

COLLECT

Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son
Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to us
the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before
us you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

(Alternative readings)

The reading from Acts must be read as either the First or Second Reading.

Either **Acts 8:26-end**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

An angel of the Lord said to Philip,
"Get up and go toward the south to the
road that goes down from Jerusalem
to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.)
So he got up and went. Now there was
an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of
the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians,
in charge of her entire treasury. He had
come to Jerusalem to worship and was
returning home; seated in his chariot,
he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then
the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this
chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to
it and heard him reading the prophet
Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand
what you are reading?" He replied, "How
can I, unless someone guides me?" And
he invited Philip to get in and sit beside
him. Now the passage of the scripture
that he was reading was this: "Like a
sheep he was led to the slaughter, and
like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth. In his
humiliation justice was denied him. Who
can describe his generation? For his
life is taken away from the earth." The
eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may
I ask you, does the prophet say this,
about himself or about someone else?"
Then Philip began to speak, and starting
with this scripture, he proclaimed to him
the good news about Jesus. As they
were going along the road, they came to
some water; and the eunuch said, "Look,
here is water! What is to prevent me
from being baptized?" He commanded
the chariot to stop, and both of them,
Philip and the eunuch, went down into
the water, and Philip baptized him. When
they came up out of the water, the Spirit

of the Lord snatched Philip away; the
eunuch saw him no more, and went on
his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself
at Azotus, and as he was passing through
the region, he proclaimed the good
news to all the towns until he came to
Caesarea.

Or **Baruch 3:9-15. 32 – 4:4**
or **Genesis 22:1-18**

PSALM Psalm 22:25-31

R *All the ends of the earth shall turn to
you, O Lord.*

My praise is of him in the great assembly,
I will perform my vows
in the presence of those who worship
him.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
and those who seek the Lord shall praise
him:

"May your heart live for ever!" **R**

All the ends of the earth
shall remember and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations
shall bow before him.

For kingship belongs to the Lord;
he rules over the nations. **R**

To him alone all who sleep in the earth
bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust fall before
him.

My soul shall live for him;
my descendants shall serve him;
they shall be known as the Lord's for ever.
They shall come and make known to a
people yet unborn
the saving deeds that he has done. **R**

SECOND READING

(Alternative readings)

Either **1 John 4:7-end**

A reading from the first letter of John.

Beloved, let us love one another, because
love is from God; everyone who loves is
born of God and knows God. Whoever
does not love does not know God, for
God is love. God's love was revealed
among us in this way: God sent his only
Son into the world so that we might live
through him. In this is love, not that we
loved God but that he loved us and sent
his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for
our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so
much, we also ought to love one another.
No one has ever seen God; if we love one
another, God lives in us, and his love is
perfected in us. By this we know that we
abide in him and he in us, because he has
given us of his Spirit. And we have seen

and do testify that the Father has sent
his Son as the Saviour of the world. God
abides in those who confess that Jesus is
the Son of God, and they abide in God.
So we have known and believe the love
that God has for us. God is love, and
those who abide in love abide in God,
and God abides in them. Love has been
perfected among us in this: that we may
have boldness on the day of judgement,
because as he is, so are we in this world.
There is no fear in love, but perfect love
casts out fear; for fear has to do with
punishment, and whoever fears has not
reached perfection in love. We love
because he first loved us. Those who say,
"I love God," and hate their brothers or
sisters, are liars; for those who do not love
a brother or sister whom they have seen,
cannot love God whom they have not
seen. The commandment we have from
him is this: those who love God must love
their brothers and sisters also.

Or **Acts 8:26-end**

GOSPEL John 15:1-8

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

Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the true
vine, and my Father is the vine-grower.
He removes every branch in me that
bears no fruit. Every branch that bears
fruit he prunes to make it bear more
fruit. You have already been cleansed
by the word that I have spoken to you.
Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the
branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it
abides in the vine, neither can you unless
you abide in me. I am the vine, you are
the branches. Those who abide in me
and I in them bear much fruit, because
apart from me you can do nothing.
Whoever does not abide in me is thrown
away like a branch and withers; such
branches are gathered, thrown into the
fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and
my words abide in you, ask for whatever
you wish, and it will be done for you. My
Father is glorified by this, that you bear
much fruit and become my disciples."

POST COMMUNION

Eternal God,
whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the
truth, and the life:
grant us to walk in his way,
to rejoice in his truth,
and to share his risen life;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.