

## **Liturgy for the Preborn**

*Your eyes saw my unformed body.  
All the days ordained for me  
were written in your book  
before one of them came to be*

*Psalm 139:16*

## Liturgical Prayer for the Pre-born

### Part I. Liturgy at the Time of Death

*This Litany is said on behalf of the pre-born who are abandoned to death each day and are being discarded without any burial, blessing or commendation to God their Creator.*

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. *1 Corinthians 15:57*

### Opening Collect

Almighty God, look on your children, lying in great weakness, and comfort *them* with the promise of life everlasting, given in the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

God the Father,  
**Have mercy on your servants.**

God the Son,  
**Have mercy on your servants.**

God the Holy Spirit,  
**Have mercy on your servants.**

Holy Trinity, one God,  
**Have mercy on your servants.**

From all evil, from all sin, from all tribulation,  
**Good Lord, deliver them.**

By your holy Incarnation, by your Cross and Passion, by your precious Death and Burial,  
**Good Lord, deliver them.**

By your glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by the Coming of the Holy Spirit,  
**Good Lord, deliver them.**

We beseech you to hear us, Lord Christ: That it may please you to deliver the souls of your servants from the power of evil and eternal death,  
**We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.**

That it may please you to grant *them* a place of refreshment and everlasting blessedness,  
**We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.**

That it may please you to give *them* joy and gladness in your kingdom, with your saints in light,  
**We beseech you to hear us, good Lord.**

Jesus, Lamb of God:  
**Have mercy on them.**

Jesus, bearer of our sins:  
**Have mercy on them.**

Jesus, redeemer of the world:  
**Grant them your peace.**

## Ministry of the Word

*Old Testament, Responsorial Psalms, New Testament, and Gospel readings are to be chosen from the following; or optionally other Scripture readings that are appropriate. A reading from each section of Scripture does not necessarily need to be used in every time of prayer, but when used, should be done so in order of section.*

*All Scripture Readings were taken from the New International Version bible.*

## Old Testament Readings

### **Genesis 1:26-28a**

**26** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." **27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. **28** God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### **Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17**

<sup>8</sup> Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup> The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. <sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### **Genesis 3:1-15**

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" <sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of

## Prayer of St. Michael

*(Warfare Prayer Request in the Name of Christ to commission Michael the Archangel to fight for the Church)*

Saint Michael the Archangel,  
defend us in battle.

Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil.  
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray;  
and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host -  
by the Divine Power of God -  
cast into hell, Satan and all the evil spirits,  
who roam throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls.

(In Jesus' Name we pray)... Amen.

*"At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people--everyone whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered.*

- Daniel 12:1

*"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"*

- Matthew 26:53

## Closing Prayer - For an End to Abortion

Oh God, who is the Beginning and the End, we thank you that you have heard our prayers as we cry out to you to end the merciless shedding of innocent blood in our nation and throughout the world. Through death You have conquered death and through your life we experience eternal and everlasting life. Cause life to spring forth in the hearts of all people and bring forth a love and respect for life that will dominate our culture. May your kingdom and church apprehend and overtake the culture of death that has prevailed through deceit and selfishness; may the Seed of the woman crush the head of the serpent through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*(Optional – closing worship music, if available)*

May the Blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you, and those whom you love, this day and forever.  
**Amen.**

*You may dismiss with one of the following:*

Let us go forth in the Name of Christ..

Go forth in peace to love and serve the Lord..

Let us go forth rejoicing in the Power of the Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.”<sup>4</sup> “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.<sup>5</sup> “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”<sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.<sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”<sup>10</sup> He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”<sup>11</sup> And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”<sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### **Genesis 15:1-6**

<sup>1</sup>After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”<sup>2</sup> But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?”<sup>3</sup> And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”<sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.”<sup>5</sup> He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”<sup>6</sup> Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## **Exodus 1:15-21**

<sup>15</sup> The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, <sup>16</sup> “When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.” <sup>17</sup> The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. <sup>18</sup> Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, “Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?” <sup>19</sup> The midwives answered Pharaoh, “Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive.” <sup>20</sup> So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. <sup>21</sup> And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## **Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

<sup>15</sup> See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. <sup>16</sup> For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. <sup>19</sup> This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live <sup>20</sup> and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## **Isaiah 9:2-7**

<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. <sup>3</sup> You have

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

### 5. For Institutions, Industries, & Leaders

Only Wise and Omniscient Lord, the source of all true knowledge, pour out you Spirit upon all legal, medical, and educational institutions; upon the entertainment, news media, other industries and their leaders; that the world's knowledge of good and evil might remain in agreement with your will, in order that life would be chosen over death among all people. Bring about the closing of all abortion clinics, and raise up life-promoting entities in their place.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

### 6. For Government Rulers

Oh Ruler of the nations, many of the kings of the earth have set themselves against you, they rebel against your rule. Yet you have set your King on your holy hill of Zion so that in every local, state, provincial and national government you would rule in the midst of your enemies. We pray that you would strengthen and uphold those rulers that, by your grace, are following your ways and purposes.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

### 7. For Pro-Life Charity

Almighty God, source of all divine charity, empower and unite all those who labor for life and defend its sanctity through prayer and good works. May those who see and hear our pro-life witness receive your truth given in love. Drive out the fear and destroy the lies that mothers and fathers of the unborn believe, and that abortion workers further and falsely defend. Grant fortitude and success to all pro-life charities for the sake of the Pre-born and all others whose lives are threatened, promoting justice for the defenseless and poor, mercy and truth for the ignorant, and the knowledge of God's love for all.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

## 2. Restoration of the Holiness and Protection of the Womb

Oh Holy God, our Rock and our Fortress, you used the womb of Mary to be a tabernacle for the dwelling of the Incarnation, where the Holy Son of God was to be nurtured and protected. You created the womb of woman that the miracle of human life might be nurtured and protected. Many women have been deceived to believe that their womb is not a place of holy protection for human life, but that it is simply another appendage of their body. Renew and restore your divine purpose and will concerning the womb of all women throughout the earth, that you may be rightly glorified in all your creation.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

## 3. For Forgiveness

Oh God of mercy and grace, as you hung on the hard wooden cross, you asked that those who were putting you to death might be forgiven. Grant that same forgiveness to those who participate in abortion, euthanasia, and the destruction of embryonic life, and who by other means violate the sanctity of human life. May all be reconciled to you O God, our Master, who is patient and slow to anger, and who desires that all be saved. Empower us, your Church, to faithfully carry the message of reconciliation to all.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

## 4. For Healing

Oh God, our Compassionate Healer, whose Son took our infirmities, carried our sorrows, and by whose wounds we are healed; mercifully grant to all abortive mothers especially, and to fathers and other family members, a restoration and renewal of heart, mind, body and soul. Grant also, we pray, your peace to those who have left the abortion industry in search of new life. Assist those who minister healing to them both, with the anointing and good counsel of your Holy Spirit.

enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.<sup>4</sup> For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.<sup>5</sup> Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.<sup>7</sup> Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## **Isaiah 11:1-9**

<sup>1</sup>A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. <sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—<sup>3</sup> and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;<sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. <sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup>They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## Isaiah 51:1-4

<sup>1</sup>“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn; <sup>2</sup> look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many. <sup>3</sup> The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## Isaiah 53:1-6

<sup>1</sup>Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? <sup>2</sup> He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. <sup>4</sup> Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## Jeremiah 1:4-10

<sup>4</sup> The word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>5</sup> “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” <sup>6</sup> “Alas, Sovereign LORD,”

## Intercessions

**Collect:** O God of Beginnings, You are the Creator of all life. As we pray for the end of abortion, be near us as we unite with our Pre-born brothers and sisters who are scheduled for death. May You, by your Holy Spirit and by the voice of your Church, lead your people to rescue from death the innocent children, and bring those who participate in their death to repentance and a saving knowledge of your love, that they may taste of your goodness, mercy and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Pour out your grace, O God ...**And grant faith to pregnant mothers.**

Pour out your virtue, O God ...**And grant love to "preborn" fathers.**

*The following intercessions may be lead by one person or several different persons, in turn, in order to maximize participation; but followed by the response, said by all.*

### 1. For Spiritual Warfare

Almighty and Powerful God, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and we know that victory comes from you. We ask that you would drive all evil spirits away from the innocent Pre-born children and from the killing-centers where their destruction is planned. Grant us wisdom and patience to overcome evil with good. Strengthen us in prayer and equip us with your victorious gifts. Shine your light upon the darkness and upon those who are deceived by the evil one. Rebuke the enemy for the sake of the innocent children and come to the aid of your servants as we call upon your Name.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Officiant:* Lord, open our lips

*People:* **And our mouth will declare your praise.**

**Glory to the Father and the Son and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

### **Responsive Psalm**

*Officiant reads one verse and people respond with the next verse in bold.*

### **Psalm 139:11-16**

<sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"

<sup>12</sup> **even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.**

<sup>13</sup> For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup> **I praise you because I am fearfully and  
wonderfully made; your works are too  
wonderful, I know that full well.**

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you when I was  
made in the secret place. When I was woven  
together in the depths of the earth,

<sup>16</sup> **your eyes saw my unformed body.  
All the days ordained for me  
were written in your book  
before one of them came to be.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen**

I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am too young." <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. <sup>8</sup> Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your mouth. <sup>10</sup> See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### **Jeremiah 31:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> This is what the LORD says: "A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." <sup>16</sup> This is what the LORD says: "Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded," declares the LORD. "They will return from the land of the enemy. <sup>17</sup> So there is hope for your descendants," declares the LORD. "Your children will return to their own land.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### **Malachi 4:4-6**

<sup>4</sup> "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. <sup>5</sup> "See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup> He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction."

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

**Psalm Readings** - *Can be read with or without the Response*

**Psalm 2**

**Response: God is the King and Author of life.**

<sup>1</sup>Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing?

<sup>2</sup>The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*,

<sup>3</sup>“Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.”

**Response: God is the King and Author of life.**

<sup>4</sup>He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. <sup>5</sup>Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: <sup>6</sup>“Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.”

**Response: God is the King and Author of life.**

<sup>7</sup>“I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, ‘You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You. <sup>8</sup>Ask of Me, and I will give *You* The nations *for* Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.

**Response: God is the King and Author of life.**

**Psalm 10**

**Response: Arise Lord! Lift up your hand, O God.**

In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak,  
who are caught in the schemes he devises.

He boasts of the cravings of his heart, he blesses the greedy  
and reviles the Lord

**General Confession**

Almighty and most merciful Father,  
we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,  
we have followed too much the devices and desires  
of our own hearts,  
we have offended against thy holy laws,  
we have left undone those things which we ought to have done,  
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.  
But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us,  
spare thou those who confess their faults,  
restore thou those who are penitent,  
according to thy promises declared unto mankind  
in Christ Jesus our Lord;  
and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,  
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the  
glory of thy holy Name. **Amen.**

*If present, a Bishop or Priest alone may say the following absolution below:  
(Otherwise, a Deacon or Lay Leader may insert "us" and "our")*

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you (*us*) absolution and remission of all your (*our*) sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*(Optional) This time can used for someone to give a personal testimony, other pro-life witness or teaching, or perhaps used as a time for private or individual intercession, silent or aloud, before continuing with the Collect.*

**Collect:** O God, our Heavenly Father, you raised up your One and Only-Begotten Son, who is the Word of Truth who intercedes for us now in Your Presence; answer our prayer as we stand in your truth on behalf of the Preborn and pronounce your Word to the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## Part II. Intercessory Prayer for Life & the End of Abortion

*This Intercession is made for the pre-born who are threatened by abortion, for their families, and for all those who are being deceived by Satan in regard to abortion.*

Almighty and merciful God, recognizing our own participation as a nation in the death of pre-born children, and the deception of those who actively participate in their deaths, we ask that you would grant mercy and grace to the pre-born and bring the deceived into a true conversion experience that they may know you, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, One God forever and ever. **Amen**

*Officiant:* Let us pray with the response,  
**“Have mercy on us, O Lord”!**

God the Father, Creator of the world,

God the Son, through whom all things were made,

God the Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life,

Lord Jesus, Defender of the helpless,

For the sin of abortion,

For the daily killing of innocent babies,

For the bloodshed through the land,

For the silent screams of Your children,

For the exploitation of women by abortion,

For the abandonment of children by their fathers,

For the rejection of children by their mothers,

For the silence of Your people.

**Response: Arise Lord! Lift up your hand, O God.**

He lies in wait near the villages; from an ambush he murders the innocent, He lies in wait like a lion in cover; he lies in wait to catch the helpless.

**Response: Arise Lord! Lift up your hand, O God.**

You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them and hear their cry, Defending the fatherless and the oppressed, so that the earthly man may terrify no more.

**Response: Arise Lord! Lift up your hand, O God.**

### Psalm 72

**Response: The LORD will bring justice to all the earth.**

Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness. He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.

**Response: The LORD will bring justice to all the earth.**

He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations. He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth. In his days the righteous will flourish; prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.

**Response: The LORD will bring justice to all the earth.**

He will rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. The desert tribes will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him; the kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts.

**Response: The LORD will bring justice to all the earth.**

All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him. For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

**Response: The LORD will bring justice to all the earth.**

### Psalm 139

**Response: You knew us before we were born.**

O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

**Response: You knew us before we were born.**

If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

**Response: You knew us before we were born.**

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are too wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

**Response: You knew us before we were born.**

### Commendatory Prayers

Deliver your servants, the Pre-born, O Sovereign Lord, from all evil, and set them free from every bond; that *they* may rest with all your saints in the eternal habitations; where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Officiant: Receive O Lord, your Preborn children, for they return to you.

People: **Into your hands, O Lord, we commend our brothers and sisters.**

*Officiant prays one or more of the following...*

Depart, O Christian souls, out of this world;  
In the Name of God the Father who created you;  
In the Name of Jesus Christ who redeems you;  
In the name of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies you.  
May your rest be this day in peace, and your dwelling place in the Paradise of God. **Amen**

Almighty God, our Father in heaven, before whom live all who die in the Lord: Receive our brothers and sisters into the courts of your heavenly dwelling place. Let their hearts and souls now ring out in joy to you, O Lord, the living God, and the God of those who live. **Amen**

May *their* souls and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

*(Worship music interlude - if available)*

## Homily *the Officiant*

### The Apostles' Creed *Officiant and People together*

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

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the  
Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the  
Father.

He will come again 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 the life everlasting. *Amen.*

### Celebration of the Eucharist *(if desired)*

*If the Eucharist is celebrated, the Liturgy continues afterwards with the  
Commendatory Prayers; if the Eucharist is not celebrated, then continue here  
below...*

*Officiant:* The Lord be with you.

*People:* **And with your spirit.**

*Officiant:* Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

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

## New Testament Readings

### Romans 8:35-39

<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?  
<sup>36</sup> As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

<sup>1</sup>If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. <sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup>It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup>Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup>It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### 1 Corinthians 15:19-26

<sup>19</sup> If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. <sup>20</sup> But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. <sup>24</sup> Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord  
*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## **2 Corinthians 5:16-19**

<sup>16</sup> So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord  
*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## **James 1:12-15**

<sup>13</sup> When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; <sup>14</sup> but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord  
*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

the right to become children of God— <sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. <sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord  
*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

## **John 16:19-22**

<sup>19</sup> Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'?" <sup>20</sup> Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. <sup>21</sup> A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. <sup>22</sup> So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord  
*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

## **John 18:36-37**

<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place." <sup>37</sup> "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord  
*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" <sup>43</sup> But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup> As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

### **Luke 15:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. <sup>2</sup> But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." <sup>3</sup> Then Jesus told them this parable: <sup>4</sup> "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? <sup>5</sup> And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders <sup>6</sup> and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' <sup>7</sup> I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

### **John 1: 5-14**

<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave

### **Ephesians 6:10-17**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

### **Revelation 21:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup> I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'"

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

*Response:* **Thanks be to God**

## Gospel Readings

### **Mt 1:18-23**

<sup>18</sup> This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

<sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

### **Mt 11:25-30**

<sup>25</sup> At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. <sup>26</sup> Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. <sup>27</sup> “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. <sup>28</sup> “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

### **Matthew 18:1-5**

<sup>1</sup>At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” <sup>2</sup> He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. <sup>3</sup> And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>5</sup> And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

### **Mark 4:21-23**

<sup>1</sup>He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? <sup>22</sup> For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. <sup>23</sup> If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.”

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

### **Luke 7:37-38**

<sup>37</sup> “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. <sup>38</sup> Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

*Response:* **Praise to you Lord Christ**

### **Luke 1:39-45**

<sup>39</sup> At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, <sup>40</sup> where she entered Zechariah’s home and greeted