

COLLECT

Heavenly Father,
whose children suffered at the
hands of Herod,
though they had done no
wrong;
by the suffering of your Son
and by the innocence of our
lives
frustrate all evil designs
and establish your reign of
justice and peace;
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

Jeremiah 31:15-17

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Thus says the LORD: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more. Thus says the LORD: Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work, says the LORD: they shall come back from the land of the enemy; there is hope for your future, says the LORD: your children shall come back to their own country.

PSALM Psalm 124

R *Our help is in the name of the Lord, [the maker of heaven and earth].*

If the Lord had not been on our side,
let Israel now say;
If the Lord had not been on our side,

when enemies rose up against us; **R**

Then would they have
swallowed us up alive
in their fierce anger towards us;
Then would the waters have
overwhelmed us
and the torrent gone over us. **R**

Then would the raging waters
have gone right over us.
Blessèd be the Lord!
he has not given us over to be
a prey for their teeth.
We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowler;
the snare is broken and we
have escaped. **R**

[Our help is in the name of the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.] **R**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:26-29

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

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-18

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

After the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to

Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son". When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

POST COMMUNION

Lord Jesus Christ,
in your humility you have
stooped to share our human
life

with the most defenceless of
your children:

may we who have received
these gifts of your passion
rejoice in celebrating the
witness of the holy innocents
to the purity of your sacrifice
made once for all upon the
cross;

for you are alive and reign, now
and for ever.