

COLLECT

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Genesis 50:15-21

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Realising that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Or **Exodus 14:19-end**

PSALM Psalm 103:1-13

R *The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
[slow to anger and of great kindness].*

[Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits. **R**

He forgives all your sins
and heals all your infirmities;
He redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness; **R**

He satisfies you with good things,
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

The Lord executes righteousness
and judgement for all who are
oppressed.
He made his ways known to Moses
and his works to the children of Israel. **R**

The Lord is full of compassion and
mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness.
He will not always accuse us,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
He has not dealt with us according to our
sins,
nor rewarded us according to our
wickedness. **R**

For as the heavens are high above the
earth,
so is his mercy great upon those who
fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our sins from us.
As a father cares for his children,
so does the Lord care for those who fear
him. **R**

SECOND READING Romans 14:1-12

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Welcome those who are weak in faith,
but not for the purpose of quarrelling
over opinions. Some believe in eating
anything, while the weak eat only
vegetables. Those who eat must not
despise those who abstain, and those
who abstain must not pass judgement on
those who eat; for God has welcomed
them. Who are you to pass judgement
on servants of another? It is before their
own lord that they stand or fall. And
they will be upheld, for the Lord is able
to make them stand. Some judge one
day to be better than another, while
others judge all days to be alike. Let all
be fully convinced in their own minds.
Those who observe the day, observe it
in honour of the Lord. Also those who
eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since
they give thanks to God; while those
who abstain, abstain in honour of the
Lord and give thanks to God. We do
not live to ourselves, and we do not die
to ourselves. If we live, we live to the
Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord;
so then, whether we live or whether we
die, we are the Lord's. For to this end
Christ died and lived again, so that he
might be Lord of both the dead and the
living. Why do you pass judgement on
your brother or sister? Or you, why do
you despise your brother or sister? For
we will all stand before the judgement
seat of God. For it is written, "As I live,

says the Lord, every knee shall bow to
me, and every tongue shall give praise
to God." So then, each of us will be
accountable to God.

GOSPEL Matthew 18:21-35

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.*

Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord,
if another member of the church sins
against me, how often should I forgive?
As many as seven times?" Jesus said
to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell
you, seventy-seven times. For this
reason the kingdom of heaven may
be compared to a king who wished to
settle accounts with his slaves. When he
began the reckoning, one who owed
him ten thousand talents was brought
to him; and, as he could not pay, his
lord ordered him to be sold, together
with his wife and children and all his
possessions, and payment to be made.
So the slave fell on his knees before him,
saying, 'Have patience with me, and I
will pay you everything.' And out of pity
for him, the lord of that slave released
him and forgave him the debt. But that
same slave, as he went out, came upon
one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a
hundred denarii; and seizing him by the
throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then
his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded
with him, 'Have patience with me, and
I will pay you.' But he refused; then he
went and threw him into prison until he
would pay the debt. When his fellow-
slaves saw what had happened, they
were greatly distressed, and they went
and reported to their lord all that had
taken place. Then his lord summoned
him and said to him, 'You wicked slave!
I forgave you all that debt because you
pleaded with me. Should you not have
had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had
mercy on you?' And in anger his lord
handed him over to be tortured until
he would pay his entire debt. So my
heavenly Father will also do to every one
of you, if you do not forgive your brother
or sister from your heart."

POST COMMUNION

Keep, O Lord, your Church,
with your perpetual mercy;
and, because without you our human
frailty cannot but fall,
keep us ever by your help from all things
hurtful,
and lead us to all things profitable to our
salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.