

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

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-end

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

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.