

COLLECT

Almighty God,
 you show to those who are in error
 the light of your truth,
 that they may return to the way of
 righteousness:
 grant to all those who are admitted
 into the fellowship of Christ's
 religion,
 that they may reject those things that
 are contrary to their profession,
 and follow all such things as are
 agreeable to the same;
 through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Genesis 12:1-4a

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

PSALM Psalm 121

R *My help comes from the Lord,
 [the maker of heaven and earth].*

I lift up my eyes to the hills;
 from where is my help to come?
 My help comes from the Lord,
 the maker of heaven and earth. **R**

He will not let your foot be moved
 and he who watches over you will not
 fall asleep.

Behold, he who keeps watch over
 Israel
 shall neither slumber nor sleep. **R**

The Lord himself watches over you;
 the Lord is your shade at your right
 hand,
 so that the sun shall not strike you by
 day,
 nor the moon by night. **R**

The Lord shall preserve you from all
 evil;

it is he who shall keep you safe.
 The Lord shall watch over your going
 out
 and your coming in,
 from this time forth for evermore. **R**

SECOND READING

Romans 4:1-5. 13-17

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

What are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") – Abraham believed in the presence of the God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

GOSPEL John 3:1-17

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

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very

truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

POST COMMUNION

Almighty God,
 you see that we have no power of
 ourselves to help ourselves:
 keep us both outwardly in our bodies,
 and inwardly in our souls;
 that we may be defended from all
 adversities which may happen to
 the body,
 and from all evil thoughts
 which may assault and hurt the soul;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.