

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

These are the ones who, living in the flesh, planted the Church with their blood; they drank the chalice of the Lord and became the friends of God.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you came to reconcile us to one another and to the Father:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division: Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you intercede for us with your Father:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God **Amen.**

THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father have mercy on us;

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us;

you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father have mercy on us;

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD**FIRST READING Acts 12:1 - 11****A reading from the Acts of the Apostles**

King Herod started persecuting certain members of the Church. He beheaded James the brother of John, and when he saw that this pleased the Jews he decided to arrest Peter as well. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread, and he put Peter in prison, assigning four squads of four soldiers each to guard him in turns. Herod meant to try Peter in public after the end of Passover week. All the time Peter was under guard the Church prayed to God for him unremittingly.

On the night before Herod was to try him, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, fastened with double chains, while guards kept watch at the main entrance to the prison. Then suddenly the angel of the Lord stood there, and the cell was filled with light. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him. 'Get up!' he said 'Hurry!' - and the chains fell from his hands. The angel then said, 'Put on your belt and sandals'. After he had done this, the angel next said, 'Wrap your cloak round you and follow me'. Peter followed him, but had no idea that what the angel did was all happening in reality; he thought he was seeing a vision. They passed through two guard posts one after the other, and reached the iron gate leading to

the city. This opened of its own accord; they went through it and had walked the whole length of one street when suddenly the angel left him. It was only then that Peter came to himself. 'Now I know it is all true', he said. 'The Lord really did send his angel and has saved me from Herod and from all that the Jewish people were so certain would happen to me'.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (P.S. 33:2-9)

R. From all my terrors the Lord set me free.

1. I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad **[R]**

2. Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free. **[R]**

3. Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress. **[R]**

4. The angel of the Lord is encamped
around those who revere him, to rescue them.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
He is happy who seeks refuge in him. **[R]**

SECOND READING 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18**A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to Timothy.**

My life is already being poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to be gone. I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith; all there is to come now is the crown of righteousness reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his Appearing.

The Lord stood by me and gave me power, so that through me the whole message might be proclaimed for all the pagans to hear; and so I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from all evil attempts on me, and bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 16: 13-19**A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.**

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you', he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that



focus on sunday

The Lord has set us firm within his Church, which he built upon the rock of Saint Peter's faith. The Lord has given us knowledge of the faith through the labours and preaching of Saint Paul.

May their example inspire us to lead others to Christ by the way we live our lives.



revealed this to you but my father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

All bow for following two lines: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray brothers and sisters,

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.



Today we celebrate Christian leadership within the church. One of the big messages of leadership from Pope Francis is about the mercy of God:

MERCY

"Before repentance, "the righteousness of God... is transformed into mercy, and forgiveness." But first we must be ashamed of our sins. It is true, none of us have killed anyone, but many small things, so many everyday sins, everyday... And when one thinks: 'But what, but what a tiny heart I have: I did this against the Lord'. Being ashamed and sorry before God is a grace, it is the grace of being sinners.

"The merciful man and the woman have a wide, wide open heart: They always forgive others and think about their own sins. 'But you saw what he did?'. But I've had enough with what I have done and I will not interfere! This is the path of mercy which we have to seek. But if all of us, if all peoples, individuals, families, communities, if we all had this attitude, what peace there would be in the world, how much peace in our hearts! For mercy leads us to peace. Always remember: 'Who am I to judge? '. Be ashamed and open wide your heart. May the Lord give us this grace.' These were words of Pope Francis at a morning homily.

MERCY AND PEACE

Interesting that he links mercy and peace. Real peace, with negotiation, is based on justice for all and mercy covering past relationships. Both Peter and Paul found a similar link between justice and peace in their leadership of their various local churches.

Lord make us instruments of peace. Help us towards mercy in our hearts to all.
Donal Neary SJ.