
,the Buzite, answered and said,
I am younger in age, and you are
the elder,
therefore I kept silent,
and did not dare to declare my
knowledge to you.
And I said, “It is not time that
speaks,
and in many years, *men* know wis-
dom.”
Rather, there is a spirit in mortals,
and the inspiration of the Al-
mighty is what teaches.
The long-lived are not always wise,
nor do the aged always know
judgment.
Therefore I said, “Listen to me,
and I will tell you what I know.”
Listen to my words,

for I will speak in your hearing,
until you have put words to the
test.
And I will understand as far as
you.
And, look, not one of you an-
swered Job in argument;
lest you should say, “We have
found that we have added wisdom to
the Lord.”
And you have permitted a man to
speak such words!
They were afraid, they answered
no more;
they gave up their words.
I waited, (for I had not spoken,)
because they stood still, they did
not answer.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 37:10

A Psalm of David.

O Lord, all my desire is before You,
and my groaning is not hidden from You.

Alleluia.

Mark 12:1-12

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

He began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a tower. He then rented it to tenant farmers and left for another country. When it was time, he sent a servant to the farmers to receive his share of the fruit of the vineyard. But they took the servant, beat him, and sent him away empty. Again, the owner sent another servant to them, and they threw stones at him, wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully treated. Again he sent another; and they killed him along with many others, beating some, and killing some. The man still had one left to send, his beloved son. Finally, he sent him to them, saying: 'They will respect my son!' But the

tenants of the vineyard said among themselves, 'This is the heir! Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!' They took him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What then will the lord of the vineyard do? He will come to destroy the farmers, and he will give the vineyard to others. Have you not even read this Scripture:

'The very stone which the builders rejected,

Has become the head of the corner.

This is the Lord's doing,

And it is marvelous in our eyes'?

They kept trying to arrest Jesus, but they feared the multitude because they understood that he had spoken the parable against them. So they left him and went away. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Thessalonians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

As for other matters, brethren, we beg and exhort you in the Lord Jesus: as you received from us how you should live to please God, may you make progress in this ever more! For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. This is the will of God: your sanctification, and that you abstain from sexual immorality. Each one of you should know how to practice self-control of the body in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passions, as Gentiles who do not know God. No one should take advantage of or wrong a brother [or sister] in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as also we warned you and testified to you. Certainly, God did not call us for impurity but to sanctification! Therefore, whoever rejects this does not reject a human [command], but God, who has also given his Holy Spirit to you.

But concerning brotherly love, you have no need that one should write to you since you have learned from God how to love one another, and this is what you do toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, to overflow

even more! Make it your goal to lead a quiet life, to take care of your own affairs, and to work with your own hands, even as we instructed you. Thus, you will live properly in the sight of those who are outside and you will lack nothing.

We do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like those have no hope do. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. We tell you the following by the word of the Lord: we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with God's trumpet. The dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore, comfort one another with these words.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 4:7-12

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, submit yourselves to God, but resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you who are double-minded. Lament, mourn, and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Do not speak against one another, brethren. Whoever speaks against one

of the brethren and judges speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge! Only one is the lawgiver, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge another?

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 18:9-18b

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

One night, the Lord said to Paul by a vision, "Do not be afraid! Speak out and do not be silent. I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many people in this city."

Paul lived there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among the people of Corinth. But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up with one accord against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat, saying, "This man

convinces people to worship God in opposition to the law."

But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If you Jews were complaining about a matter of wrongdoing or about a wicked crime, it would be reasonable that I should bear with you. However, if these are questions about words and names and your own law, deal with it yourselves, for I do not want to be a judge of these matters." And he had them removed from the court.

Then, they turned on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal, but Gallio did not care about any of these things.

After this, Paul stayed some time longer. He then took his leave of the brethren and set sail from Corinth to Syria.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 34:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

Judge those who wrong me, O Lord;
fight against those who fight against me!
Take hold of weapon and shield,
and rise up to help me!

Alleluia.

Luke 13:1-5

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

At that time, some [Jews] were present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no,

but unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way! Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell. Do you think that they were worse offenders than all those who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but, unless you repent, you will all perish as they did!" *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of Fifth (Sixth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 8:12-21

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

I, wisdom, dwell *with* counsel,

and I call upon knowledge and understanding.

The fear of the Lord hates unrighteousness,

and both insolence and pride, and the ways of wicked;

and I the perverse ways of evil men.

Counsel and safety are mine;
prudence is mine, and strength is mine.

By me, kings reign,
and rulers decree justice.

By me, nobles become great,
and by me, monarchs rule over the earth.

I love those who love me,

and those who seek me will find *me*.

Wealth and glory belong to me,
and abundant possessions, and righteousness.

It is better to enjoy my fruits than gold and precious stones,

and my fruits are better than choice silver.

I walk in ways of righteousness,
and I *am* conversant with the paths of judgement;

that I may distribute substance to those who love me,

and may fill their treasures with good things.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 44:1-8

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But now hear, O Jacob My servant,

and Israel, whom I have chosen!

This is what the Lord God Who made you,

and Who formed you from the womb, says,

“You will still be helped; do not fear, O Jacob My servant,

and beloved Israel, whom I have chosen,

for I will give water to the thirsty
who walk in a dry land;

I will put My Spirit upon your offspring,

and My blessings upon your children;

and they will spring up like grass
between brooks,

and like willows by flowing water.

One will say, ‘I am God’s,’

and another will call himself by the name of Jacob;

and another will write, ‘I am God’s,’

and will call himself by the name of Israel.”

This is what God the King of Israel,

and the God of hosts, Who delivered him, says,

“I AM the first, and I AM after these things;

besides Me there is no God.”

Who is like Me? Let him stand,
and call,
and prepare for Me,
as I have made man forever;
and let them declare to you
the things that are coming
before they arrive.
Do not hide yourselves,

have you not paid attention from
the beginning,
and I declared it to you?
You are witnesses
whether there is a god beside me,
who was not formerly.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 32:17-33:33

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Elious continued, and said,
“Again, I will speak, for I am full
of words;
for the spirit of my stomach is
killing me.
And my stomach is like a skin of
sweet new wine,
bound up *and* ready to burst,
or like the bellows of a copper-
smith, ready to bellow.
I will speak, that I may open my
lips and relieve myself.
For truly I will not be in awe of a
man,
nor indeed will I be ashamed be-
fore a mortal.
For I do not know how to respect
persons,
or else moths would eat me.
Nonetheless, hear my words, O
Job,
and listen to what I say.
For look, I have opened my
mouth,
and my tongue has spoken.
By my words, my heart *will be found*
pure,

and the understanding of my lips
will meditate purity.
It is the Divine Spirit that has
made me,
and the breath of the Almighty
that teaches me.
If you can, give me an answer to
these things;
wait, take a stand against me, and I
will stand against you.
You are formed from clay, just as
I am;
we have been formed from the
same *thing*.
My fear will not terrify you,
nor will my hand be heavy upon
you.
But you have said in my hearing,
(I heard the voice of your words;)
for you say, “I am pure, not hav-
ing sinned;
I am blameless, for I have not
transgressed.
Yet He has found a charge against
me,
and He has counted me as an en-
emy.

And He has put my foot in the stocks,

and has watched all my ways.”

For how can you say, “I am righteous, and He has not listened to me”?

For He that is above mortals is eternal.

But you say, “Why has he not heard every word of my cause?”

For when the Lord speaks once,
or a second time, *through* a dream,
or in the meditation of the night;
(as when a dreadful fear falls upon men

while slumbering on their bed),
then He opens the human heart,
and frightens them with such fearful visions,

to turn a man from unrighteousness,

and he delivers his body from a fall.

He spares his soul from death,
and *does not allow* him not to fall in war.

And again, he chastens him with sickness on his bed,

and a great many of his bones grow stiff.

And he will not be able to take any food,

though his soul may long for it,
until his flesh wastes away,
and he shows his bones bare.

His soul also draws near to death,
and his life is in Hades.

Though there should be a thousand messengers of death,

not one of them will wound him.

If he purposes in his heart to turn to the Lord,

and declares his fault to men, and show his folly,

He will support him, that he should not perish,

and will restore his body like *fresh* plaster upon a wall,

and He will fill his bones with morrow.

And He will make his flesh tender like a baby’s,

and He will restore him among men in *his* full strength.

And he will pray to the Lord, and his prayer will be accepted.

He will enter with a cheerful face,
with an expression full *of praise*,

for He will give to men with righteousness.

Even then, a man will blame himself, saying,

“What kind of things have I done?”

And He has not punished me according to the full amount of my sins.”

Save my soul from going down into decay,

and my life will see the light.

Look, the Mighty one works all these things

three ways with a man.

But He has delivered my soul from death,

that my life may praise him in the light.

Listen, Job, and hear me;

be silent, and I will speak.

If you have words, answer me;

Speak, for I desire you to be justified.

If not, listen to me;

be silent, and I will teach you wisdom.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

4 Kings 5:1-27 or 2 Kings 5:1-27*

From the Fourth book of Kings. Its blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now Naiman, the commander of the army of Syria, was a great man before his master, and highly respected, because the Lord had given deliverance to Syria by him. And the man was mighty in strength, but a leper. And the Syrians went out lightly armed, and took a young girl captive out of the land of Israel, and she waited on Naiman's wife. And she said to her mistress, "If only my master were before the prophet of God in Samaria, then he would recover him from his leprosy." And she went in and told her master, and said, "This is what the young girl from the land of Israel said." And the king of Syria said to Naiman, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel."

And he went, and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of clothing. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, "Now then, as soon as this letter reaches you, see, I send to you my servant Naiman, and you shall recover him from his leprosy." And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his garments, and said, "Am I God, able to kill and to make

alive, that this man sends to me to recover a man of his leprosy? Consider, however, and see that this man seeks a pretext to quarrel with me."

And it happened, when Elisha heard that the king of Israel had torn his garments, that he sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Why have you torn your garments? Let Naiman come to me, and let him know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naiman came with horse and chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will return to you, and you will be cleansed." And Naiman was angry, and departed, and said, "See, I said that he would come out to me, and stand, and call on the Name of his God, and lay his hand upon the place, and recover the leper! Are not the Abana and the Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not go and wash in them, and be cleansed?" and he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants approached him and said, "If the prophet had told you to do a great thing, would you not do it? But he has only said to you, 'Wash, and be

cleansed.” So Naiman went down, and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of Elisha, and his flesh returned to him like the flesh of a little child, and he was cleansed.

And he and his company returned to Elisha, and came and stood before him, and said, “Look, I know that there is no god in all the earth, but only in Israel. And now receive a blessing from your servant.” And Elisha said, “As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.” And he pressured him to take it, but he would not. And Naiman said, “Well then, if not, let your servant be given a load of a pair of mules, and you will give me from the red earth, and your servant will no longer offer whole burnt offering, or sacrifice to other gods, except to the Lord alone. And let the Lord be merciful to your servant when my master goes into the house of Remman to worship there, and he will rest on my hand, and I will bow down in the house of Remman when he bows down in the house of Remman; may the Lord be merciful to your servant in this matter.” And Elisha said to Naiman, “Go in peace.” And he departed from him a little way.

And Giezi, the servant of Elisha said, “Look, my master has spared this Syrian Naiman, by not accepting from his hand what he brought; as the Lord lives, I will surely run after him, and take something from him.”

So Giezi followed after Naiman, and Naiman saw him running after him, and turned back from his chariot to meet him. And Giezi said, “Peace. My master sent me, saying, “Look now, there are two young men who have come to me from the sons of the prophets from mount Ephraim. Give them, a talent of silver and two changes of clothing.” And Naiman said, “Take two talents of silver.” And Giezi took two talents of silver in two bags, and two changes of clothing, and handed them to two of his servants, and they carried them ahead of him. And he came to a secret place, and took he them from their hands, and stored them in the house, and dismissed the men.

And he went in and stood before his master, and Elisha said to him, “Where have you come from, Giezi?” And Giezi said, “Your servant has not gone anywhere.” And Elisha said to him, “Did not my heart go with you when the man returned from his chariot to meet you? And now you have received silver, and the garments, and will you receive from him olive yards, vineyards, sheep, oxen, menservants, and handmaidens? The leprosy of Naiman will cling to you, and to your offspring forever.” And he went out from his presence leprous, like snow.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

** Found in Southern United States. Lacking in Kitchener and Ottawa.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 34:13

A Psalm of David.

I put on sackcloth
when they troubled me,
and I humbled my soul with fasting;
and my prayer will return into my bosom.

Alleluia.

Luke 4:22-30

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

All testified about him and marveled at the gracious words which came out of his mouth; and they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

He said to them, "With doubt, you will quote me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard was done at Capernaum, do also here in your hometown.'" He continued, "Amen, I tell you that no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. But I tell you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elias, when the sky was shut up three years and six months, when a great famine came all over the

land Elias was sent to none of them, except to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. There were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed, except Naaman, the Syrian."

As they heard these things, all were filled with wrath in the synagogue. They rose up, threw him out of the city, and led him to the edge of the hill that their city was built on in order to throw him off the cliff. But he, passing through their midst, went his way. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

1 Corinthians 14:18-28

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

I give thanks to my God: I speak in tongues more than all of you. However, in the Church, I would rather speak five words with my mind than ten thousand words in another tongue, in order to instruct others.

Brethren, do not be children in thoughts, yet be infants when it comes to evil. Be mature in your thoughts. It is written in the law, "By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people. Yet, not even thus will they hear me, says the Lord." Therefore, other tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers. Prophesying is [also] a sign, not to the unbelieving, but to those who believe. If therefore the whole Church is assembled and all speak in tongues, and someone unlearned or unbelieving comes in, will he not say that you are crazy? But if all prophesy, and

someone unbelieving or unlearned comes in, that person is reproved by all, and is judged by all. And thus, the secrets of this person's heart shall be revealed in order to fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed.

What is it then, brethren? When you come together, each one of you has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a [saying in] tongue, or an interpretation. Let all these things be done to build each other up. If someone speaks in another tongue, let it be two or at the most three of them, one at a time; and then someone should interpret. But if there is no interpreter, the one who speaks in tongues should remain silent in the Church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 1:22-2:1

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Be 'doers of the word'; not only hearers who delude themselves! For if anyone is a 'hearer of the word' and not a doer, such a person is like someone looking at his natural face in a mirror. Seeing himself and going away, he immediately forgets what kind of person he was. But whoever looks into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres [in it], not being a

hearer who forgets but a doer of the work, will be blessed in doing so.

If anyone among you considers himself to be religious but does not bridle his tongue, such a one deceives his heart and his religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in

their afflictions and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory with partiality.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 19:11-20

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

God worked remarkable miracles by the hands of Paul, so [much] that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and the evil spirits were expelled.

But some of the itinerant Jews who were exorcists took it on themselves to invoke the Name of the Lord Jesus over those who had the evil spirits. They said, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." There were seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did this.

But the evil spirit answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" The man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them and overpowered them. He gave them

such a beating that they escaped from that house naked and wounded. This became known to all who lived at Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. Fear fell on them all, and the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Many also of those who had believed came forward to confess and reveal their [evil] deeds. Many of those who practiced magical arts brought their books and burned them in the sight of all. Their price was counted and found to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. In this way, the word of the Lord was growing and becoming powerful.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalms 41:2

A Psalm of David.

My soul longs for You, O God,
as the deer longs for springs of water.

Alleluia.

Luke 9:18-22

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Once, as Jesus was praying alone and the disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the multitudes say that I am?"

They answered, "John the Baptizer,' but others say, 'Elias,' and others, that one of the old prophets is risen again."

Jesus said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered, "The Christ of God!"

But he warned them, and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the presbyters, the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up." *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of Fifth (Sixth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Exodus 10:1-11:10

From the book of Exodus of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that these signs may come upon them; in order that you may tell in the hearing of your children, and your children's children, how I mocked the Egyptians, and My wonders that I performed among them; and you will know that I *am* the Lord."

And Moses and Aaron went in before Pharaoh and said to him, "This is what the Lord God of the Hebrews, says, 'How long will you refuse to reverence me? Send My

people away, so that they may serve Me. But if you will not send My people away, look, at this hour tomorrow I will bring an abundance of locusts upon all your borders. And they will cover the face of the earth, and you will not be able to see the earth; and they will devour all that is left of the abundance of the land, which the hail has left you, and will devour every tree that grows for you on the land. And your houses will be filled, and the houses of your servants, and all the houses in all the land of the Egyptians; things which neither your fathers, nor their forefathers

have seen, from the day that they were upon the earth until this day.” And Moses turned away and went out from Pharaoh.

And the servants of Pharaoh said to him, “How long will this be a snare to us? Send the men away, so that they may serve their God; do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?” And they brought back both Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh; and he said to them, “Go and serve the Lord your God, but who are the ones that are going with you?” And Moses said, “We will go with the young and the old, with our sons, and daughters, and sheep, and oxen, for it is a feast of the Lord.” And he said to them, “let the Lord be with you as I send you away, but not your belongings also, for evil lies before you. Not so, but let the men go and serve God, for that is what you desired.” And they threw them out from Pharaoh’s presence.

And the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt, and let the locust come upon the land, and devour every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees that the hail left.” And Moses lifted up his rod towards heaven, and the Lord brought a south wind upon the earth, all that day and all that night. The morning dawned, and the south wind brought up the locusts, and brought them up over all the land of Egypt. And they rested in very great abundance over all the territories of Egypt. Previously there had

been no locusts as these, nor will there be after them. And they covered the face of the earth, and the land was wasted, and they devoured all the herbs of the land, and all the fruit of the trees that was left by the hail. There was no green thing left on the trees, nor on all the plants of the field in all the land of Egypt.

And Pharaoh hurried to call Moses and Aaron, saying, “I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Therefore, pardon my sin yet this time, and pray to the Lord your God, and let Him take away from me this death.” And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and prayed to God. And the Lord brought from the opposite direction a strong wind from the sea, and took up the locusts and blew them into the Red Sea, and there was not one locust left in all the land of Egypt. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not send the children of Israel away.

And the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand to heaven, and let there be darkness over the land of Egypt—darkness that may be felt.” And Moses stretched out his hand to heaven, and there was a very thick darkness, even a storm, over all the land of Egypt three days. And for three days no one saw his brother, and no one rose up from his bed for three days. But all the children of Israel had light where they lived.

And Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron, saying, “Go, serve the Lord

your God, only leave your sheep and your oxen, and let your belongings go with you.” And Moses said, “No, but you must give to us whole burnt offerings and sacrifices that we will sacrifice to the Lord our God. And our cattle will go with us, and we will not leave a hoof behind, for from them we will take to serve the Lord our God, but we do not know in what manner we will serve the Lord our God until we arrive there.” But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he would not let them go. And Pharaoh said, “Depart from me, beware of seeing my face again, for the day you appear before me, you will die.” And Moses said, “You have spoken! I will no longer appear in your presence.”

And the Lord said to Moses, “I will bring yet one more plague on Pharaoh, and on Egypt. Afterward he will send you away from here. And whenever he sends you out with everything, he will indeed drive you out. Therefore, speak secretly in the ears of the people, and let everyone ask from his neighbour jewels of silver and gold, and clothing.” And the Lord gave his people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, and they lent to them. And the man Moses was very great before the Egyptians, and before Pharaoh, and before his servants.

And Moses said *to Pharaoh*, “This is what the Lord says, ‘About midnight I will go forth into the midst of Egypt. And every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is by the mill, and to the firstborn of all the cattle. And there will be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as has not been, and which will not be repeated again. But against not even one of children of Israel, whether man or beast, will a dog snarl with his tongue, that you may know how wide a distinction the Lord will make between the Egyptians and Israel.’ And all these your servants will come down to me, and bow down to me, saying, ‘Go forth, and all the people who follow you,’ and afterwards I will go.” And Moses went out from Pharaoh with wrath.

And the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, that I may greatly multiply My signs and wonders in the land *of* Egypt.” And Moses and Aaron worked all these signs and wonders in the land *of* Egypt before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not listen, to send the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 44:21-28

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Remember these things, O Jacob
and Israel, for you are My servant;
I have formed you as my servant,
and you, Israel, do not forget Me.
For see, I have blotted out your
transgressions like a cloud,
and your sins like darkness;
return to Me, and I will redeem
you.

Rejoice, O heavens, for God has
had mercy on Israel;
sound the trumpet, O foundations
of the earth;
shout for joy, O mountains,
the hills, and all the trees upon
them,
for God has redeemed Jacob,
and Israel will be glorified!

This is what the Lord, Who re-
deems you,
and Who formed you from the
womb, is saying,
“I am the Lord, Who accomplish-
es all things;
I alone stretched out the heaven,

and established the earth.
Who else will scatter the signs of
ventriloquists,
and divinations from their heart?
turning the wise back,
and making their counsel foolish-
ness?

Who else establishes the word of
His servant,
and proves the counsel of his
messengers?

Who else says to Jerusalem, “You
will be inhabited,”
and to the cities of Judea, “You
will be built,”
and her desert places will spring
forth?

Who else says to the deep, “You
will be dried up,
and I will dry up your rivers?”
Who else tells Cyrus be wise,
and he will perform all My will,
who says to Jerusalem,

You will be built, and I will lay the
foundation of My holy house?”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 8:22-36

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

The Lord created me the begin-
ning of His ways
for the sake of His works.
He established me at the begin-
ning, before time *was*,
before He made the earth, and
before he made the depths,
before the fountains of water
came forth,

before the mountains were estab-
lished,
and before all hills, he begets me.
The Lord made the countries and
the uninhabited *places*,
and the highest inhabited places
under heaven.

When He prepared the heaven, I
was present with Him,

and when He prepared His throne
on the winds.

And when He strengthened the
clouds above,

and when He secured the foun-
tains of the earth,

and when He strengthened the
foundations of the earth,

I was working beside Him;
it was I in whom He took delight.

And daily I rejoiced in His pres-
ence at every moment,

when He rejoiced after He had
completed the world,

and rejoiced among the sons of
men.

Now then, *my* son, hear me:
blessed is the man who will listen
to me,

and the person who will guard my
ways,

watching daily at my doors,
keeping watch at the posts of my
entryways.

For my outgoings are the outgo-
ings of life,

and grace is prepared from the
Lord.

But those who sin against me act
wickedly against their own souls,

and those who hate me love death.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 34:1-37

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Elious continued, and said,

“Hear me, O you wise men;

O you who have knowledge, pay
attention to what is good.

For the ear tries words
as the mouth tastes food.

Let us choose judgment for our-
selves;

let us know amount ourselves
what is good.

For Job has said, ‘I am righteous,
the Lord has removed my judg-
ment.’

And he has erred in my judgment,
when he said,

‘my wound is severe, though I am
without unrighteousness.’

What man is like Job,
drinking scorning like water?

For he says, ‘I have not sinned, nor
committed ungodliness,

nor had fellowship with workers
of iniquity,

to walk with the ungodly.’

For you should not say, ‘There will
be no visitation of a man,’

and *there is* a visitation on him
from the Lord!

Therefore, hear me, you that are
wise in heart:

far be it from me to sin before the
Lord,

and to pervert righteousness be-
fore the almighty.

Yes, He renders to a man as each
one of them does,

and in a man's path He will find him.

And do you think that the Lord will do wrong,

or will the Almighty Who made the earth pervert judgment?

And who is He that created everything under heaven,

and all things therein?

For if He would hold and restrain His spirit within Himself,

all flesh would die together,

and every mortal would return to the earth, from which he was formed.

Take heed *to this*, lest he rebuke *you*;

hear this, listen to the sound of words.

Look then at the One Who hates iniquities,

and Who destroys the wicked,

Who is forever just.

He is ungodly that says to a king,

'You are a transgressor,'

and to rulers, 'O most ungodly one.'

Such a man is not ashamed

before the face of an honourable man,

nor knows how to give honour to the great,

so that their persons should be respected.

But it will prove to be in vanity for them to cry out and entreat a man;

for they dealt unlawfully when they turned aside the weak.

For He observes the works of men,

and nothing of what they do has escaped Him.

Neither will there be a place

for the workers of iniquity to hide themselves.

For He will not put upon a man any longer.

For the Lord looks down upon all men.

He comprehends unsearchable things,

glorious and extraordinary things without number.

He discloses their workings,

and He will bring night about *upon them*, and they will be brought low

And He extinguishes the ungodly for they are seen before Him.

Because they turned aside from the law of God,

and did not regard His ordinances,

so as to bring before Him the cry of the needy;

for He will hear the cry of the poor.

And He will give quiet, and who will condemn?

And He will hide His face, and who will see Him?

Whether *it be done* against a nation, or against a man also;

causing a hypocrite to be king,

because of the discontentment of the people.

For *there is* one who says to the Mighty One,

'I have received *blessings*; I will not take a pledge;

I will see apart from myself;
show me if I have done unrighteousness,
and I will do so no more.'

Will He take vengeance for it on you,

because you will reject?
For you will choose, and not I,
therefore, speak what you know.

Because the wise in heart will say this,

and a wise man listens to my word.

But Job has not spoken with understanding,
and his words are without knowledge.

But learn, Job, do not answer as the foolish any longer,
that we do not add to our sins;
for iniquity will be counted against us,

if *we* speak many words before the Lord."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Sirach 10:1-31

From the book of the Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

A wise judge will instruct his people;

and the rule of an intelligent man is well ordered.

As the judge of the people is himself, so are his officials,

and as the ruler of the city is, so are all its inhabitants.

An unwise king destroys his people,

but a city will be made habitable by the wisdom of its rulers.

The Lord's hand is the governance of the earth,

and He will raise up the appropriate man over it for an appointed time.

The success of a man is in the Lord's hand,

and he lays honour on the person of the scribe.

Do not bear anger against your neighbour for every wrong,
and do nothing by acts of insolence.

Pride is hateful before God and man,

and iniquity is offensive to both.

Because of wrongdoing, insolence, and wealth,

dominion is transferred from one people to another.

There is nothing more lawless than the love of money,

For such a man sets his own soul for sale.

How can earth and ashes be proud,

since even while living, his insides are decaying.

A physician mocks a long illness,

And a king today will die tomorrow.

For when a man is dead,
he will inherit creeping things,
beasts, and worms.

The beginning of pride is one's
arrogance to depart from God,
and to rebel against Him Who
created his heart.

For the beginning of pride is sin,
and he who holds it will pour out
abomination.

Therefore the Lord brought upon
them incredible distress,
and completely destroyed them.

The Lord has cast down the
thrones of rulers,
and enthroned the meek in their
place.

The Lord has plucked out the
roots of nations,
and planted the humble in their
place.

The Lord overthrew the lands of
the nations,
and destroyed them to the founda-
tions of the earth.

He removed some of them, and
destroyed them,
and has erased their memory from
the earth.

Pride was not created for men,
nor furious anger for those who
are born of women.

What kind of seed is honourable?
The seed of man.
What kind of seed is honourable?
Those who fear the Lord.

What kind of seed is dishonourable?

The seed of man.

What kind of seed is dishonoured?

Those who transgress the com-
mandments.

In the midst of kin, the leader is
honourable,

and those fear the Lord are hon-
oured in His eyes.

The fear of the Lord goes before
the obtaining of authority,

but roughness and pride is the
losing thereof.

Whether rich, noble, or poor,
their boasting is the fear of the
Lord.

It is not right to dishonour an
intelligent poor man,

nor is it proper to honour a sinful
man.

Nobles, judges, and rulers will be
honoured,

but none of them is greater than
he who fears the Lord.

Free men will render service to a
wise servant,

and he who has understanding will
not grumble when he is reformed.

Do not put your wisdom on dis-
play when you do your work,

or boast of yourself in the time of
your distress.

He who works and has plenty is
better,

than he who boasts of himself,
and lacks bread.

My son, glorify your soul with meekness,

and give it honour according to its worth.

Who will justify he who sins against his own soul?

And who will honour he who dishonours his own life?

The poor man is honoured for his knowledge,

and the rich man is honoured for his wealth.

If a man is honoured in poverty, how much more in wealth?

And if an man is dishonoured in wealth,

how much more in poverty?

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 101:18,

A Psalm of David.

He regarded the prayer of the humble,
and will not despise their supplication;
to declare the Name of the Lord in Zion
and His praise in Jerusalem.

Alleluia.

Mark 7:1-20

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came from Jerusalem and gathered to [see] Jesus. When they saw some of his disciples were eating bread with defiled (that is, unwashed) hands, they found fault. (For the Pharisees and all the Jews hold to the tradition of the presbyters and do not eat unless they wash their hands and forearms. [Also], they do not eat when they return from the marketplace unless they [first] bathe themselves; and there are many other

things which they have received and observe: washings of cups, pitchers, bronze vessels, and couches.) The Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why is it that your disciples do not live by the tradition of the presbyters, but eat their bread with unwashed hands?”

Jesus answered them, “Well did Isaias prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

This people honors me with their lips,

*but their heart is far from me.
But in vain do they worship before
me,
teaching as doctrines the command-
ments of men.'*

Indeed, you set aside the commandment of God and hold fast to the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and you do many other such things.” He said to them, “How ingeniously do you reject the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother;’ and, ‘Whoever speaks evil of father or mother should be put to death.’ But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or mother, “Whatever [support] you might have received from me is Corban (that is, dedicated to God)”’ then you no longer allow him to do anything for his father or mother. Thus, you nullify the word of God by your tradition which you have handed

down. And you do many [other] things like this.”

Jesus called the entire crowd to himself and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand! There is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile; it is what comes out of a person that defile the person. Anyone who has ears for listening should listen!”

When he had entered into a house away from the crowd, his disciples asked him about the parable. He said to them, “Are you also without understanding? Do you not perceive that whatever goes into someone from the outside cannot defile that person because it does not go into his heart but into the stomach, and then into the sewer (thus he declared all foods to be clean)?” He said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles that person. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 2:12-24

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Hence, all those who have sinned apart from the law will also perish without the law, [and] as many as have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be declared righteous. (Indeed, when Gentiles who do not have the

law do by nature the things of the law, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law, by showing that the practical expression of the law is written in their hearts. Their conscience bears witness, and their thoughts alternately accuse or defend them). This is for the day when, according to my

[proclamation of the] gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

Indeed, you bear the name of Jew, you rely on the law and glory in God. You know his will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law. You are confident that you yourself are a guide of the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish and teacher of infants, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth. You

therefore who teach another, [why] do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one should not steal, [why] do you steal? You who say a man should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who glory in the law by your disobedience of the law, [why] do you dishonor God? For “the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,” just as it is written.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

2 Peter 1:20-2:6

The Catholic Epistle from the Second Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Know this first of all, that no interpretation of Scriptural prophecy happens as something private, because no prophecy ever came by human will: holy men of God spoke, being moved by the Holy Spirit.

But false prophets also arose among the people, as false teachers will also be among you. They will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. Many will follow their immoral ways and as a result, the way of the truth will be brought into disrepute. They will exploit you greedily with deceptive words. Their sentence, pronounced long ago, does

not linger, and their destruction does not slumber.

For God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them down to Tartarus and committed them to pits of darkness to be reserved for judgment. He did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah (a preacher of righteousness) with seven others when he brought a flood on the world of the ungodly. He also turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction and made them an example to those who would lead ungodly lives.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 26:1-8

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Agrippa said to Paul, “You may speak for yourself.”

Then Paul held up his hand and made his defense. “I consider myself blessed, King Agrippa, that today, I am able to make my defense before you in response to all the accusations of the Jews, especially because you are an expert in all customs and debates which take place among the Jews. Therefore, I beg you to hear me patiently.

Indeed, all the Jews know about my way of life from my youth up, which was from the beginning among

my own nation and in Jerusalem. Since they have known me from the beginning, they could testify that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion. And now, I stand here on trial because of the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers! This is what our twelve tribes hope to attain as they constantly offer divine service night and day. It is concerning this hope that I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa! Why is it judged incredible that God raises the dead?

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 9:12, 13a

A Psalm of David.

Sing to the Lord Who dwells in Zion.

Declare His ways among the nations,
for while avenging blood, He remembers them.

Alleluia.

Luke 11:45-52

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

One of the experts in the law exclaimed, "Teacher, in saying this you insult us also."

Jesus said, "Woe to you lawyers also! For you load men with burdens that are difficult to carry, and you yourselves will not even lift one finger to help carry those burdens! Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. And so, you testify and consent to the works of your fathers! For they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs. Therefore, the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them

prophets and apostles. Some of them they will kill and persecute, so that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah who perished between the altar and the sanctuary.' Yes, I tell you that this generation will be charged with this blood. Woe to you experts of the law! You have taken away the key to knowledge; you yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering." *Glory be to God forever.*

Thursday of Fifth (Sixth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

4 Kings 4:8-37 or 2 Kings 4:8-37

From the Fourth book of Kings.

And a day came, when Elisha passed over to Souman, and a great lady was there, and she persuaded him to eat bread. And it happened that as often as he went into *the city*, *that* he turned aside to eat there. And the woman said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this *is* a holy man of God who comes to us regularly. Let us now make a small upper chamber for him; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table, a stool, and a lampstand. And it will happen that when he comes to us, he will turn aside to this place." And a day came, and he came there, and

turned aside into the upper chamber, and lay there. And he said to Giezi his servant, "Call this Somanite woman to me." And he called her, and she stood before him. And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have shown us all this care, what should I do for you? Do you have any request *for* the king, or to the commander of the army?'" And she said, "I live among my own people." And he said to Giezi, "What must we do for her?" And Giezi his servant said, "Indeed, she has no son, and her husband *is* old." And he called her, and she stood by the door. And

Elisha said to her, "At this season *next year*, when the season *is* ripe, you will embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord, do not lie to your servant!" And the woman conceived, and bore a son at the when this season came, when the time was ripe, as Elisha said to her.

And the child grew. And it happened when he went out to his father to the reapers, that he said to his father, "My head, my head!" and *his father* said to a servant, "carry him to his mother." And he carried him to his mother, and he lay down on her knees until noon, and died. And she carried him and laid him on the bed of the man of god, and she closed the door on him, and went out. And she called her husband, and said, "Send me one of the young men, and one of the donkeys, and I will ride quickly to the man of God, and return." And he said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither new moon, nor the Sabbath." And she said, "*It is well.*" And she saddled the donkey, and said to her servant, "Lead onward, and do not slacken the pace on my account, unless I tell you! Come on, and you will proceed, and come to the man of God at mount Carmel."

And it happened when Elisha saw her coming, that he said to Giezi his servant, "Look, it is the Somanite woman. Now run to meet her, and say, '*Is it well with you? is it well with your husband? is it well with the*

child?'" And she said, "*It is well.*" And she came to Elisha at the mountain, and took hold of his feet, and Giezi came near to push her away. And Elisha said, "Leave her alone, for her soul *is* in great distress, and the Lord has hidden *it* from me, and did not tell me." And she said, "Did I ask for a son from my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deal deceitfully with me?'" And Elisha said to Giezi, "Gird up your loins, and take my staff in your hand, and go; if you meet any man, do not salute him, and if a man salutes you, do not answer him, and you shall lay my staff on the child's face." And the mother of the child said, "*As* the Lord lives and *as* your soul lives, I will not leave you." And Elisha arose, and followed her. And Giezi went on before her, and laid the staff on the child's face; but there was neither voice nor hearing. So he returned to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child is not awaked."

And Elisha went into the house, and, look, the dead child was laying dead on his bed. And Elisha went into the house, and shut the door upon themselves, the two, and prayed to the Lord. And he went up, and laid on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he bowed himself down upon him, and the flesh of the child grew warm. And he returned, and walked up and down in the house, and he went up, and bowed himself on the child seven

times, and the child opened his eyes.
And Elisha cried out to Giezi, and
said, "Call this Somanite woman." So
he called her, and she came in to him,
and Elisha said, "Take your son."

And the woman went in, and fell at
his feet, and did obeisance *bowing* to
the ground; and she took her son, and
went out.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 45:1-10

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is what the Lord God is say-
ing to Cyrus, My anointed,
whose right hand I have held,
so that nations will be obedient
before him,
and I will break through the
strength of kings;
I will open doors before him,
and cities will not be closed.
"I will go before you,
and level mountains;
I will break to pieces doors of
bronze,
and break off bars of iron,
and I will give you the treasures of
darkness;
I will open to you hidden, unseen
treasures,
so that you may know that I am
the Lord your God,
the God of Israel, Who calls you
by name.
For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel My elect,
I will call you by My Name,
and receive you, though you have
not known me,
for I am the Lord God,
and there is no other god beside
Me;

I strengthened you, and you have
not known Me,
that they who *come* from the east
and they who *come* from the west
may know that there is no god but
Me.

I am the Lord God, and there is
no other.

I am He Who prepared light, and
formed darkness;

Who makes peace, and creates
evil;

I am the Lord God, Who does all
these things.

Let the heaven rejoice from above,
and let the clouds rain righteous-
ness;

let the earth bring forth, and blos-
som *with* mercy,

and *let it* bring forth righteousness
as well;

I am the Lord Who created you.

What better thing have I formed,
like clay of the potter?

Will the ploughman plough the
earth all day?

Will the clay say to the potter,
"What are you doing

since you are not working, nor
have hands?”

will the formed thing answer He
Who formed it?

It is like one who says to *his* father,
‘What will you beget?’

And to his mother, ‘What are you
bringing forth?’”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 9:1-11

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Wisdom has built herself a house,
and supported it with seven pillars.
She has killed her sacrificial vic-
tims;

she has mixed her wine in a bowl,
and prepared her table.

She has sent out her servants,
calling with a stately proclamation
to the feast, saying,

“He who is foolish,
let him turn aside to me,”
and to those who lack understand-
ing she says,

“Come, eat of my bread,
and drink wine that I have mixed
for you.

Leave folly, and you will live,
and seek understanding so that
you may live,

and keep straight your understand-
ing with knowledge.”

He who chastises evil *men* will
receive dishonour to himself,

and he who rebukes an ungodly
man will disgrace himself.

Do not rebuke evil *men*, so they
may not hate you;

rebuke a wise *man*, and he will love
you.

Give an opportunity to a wise *man*,
and he will become wiser;

instruct a righteous man, and he
will continue to receive it.

The fear of the Lord is the begin-
ning of wisdom,

and the counsel of saints is under-
standing;

for to know the law is *the character*
of a sound mind.

For in this manner you will live
long,

and the years of your life will be
increased.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 35:1-16

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Elious resumed and said,
“What is this that you consider as
right?

Who are you that you have said, ‘I
am righteous before the Lord?’

Or will you say, ‘What have I
done, if I have sinned?’

I will answer you, and your three friends.

Look up to the heaven and see,
and observe the clouds, how high
they are above you.

If you have sinned, what will you do?

And if you have transgressed much, what can you do?

And suppose you are righteous, what will you give Him?

Or what will He receive from your hand?

Your ungodliness *may affect* a man who is like you,

or your righteousness a son of man.

Those who are falsely accused by a multitude will cry out;

they will call for help because of the strength of many.

But no one said, 'Where is the God Who made me,

Who appoints the night watches;

Who sets me apart from the four-footed animals of the earth,

and from the birds of the air?'

There they will cry out, and no one will listen,

because of the insolence of wicked men.

For the Lord does not desire to look on wrongdoing,

for He, the Almighty, beholds those who perform lawless acts, and He will save me!

And submit to judgment before Him,

if you can praise Him, as it is now *possible*.

For He is not regarding his wrath now,

nor taking notice of very great transgression.

Yet Job opens his mouth in vain, in ignorance he burdens us with words."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Sirach 11:1-10

From the book of the Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Wisdom lifts up the head of a humble person,

and seats him among great men.

Do not praise a man for his beauty,

nor detest a man for his outward appearance.

The bee is small among flying creatures,

but her fruit is first among sweet things.

Do not boast of your fine clothes, and do not exalt yourself in the

day of honour,

for the works of the Lord are wondrous,

and his works are hidden among men.

Many tyrants have sat down on the ground,

and one that had never been thought of has worn the crown.

Many rulers have been utterly disgraced,

and honoured men have been betrayed into the hands of others

Do not find fault before you have investigated;

understand first, and then rebuke.

Do not answer before you have listened,

nor interrupt men in the middle of their talking.

Do not argue in a matter that does not concern you,

and do not sit together with sinners in judgment.

My son, do not let your business involve many things,

for if you meddle much, you will not remain innocent,

and if you pursue, you will not obtain them,

neither will you escape by fleeing.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 9:14

A Psalm of David.

Have mercy on me, O Lord;

see how my enemies have humiliated me,

O You Who lifts me from the gates of death.

Alleluia.

Luke 20:9-19

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

He began to tell the people this parable. "A certain man planted a vineyard and rented it out to some farmers, and went into another country for a long time. At the proper season, he sent a servant to the farmers to collect his share of the fruit of the vineyard. But the farmers beat the servant and sent him away empty. The owner then sent yet another servant, and they also beat

him, treated him with contempt, and sent him away empty. The owner sent yet a third [servant], and they also wounded him, and threw him out. Then, the lord of the vineyard thought, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son! It may be that seeing him, they will respect him.'

But when the farmers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying: 'This is the heir! Come, let us

kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' So, they threw the son out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now, what will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these farmers, and he will give the vineyard to others."

When the people heard this, they exclaimed, "May it never be!" But Jesus looked at them, and said, "Then what is this that is written:

The stone which the builders rejected,

*Has become the chief cornerstone?
Everyone who falls on that stone will
be broken to pieces,
and it will crush to dust whoever it
falls on.*

The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to lay hands on him that very hour, but they feared the people because they knew that he had spoken this parable against them. *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

1 Timothy 2:1-3:4

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to Timothy. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, I encourage that first of all, petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all: for kings and all in high places, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and piety. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior who desires all people to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.

There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all - this testimony [was given] in its own times. I was appointed a preacher and an apostle of these things (I am telling the truth in Christ, not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

I desire, therefore, that in every place, the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or doubting. In the same way, women should wear decent clothing, modest and fitting, without elaborate hairstyle, gold, pearls, or expensive clothing, but with good works (which is fitting for women professing godliness). Let a woman learn in quietness, with all submission. I do not allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to be silent; because Adam was first formed, then Eve. Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, fell into disobedience. But women will be saved through childbearing, as they remain in faith, love and sanctifying self-restraint.

This is a sure word: if a man aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a good work. The overseer must be irreproachable, husband of one wife, self-controlled, sensible, modest, hospitable and a good teacher. He must not be a drinker; or

someone violent or greedy for money. He should be gentle, not irritable or envious. He should be someone who rules his own house well, keeping his [own] children in subjection with all reverence.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

Jude 1:19-25

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher Jude. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

These are these ones who cause divisions, because they are sensual, deprived of the Spirit. But you, beloved, keep on building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ [that leads] to eternal life. Have compassion on some of them, making a distinction. You can save some of them, snatching them out of the fire

with fear, yet hating even the clothing stained by what is carnal.

Now, to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory in great joy, to God our Savior who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever and unto all ages. Amen.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 27:16-20

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Sailing under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the lifeboat. After the crew had hoisted it up, they used it to help reinforce the ship.

Fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis sand bars, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship drift along. We were so battered by the storm that the next day, the men

began to throw things overboard. On the third day, they threw out the ship's tackle with their own hands. When neither sun nor stars had shone on us for many days, and with a

major storm pressing on us, all hope that we would be saved was now taken away.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Pslam 9:14c, 15ab

A Psalm of David.

O You Who lifts me from the gates of death,
that I may proclaim all Your praises
in the gates of daughter Zion.

Alleluia.

John 6:47-71

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Amen, amen, I tell you; the one who is believing in me has eternal life. I am the bread of life! Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, its purpose is that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down out of heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, this one will live forever! Yes, the bread which I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

At this, the Jews disputed with one another, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus therefore said to them, "Amen, amen, I tell you; unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and

drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood dwells in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; whoever eats me will also live because of me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven - not [such] as the fathers [who] ate the manna and died. The one who eats this bread will live forever!" He said these things in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

Therefore, many of his disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying! Who can listen to it?"

But knowing in himself that his disciples grumbled at this, Jesus said to them, "Does this cause you to stumble? What then if you would see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and [they] are life. But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who were those who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him. He said, "For this reason, I have told you that no one can come to me,

unless it is given to him by my Father."

At this, many of his disciples went back and no longer walked with him. Then Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?"

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life! We have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus told them, "Did I not choose you, the Twelve? And [yet] one of you is a devil!" Now, he was speaking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, for it was he who would betray him, and he was one of the Twelve. *Glory be to God forever.*

Friday of Fifth (Sixth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Genesis 22:1-18

From the book of Genesis of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it happened after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." And he said, "Take your son, Isaac, whom you love, and go into the high land, and offer him there as a whole burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will tell you of."

And Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and he took two servants with him, and Isaac his son, and he split firewood

for a whole burnt offering, and arose and departed, and went to the place God had spoken to him of. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place far off. And Abraham said to his servants, "Sit here with the donkeys, and I and the lad will go over there, and after we have worshipped, we will come back to you." And Abraham took the wood of the whole burnt offering, and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took fire and a knife into his hands,

and the two went together. And Isaac said to Abraham his father, "Father." And he said, "What is it, son?" And he said, "See, the fire and the wood, but where is the sheep for a whole burnt offering?" And Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself a sheep for a whole burnt offering, *my* son." And the two of them went together, and came to the place that God had spoken of to him. And Abraham built the altar there, and placed the wood on it; and he bound Isaac his son, hand and foot, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.

And Abraham reached out his hand to take the knife to kill his son. And the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." And he said, "Do not lay your hand upon the lad, or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, and for My sake you have not spared your beloved son." And

Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw, and look! A ram caught by its horns in a Sabek plant. And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as a whole burnt offering instead of Isaac his son. And Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord has seen," that they might say today, "On the mount the Lord was seen."

And an angel of the Lord called to Abraham the second time out of heaven, saying, "I have sworn by Myself, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and on My account have not spared your beloved son, surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand by the sea shore; and your seed will inherit the cities of their enemies. And in your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have listened to My voice."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 45:11-17

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is what the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel,

Who has formed the things that are to come, is saying,

"Ask Me concerning My sons and My daughters,

and command Me concerning the works of My hands.

I have made the earth,
and man upon it;

I have established the heaven with My hand;

I have commanded all the stars.

I have raised him up *to be* a king with righteousness,

and all his paths are straight;

he will build My city,

and will turn back the captivity of my people,

not will ransoms, or with gifts,"

says the Lord of hosts.

This is what Lord of hosts is saying,

“Egypt has laboured *for you*;
and the commerce of the Ethiopians,

and the lofty men of Sabeans will pass over to you,

and will be your servants;

they will follow after you bound in handcuffs.

They will pass over to you, and will do obeisance to you,

and will make supplication to you,

because God is in you;

and they will say ‘there is no God besides You.

For You are God, yet we did not know *it*,

O God of Israel, the Saviour.’

All who oppose Him will be ashamed and disgraced,

and will walk in shame.

Be restored to Me, you islands!

Israel is saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation;

they will not be ashamed or disgraced forever.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 9:12-21

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

My son, if you become wise in yourself,

you will also be wise for your neighbours;

but if you should prove *to be* evil,

you alone will bear the evil.

He who supports himself with lies will shepherd winds,

and chase flying birds,

for he forsakes the ways of his own vineyard,

and strayed from the paths of his own farming;

and he will pass through a waterless desert,

a land destined for drought,

and gathers desolation with his hands.

A foolish and bold woman, who knows no shame,

becomes in need of a morsel.

She sits at the doors of her house,

on a seat openly in the streets,

calling to passersby,

who are going straight along their paths, *saying*,

”Whoever is most foolish among you,

let him turn aside to me,

and I exhort those who lack prudence, saying,

“Take secret bread gladly,
and the sweet water of theft.”

But he does not know that the dead parish by her,

and he falls into a snare of Hades.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 36:1-32*

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Elious further continued, and said,

“Wait from me a little longer, so that I may teach you,
for there is still more speech in me.

Having fetched my knowledge from afar,

and in my efforts, I will speak what is just,

in truth, and you will not receive unjust words.

But know that the Lord will not cast off an innocent man;

being mighty in strength of wisdom,

He will not save alive the ungodly,
and He will grant the judgment of the poor.

He will not turn His eyes away from the righteous,

but *He will seat them* with kings on the throne,

and He will establish them in triumph, and they will be exalted.

But they that are bound in handcuffs

will be held in the cords of poverty.

And He will tell them their works, and their transgressions,

for such will act with violence.

But he will listen to the righteous,
and He has said that they will turn from unrighteousness.

If they listen and serve *Him*,
they will spend their days in prosperity,

and their years in honour.

But He does not save the ungodly,
because they are not willing to know the Lord,

and because they refused to listen when they were admonished.

And the hypocrites in heart will array wrath *against themselves*;

they will not cry out, because He has bound them.

Therefore let their soul die in youth,

and their life be wounded by messengers *of death*.

Because they afflicted the weak and helpless;

and He will manifest the judgment of the meek.

And He has also enticed you out of the mouth of the enemy,

there is a deep gulf *and* a rushing stream beneath it,

and your table came down full of fatness.

Judgment will not fail from the righteous,

but there will be wrath upon the ungodly,

on account of the ungodliness of the bribes that they received for iniquities.

Do not let your mind willingly
turn you aside

from the petition of the weak who
are in distress.

And do not draw out all the
mighty *men* by night,

so that the people should go up
instead of them.

But guard yourself, so that you not
do what is wrong,

for you choose this because of
poverty.

Look, the Mighty One will prevail
by His strength,

for who is mighty like He is?

And who is it that examines His
works?

Or who can say, 'He has done
injustice?'

Remember that His works are
great,

beyond those that men have at-
tempted.

Everyone has seen in himself
how many mortals are wounded.

Look, the Mighty One is great,

and we will not know *Him*;

the number of his years is bound-
less.

And He numbers the drops of
rain,

and they will be poured out in rain
to form a cloud.

The ancient *heavens* will flow,

and the clouds overshadow innu-
merable mortals.

He has fixed a time for cattle,

and they know the appointed time
for rest.

Yet your mind is not astonished by
all these things,

and your heart does not leap out
of *your* body.

And even if one should under-
stand the spreading out of the clouds,

or the measure of His tent,

look, He will stretch his bow
against him,

and He covers the bottom of the
sea.

For He will judge the nations by
them;

He will give food to him that has
strength.

He has hidden the light in *his*
hands,

and has given orders concerning
to the cloud that diverts it.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Found in Kitchener and Ottawa, lacking in
Southern United States.*

Job 37:1-24*

Again from the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

At this also my heart was troubled,
and dropped out of its place.

Listen to a report in the anger of
the Lord's wrath,

and a discourse will come out of
His mouth.

His dominion is under the whole
heaven,

and His light is to the ends of the earth.

Behind Him a voice will cry out;
He will thunder with the voice of his outrage,
yet He will not cause men to pass away,
for one will hear His voice.

The Mighty One will thunder wondrously with His voice,
for He has done great things, which we cannot know,

commanding the snow, "Fall upon the earth,"
and the rain, and the winter storms of His might.

He seals up the hand of every man,

so that everyone may know his own weakness.

And the wild animals come in under shelter,
and rest in *their* lairs.

The whirlwinds come from their secret chambers,
and cold from the mountaintops.

And by the breath of the Mighty One, He will send frost,

and He guides the water as He wishes.

And *if* a cloud obscures *what is* precious to Him,

His light will disperse the cloud.

And He will swirl around the encircling *clouds* by His governance,

to *perform* their works, whatever He commands them;

this has been appointed by Him on the earth,

whether for correction, *or* for his land,

or if He will find *an object* for mercy.

Listen to this, O Job.

Stand still, and be warned of the power of the Lord.

We know that God has appointed His works,

having made light out of darkness.

And He knows the divisions of the clouds,

and the violent falls of the ungodly.

But your robe is warm,

and there is quiet upon the land.

Will you establish foundations for the ancient heavens with Him?

They are strong as a molten mirror.

Why? Teach me, what will we say to him?

And let us cease from saying much.

Do I have a book or a scribe by me,

that I may stand and put man to silence?

But the light is not visible to all.

It shines far off in the heavens,

as that which is from Him in the clouds.

From the *north* come the clouds, shining like gold;

in these great are the glory and honour of the Almighty.

And we do not find another equal to Him in strength.

Do you not think He Who judges righteously listens?

Therefore, men will fear Him,
and the wise in heart will fear
Him.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

**Found in Ottawa and Kitchener, lacking in
Southern United States.*

Tobit 1:1-3:6

From the book of Tobit. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

The book of the words of Tobit, son of Tobiel, the son of Ananiel, the son of Aduel, the son of Gabael, of the seed of Asiel, of the tribe of Nephthali, who was taken captive in the days of Enemessar, king of the Assyrians, out of Thisbe, which is to the right of Kedesh Naphtali, in Galilee above Asher.

I, Tobit, have walked in the paths of truth and righteousness all the days of my life, and I performed many acts of charity for my brethren, and my nation, who came with me to Nineveh, in the land of the Assyrians. And when I was young and in my own country, in the land of Israel, all the tribe of my father, Nephthali turned away from the house of Jerusalem, which was chosen from all the tribes of Israel, that all the tribes should sacrifice there, where the Temple, the habitation of the Most High was consecrated and built for all the generations of the age.

Now all the tribes that joined in the revolt, and the house of my father Nephthali, sacrificed to the Baal the heifer. But I alone travelled often to Jerusalem for the feasts, as it was ordained for all the people of Israel

by an everlasting decree, taking the firstfruits tithes of my harvest, and the first sheering. And I gave these to the priests, the sons of Aaron, at the altar. I offered the first tenth of all the harvest to the sons of Levi, who ministered at Jerusalem. A second tenth part I sold, and spent it at Jerusalem each year. And the third tenth I gave to those to whom it was fitting, as my father's mother, Deborah, had commanded me, for I was left an orphan by my father. And when I came of age and became a man, I married Anna, from my own kindred, and by her I became the father of Tobias.

And when we were taken captive to Nineveh, all my brothers and those that were of my kindred ate from the bread of the Gentiles. But I kept myself from eating it, because I remembered God with all my soul. And the Most High gave me grace and favour before Enemessar, so that I was his purchasing agent. I would go into Media, and entrusted Gabael, the brother of Gabrias, at Rages a city of Media with ten talents of silver. Now when Enemessar died, Sennacherib his son reigned in his place,

whose roads became unstable, so that I could no longer go into Media.

And in the time of Enemessar, I gave many alms to my brethren, and gave my bread to the hungry, and my clothes to the naked. And if I saw any of my people dead, or cast about the walls of Nineveh, I buried him. And if the king Sennacherib put anyone to death, when he came trying to escape from Judah, I buried them secretly. For in his wrath he killed many, and the king sought the bodies, but they were not found. And one of the Ninevites went and informed the king about me, that I buried them, so I hid myself. Discovering that I was sought to be put to death, I fled in fear. Then all my belongings were seized, and there was there nothing left to me, except my wife Anna and my son Tobias. And not even fifty days passed before two of his sons killed him, and they fled into the mountains of Ararat; and Sarchedonus his son reigned in his place, who appointed Achiacharus my brother Anael's son, over his father's accounts, and over all his affairs.

And Achiacharus entreating for me, so I returned to Nineveh. Now Achiacharus was cupbearer, and keeper of the signet, and steward, and overseer of the accounts, and Sarchedonus appointed him next to himself, and he was my nephew.

Now when I returned home again, and my wife Anna and my son Tobias were given back to me. It was the

feast of Pentecost, which is the holy feast of the seven weeks. A good dinner prepared me, and I sat down to eat. And when I saw abundance of meat, I said to my son, "Go and bring whatever poor you find from our brethren, who are mindful of the Lord; and, look, I will wait for you." But he returned and said, "Father, one of our people has been strangled, and is thrown out in the marketplace!" Then before I tasted anything, I jumped up, and took him up into a room until the sun set. Then I returned, and washed myself, and ate my bread in heaviness. Then I remembered the prophecy of Amos, when he said,

"Your feasts will be turned into mourning,

and all your gladness into lamentation."

So I wept. When the sun set, I went and dug a grave, and buried him. But my neighbours mocked me, and said, "He is not longer afraid to be put to death for this matter. He ran away, and now, look, he is burying the dead again."

That same night I returned from the burial, and because I was defiled, I slept by the wall of my courtyard, and my face was uncovered. And I did not know that there were sparrows in the wall, and since my eyes were open, the sparrows dropped warm dung into my eyes, and a white film came in mine eyes. So I went to the physicians, but they did not help me.

Achiacharus, however, did nourish me until I went into Elymais.

And my wife Anna took women's work. And when she had sent her work to the owners, they paid her wages, and they also gave her a kid. And when it was in my house, and began to bleat, I said to her, "Where is this kid from? It is not stolen? Return it to its owners, for it is not lawful to eat any thing that is stolen." But she replied to me, "It was given to me as a gift, above my wages." But I did not believe her, but told her to return it to its owners, and I blushed in anger at her. But she replied to me, "Where are your alms and your righteous deeds? Look, you and all your works are known."

Then I wept weep in my grief, and prayed in anguish, saying,

"O Lord, You are righteous,
as are all Your works,
and all Your ways are mercy and truth,
and You judge truly and justly forever.

Remember me,
and look on me,
do not punish me for my sins and ignorances,
and for the sins of my fathers,
who have sinned before You.

For they did not obey Your commandments,

so You delivered us as a plunder,
and to captivity, and to death,
and made us a byword of disgrace
to all the nations among whom we were scattered.

And now Your many judgments many and true

in dealing with me according to my sins and my fathers',

because we have not kept Your commandments,

for we have not walked in truth before You.

So now, deal with me as it seems best to You,

and command my spirit to be taken up,

that I may be released, and become earth,

for it is better for me to die than to live,

because I have heard false reproaches,

and there is much sorrow within me.

Command that I be released now from this distress,

to go into the everlasting place;
do not turn Your face away from me."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Tobit 3:7-3:16

Again from the book of Tobit. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

On the same day, it happened to Sara, the daughter of Raguel, in

Ecbatana, a city of Media, that she was also reproached by her father's

maids, because she had been given to seven husbands, whom Asmodeus the evil demon had killed, before they had lain with her. "Do you not know," they said, "that you have strangled your husbands? You have already had seven husbands, but you received no profit from any of them. Why do you beat us? If they bare dead, go with them! May we never see a son or daughter from you!"

When she heard these things, she was so deeply grieved that she thought to hang herself. And she said, "I am the only daughter of my father. If I do this, it will be a disgrace to him, and I will down bring his old age with sorrow into the Hades." So she prayed toward her window, and said,

"You are blessed, O Lord my God!

And Your holy and glorious Name is blessed unto the ages.

Let all Your works praise You forever.

And now, O Lord, I have set my eyes and my face toward You.

Command that I be released from the earth

and I may hear no more reproach.

You know, O Lord, that I am pure from all sin with man,

and that I have not defiled my name,

nor the name of my father in the land of my captivity.

I am my father's only begotten, and he has no other child to be his heir

nor any near kinsman, nor any son of his,

that I should keep myself to be a wife.

Seven of my husbands have already died.

Why should I live?

But if it does not seem good to you to kill me,

command that some regard to be shown to me,

and pity be taken of me,

that I may not hear reproach any-more."

The prayers of both were heard in the presence of the glory of the great Raphael, and he was sent to heal them both: to scale away the whiteness of Tobit's eyes, and to give Sara, the daughter of Raguel for a wife to Tobias the son of Tobit, and to bind Asmodeus the evil demon, for she belonged to Tobias by right of inheritance. At that very moment Tobit home, and entered into his house, and Sara, the daughter of Raguel came down from her upper chamber.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Tobit 4:1-6:9

Again from the book of Tobit. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

On that day Tobit remembered the silver that he had entrusted to Gabael at Rages of Media. So he said with himself, "I have asked for death, why do I not call for my son Tobias, that I may make known to him the money before I die?"

So he had called him and said, "My son, if I die, bury me, and do not disregard your mother, but honour her all the days of your life, and do that which is pleasing to her, and do not grieve her. Remember, my son, that she saw many dangers for you while you were in her womb. And when she dies, bury her beside me in one grave.

My son, remember the Lord our God all your days, and do not let your will be set to sin, or to transgress His commandments; do righteousness all the days of your life, and do not follow the ways of unrighteousness. For if you deal truly, your works will be successful. And to all those who live justly, give alms of your substance; and when you give alms, do not let your eye be envious, nor turn your face from any poor, and the face of God will not be turned away from you. If you have abundance, give alms accordingly; if you have but a little, do not be afraid to give according to that little, for you lay up a good treasure for yourself against the day of necessity, since alms deliver from death, and prevent us from coming into darkness. For almsgiving is a

good gift for all who do it before the Most High.

Beware of all fornication, my son, and above all take a wife from among the seed of your fathers, and do not take a foreign woman, who is not of your father's tribe as a wife, for we are the children of the prophets. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are our fathers from old. Remember, my son, that all these married wives of their own kindred, and were blessed in their children, and their seed will inherit the land. So now, my son, love your brethren, and do not despise your brethren in your heart, the sons and daughters of your people, by not taking a wife from them. For in pride there is ruin and great disorder, and in worthlessness there is loss and great want. For worthlessness is the mother of famine.

Do not let the wages of any man, who has worked for you, stay with you overnight, but give it to him immediately. For if you serve God, He will repay you. Watch yourself, my son, in all that you do, and be disciplined in your behaviour. What you yourself hate, do to no one. Do not drink wine to drunkenness, nor let drunkenness go with you on your journey. Give of your bread to the hungry, and of your clothes to those who are naked. If you have more than you need, give alms, and do not let your eye be envious when you give alms. Spread out your bread on the grave of the righteous, but give

nothing to the sinners. Seek advice from all who are wise, and do not despise any advice that is useful. Bless the Lord your God at every moment, and ask of Him that your ways may be directed, and that all your paths and counsels may prosper. For not every nation has understanding, but the Lord Himself gives all good things, and He humbles whom He will, as He wills. So now, my son, remember my commandments, and do not let them be erased from your heart.

And now I inform you that I have entrusted ten talents of silver to Gabael, the son of Gabrias, at Rages of Media. And do not fear, my son, that we have become poor. For you are very rich if you fear God, and stay away from ever sin, and do what is pleasing in His sight."

Then Tobias answered him and said, "Father, I will do everything you have commanded me. But how can I receive the silver, since I do not know him?" Then he gave him the bond, and said to him, "Seek a man for yourself who will go with you, while I still live, and I will give him wages; now go, and obtain the silver.

So he went to seek a man, he found Raphael, who was an angel, but he did not know it. And he said to him, "Can you go with me to Rages? And do you know those places well?" The angel said to him, "I will go with you, and I know the road well, and I have stayed with our brother, Ga-

bael." Then Tobias said to him, "Wait for me, I will tell my father." And he said to him, "Go, but do not dely."

So he went in and said to his father, "Look, I have found someone who will go with me." Then he said, "Call him to me, that I may know what tribe he belongs to, and if he is a trustworthy man to go with you." So he called him, and he came in, and they greeted one another.

Then Tobit said to him, "Brother, tell me, of what tribe and family do you belong?" And he said to him, "Do you seek a tribe and a family, or a hired man to go with your son?" Tobit said to him, "I wish to know, brother, your kindred and name." Then he said, "I am Azarias, the son of Ananias the great, one of your relatives." Then Tobit said, "You are welcome, brother; do not be angry with me for seeking to know your tribe and your family, for you are my brother, of an honest and good family. For I know Ananias and Jonathan, sons of that great Samaias, since we went together to Jerusalem to worship, and to offer the firstborn, and the tenths of the harvest. And they were not led astray by the error of our brethren. My brother, you are from a good root. But tell me, what wages will I give you? A drachma a day, and expenses, for you and my son? Yes, and if you return safe, I will add something to your wages." So they were well pleased.

Then he said to Tobias, "Prepare yourself for the journey, and may you be successful." And when his son had prepared all things for the journey, his father said, "Go with this man, and God Who dwells in heaven will make your journey successful, and may His angel go along with you." So they both went out, and the young man's dog was with them.

But Anna his mother wept, and said to Tobit, "Why have you sent our son away? Is he not the staff of our hand, as he goes in and out before us? Do not be not greedy, to add silver to silver, but let it be as dirt compared to our child. For as it has been given to us to live by the Lord, that is enough for us." Then Tobit said to her, "Do not be concerned, my sister; he will return in good health, and your eyes will see him. For a good angel will go with him, and his journey will be prosperous; he will return in good health." So she stopped weeping.

And they went on their journey, and came in the evening to the river

Tigris, and they camped there. And when the young man went down to wash himself, a fish leaped out of the river, and wanted to swallow him. Then the angel said to him, "Take the fish." And the young man grabbed the fish, and pulled it to land. The angel said to him, "Cut open the fish, and take the heart, the liver, and the gall, and put them away safely." So the young man did as the angel commanded him; and when they had roasted the fish, they ate it.

Then they journeyed until they drew near to Ecbatana. Then the young man said to the angel, "Brother Azarias, of what use are the heart, liver, and the gal of the fish?" And he said to him, "Concerning the heart and the liver, if a devil or an evil spirit troubles anyone, one must burn them to produce smoke before the man or the woman, and he will no longer be troubled. As for the gall, use it to anoint a man that has white films on his eyes, and he will be healed."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Tobit 6:10-11:19

Again from the book of Tobit. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And when they came near to Rages, the angel said to the young man, "Brother, today we will stay with Raguel. He is your cousin, and he has one only daughter, named Sara. I will speak for her, that she might be given to you for a wife, since her inher-

itance falls to you; for you alone are from her kindred. And the girl is beautiful and sensible. So now listen to me, and I will speak to her father. And when we return from Rages, we will celebrate the wedding feast. For I know that Raguel cannot marry her to

another according to the law of Moses, or he would be guilty of death, because it is your right to receive the inheritance before any other."

Then the young man answered the angel, "I have heard, brother Azarias, that this girl has been given to seven men, who all died in the bridal chamber. And now I am the only son of my father, and I am afraid that if I go in to her, I may die as the others before. For a demon loves her, and he does not harm anyone, except those who approach her. Therefore I also fear for myself that I may die, and bring my father's and my mother's life down into to the grave with sorrow, because of me. For they have no other son to bury them."

But the angel said to him, "Do you not remember the words that your father commanded, that you should marry a wife from among your own people? Now listen to me, my brother, for she will become your wife. And do not worry about the demon, for tonight she will be given to you as a wife. And when you enter the bridal chamber, take the embers of incense, and lay some of the heart and liver of the fish upon them, and make a smoke with it, and the demon will smell it, and flee, and will never again come back. But when you approach her, both of you will rise up, and pray to God, Who is merciful, Who will have pity on you, and save you. Do not fear, for she has

been prepared for you from of old; and you will save her, and she will go with you. I suppose that you will have children by her." Now when Tobias had heard these things, he loved her, and his spirit clung to her intensely.

And they went to Ecbatana, and came to the house of Raguel. Sara met them, and after they had greeted one another, she brought them into the house. Then Raguel said to Edna his wife, "How this young man resembles my cousin Tobit!" And Raguel asked them, "Where are you from, brethren?" They answered, "We are of the sons of Nephthalim, who are captives in Nineveh." Then he said to them, "Do you know Tobit our kinsman?" And they said, "We know him." Then he asked, "Is he in good health?" And they said, "He is alive and in good health." And Tobias added, "He is my father." Then Raguel jumped up, kissed him, and wept. And he blessed him, and said to him, "You are the son of an honest and good man." But when he had heard that Tobit was blind, he grieved, and wept. And Edna his wife and Sara his also daughter wept, and they welcomed them warmly. Then they killed a ram from the flock, and they set out large servings of food.

Then said Tobias to Raphael, "Brother Azarias, speak of those things of which you talked on the way, and let this matter be completed." So he told Raguel what he said, and Raguel said to Tobias, "Eat,

drink, and be glad, for it is fitting that you should marry my daughter. However, I must tell you the truth. I have given my daughter in marriage to seven men, who died that night they came in toward her. But for now, be glad! But Tobias said, "I will not eat anything until you make a binding agreement with me." Raguel said, "Then take her from now on, according to this decree, for you are her cousin, and she is yours, and may the merciful God prosper you both with the best.

Then he called Sara, his daughter, and she came to her father. And he took her by the hand, and gave her to be a wife for Tobias, saying, "Look, take her according to the law of Moses, and lead her away to your father." And he blessed them, and called Edna his wife, and took paper, and wrote a contract, and sealed it. Then they began to eat.

Then Raguel called his wife Edna, and said to her, "Sister, prepare the other room, and bring her into it." When she had done as he had said, she brought her there, and she wept, and she received the tears of her daughter, and said to her, "Take courage, my daughter; may the Lord of heaven and earth give you joy instead of this sorrow of yours. Take courage, my daughter."

When they had dined, they led Tobias in to her. And as he went, he remembered the words of Raphael, and took the embers of incense, and

put the heart and the liver of the fish upon them, and made a smoke with them. When the demon smelled the fragrant scent, he fled into the uppermost parts of Egypt, and the angel bound him.

And after that they were shut in together, Tobias rose out of the bed, and said, "Sister, arise, and let us pray that God will have mercy on us. Then Tobias began to say,

You are blessed, O God of our fathers,

and may Your holy and glorious Name be blessed forever.

Let the heavens and all Your creatures bless You.

You made Adam, and gave him Eve as a helper,

his wife as a support.

From them came mankind.

You said, 'It is not good for man to be alone;

let us make a helper for him like himself.

And now, O Lord, I am not taking this, my sister, for lust

but with sincerity.

Therefore, mercifully ordain that we may grow old together."

And she said with him, "Amen." Then they fell asleep for the night.

And Raguel got up, and went out to make a grave, Saying, "I fear that he too may die." But when Raguel came into his house, he said to his wife Edna, "Send one of the maids, and let her see whether he is alive; if he is not, let us bury him, and no one

may know.” So the maid opened the door, and went in, and found them both asleep, and came out, and told them that he was alive.

Then Raguel blessed God, saying,
You are blessed, O God, with every pure and holy blessing.

Let Your saints and all your creatures bless You;

and let all Your angels and Your elect bless You forever.

You are blessed, because You have made me glad,

and it did not turn out for me as I expected,

but You have dealt with us according to Your great mercy.

You are blessed because You have had mercy

on two only begotten children of their fathers.

Have mercy on them, O Lord,
and complete their life
in health with gladness and mercy.”

Then Raguel ordered his servants to fill in the grave.

And he gave them a wedding feast for fourteen days. And before the days of the wedding were finished, Raguel said to him by an oath, that he should not leave until the fourteen days of the wedding feast were ended, and that he should take the half of his property, and go in health to his father, and have the rest “when I and my wife die.”

Then Tobias called Raphael, and said to him, “Brother Azarias, take a

servant, and two camels, and go to Rages of Media, to Gabael, and bring me the silver, and bring him to the wedding feast. For Raguel has sworn that I should not leave. But my father is counting the days, and if I delay long, he will be very distressed.” So Raphael went and stayed with Gabael, and gave him the bond, and he brought out bags with the seals, and gave them to him. And early in the morning they both went out together, and came to the wedding. And He blessed Tobias and his wife.

Now Tobit his father was counting each day, and when the days of the journey ended, and they had not come, Tobit said, “Are they detained? Or has Gabael died, and there is no one to give him the silver?” So he was very distressed. Then his wife said to him, “My son has perished; that is why he is delayed.” And she began to weep for him, and said, “Nothing matters to me, my son, since I have let you go, the light of my eyes.” But Tobit said to her, “Hold your peace, do not worry, for he is in good health”. But she said, “Be quiet, and do not deceive me! My son has perished.” And she went out every day into the road by which they had gone, and ate no food during the day, and did not cease mourning her son Tobias during the nights, until the fourteen days of the wedding feast were completed, which Raguel had sworn that he should spend there.

Then Tobias said to Raguel, "Send me back, for my father and my mother no longer hope to see me." But his father-in-law said to him, "Stay with me, and I will send *messengers* to your father, and they will tell him how things are with you." But Tobias said, "No, but send me back to my father."

Then Raguel arose, and gave Sara his wife to him, and half his possessions, servants, cattle, and silver. And he blessed them, and sent them away, saying, "May the God of heaven give you a prosperous journey, my children, before I die." And he said to his daughter, "Honour your father-in-law and your mother-in-law, who are now your parents, that I may hear good report of you." And he kissed her. Then Edna said to Tobias, "May the Lord of heaven restore you, my dear brother, and grant that I may see your children from my daughter Sara before I die, that I may rejoice before the Lord. Look, I entrust my daughter to your care. Do not grieve her."

After these things Tobias went away, blessing God because He had given him a prosperous journey. And he blessed Raguel and Edna his wife.

He travelled until they came near to Nineveh. Then Raphael said to Tobias, "Do you know, brother, how you left your father? Let us hurry ahead of your wife, and prepare the house. And take the gall of the fish in your hand. So they went on, and the dog followed after them.

Now Anna sat looking toward the road for her son. And when she saw him coming, she said to his father, "Look! Your son is coming, and the man who went with him!

Then Raphael said, "I know, Tobias, that your father will open his eyes. Therefore, anoint his eyes with the gall, and when he feels the sting he will rub them, and the white film will fall away, and he will see you."

Then Anna ran up to her son, and fell on his neck, and said to him, "I have seen you, my son, from now I am content to die." And they both wept both. Tobit went out toward the door, and stumbled. But his son ran to him, and took hold of his father, and he dabbed the gall on his fathers' eyes, saying, "Take courage, my father." And when his eyes began to sting, he rubbed them, and the white film peeled away from the corners of his eyes, and when he saw his son, he fell on his neck. Weeping, he said,

"You are blessed, O God,
and Your Name is blessed forever,
and all your holy angels are
blessed.

For You have scourged me,
but You have had mercy on me;
Look! I see my son Tobias!"

And his son went in rejoicing, and he told his father the great things that had happened to him in Media.

Then Tobit went out to meet his daughter-in-law at the gate of Nineveh, rejoicing and blessing God. And those who saw him go marvelled,

because he had received his sight. And Tobias confessed before them, that God had mercy on him. And when he came near to Sara his daughter-in-law, he blessed her, saying, "May you be in good health, daughter! God be blessed, Who has brought you to us, and blessed be

your father and your mother." And there was joy among all his relatives in Nineveh. And Achiacharus, and Nasbas his brother's son, came. And Tobias' wedding feast was kept with great joy for seven days.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Tobit 12:1-14:15

Again from the book of Tobit. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Tobit called his son Tobias, and said to him, "My son, see that the man who went with you has his wages, and you must give him more." And Tobias said to him, "O father, would do me no harm to give him half of the things that I have brought, for he has brought me again to you in safety, and healed my wife, and brought me the silver, and likewise healed you." Then the old man said, "He has earned it." So he called the angel, and he said to him, "Take half of all that you have brought."

Then Raphael took them both apart, and said to them, "Bless God, confess Him, and magnify Him, and confess Him in the presence of all the living for the things that He has done for you. It is good to bless God and exalt His Name, and honourably to declare the works of God. Therefore, do not hesitate to confess Him. It is good to guard the secret of a king, but it is honourable to reveal the works of God. Do what is good, and no evil will touch you. Prayer is good

with fasting and alms and righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than much with unrighteousness. It is better to give alms than to store up gold. For almsgiving delivers from death, and will purge away all sin. Those who practice almsgiving and righteousness will be filled with life, but those who sin are enemies to their own life.

I will not hide anything from you. Indeed, I said, 'It is good to guard the secret of a king, but it is honourable to reveal the works of God.' Now therefore, when you and Sara your daughter-in-law prayed, I brought the remembrance of your prayers before the Holy One, and when you buried the dead, I was likewise present with you. And when you did not delay to rise up, and left your dinner to go and cover the dead, your good deed was not hidden from me, but I was with you. So now God has sent me to heal you, and Sara your daughter-in-law. I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the

saints, and who enters before the glory of the Holy One.”

Then they were both troubled, and fell on their faces, for they were afraid. But he said to them, “Do not fear, you will have peace; But bless God forever. For I have come not by my grace, but by the will of our God; therefore, bless Him forever. All these days I appeared to you, I did not eat or drink, but you were seeing a vision. Now therefore, give confession to God, for I am ascending to Him Who sent me. And write in a book all things that have been accomplished.” And when they stood up, they saw him no longer. Then they confessed the great and wonderful works of God, and how the angel of the Lord had appeared to them.

Then Tobit wrote a prayer of rejoicing, and said,

“Blessed be God, Who lives forever,

and blessed be His kingdom.

For He scourges, and has mercy;

He leads down to Hades, and brings up again,

and there is no one who can escape His hand.

Confess him before the Nations,
O children of Israel,

for He has scattered us among them.

Declare there His greatness;

exalt Him in the presence of all the living,

for He is our Lord and God,

and He is our Father unto all the ages.

And He will scourge us for our iniquities,

and He will have mercy again,

and will gather us out of all nations,

among whom He has scattered us.

If you turn back to Him with your whole heart,

and with your whole soul,

and do what is true before Him,

then He will turn to you,

and will not hide His face from you.

Therefore, see what He will do with you,

and confess Him fully with your mouth,

and bless the Lord of righteousness,

and exalt the King of the ages.

In the land of my captivity do I confess Him,

and declare his might and majesty to a sinful nation.

O you sinners, turn back

and do what is just before Him;

who knows if He will accept you,

and have mercy on you?

I will exalt my God,

and my soul will exalt the King of heaven,

and will rejoice in His majesty.

Let all speak,

and confess Him in Jerusalem.

O Jerusalem, the holy city,

He will scourge you for the works of your children,

and will have mercy again on the
sons of the righteous.

Confess the Lord well,
and bless the King of the ages,
that His tent may be built in you
again with joy,

and may He rejoice there in those
who are captives,

and love within you those that are
in distress,

for all the generations of the age.

Many nations will come from far
away

to the Name of the Lord God,
bringing gifts in their hands, yes,
gifts for the King of heaven.

Generations of generations
will praise you with great joy.

All who hate You are cursed,
and all who love You will be
blessed forever.

Rejoice and be glad over the chil-
dren of the righteous,

for they will be gathered together,
and will bless the Lord of the
righteous.

O those who love You are
blessed,

for they will rejoice in your peace.

Those who have grieved over all
Your scourged are blessed,

for they will rejoice over You
when they have seen all Your glo-
ry,

and will rejoice forever.

Let my soul bless God the great
King.

For Jerusalem will be built up

with sapphires and emeralds, and
precious stones

Your walls and towers and battle-
ments with pure gold.

And the streets of Jerusalem will
be paved

with beryl and carbuncle and
stones of Ophir.

And all her streets will say, 'Allelu-
ia!'

And will praise him, saying,

'Blessed be God,

Who has exalted You unto all the
ages.'"

Then Tobit ceased praising.

And he was fifty-eight years old
when he lost his sight, which was
restored to him after eight years. And
he gave alms, and he increased in the
fear of the Lord God, and confessed
him.

And when he became very old, he
called his son, and the sons of his
son, and said to him, "My son, take
your children; for, look, I have grown
old, and am about to depart from this
life. Go into Media my son, for I trust
all the things that Jonas the prophet
spoke of Nineveh, that it will be
overthrown. But there will be peace
for a time in Media. And our brethren
will be scattered in the earth from
that good land. And Jerusalem will be
desolate, and the house of God in it
will be burned, and will be desolate
for a time.

But God will again have mercy on
them, and bring them back into the
land, where they will build the house,

but not like the former one, until the time of that age is fulfilled. And afterward they will return from all places of their captivity, and build Jerusalem up honourably, and the house of God shall be built in it for ever as a glorious building, as the prophets have said concerning it. And all nations will turn and truly fear the Lord God, and will bury their idols. And all will nations bless the Lord, and His people will confess God, and the Lord will exalt his people. And all those who love the Lord God in truth and justice will rejoice, showing mercy to our brethren.

So now, my son, depart from Nineveh, since these things that the prophet Jonas spoke will surely happen. But keep the law and the commandments, and be merciful and just, so that it may go well with you. And bury me decently, and your mother with me, but dwell no longer in Nineveh. Remember, my son, what Aman did to Achiacharus who raised him, how he brought him from the light into darkness, and how he repaid him. Indeed, Achiacharus was saved,

but the other received his retribution, and descended into darkness. Manasseh gave alms, and was saved from the trap of death that was set for him. But Aman fell into the trap, and perished. So then, my son, consider what almsgiving does, and how righteousness delivers.” When he had said these things in his bed, his soul left him. He was one hundred and fifty-eight years old, and *Tobias* buried him honourably. And when Anna his mother died, he buried her with his father.

Then Tobias departed with his wife and children to Ecbatana, to Raguel his father-in-law. And he grew old with honour, and he buried his father-in-law and mother-in-law honourably, and he inherited their property, and that of his father Tobit.

And *Tobias* died at Ecbatana in Media, being one hundred and twenty-seven years old. But before he died, he heard of the destruction of Nineveh, which was taken by Nabuchodonosor and Assuerus. So before his death he rejoiced over Nineveh.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 50:9, 10

A Psalm of David.

You will sprinkle me with hyssop,
and I will be cleansed;
You will wash me,
and I will be whiter than snow.
You will make me hear joy and gladness;
my bones that were humbled will rejoice.

Alleluia.

John 3:14-21

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone who is believing in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world should be saved through him. The one believing in him is not judged, but whoever does not believe has

already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten Son of God. This is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the light and does not come to the light, for fear that his works would be exposed. But whoever practices the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be revealed as done in God.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now, I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that our forefathers were all under the cloud: all passed through the sea; and they were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink. They drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. However, God was not well pleased with most of them because they were struck down in the wilderness. Now these things were written as examples for us, so that we may not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Do not become idolaters, as some of them were. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."a Let us not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day

twenty-three thousand fell! Let us not put the Lord to the test, as some of them did, and they perished by the poisonous snakes. Let us not grumble either, as some of them did, and they were killed by the destroying angel. Now, all these things happened to them as an example and they were written for our instruction, since the ends of the agesb have come on us. Therefore, let the one who thinks he is standing be careful not to fall.

No temptation has come to you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful: he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to resist, but with the temptation he will also create a way to escape, so that you may be able to endure it.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 2:12-17

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

I write to you, children, because your sins are forgiven through his Name. I write to you, fathers, because you know the one who has existed from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

I have written to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I have written to you,

young men, because you are strong; and the word of God remains in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Do not love the world or the things that are in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; because everything that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, pride in possessions, is not from the Father but from the world. The world is passing away with

its lusts, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its

desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 8:9-17

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who used to practice sorcery in the city. He amazed the people of Samaria, claiming to be a great one, and all listened to him, from the least to the greatest. They said, "This man is the power of God, of the great kind!" People listened to him because for a long time, he had amazed them with his sorceries. But when they believed Philip [who was] preaching the Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself also believed and after his baptism, he followed Philip

closely. Seeing that signs and great miracles were taking place, he was amazed.

Now, when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them, so that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them. They had only been baptized in the Name of Christ Jesus. Then, Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 33:6, 5a

A Psalm of David.

Come to Him and be enlightened,
and your faces will never be ashamed.
I sought the Lord and He heard me.
Alleluia.

John 3:1-13

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Now, there was one of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night, and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God because no one can perform the signs which you accomplish unless God is with him."

Jesus answered him, "Amen, amen, I tell you; unless one is born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

Nicodemus asked him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born [anew]?"

Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I tell you; unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God! What is born of the flesh is flesh. What is born of the

Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' The wind blows where it wants to, and you hear its sound, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus said, "How can these things be?"

Jesus replied and said, "You are the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? Amen, amen, I tell you; we speak of what we know, and [we] bear witness to what we have seen, and you do not receive our testimony. If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you [about] heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven, except for the one who came down out of heaven, the Son of Man. *Glory be to God forever.*

Saturday of Fifth (Sixth) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 78:8bc, 9ab

A Psalm of David.

Let Your compassion overtake us quickly,
for we have become very poor.
Help us, O God, our Saviour,
... for the [sake of the] glory of Your Name.
Alleluia.

Matthew 9:1-8

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus entered into a boat, crossed over [the lake] and came into his own city. Behold, some people brought him a man who was paralyzed, lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer! Your sins are forgiven!"

At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man blasphemes!"

Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil [thoughts] in your hearts? Which is

easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or, 'Get up, and walk?' But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" (then he said to the paralytic), "Get up, take up your mat, and go up to your house."

The man got up and departed to his house. But when the crowds saw this, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.
Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Ephesians 4:1-7

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Ephesians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is why, I, being the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and humility,

with patience, bearing with one another in love; being eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body,

and one Spirit, even as you also were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and

in us all. But grace has been granted to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

1 Peter 1:13-21

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, prepare your minds for action, be clear-minded and set your hope fully on the grace that is brought to you by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Be children of obedience and do not conform yourselves to your former lusts as in [the days of] your ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves should also be holy in every aspect of your life, because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." If you call on him who judges without discrimination according to everyone's work as Father, spend your lives as exiles here {on earth}, in reverent fear. Know that you were redeemed,

not with corruptible things such as silver or gold from the useless way of life handed down to you by your forefathers, but with precious blood of a blameless and pure lamb, the blood of Christ! He was foreknown even before the foundation of the world but he was revealed at the end of times for your sake. Through him, you believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 27:9-26

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

A great deal of time had been lost and the voyage was now dangerous because the Fast was now already passed. Paul gave them this warning:

"Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will result in injuries and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also of our lives!" However, the centurion

gave more heed to the master and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul was saying. Since the haven was not suitable to spend the winter, the majority was in favor of continuing and to do our utmost to reach Phoenix and winter there. This is a port of Crete which faces both the northeast and the southeast.

When the south wind began to blow softly, they thought that their goal was within reach. Having lifted the anchor, they sailed along [the coast of]

Crete, close to shore. But before long, a violent wind called 'the northeastern' rushed down from the island! The ship was caught and could not face the wind. We had to yield to the wind and the ship was driven along. Sailing under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the lifeboat. After the crew had hoisted it up, they used it to help reinforce the ship. Fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis sand bars, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship drift along. We were so battered by the storm that the next day, the

men began to throw things overboard. On the third day, they threw out the ship's tackle with their own hands. When neither sun nor stars had shone on us for many days, and with a major storm pressing on us, all hope that we would be saved was now taken away.

As the men had been for a long time without food, Paul stood up among them and said, "Sirs, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete; then you would have avoided this injury and loss. Now, I encourage you to keep your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For last night, an angel of the God to whom I belong and to whom I offer divine service stood by me. He said: 'Do not be afraid, Paul! You must stand before Caesar. Behold, God has granted you [the life] all those who sail with you.' Therefore, sirs, be of good cheer! For I believe God, that it will be just as it has been spoken to me. However, we must run aground on some island."

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 31:1, 2a

A Psalm of David.

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not take into account.

Alleluia.

Mark 10:46-52

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then, they arrived in Jericho. As Jesus was leaving the city with his disciples and a great crowd, the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the road. When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out, "Jesus, you son of David, have mercy on me!" Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet. But Bartimaeus cried out even more, "You son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stood still and said, "Call him."

They called the blind man and said to him, "Cheer up! Get up! He is calling you!"

Having thrown his cloak aside, he got up and came to Jesus.

Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

The blind man replied, "Rabboni, that I may see again!"

Jesus said to him, "Be on your way! Your faith has made you well." Immediately, the man received his sight and followed him along the way.
Glory be to God forever.

The Sixth Sunday of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 16:3, 5

A Psalm of David.

You tested my heart when You visited me in the night;

You tried me by fire,

and found nothing unjust in me.

Restore my steps in Your paths,

that my feet may not slip.

Alleluia.

Luke 13:22-35

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus was on his way through cities and villages, teaching and traveling onward to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, are those who are saved [only] a few?"

Jesus replied, "Do your utmost to enter in by the narrow door! For I tell you that many will try to enter, but they will not be able. Once the master of the house has risen up and shut the door, you will stand outside and knock on the door, saying: 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But then, he will answer, 'I do not know you or where you come from!' Then you will start saying, 'We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets!' But the master will reply, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from! Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity.' In that place,

there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, and yourselves being thrown outside. People will come from the east, west, north, and south, and they will have a place in the Kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last."

On that same day, some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, "Leave this place and go somewhere else, for Herod wants to kill you!"

Jesus replied, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I fulfill my end. Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the next

day, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.’

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [you] that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood

under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is left to you desolate! I tell you, you will not see me, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord!’” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 25:2, 3

A Psalm of David.

Prove me, O Lord, and try me;
test my heart and mind in fire.
For Your mercy is before my eyes,
and I delight in Your truth.

Alleluia.

Matthew 23:1-39

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus then spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, “The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses. Therefore, whatever they tell you to observe, observe and do, but do not imitate their works; for they preach and [yet] do not act accordingly. Indeed, they bind heavy burdens that are dreadful to bear and put them on people’s shoulders; but they themselves will not lift a finger to help them. Instead, they do all their works to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad, they enlarge the fringes of their garments, and love the place of honor at feasts. They love the best seats in the synagogues, the

greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called ‘Rabbi, Rabbi’ by people. But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for one is your teacher, the Christ, and all of you are brothers. Call no man on the earth ‘your father,’ for one is your Father, he who is in heaven. And do not be called ‘teacher,’ for one is your teacher, the Christ. But the one who is the greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and as a pretense you make

long prayers. Therefore, you will receive a greater condemnation.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you shut the Kingdom of Heaven in the face of people and you yourselves do not enter! And those who would enter, you prevent from doing so. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel around by sea and land to make one convert; and when one is converted, you make him twice as much of a son of Gehenna as yourselves.

Woe to you, you blind guides, who say, 'If someone swears by the sanctuary, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound.' You blind fools! Which is greater, the gold, or the sanctuary that sanctifies the gold? You say, 'If someone swears by the altar, it is nothing; but if someone swears by the gift that is placed on it, he is bound?' You blind fools! Which is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore, whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. Whoever swears by the sanctuary swears by it and by the one who was living in it. Whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by the one who sits on it.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin, but you have not fulfilled the truly significant matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faith. It is these you should have practiced, without neglecting the others. You

are blind guides who filter out a fly and yet swallow a camel!

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but inside, they are full of greed and excess. You blind Pharisees, first clean the inside of the cup and platter, so that the outside may also become clean.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like white-washed tombs which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside, they are full of dead bones and all [kinds of] impurity. Likewise, you also appear righteous to men in appearance, but inside, you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the tombs of the righteous, saying, 'If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have partaken with them in the blood of the prophets.' Therefore, you testify to yourselves that you are children of those who killed the prophets! Fill up, then, the measure [of sin] of your forefathers. You serpents, offspring of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna? Therefore, behold, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes. Some of them, you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from city to city. Thus all the righteous blood shed on the earth will come upon you, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of

Zachariah son of Barachiah whom you killed between the sanctuary and the altar. Amen, I tell you: all these things will come upon this generation.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often have I desired to gather your children, just as a hen

gathers her brood under her wings; but you were not willing! Behold, your house is left to you in a desolate state. For I tell you, you will not see me from now on until [the day when] you are saying, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord!’”

Glory be to God forever.

The Pauline Epistle

Colossians 3:5-17

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Colossians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, put to death what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, depraved passions, lust and greed (which is idolatry). Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming on the children of disobedience. You also used to live in those things when you lived among these people; but now, put them all away: anger, rage, evil, slander, and shameful language. Do not lie to one another. You have put off the old self with his doings and you have put on the new self who is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of his Creator. Here, there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free; but Christ is all, and in all!

As God’s elect, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with a heart of

compassion, kindness, lowliness, humility, and perseverance. Bear with one another, and forgive each other! If anyone has a complaint against anyone else, forgive, even as Christ forgave you.

Above all, walk in love, which is the bond of perfection. Let the peace of God (to which also you were called in one body) rule in your hearts, and be thankful! Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. In all wisdom, teach and admonish each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord.

Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do it all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 5:13-21

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

I have written these things to you who believe in the Name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life and continue to believe in the Name of the Son of God.

This is the boldness which we have toward him: if we ask anything according to his will, he listens to us! And if we know that he listens to

us, no matter what we ask, we [also] know that we have obtained the petitions which we have asked of him.

If you see one of the brethren committing a sin that does not lead to death, you should intercede in prayer and God will give life to those brethren whose sin do not lead to death. But there is a [type of] sin that leads to death, and I do not say that you should make a request in this

case. All unrighteousness is sin, yet there is a [type of] sin which does not lead to death. We know that whoever is born of God does not practice sin; whoever has been born of God is protected [by God], and the evil one does not take hold of such a one. We know that we are of God and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. We know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true. Indeed, we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 27:27-37

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

On the fourteenth night, at about midnight, as we were driven back and forth in the Adriatic Sea, the sailors surmised that they were approaching some land. They measured the depth

of water and found twenty fathoms. A little while later, they took soundings again and found fifteen fathoms. Fearing that we would run aground on rocky ground, they let down four

anchors from the stern, hoping to hold steady until daylight. Trying escape from the ship, sailors lowered the lifeboat into the sea, pretending that they would lay out anchors from the bow. Paul then said to the centurion and to the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved!” So the soldiers cut away the ropes of the lifeboat and let it fall off.

As the day was coming on, Paul begged them all to take some food,

saying, “This day is the fourteenth day that you wait and continue fasting, taking nothing. Now, I urge you to take some food! This is for your safety, and not a hair will perish from any of your heads.” When he had said this and taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all. Then he broke it and began to eat. At this, they all cheered up and also took food. In all, we were two hundred seventy-six souls on the ship.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 142:7abc, 1ab

A Psalm of David.

Hear me quickly, O Lord:

my spirit has failed.

Do not turn Your face from me,

O Lord, hear my prayer;

give ear to my supplication in Your truth.

Alleluia.

John 9:1-41

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

As Jesus was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but [it was] in order that the works of God might be revealed in him. I must do

the works of him who sent me while it is day. The night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground, made mud with the saliva and anointed the blind man’s eyes with the mud. He then said to him,

“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means “Sent”). And so, the man went away, washed, and came back seeing. At this, the neighbors and those who saw that he had been blind before said, “Is this not the man who sat and begged?” Others were saying, “It is he!” Still others were saying, “He looks like him.”

The man said, “I am he!” Therefore, the people asked him, “How were your eyes opened?”

He answered, “A man called Jesus made mud, anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash.’ And so, I went away and washed, and I received sight.”

Then they asked him, “Where is he?”

The man replied, “I do not know.”

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It was a Sabbath when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Again, the Pharisees also asked the man how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and I see!”

At this, some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” There was division among them. Therefore, they asked the blind man again, “What do you say about him, since he opened your eyes?”

He said, “He is a prophet!”

The Jews did not believe [the report] about this man, that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of this man who had received his sight. They asked the parents, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. He is of age. Ask him! He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone would confess Jesus as Christ, this person would be expelled from the synagogue. Therefore, his parents said, “He is of age. Ask him!”

And so, they called the man who had been blind a second time, and they told him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner!”

At this, the man answered, “I do not know if he is a sinner. One thing I do know: that though I was blind, now I see!”

Again, asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

He answered them, “I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You do not also want to become his disciples, do you?”

Then they insulted him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that

God has spoken to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”

The man answered them, “How amazing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he listens to him. Since the world began, it has never been heard of that anyone opened the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

They answered him, “You were born completely in sins, and do you teach us?” And they threw him out.

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and finding him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of God?”

The man answered, “Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?”

Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking with you.”

Then the man said, “Lord, I believe!” and he worshiped Jesus.

Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see; and so that those who see may become blind.”

The Pharisees who were present heard these things, and they asked Jesus, “Are we also blind?”

Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see!’ and therefore, your sin remains. *Glory be to God forever.*”

Monday of Sixth (Seventh) Week of Great Lent

The Evening or Vespers Gospel

Psalm 40:2

A Psalm of David.

Blessed is he who considers the poor and needy;
the Lord will deliver him in an evil day.

Alleluia.

Mark 8:22-26

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

When he arrived at Bethsaida, people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. Jesus took hold of the blind man by the hand

and brought him out of the village. He spit on his eyes, laid his hands on the man, and asked him if he saw anything.

The man looked up and said, “I see people! I see them like trees walking!”

Again, Jesus laid his hands on the man’s eyes who then looked [around] intently. His sight was then restored

and he saw everyone clearly. Jesus sent him away to his home, saying, “Do not enter into the village and do not tell anyone in the village.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 10:1-16

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

A wise son makes *his* father glad,
but a foolish son is a grief to his mother.

Treasures will not profit the lawless,
but righteousness will deliver from death.

The Lord will not let a righteous soul starve,

but He will overthrow the life of the ungodly.

Poverty makes a man humble,
but the hands of the vigorous make rich.

A son who is instructed will be wise,

and will use the fool for a servant.

A wise son is kept safe from heat,
but a lawless son is blasted by the winds at harvest time.

The blessing of the Lord is on the head of the righteous,

but untimely grief will cover the mouth of the ungodly.

The memory of the righteous is praised,

but the name of the ungodly *man* is extinguished.

A wise man will receive commandments in heart,

but he that is unguarded in his speech will be overthrown in his perverseness.

He who walks in integrity, walks confidently,

but he who perverts his ways will be found out.

He who winks with his eyes deceitfully earns griefs for men,

but he who reproves openly is a peacemaker.

There is a fountain of life in the hand of a righteous man,

but destruction will cover the mouth of the ungodly.

Hatred stirs up strife,

but affection covers all who do not love strife.

He who brings forth wisdom from his lips

strikes a heartless man with a rod.

The wise will conceal perception,
but the mouth of a rash man draws near to ruin.

The wealth of rich men is a strong city,

but poverty is the ruin of the ungodly.

The works of the righteous produce life,

but the fruits of the ungodly *produce* sins.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 48:17-49:4

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is what the Lord Who delivered You,

the Holy One of Israel, is saying,

“I am your God;

I have shown You how to find the way in which you should walk.

And if you had listened to My commandments,

your peace would have been like a river,

and your righteousness like a wave of the sea;

Your offspring would have been like the sand,

and the offspring of your womb like the dust of the ground.

Neither would you now be utterly destroyed,

nor would your name perish before Me.”

Go out from Babylon, you who are fleeing from the Chaldeans;

proclaim a voice of joy, and let this be made known,

proclaim it to the end of the earth;

say, “The Lord has delivered his servant Jacob!”

And if they are thirsty, He will lead them through the desert;

He will bring forth water out of the rock for them;

the rock will be split, and the water will flow,

and my people will drink.

“There is no rejoicing,” says the Lord, “for the ungodly.”

“Listen to me, O islands, and pay attention, O nations!

After a long time it will happen,” says the Lord.

“From My mother’s womb He called My Name

and made My mouth like a sharp sword,

and hidden Me under the shadow of His hand;

He has made Me like a chosen arrow,

and covered Me in His quiver.

And He said to me, ‘You are My servant,

O Israel, and I will be glorified in You.’

Then I said, ‘I have laboured in vain,

And I have given my strength vain and for nothing;

Therefore, My judgement is with the Lord,

and My labour before My God.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 38:1b-36

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord spoke to Job
through a whirlwind and clouds,

“Who is this who hides counsel
from Me,

and hides words in *his* heart,

and thinks to conceal *them* from
Me?

Gird your loins like a man,

and I will question you, and you
will answer Me!

Where were you when I laid the
foundations of the earth?

Now tell Me, if you have under-
standing,

who determines its measures, if
you know?

Or who stretched a line upon it?

On what rings is it fastened?

And who laid the cornerstone
upon it?

When the stars were made,

all my angels praised Me with a
loud voice.

Again, I shut up the sea with gates,
when it rushed out, coming from
its mother’s womb.

And I made a cloud its clothing,
and swaddled it in mist.

And I set bounds to it,
surrounding it with bars and gates.

And I said to it, “This far you will
come,

but you will not go beyond;

but your waves will be confined
within your.’

Or was it in your time that I or-
dered the morning light,

and the morning star saw its post;
to take hold of the ends of the

earth,

to shake the ungodly off of it?

Or did you take clay of the
ground,

and form a living creature,

and set it with the power of
speech upon the earth?

And have you removed light from
the ungodly,

and crushed the arm of the proud?

Or have you gone to the source of
the sea,

and walked in the tracks of the
deep?

And do the gates of death open to
you out of fear,

and did the doorkeepers of Hades
quake when they saw you?

And have you been instructed in
the breadth of the *all that is* under
heaven?

Tell me now, what is the extent of
it?

And in what kind of a land does
the light dwell?

And of what kind is the place of
darkness?

If you could bring me to their
boarders,

and if you also know their paths,

then I will know that you were
born at that time,

and *that* the number of your years
is great!

And have you gone to the store-
houses of the snow?

And have you seen the store-
houses of the hail?

Are they stored for you against the
time of *your* enemies,

for a day of war and battle?

And from where does the frost
come?

Or *from where* is the south wind
dispersed over the *whole world* under
heaven?

And who prepared a course for
the violent rain,

or a path for the thunders?

To *bring* rain on the land where
there is no man,

the wilderness, where there is not
a man in it,

to feed the untrodden and unin-
habited *land*,

and to cause it to bring forth a
crop of greenery?

Who is the rain's father?

And who has begotten the drops
of dew?

And from whose womb does the
ice come?

And who has given birth to the
frost in the sky,

which descends like flowing wa-
ter?

Who has frozen the face of the
deep?

And do you understand the band
of Pleides,

and have you opened the barrier
of Orion?

Or will you open Mazouroth in its
season,

and the Evening Star with its rays?

Will you guide them?

And do you know the movements
of heaven,

or the events that take place to-
gether under heaven?

And will you call a cloud with your
voice,

and will it obey you with a violent
shower of much rain?

And will you send lightnings, and
they will go?

And will they say to you, 'What is
it?'

And who has given skill in weav-
ing to women,

or knowledge of embroidery?"

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 31:10, 11

A Psalm of David.

Many are the scourges of the sinner,
but mercy surrounds him who hopes in the Lord.
Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O you righteous ones,
and glory, all you upright in heart.

Alleluia.

Luke 16:19-31

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Now, there was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, feasting in luxury every day. A certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Yes, even dogs came and licked his sores. It happened that the beggar died and that he was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried. In hades, he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far off, and Lazarus in his bosom. He cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue! For I am in agony in this flame.'

But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime, you received your good things, and

Lazarus, in the same way, bad things. But now, he is comforted here and you are in anguish. Besides all this, between us and you a great gulf is fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot [do so], and that no one may cross over from there to us.'

He said, 'I ask you therefore, father, that you would send Lazarus to my father's house; for I have five brothers, that he might bear witness to them, so that they would not also come to this place of torment.'

But Abraham replied to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets! Let them listen to them!'

But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

Then Abraham said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be con-

vinced if someone rises from the dead.” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 14:10-15:2

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But [as for] you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. As it is written:

‘As I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow to me;

Every tongue will confess to God.’

And so, each of us will give a personal account to God. Therefore, let us not judge one another any more. Instead, resolve that no one should put a stumbling block in his brother’s way, or an occasion for falling.

In the Lord Jesus, I know and I am convinced that nothing is unclean of itself. But to the one who considers anything to be unclean, to such a one it is unclean! Yet, if because of food your brother is grieved, you no longer walk in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. Thus, do not let what is good to you become a cause of evil things being said, because the Kingdom of God is not [about] eating and drinking, but [it is about] righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Certainly, whoever serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by all. And so, let us pursue things which cause peace, and things

by which we may edify one another. Do not overthrow God’s work for the sake of food! All things indeed are clean; however it is evil for someone to create a stumbling block by eating. It is good to not eat meat, drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles, is offended, or is made weak.

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Blessed is the one who does not judge himself in what he approves. But the one who doubts is condemned if by eating, it is not of faith. Whatever is not of faith is sin.

Now to him who is able to establish you according to my Good News and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret through long ages but is now revealed, and who by the Scriptures of the prophets (according to the commandment of the eternal God,) is made known for obedience of faith to all the nations; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever! Amen.

Now, we who are strong should bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not {just} please ourselves. Let each

one of us please our neighbor for what is good, to be edifying to him.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 2:5-13

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose those who are poor in this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom which he promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor! Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you before the courts? Do they not blaspheme the honorable Name by which you are called? However, if you fulfill the royal law found in the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. But if you discriminate, you commit sin and you are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever

keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point has become guilty of everything. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery" also said "Do not commit murder." Now, if you do not commit adultery but murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. And so, speak and act as people who are going to be judged by a law of freedom. For judgment is without mercy to those who have shown no mercy, but mercy triumphs over judgment.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 9:22-31

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

But Saul grew even more in strength and confounded the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that [Jesus] is the Christ.

After some time, the Jews conspired to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. Day and night, they watched the gates in order to be able

to kill Saul, but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket. When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to join himself to the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him

to the apostles. Saul told them how he had seen the Lord on the way, that the Lord had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had boldly preached in the Name of Jesus. So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus. He talked and debated with the Hellenists, but they tried to kill him. When the

brethren became aware of this, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him off to Tarsus.

And so, the Churches throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and were edified. Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they continued to grow.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 85:12, 13

A Psalm of David.

I will confess You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
And I will glorify Your Name forever,
for Your mercy towards me is great,
and You have rescued my soul from the deepest Hades.
Alleluia.

John 5:31-47

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

If I bear witness about myself, my testimony is not valid. There is another who bears witness to me, and I know that the testimony by which he bears witness about me is true. You have sent [messengers] to John, and he has testified to the truth. But the testimony which I receive is not from man. However, I say these things so that you may be saved. John was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a

while in his light. But the testimony which I have is greater than that of John, because the works which the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, they bear witness about me, that the Father has sent me. The Father himself, who sent me, he has testified about me. You have never heard his voice at any time, and you have never seen his outward appearance. You do not have

his word living in you, because you do not believe him whom he sent.

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me. Yet, you will not come to me to have life. I do not receive glory from men. But I know you, that you do not have God's love in yourselves. I have come in my Father's Name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him! How

can you believe, since you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?

Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father. The one who accuses you is in fact Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me because he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" *Glory be to God forever.*

Tuesday of Sixth (Seventh) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 10:17-31

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Instruction guards the right ways of life,

but unchastened instruction goes astray.

Righteous lips conceal enmity,
but those who utter slander are most foolish.

You will not escape sin by a multitude of words,

but if you refrain your lips you will be prudent.

The tongue of a righteous man is tried silver,

but the heart of the ungodly will fail.

The lips of the righteous know sublime *truths*,

but the foolish die in want.

The blessing of the Lord is on the head of the righteous,

it enriches *him*, and grief of heart will not be added to *it*.

A fool does evil things with laughter,

but wisdom brings forth prudence for a man.

The ungodly is engulfed in destruction,

but the desire of the righteous is acceptable.

When the storm passes by, the ungodly man vanishes away,

but the righteous man turns aside and will be saved forever.

As an unripe grape is harmful to the teeth, and smoke is to the eyes,

so iniquity hurts those who practice it.

The fear of the Lord adds days,
but the years of the ungodly will be shortened.

Gladness lingers with the righteous,

but the hope of the ungodly perishes.

The fear of the Lord is a strong hold for the saints,

but ruin *comes* to those who work evil.

The righteous will never fail,
but the ungodly will not inhabit the earth.

The mouth of the righteous drips wisdom,

but the tongue of the unjust will perish.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 49:6b-10

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And he said to Me,

*[“It is a great thing for You to be called My servant,

to establish the tribes of Jacob,

and to restore the dispersion of Israel.]*

Look, I have given You as the covenant of a race,

and as a light of the Gentiles,

that You should be for salvation to the end of the earth.”

This is what the Lord Who delivered you,

the God of Israel, is saying,

“Sanctify Him Who despises His own soul,

Who is abhorred by the nations, *by* the servants of rulers;

kings will see Him, and rulers will stand up,

and will worship Him for the Lord’s sake,

because the Holy One of Israel is faithful,

and I have chosen you.”

This is what the Lord is saying,

“In an acceptable time have I heard You,

and on a day of salvation have I help You;

I gave You as a covenant of the nations,

to establish the earth,

and to inherit the inheritance of the desert;

saying to those who are in bonds, ‘Go forth,’

and *bidding* those who are in darkness to reveal themselves.

They will feed along all their roads,

and their pasture will be along all the paths.

They will not hunger, nor will they thirst;

nor will the burning heat or the sun strike them down;

but He Who has mercy on them will comfort *them*,

and He will lead them by springs
of water.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

*☐ *Lacking in Kitchener, found in Ottawa
and Southern United States.*

Job 38:37-39:30

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

“Who numbers the clouds in wisdom,
and bowed down the heaven to earth?

When the dust was poured out like soil,

But I have cemented it, like a cut stone to another?

Will you hunt the prey for the lions?

Or satisfy the appetite of serpents?

They fear in their dens,
living in the woods to lie in wait.

Who provides food for the raven?

For its young ones cry to God
as they wander, searching for food.

Do you know the time when the wild rock goats bear young?

Or can you mark when the deer gives birth?

Can you number the months of their childbearing?

Or have you relieved their birth pangs?

Or have you reared their young without fear?

Their young ones will break forth;
they will be multiplied with offspring;

they depart, and do not return.

Who has set the wild donkey free?

Who has loosed its bonds?

I have made the wilderness his home,

and the barren land his dwellings.

He scorns the multitude of the city,

and does not hear the chiding of the tax collector.

It will survey the range of the mountains *as* its pasture,

and search after every green thing.

Will the unicorn be willing to serve you,

or lie down in your manger?

Can you bind its yoke with ropes?

Or will it plow your furrows in the plain?

Will you trust it, because its strength *is* great?

Or will you leave your labour to it?

Will you believe it, that it will return your seed to you,

and gather *it into* your threshing floor?

The wings of the falcon wave proudly,

but are its wings like the stork's?

For falcons leave their eggs on the ground,

and warm them in dust,

and forgets that the foot may crush them,

or that the wild animals may trample them.

She is hardened against her young ones,

as though *they were* not hers.

her labour is in vain without fear,

because God has deprived her of wisdom,

and did not give understanding to her.

When she lifts herself on high,

she scorns the horse and its rider.

Have you given the horse strength?

Have you clothed its neck with terror?

Did you give it full honour,

And make its breast glorious with courage?

It paws in the plain,

and rejoices in *its* strength.

It goes on to meet the armed men.

It mocks at battle when it sees it,

and will never turn back from the sword.

The bow and the sword resound against it,

And its rage will stamp out the earth.

It will not believe until the trumpet sounds,

But when the trumpet sounds, it says, "Good, well done!"

It smells the battle from far off, with leaping and shouting.

Does the hawk fly by your wisdom,

and spread its wings, motionless, looking toward the south?

Does the eagle mount up at your command,

and the vulture remain upon its nest?

She sits and stays on the rock,

upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

From there she seeks prey,

and her eyes see far off.

Her young ones are drenched in blood,

and where the slain *are*, they are found there."

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Sirach 5:1-15

From the book of the Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Do not set your heart upon your possessions,

and do not say, "I am self-sufficient."

Do not follow your own soul and your strength,

to walk in your heart's desires.

And do not say, "Who will be lord over me?"

For the Lord will surely punish you.

Do not say, "I have sinned, and what harm has come me?"

For the Lord is longsuffering.

Do not become fearless concerning atonement,
to add upon your sins.

And do not say, "His compassion is great;

He will atone for the multitude of my sins,"

for both mercy and wrath come from Him,

and his wrath rests on sinners.

Do not delay in turning to the Lord,

and do not put it off day after day;

for the wrath of the Lord will come forth suddenly,

and you will perish in the day of vengeance.

Do not set your heart on ill-gotten wealth,

For it will not profit you in the day of distress.

Do not winnow with every wind,
and do not follow every road;

as the double-tongued sinner does.

Be firm in your understanding,

and let your speech be consistent.

Be quick to listen,

and give your answer with patience.

If you have understanding, answer your neighbour,

but if not, place your hand over your mouth.

Honour and shame are in speaking,

and a person's tongue is his downfall.

Do not be called a slanderer,

and do not ambush with your tongue;

for a shame is upon the thief,

and a grievous condemnation is upon the double-tongued.

Do not be ignorant in anything, in a great or a small matter.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 37:19, 20a

A Psalm of David.

For I confess my iniquity,

and I am anxious about my sin.

But my enemies live, and are stronger than I.

Alleluia.

Luke 17:1-10

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus told the disciples, "It is impossible that no occasions of stumbling should come, but woe to the one through whom they come! It would be better for such a person to have a millstone hung around the neck and be thrown into the sea, rather than to cause any of these little ones to stumble. Be careful! If your brother sins against you, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in the day, and comes back seven times, saying: 'I repent!' you must forgive him."

The apostles also said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

The Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you would tell this sycamore tree, 'Be

uprooted and transplanted into the sea,' and it would obey you!"

But who is there among you, having a servant plowing or shepherding, that will say when that servant returns from the field, 'Come at once and sit down at the table.' Instead, will you not tell him, 'Prepare my supper, clothe yourself properly, and serve me while I eat and drink. Afterwards, you may eat and drink'? Does the master thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded? I think not! So you also, when you have done all those things which you are commanded [to do], say, 'We are unworthy servants, we have [only] done our duty!'" *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

1 Corinthians 14:5-17

A chapter from the First Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Now, I desire to have all of you speak in other tongues, and even

more that you would prophesy. For the one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless the one who speaks in tongues also interprets, so that the Church may be edified.

But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what profit is there for you unless I speak either by way of revelation, knowledge, prophesying, or teaching? Consider things without life but giving a voice,

such as a pipe or a harp: if they did not give a distinction in the sounds, how would anyone know what is being played? For if the trumpet gave an uncertain sound, who would prepare for war? It is the same with you: if you do not utter words easy to understand, how will people understand what is spoken? For you would be speaking into the air! As it is, there are many kinds of sounds in the world, and none of them is without meaning. But if I do not know the meaning of the sound, I would be as a

foreigner to the one speaking [in tongues] and vice-versa. And so with you, since you are eager for spiritual gifts, try to excel in what edifies the Church. Therefore, the one who speaks in another tongue should pray that he may [also] interpret, because if I pray in another tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind does not bear fruit.

What then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the

mind. I will sing with the spirit, and with the mind also. Otherwise if you bless with the spirit, how will the one who is untrained say the “Amen” at your giving of thanks, not knowing what you say? You give thanks well, no doubt about it, but the other person is not built up.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

2 Peter 3:8-15a

The Catholic Epistle from the Second Epistle of our teacher Peter. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Beloved, do not forget that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day! The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some people think that he is. Instead, he is patient with us, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night and in this day, the heavens will pass away with a rushing noise, the elements will be dissolved by intense heat, and the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Therefore, since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be in terms of holy living and godliness! You should look for and eagerly desire the

coming of the day of God, which will cause the burning heavens to be dissolved and the elements to melt with intense heat! But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, as you look for these things, to your utmost to be found in peace, without blemish and blameless in his sight. Consider the patience of our Lord as salvation*]; even as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom given to him]*.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

*[] *Lacking in Kitchener. Found in Ottawa and Southern United States.*

The Praxis

Acts 22:17-24

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

It happened that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance. I saw the Lord saying to me, 'Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not receive testimony concerning me from you.' I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those who believed in you. When the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I too was standing by, consenting to his death and guarding the garment of those who killed him.'

Then he said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you out far from here to the Gentiles.'"

They listened to him until he said that; then they lifted up their voice, and shouted, "Rid the earth of this fellow, for he is not fit to live!"

As they cried out, throwing off their cloaks and dust into the air, the commanding officer ordered him to be brought into the barracks. He commanded that Paul should be examined under scourging, so that he might find out for what crime the people shouted against him in such a way.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 50:4, 5

A Psalm of David.

[You will] wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin,
for I know my iniquity,
and my sin is ever before me.

Alleluia.

John 12:36b-43

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

After Jesus had said this, he left and hid from them. But even though he had performed so many signs in front of them, they did not believe in him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet:

Lord, who has believed our report?

To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

For this reason, they could not believe, for Isaiah said elsewhere:

He has blinded their eyes and he hardened their heart,

*lest they should see with their eyes,
and perceive with their heart,
and would turn,
and I would heal them.*

Isaiah said these things when he saw his glory and spoke of him. Still, even many among the rulers believed in him, but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess it [openly], so that they would not be put out of the synagogue, for they loved human praise more than God's praise. *Glory be to God forever.*

Wednesday of Sixth (Seventh) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 10:32-11:13

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

The lips of the righteous drip grace,

but the tongue of the ungodly turns people away.

False balances are an abomination before the Lord,

but a just weight is acceptable to Him.

Wherever pride enters, there will be also disgrace,

but the mouth of the humble meditates on wisdom.

When a righteous man dies, he leaves regret,

but the destruction of the ungodly at hand, and joyous.

[Possessions will not profit in a day of wrath,

but righteousness will deliver from death.]

Righteousness cuts straights and blameless paths,

but ungodliness embraces injustice.

The righteousness of upright men
delivers them,

but transgressors are caught in
their own destruction.

When a righteous man dies, hope
does not perish,

but the boast of the ungodly per-
ishes.

A righteous man escapes from a
snare,

and the ungodly man is delivered
up in his place.

There is a snare for citizens in the
mouth of ungodly men,

but the perception of the right-
eous is prosperous.

A city is prosperous by the good
deeds of the righteous,

but it is leveled to the ground by
the mouths of the ungodly.

A man lacking discernment scorns
his fellow citizens,

but a man of discernment keeps
quiet.

A double-tongued man reveals the
counsels of an assembly,

but he who is faithful in spirit
conceals matters.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 58:1-11a

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

“Cry aloud with strength, and do
not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet,
and declare to my people their
sins,

and to the house of Jacob their
iniquities.

They seek Me day by day,
and desire to know My ways,
like a people who practiced right-
eousness,

and did not forsake the judgment
of their God,

they now ask of Me righteous
judgment,

and desire to draw near to God,
saying, ‘Why have we fasted, but
You did not see?

Why have we humbled our souls,
but You did not know it?’

No, in the days of your fasts you
seek your desires,

and mistreat those who are under
your power.

If you fast for quarrels and fights,
and strike the humble with *your*
fists,

why do you fast to Me as *you do*
today,

so that your voice may be heard in
crying?

I have not chosen this fast,
nor *such* a day for a man to humble
his soul;

though you should bow down
your neck like a ring,

and sackcloth and ashes under
yourself,

you could not call such a fast ac-
ceptable.

‘I have not chosen such a fast,’”
says the Lord;

“Rather, loose every bond of iniquity;

untie the knots of violent dealings;
set the oppressed free;

and tear up every unjust contract.

Break your bread for the hungry,

and bring the homeless into your house;

if you see one naked, clothe *him*,

and you will not neglect

any of the relatives of your offspring.

Then your light will break forth as the morning,

and your health will rise quickly,

and your righteousness will go before you,

and the glory of God will cover you.

Then you will cry, and God will listen to you;

while you are still speaking, He will say, ‘Look, here I am’.

If you remove from yourself the bond,

and the stretching of the hands *to vote*,

and grumbling speech,

and *if* you give bread to the hungry from your soul,

and satisfy the humbled soul,

then your light will rise in darkness,

and your darkness *will be* as mid-day.

And your God will be with you continually,

and you will be satisfied as your soul desires.

And your bones will be enriched,

and will be like a well-watered garden,

and like a spring of water that never fails.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 40:1-41:26

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the Lord God answered Job,
and said,

“Will *anyone* pervert judgment with the Mighty One?

and He who reproved God will answer for it.”

And Job answered and said to the Lord,

”Why do I yet contend—being rebuked even while reproving the Lord,

hearing such things—when I am nothing?

And what answer will I give to these *things*?

I will lay my hand on my mouth.

I have spoken once, but I will not do so a second time.”

And the Lord yet again answered and spoke to Job out of the cloud,

“No, gird up your loins like a man,

and I will question you, and you
will answer me.

Do not set aside my judgment.

And do you think that I have dealt
with you in any other way,
than that you might appear to be
righteous?

Do you have an arm like the
Lord's?

Or do you thunder with a voice
like His?

Assume now a majesty and power,
and clothe yourself with glory and
honour.

And send forth messengers with
wrath

and humble every insolent one.

Extinguish the proud man,
and consume at once the ungodly.

And hide them together in the
earth

and fill their faces with shame.

Then I will confess that your right
hand can save *you*.

But look now at the wild animals
with you.

They eat grass like oxen.

See now, his strength is in his
loins,

and his power is in the center of
his stomach.

He sets up his tail like a cypress;
his nerves are tightly knit.

His ribs are like ribs of bronze,
and his backbone is *like* cast iron.

This is the chief of the creation of
the Lord,

made to be mocked at by His an-
gels.

And when he has gone up to a
steep mountain,

he causes joy to the four-footed
animals in Tartarus.

He lies under every kind of trees,
by the papyrus, reed, and bulrush.

And the great trees shade him
with their branches,

and *so do* the bushes of the field.

If there should be a flood, he will
not notice it;

he trust that Jordan will rush up
into his mouth.

Yet one shall take him in his eyes,

one will catch *him* with a snare, and
pierce his nose.

But will you catch the serpent with
a hook,

and put a halter about his nose?

Or will you fasten a ring in his
nose,

and pierce his lip with a hook?

Will he address you with a peti-
tion,

softly, with the voice of a suppli-
ant?

And will he make a covenant with
you?

And will you take him for a per-
petual servant?

And will you play with him like
with a bird?

Or cage him like a sparrow for a
child?

And do the nations feed on it,

and do the Phoenician nations
divide it up?

And all the ships together would
not be able to carry merely the skin of
its tail,

or *carry* its head in fishing vessels.

But you will lay your hand on it,
remembering the battle that is
waged by its mouth,

and let it not be done any more!

Have you not seen it?

And have you not wondered at the
things said *of it*?

Do you not fear because prepara-
tion has been made by Me?

For who able to stand against Me?

Who will stand against Me, and
endure,

since all that is under heaven is
Mine?

I will not be silent because of it,
though because of its power *one*
will pity its antagonist.

Who remove its outer garment?

And who can enter within the fold
of its breastplate?

Who will open the doors of its
face?

Terror is round about its teeth.

Its inwards are like brazen plates,
and the texture of its *skin* as a
smyrite stone.

One *part* clings to another,
and the air cannot come between
them.

They will remain united each to
the other,

they are bound together, and can-
not be separated.

At its sneezing a light shines,

and its eyes have the appearance
of the morning star.

Out of its mouth proceed flaming
torches,

and fiery braziers are being cast
forth.

Out of its nostrils proceeds smoke
of a furnace burning with fire of
coals.

Its breath is live coals,

and a flame goes out of its mouth.

And power dwells in its neck;
destruction runs before him.

The muscles of its body are joined
together.

if one pours *violence* upon it, it will
not be shaken.

Its heart is hard as a stone,
and it stands like an unyielding
anvil.

And when it turns, *it is* a terror
to the four-footed wild animals
that leap on the earth.

If sword reaches it, *it* will do noth-
ing,

nor the spear or the breast-plate.

For it regards iron as chaff,
and bronze as rotten wood.

The bronze bow will not wound
it;

the sling-stone is like grass to it.

Hammers are counted as straw,
and it laughs to scorn the waving
of the firebrand.

Its bed is *like* sharp skewers,

and all the gold of the sea under
him

is like a great *amount* of clay.

It makes the deep boil like a brazen pot,
and it regards the sea like a pot of ointment,
and the lowest part of the deep as a captive.
It considers the deep as *its walking range*.

There is nothing on the earth like it,
made to be mocked at by My angels.
It beholds every high thing;
and it is king over all that are in the waters.”
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 56:2

A Psalm of David.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me,
for my soul trusts in You;
and I will hope in the shadow of Your wings
until iniquity passes away.

Alleluia.

Luke 14:28-35

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, everyone who sees would begin to mock him, saying: “This man began to build and he was not able to finish!” Or what king, as he goes to encounter another king in war, will not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand [troops] to meet the one

who comes against him with twenty thousand [troops]? If he cannot, while the other [king] is still far away, he sends an embassy and asks for the conditions of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Salt is good, but if it becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile and it is thrown out! Anyone who has ears for listening should listen!” *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

Romans 10:4-13

A chapter from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Romans. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

For Christ is the fulfillment of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Moses writes about the righteousness of the law, "The one who does them will live by them." But the righteousness which is of faith speaks this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down); or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)" But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart;" that is, the word of faith, which we preach. If you will confess with your mouth that

Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. With the heart, one believes, resulting in righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made, resulting in salvation. As the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed."

Indeed, there is no distinction between Jew and Greek because the same Lord is Lord of all, and he is bountiful to all who call on him. For, "Whoever will call on the Name of the Lord will be saved."

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

James 1:13-21

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

When temptations come, let no one say, "I am tempted by God," because God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. But a person is tempted when drawn away and enticed by his own lust. Then the lust, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, results in death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren! Every good gift and every perfect gift is

from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom can be no variation or shifting shadow. He brought us forth of his own will by the word of truth, so that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

Know this, my beloved brethren: be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger! Anger does not produce the righteousness of God.

Therefore, putting away all [moral] impurity and remains of wickedness, receive with humility the implanted word which is able to save your souls.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 19:23-26

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

About that time, there arose a serious disturbance concerning the Way. A certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought much business to the craftsmen. He held a meeting with craftsmen of the same occupation and said, "Men, you know that we obtain our wealth through

this business. As you can see and hear, not in Ephesus alone, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has convinced and turned away many people, saying that our gods are no gods and that they are made with [human] hands.

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 50:4, 5

A Psalm of David.

[You will] wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin,
for I know my iniquity,
and my sin is ever before me.

Alleluia.

John 6:35-45

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. John. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Jesus told them, "I am the bread of life! The one who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in

me will never be thirsty. But I told you that you have seen me, and yet, you do not believe. All that the Father

gives me will come to me, and the one who is coming to me I will in no way reject. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but [to do] the will of the one who sent me. This is the will of my Father who sent me: that of all he has given me, I should lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. This is the will of the one who sent me: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and this one I will raise up on the last day.”

At this, the Jews began to murmur concerning him, because he had said, “I am the bread which came down

out of heaven.” They said, “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then does he say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’”

Therefore, Jesus answered them, “Do not murmur among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and this one I will raise up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Therefore, everyone who hears from the Father and has learned comes to me. *Glory be to God forever.*

Thursday of Sixth (Seventh) Week of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Proverbs 11:13-26

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

A double-tongued man reveals the counsels of an assembly,

but he who is faithful in spirit conceals matters.

Those who have no guidance fall like leaves,

but in much counsel there is safety.

A wicked man does harm wherever he meets a righteous man,

and he hates the sound of stability.

A gracious wife procures honour for her husband,

but a woman hating righteousness is a throne of dishonour.

The lazy come to want,

but the diligent support themselves with wealth.

A merciful man does good to his own soul,

but the merciless *person* destroys his own body.

An ungodly man does unrighteous works,

but the seed of the righteous is a reward of truth.

A righteous son is born to life,

but the pursuit of the ungodly *leads* to death.

Crooked ways are an abomination to the Lord,

but all those who are blameless in
their ways are acceptable to Him.

He who unjustly joins hands will
not go unpunished,

but he who sows righteousness
will receive an assured reward.

The beauty of an evil-minded
woman

is like a ring in a pig's snout.

All the desire of the righteous is
good,

but the hope of the ungodly will
perish.

There are *those* who distribute their
own things, and produce more,

and there are *those* also who gather,
yet have less.

Every sincere soul is blessed,
but an ill-tempered man is not
graceful.

May he who hoards grain leave it
to the nations,

but may blessing be on the head
of him who shares *it*.

He who devises good seeks good
favour,

but he who seeks evil, it will over-
take him.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 65:8-16a

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

This is what the Lord is saying,
“As a grape will be found in the
cluster,

and they will say, ‘Do not destroy
it

because the blessing of the Lord is
in it,’

so will I do for the sake of the one
who serves Me.

For his sake I will not destroy *them*
all.

And I will bring forth the seed of
Jacob and of Judah,

and they will inherit My holy
mountain,

and My elect and My servants
will inherit it, and will live there.

And there will be folds of flocks in
the forest,

and the valley of Achor *will* be-
come a resting place of herds

for My people, who have sought
Me.

But you are those who have for-
saken Me,

and forgotten My holy mountain,
and prepare a table for the devil,

and fill a drink-offering to For-
tune.

I will deliver you up to the sword,
and all of you will fall in the

slaughter,

for I called you, and you did not
listen;

I spoke, but refused to hear,
and you did evil in My sight,

and chose the things I did not
desire.”

Therefore, this is what the Lord says,

“Look, My servants will eat,
but you will hunger;
look, My servants will drink,
but you will thirst;
look, My servants will rejoice,
but you will be ashamed;
look, My servants will rejoice with joy,
but you will cry out because of the pain in your heart,

and will wail for the crushing of your spirit.

For you will leave your name to the disgust of my chosen,
and the Lord will destroy you.

But My servants will be called by a new name,

which will be blessed on the earth;
for they will bless the true God.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 42:1-6

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Then Job answered the Lord and said,

“I know that You can do all things,

and nothing is impossible for You.

For who is he that hides counsel from You?

Or who keeps back his words,
and thinks to hide them from You?

And who will tell me what I did not know,

great and wonderful things that I did not know?

But hear me, O Lord, that I also may speak.

And I will ask You, and please teach me.

I have heard the report of You by the ear before,

but now My eye has seen You.

Therefore, I disparage myself, and waste away,

and I regard myself as dust and ashes.”

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

4 Kings 6:8-7:20 or 2 Kings 6:8-7:20

From the Fourth book of Kings. Its blessing be upon us. Amen.

And the king of Syria was at war with Israel, and he consulted with his servants, saying, “I will encamp in this specific place.” And Elisha sent word to the king of Israel, saying, “Take care that you do not pass by this

place, for the Syrians are hidden there.” And the king of Israel sent to the place that Elisha mentioned to him, and avoided it not once or twice.

And the mind of the king of Syria was troubled about this matter, and

he called his servants, and said to them, "Will you not tell me who betrays me to the king of Israel?" And one of his servants said, "No one, my Lord, O king, for Elisha the prophet in Israel reports to the king of Israel all your words that you might speak in your bedchamber." And he said, "Go, see where this man is, and I will send and seize him." And they sent word to him, saying, "See, he is in Dothaim." And he sent horses, chariots, and a mighty host there, and they came by night, and surrounded the city.

And the servant of Elisha rose up early and went out, and see, a host surrounded the city, with horses and chariots. And the servant said to him, "O master! what will we do?" And Elisha said, "Do not Fear, for those who are with us are more than those that are with them." And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, open the eyes of the servant, and let him see." And the Lord opened his eyes, and he saw: and, look, the mountain was full of horses, and there were chariots of fire all around Elisha. And *the Syrians* came down to him, and he prayed to the Lord, and said, "Strike this people with blindness." And He struck them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha. And Elisha said to them, "This is not the city, and this is not the way; follow me, and I will lead you to the man whom you seek." And he led them away to Samaria.

And it happened when they entered into Samaria, that Elisha said, "Open, O Lord, their eyes, and let them see." And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw, and, look, they were in the midst of Samaria.

And the king of Israel said to Elisha, when he saw them, "Striking, shall I not kill them, my father?" And he said, "You will not kill them. Would you kill those whom you had taken captive with your sword and bow? Set food and water before them, and let them eat and drink, and return to their master." And he set a great feast before them, and they ate and drank, and he dismissed them, and they went to their master. And the lightly armed raiding parties of Syria no longer came into the land of Israel.

And it happened after this, that the son of Hader, king of Syria, gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria, and look, they besieged it until a donkey's head was valued at fifty shekels of silver, and a quarter liter of dove's dung at five shekels of silver. And the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, and a woman cried out to him, saying, "Save *me*, my lord, O king!" And he said to her, "Unless the Lord saves you, how will I save you from the threshing-floor, or from the winepress?" And the king said to her, "What is troubling you?" And the woman said to him, "This woman

said to me, 'Give us your son, and we will eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' So we boiled my son, and ate him. And on the second day, I said to her, 'Give your son, and let us eat him,' but she had hidden her son."

And it happened, when the king of Israel heard the woman's words, that he tore his clothes, and as he passed by on the wall, the people saw sackcloth was on his flesh underneath. And he said, "God so do to me, and also more, if the head of Elisha remains on him today."

And Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. And the king sent a man before him. Before the messenger came to him, he also said to the elders, "Do you see that this son of a murderer has sent to take away my head? See, as soon as the messenger comes, shut the door, and forcibly detain him at the door. Is it not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" While he was yet speaking with them, see, a messenger came to him, and he said, "Look, this evil is of the Lord, why should I wait for the Lord any longer?"

And Elisha said, "Hear the word of the Lord. This is what the Lord is saying, 'About this time tomorrow, a measure of fine flour will be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gates of Samaria.'" And the officer on whose hand the king relied, answered Elisha, and said, "Look, if the Lord makes floodgates

in heaven, might this thing be?" And Elisha said, "Look, you will see this with your own eyes, but will not eat of it."

And there were four leprous men by the gate of the city, and one said to his neighbour, "Why do we sit here until we die? If we say, 'Let us go into the city,' and there is famine in the city, and we will die there. And if we sit here, then we will die. Now then come, and let us surrender to the camp of the Syrians. If they take us alive, then we will live, and if they put us to death, then we will also die." And they rose up while it was still night, to go into the camp of Syria. They entered into the outskirts of the camp of Syria, and look, no one was there. For the Lord had caused the army of Syria to hear the sound of chariots, and the sound of horses, even the sound of a great army, and each man said to his fellow, "Now the king of Israel has hired the kings of the Chettites, and the kings of Egypt, to come against us." And they arose and fled while it was still dark, and left their tents, their horses, and their donkeys in the camp, as they were, and fled for their lives.

And these lepers entered the outskirts the camp, they went into one tent, and ate and drank, and took from it silver, gold, and clothing. And they went and came back, and entered another tent, and took from there, and went and hid the spoil. And one man said to the others, "We are not

doing well; this day is a day of good news, and if we remain silent, and wait until the morning, we will find wickedness. Now they come, and let us go into the city, and report to the house of the king.” So they went and cried out toward the gate of the city, and proclaimed to them, saying, “We entered the camp of Syria, and look, there is no one there, not a man or the voice of man, only horses and donkeys tied, and their tents as they were.”

And the gatekeepers shouted the news, and reported *it* to the house of the king within. And the king arose in the night, and said to his servants, “Now I will tell you what the Syrians are doing. They know that we are hungry, and they have gone out from the camp and hidden themselves in the field, saying, ‘They will come out of the city, and we will catch them alive, and enter into the city.’” And one of his servants answered and said, “Let them take five of the remaining horses that were left here; look, they are all that is left to all the multitude of Israel, and we will go there and see.” So they saddled two horses, and the king of Israel sent after the king of Syria, saying, “Go, and see.” And they went after them even to the

Jordan, and, see, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had thrown away in their panic. And the messengers returned, and brought word to the king. And the people went out and plundered the camp of Syria. And a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord, and two measures of barley for a shekel.

And the king appointed the officer on whose hand the king relied, to have charge over the gate, and the people trampled him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spoke when the messenger came down to him. So it happened just as Elisha had said to the king, “Two measures of barley will be sold for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, and it will be about this time tomorrow in the gate of Samaria.” And the officer had answered Elisha, and said, “Look, if the Lord makes floodgates in heaven, can this be?” And Elisha said, “Look, you will see it with your eyes, but you will not eat of it.” And it was so, for the people trampled on him in the gate, and he died.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 62:2

A Psalm of David.

O God, my God, I rise early to be with You;
My soul thirsts for You...
[that my flesh might blossom for You]
in a desolate, trackless and waterless land?

Alleluia.

Matthew 20:20-28

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, kneeling and asking a certain thing of him. He said to her, "What do you want?"

She said to him, "Command that these, my two sons, may sit, one on your right hand, and one on your left hand, in your Kingdom."

But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking! Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

They said to him, "We are able!"

Jesus answered, "You will indeed drink my cup and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with, but to sit on my right and on left

hand is not mine to give! It is [reserved] for whom it has been prepared by my Father."

When the ten heard [about] this, they were upset with the two brothers.

However, Jesus called them together, and said, "You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them, and great ones make their authority felt. But it shall not be so among you! Instead, whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. Whoever desires to be first among you shall be your servant, even as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Corinthians 4:5-18

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Corinthians. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

For we do not preach [about] ourselves, but [about] Christ Jesus as Lord, and [we present] ourselves as your servants for the sake of Jesus, seeing that it is God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," and he has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

However, we have this treasure in clay vessels, so that the amazing power may be from God, and not from ourselves. We are pressed on every side, yet [we are] not crushed! We are perplexed, but not to [the point of] despair. We are persecuted yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed; and we always carry in our bodies the death of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. Indeed, we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh. And

so, death is at work in us, but life in you. But we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, and therefore I spoke." We believe, and therefore we also speak; knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus, and bring us with you into his presence. All these things are for your benefit, so that as grace is extended to many, this may also cause thanksgiving to be multiplied to the glory of God. Therefore, we do not lose heart, but even if outwardly we are decaying, yet our inner self is being renewed day by day. Indeed, our light affliction (which is temporary) is producing for us an ever-increasing standing in eternal glory! This is because we do not look at visible things but at invisible things, and the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

The Catholic Epistle

1 John 3:13-24

The Catholic Epistle from the First Epistle of our teacher John. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Do not be surprised, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life

because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother [or sister] remains in death. Whoever

hates his brother [or sister] is a murderer, and you know that eternal life does not remain in a murderer.

This is how we know what love is: that he laid down his life for us. We too should lay down our lives for the brethren. But if someone is well-off in worldly possessions and sees one of the brethren in need and yet refuses to help, how does the love of God remain in such a person? My little children, let us not love only in word or speech, but in deed and truth. This is how we know that we are of the truth and obtain assurance in his presence; even if our own hearts condemn us, God is greater than this and knows all things.

Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness toward God. Whatever we ask, we receive from him because we keep his commandments and do what is pleasing in his sight. This is his commandment: that we should believe in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, and that we should love one another, even as he commanded. All who obey his commandments remain in him, and he remains in them. By this, we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 25:23-26:6

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

On the next day, after Agrippa and Bernice had made their entry with great pomp, they went to the place of hearing with the commanding officers and the leaders of the city. At the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. Festus said, “King Agrippa, and all who are here present with us, you see this man. The entire Jewish community, both in Jerusalem and here, petitioned me about him, clamoring that he should not live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death,

and as he himself had appealed to his Imperial Majesty, I decided to send him {to Rome}. I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning this man! Therefore, I have brought him forth before you [all], and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after examination, I may have something to write. For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner without also specifying the charges against him.”

Agrippa said to Paul, “You may speak for yourself.”

Then Paul held up his hand and made his defense. “I consider myself blessed, King Agrippa, that today, I am able to make my defense before you in response to all the accusations of the Jews, especially because you are an expert in all customs and debates which take place among the Jews. Therefore, I beg you to hear me patiently.

Indeed, all the Jews know about my way of life from my youth up,

which was from the beginning among my own nation and in Jerusalem. Since they have known me from the beginning, they could testify that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion. And now, I stand here on trial because of the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers!

The word of the Lord abides in this church and in every church. Amen.

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 121:1, 2

A Psalm of David.

I was glad when they said to me,
“we will go to the house of the Lord.”
Our feet stood
in your courts, O Jerusalem.
Alleluia.

Mark 12:18-27

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Then Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection) came to him. They asked him, “Teacher, Moses wrote to us, ‘If a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife behind him but no children, his brother should take his wife, and raise up an offspring for his brother.’ There were seven brothers. The first took a wife, died, and left no offspring. The second [brother] took her and [also] died, leaving no

children behind him. The third likewise; and so the seven [brothers] married her and left no children. Last of all, the woman also died. In the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For the seven [brothers] had her as a wife.”

Jesus answered them, “Is this not why you are mistaken, by not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God? For when people {will} rise

from the dead, they do not marry or are given in marriage; instead, they are like angels in heaven. But regarding the fact that the dead are raised, have not you read in the book of Moses (in the passage about the Bush), how

God spoke to him, saying: 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living! This is why you are greatly misled." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Last Friday of Great Lent

The Morning or Prime Prophecies

Genesis 49:33-50:26

From the book of Genesis of Moses the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And Jacob finished giving orders to his sons, and lifted up his feet onto the bed, and breathed his last, and was added to his people.

And Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him, and kissed him. And Joseph ordered his servants the embalmers to embalm his father, and the embalmers embalmed Israel. And they completed his forty days, for so the days of embalming are numbered. And Egypt mourned for him seventy days.

Then after the days of mourning had past, Joseph spoke to the princes of Pharaoh, saying, "If I have found favour in your sight, speak in Pharaoh's ear, saying, 'My father made me swear an oath, saying, "In the tomb that I dug for myself in the land of Chanaan, there you will bury me." Now then I will go up and bury my father, and come back.'" And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

So Joseph went up to bury his father; and all the servants of Pharaoh went up with him, and the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and all the house of his father, his kindred. And they left behind the sheep and the oxen in the land of Gesem. And chariots and horsemen went up with him, and the company was very great. And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and they mourned him with a great and very strong lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And the inhabitants of the land of Chanaan saw the mourning at the floor of Atad, and said, "This is a great mourning to the Egyptians." Therefore, one called its name, "The mourning of Egypt," which is beyond the Jordan. And so his sons did this to him, just as he commanded them. So his sons carried him up into the

land of Chanaan, and buried him in the double cave, opposite Mambre, the cave that Abraham had bought for property of a burying place, from Ephron the Chettite. And Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brethren, and they who had gone up with him to bury his father.

And when the Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph may bear a grudge against us, and repay us all the evil that we have done to him." And they came to Joseph, and said, "Your father commanded *us* before his death, saying, 'Say this Joseph, "Forgive them their injustice and their sin, seeing that they have done you evil."' And now, pardon the injustice of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept as they spoke to him. And they came to him and said, "We are your servants." And Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for I am God's. You took counsel against me for evil, but God took counsel for me for good, in

order that a numerous people might be fed." And he said to them, "Do not Fear, I will sustain you, and your households." And he comforted them, and spoke to their heart.

And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his brothers, and the entire household of his father. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw the children of Ephraim to the third generation, and the sons of Machir, the son of Manasse, were brought up on Joseph's knees.

And Joseph spoke to his brothers, saying, "I am about to die, but God will surely visit you, and will bring you out of this land, to the land God swore to our fathers, Abraam, Isaac, and Jacob." And Joseph took an oath from the sons of Israel, saying, "At the time of the visitation with which God will visit you, you shall carry up my bones from here with you." And Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and put him in a coffin in Egypt.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Proverbs 11:27-12:22

From the book of the Proverbs of Solomon the King. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

He who devises good seeks good favour,

but he who seeks evil, it will overtake him.

He who trusts in wealth will fall,

but he who helps the righteous will rise.

He who does not deal graciously with his own house will inherit the wind,

and the fool will be the servant of the wise man.

A tree of life grows from the fruit of righteousness,

but the souls of transgressors are
cut off before their time.

If the righteous hardly be saved,
where will the ungodly and the
sinner appear?

He who loves instruction loves
perception,

but he who hates correction is a
fool.

He who finds favour with the
Lord *is made* better,

but a transgressor will be passed
over in silence.

A man will not prosper by wickedness,

but the roots of the righteous will
not be pulled out.

A courageous wife is a crown to
her husband,

But an evildoing wife destroys her
husband like a worm in wood.

The thoughts of the righteous *are*
true judgments,

but the ungodly devise deceits.

The words of the ungodly are
crafty,

but the mouth of the upright will
deliver them.

When the ungodly turns, he vanishes away,

but the houses of the righteous
endure.

The mouth of an understanding
man is praised by a man,

but he who is slow of heart is
mocked.

It is better for a man in dishonour
to be a servant to himself,

than one who honours himself
while he lacks food.

A righteous man has compassion
on the lives of his cattle,

but the bowels of the ungodly are
without mercy.

He who tills his own land will be
satisfied with bread,

but those who pursue vain things
are in need of discernment.

He who enjoys himself in banquets of wine

will leave behind disgrace in his
own strongholds.

The desires of the ungodly are
evil,

but the roots of the godly are
firmly set.

A sinner falls into a snare by the
sin of *his*,

but a righteous man escapes from
them.

He whose looks are gentle will be
pitied,

but he who contends in the gates
will afflict souls.

The soul of a man will be filled
with good from the fruits of his
mouth,

and the recompence of his lips will
be given to him.

The ways of fools are right in their
own eyes,

but a wise man listens to advice.

A fool expresses his anger at once,
but the prudent man hides his

own disgrace.

A righteous man declares the truth
as it is,

but an unjust witness is deceitful.
Some wound as they speak, *like*
swords,
but the tongues of the wise heal.
Truthful lips establish a testimony,
but a hasty witness has an unjust
tongue.
There is deceit in the heart of he
who imagines evil,
but those who advise peace will be
glad.

No injustice will please a righteous
man,
but the ungodly will be filled with
evil.
Lying lips are an abomination to
the Lord,
but he who acts faithfully is ac-
ceptable to Him.
Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Isaias 66:10-24

From the book of Isaias the Prophet. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

Rejoice, O Jerusalem,
and celebrate a festival in her, all
you who love her,
rejoice greatly with joy,
all you who *now* mourn over her,
that you may nurse and be satis-
fied
from her consoling breast,
that with much nursing you may
take delight
in the entrance to her glory.
For this is what the Lord says,
“Look, I Myself turn to them like
a river of peace,
and like a brook flooding the glory
of the Nations;
their children will be carried on
shoulders and comforted on knees.
As a mother comforts one,
so will I also comfort you,
and you will be comforted in Jeru-
salem.
And you will see, and your heart
will rejoice,

and your bones will grow like
grass,
and the hand of the Lord will be
known to those who fear Him,
and He will threaten those who
disobey Him.
For, look, the Lord will come like
fire,
and His chariots like a storm,
to render vengeance with wrath,
and rebuke with a flame of fire.
For all the earth will be judged by
the fire of the Lord,
and all flesh by His sword;
many shall be wounded by the
Lord.
Those who sanctify and purify
themselves in the gardens, and eat
swine’s flesh or any abomination in
the porches, or any abominations, or
the mouse, will be consumed togeth-
er,” says the Lord.
“And I *know* their works and their
reasonings. I am coming to gather all

nations and tongues; and they will come, and see My glory. And I will leave signs upon them, and I will send forth those who are saved of them to the nations, to Tharsis, Phoud, Lud, Mosoch, to Thobel, and to Greece, and to the far off islands, to those who have not heard My Name, nor seen My glory; and they will declare My glory among the Nations. And they will bring your brethren out of all nations as a gift to the Lord with horses and chariots, in litters *drawn by* mules with sunshades, into the holy city Jerusalem,” said the Lord,” just as the children of Israel would bring Me their sacrifices with psalms into the house of the Lord. And I will take for Myself some of them as priests and Levites,” says the Lord.

“For as the new heaven and the new earth,

which I am making, remain before me,” says the Lord,

so will your offspring and your name endure.

And it will happen from month to month,

and from Sabbath to Sabbath,

that all flesh will come to worship before Me in Jerusalem,”

says the Lord.

“And they will go forth and see the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me, for their worm will not die, and their fire will not be extinguished; and they will be a spectacle to all flesh.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

Job 42:7-17

From the book of Job the Righteous. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

And it happened, after the Lord had spoken all these words to Job, *that* the Lord said to Eliphaz the Thaimanite, “You have sinned, and your two friends, for you have not spoken anything true before My presence, as my servant Job *has*. Now then, take seven calves and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and he will offer a burnt offering for you. And my servant Job will pray for you, for I will only accept his face, for if not for him, I would have destroyed you, for what you have spoken against my servant Job is not the

truth.” So Eliphaz the Thaimanite, and Baldad the Sauchite, and Sophar the Minitite went and did as the Lord commanded them, and He absolved them of their sin for Job’s sake.

And the Lord prospered Job, and when he prayed also for his friends, He forgave them *their* sin. And the Lord gave Job twice as much, even double what he had before.

And all his brothers and his sisters heard about all that had happened to him, and they came to him, as *did* all that had known him from the first. And they ate and drank with him, and

comforted him, and they wondered at all that the Lord had brought upon him. And each one gave him a lamb, and four drachms' weight of unstamped gold.

And the Lord blessed the latter years of Job, *more* than his beginning, and his livestock consisted of fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand donkeys. And there were born to him seven sons and three daughters. And he named the first Day, and the second Cassia, and

the third Amalthia's horn. And in all the land there were not found any women so beautiful as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. And Job lived after *his* affliction one hundred and seventy years, and all the years he lived were two hundred and forty-eight; and Job saw his sons and his sons' sons, for four generations. And Job died, an old man and full of days.

Glory to the Holy Trinity.

The Morning or Prime Gospel

Psalm 97:4, 5, 6a

A Psalm of David.

Shout for joy to God, all the earth;
sing and rejoice, and sing psalms.
Make music to the Lord with a lyre,
with a lyre and the tune of a psalm.
With metal trumpets and the trumpet of the horn.
Alleluia.

Luke 17:20-37

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

Being asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, Jesus answered them, "The Kingdom of God does not come with observation! Neither will people say, 'Look, here!' or, 'Look, there!' for behold, the Kingdom of God is in your midst."

Jesus told the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. People will tell you, 'Look, here!' or 'Look, there!' Do not go away or follow [them], for as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will

the Son of Man be in his day. But first, he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. As it happened in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People ate, drank, got married, were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered into the ship; and the flood came, destroying them all. Likewise, even as it happened in the days of Lot: people ate, drank, bought, sold, planted and built. But in the day that Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from the sky which destroyed them all. It will be the same in the day that the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, whoever is on the housetop, [having] his goods in the house, should not go

down to take them away! Likewise, whoever is in the field should not return. Remember Lot's wife! Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you that in that night, there will be two people in one bed. One will be taken, and the other will be left. There will be two grinding grain together. One will be taken, and the other will be left." Two will be in the field: one will be taken, and the other left.

In reply, the disciples asked him, "Where, Lord?"

He said to them, "Where the body is, there the eagles will also be assembled." *Glory be to God forever.*

The Pauline Epistle

2 Timothy 3:1-4:5

A chapter from the Second Epistle of our teacher Paul to Timothy. His blessing be upon us. Amen.

But know that in the last days, troubled times will come. People will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful and unholy. [They will be] without natural affection, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, no lovers of good, treacherous, stubborn, self-important, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; having an appearance of godliness but having rejected its [inner] meaning. Stay away from these people too. Indeed, some

of these creep into houses and captivate gullible women who are burdened with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Even as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, these people also oppose the truth. They are mentally corrupted and as far as the faith is concerned, they are rejected. But they will not go very far because their folly will be evident to all, as in the case of Jannes and Jambres.

You, however, have paid close attention to my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, steadfastness, persecutions, and sufferings. You know what happened to me at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. I endured those persecutions and the Lord delivered me out of them all! Yes, all those who desire to lead godly lives in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others, being themselves deceived. As for you, remain in what you have learned which is what you firmly believe, knowing from whom you have learned them. From infancy, you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof,

for correction and for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may be fully qualified, completely equipped for every good work.

Before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom, I charge you to preach the word. Welcome or unwelcome, insist on it; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all patience and teaching. For the time will come when people will not listen to the sound doctrine, but, having itching ears, they will gather around them teachers that agree with their own lusts. They will turn away their ears from the truth and turn to fables. As for you, be sober in all things, put up with suffering, do the work of one who proclaims the Good News and fulfill your ministry.

*The grace of God the Father be with you all.
Amen.*

The Catholic Epistle

James 5:7-16a

The Catholic Epistle from the Epistle of our teacher James. His Blessing be upon us. Amen.

Therefore, be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receives the early and late rain. You also should be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

Brethren, do not grumble against one another, so that you will not be

judged. Behold, the judge stands at the door! Brethren, consider as an example of suffering and patience the prophets who spoke in the Name of the Lord. Behold, we call them blessed who endured. You have heard of the patience of Job and you have seen the Lord in the outcome, how the Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

But above all things, my brethren, do not swear, neither by heaven or earth, nor by any other oath. Instead, let your “yes” be “yes,” and your “no,” “no;” so that you may not fall into hypocrisy.

Are any among you suffering? Let them pray. Are any cheerful? Let them sing praises. Are any among you sick? Let them call for the presbyters of the Church: they should pray over

them and anoint them with oil in the Name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will heal those who are sick and the Lord will raise them up. If they have committed sins, they will be forgiven. Confess your offenses to one another and pray for one another in order to be healed.

Do not love the world, nor the things which are in the world. The world shall pass away and all its desires; but he who does the will of God shall abide forever. Amen.

The Praxis

Acts 15:1-18

A chapter from the Acts of our fathers the pure Apostles, who were invested with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Their blessing be with us all. Amen.

Then, certain men came down from Judea and taught the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved!” As a result, Paul and Barnabas had no small dispute and controversy with them. Therefore, the brethren appointed Paul, Barnabas and some of their own to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and presbyters about this question. Having been sent on their way by the Church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, relating the conversion of the Gentiles and causing great joy to all the brethren. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were received by the Church, the apostles and the presbyters, and they reported all that God had accomplished with them.

But some believers from the sect of the Pharisees arose and said, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses!”

The apostles and the presbyters gathered together to discuss this matter. When there had been much discussion, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brethren, you know that some time ago, God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the nations should hear the word of the Good News and believe. God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he had done to us. He made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. And now, why do you put God to the test by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples,

one which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they are.”

At this, the whole multitude kept silence. They listened to Barnabas and Paul report what signs and wonders God had accomplished among the nations through them. When they had finished, James said, “Brethren, listen to me! Simeon has reported how God first showed concern towards the Gentiles in order to take from them a people for his Name. This agrees with the words of the prophets. As it is written:

*‘After these things I will return.
I will again build the tabernacle of
David, which has fallen.
I will again build its ruins.
I will set it up,
That the rest of men may seek after
the Lord;
All the Gentiles who are called by
my Name,
Says the Lord, who does all these
things.
All his works are known to God
from eternity.’
The word of the Lord abides in this church and
in every church. Amen.*

The Liturgy Gospel

Psalm 97:8b, 9

A Psalm of David.

The mountains will rejoice [before the Lord];
for He comes to judge the earth;
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with uprightness.
Alleluia.

Luke 13:31-35

Stand with the fear of God. Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Bless, O Lord, the reading of the Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke. Blessed be He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God, Saviour, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, to Whom is glory forever.

On that same day, some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, “Leave this place and go somewhere else, for Herod wants to kill you!”

Jesus replied, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow,

and the third day I fulfill my end. Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the next day, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.’

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [you] that kills the prophets and stones those

who are sent to her! How often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is left to

you desolate! I tell you, you will not see me, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord!'" *Glory be to God forever.*

