

VESPERS (EVENING PRAYER)

Solemnity of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Introduction

Ps 69:2

☩ O God, ☩ come to our aid
☩ O Lord, make haste to help us

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

Hymn

Charles Wesley (1739)

Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
to his throne beyond the skies. Alleluia!
Christ, the Lamb for sinners given, Alleluia!
enters now the highest heaven. Alleluia!

There for him high triumph waits; Alleluia!
lift your heads, eternal gates. Alleluia!
He has conquered death and sin; Alleluia!
take the King of glory in. Alleluia!

Highest heaven its Lord receives; Alleluia!
yet he loves the earth he leaves. Alleluia!
Though returning to his throne, Alleluia!
still he calls us all his own. Alleluia!

Still for us he intercedes; Alleluia!
his atoning death he pleads, Alleluia!
near himself prepares our place, Alleluia!
he the firstfruits of our race. Alleluia!

There we shall with you remain, Alleluia!
partners of your endless reign, Alleluia!
see you with unclouded view, Alleluia!
find our heaven of heavens in you. Alleluia!

PSALMODY

The Messiah is king and priest

Ps 109(110):1-5, 7

He must be king so that he may put all his enemies under his feet (1 Cor 15:25)

Ant 1: He ascended to heaven * and is seated at the right hand of the Father. Alleluia!

The Lord's revelation to my Master:
'Sit on my right:
your foes I will put beneath your feet.'

**The Lord will wield from Sion
your sceptre of power:
rule in the midst of all your foes.**

A prince from the day of your birth
on the holy mountains;
from the womb before the dawn I begot you.

**The Lord has sworn an oath he will not change.
'You are a priest for ever,
a priest like Melchizedek of old.'**

The Master standing at your right hand
will shatter kings in the day of his wrath.

**He shall drink from the stream by the wayside
and therefore he shall lift up his head.**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Ant 1: He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. Alleluia!

He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and his kingdom will have no end

Ant 2: God goes up with shouts of joy; * **the Lord ascends with trumpet blast. Alleluia!**

All peoples, clap your hands,
cry to God with shouts of joy!
For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear,
great king over all the earth.

**He subdues peoples under us
and nations under our feet.
Our inheritance, our glory, is from him,
given to Jacob out of love.**

God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.
Sing praise for God, sing praise,
sing praise to our king, sing praise.

**God is king of all the earth,
sing praise with all your skill.
God is king over the nations;
God reigns on his holy throne.**

The princes of the peoples are assembled
with the people of Abraham's God.
The rulers of the earth belong to God,
to God who reigns over all.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,**
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Ant 2: **God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord ascends with trumpet blast. Alleluia!**

The judgement of God

Ant 3: Now the Son of Man has been glorified, * **and in him God has been glorified. Alleluia!**

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
who are and who were,
that you have taken your great power
and begun to reign.

**The nations raged,
but your wrath came,
and the time for the dead to be judged,
for rewarding your servants, the prophets and
saints,
and those who fear your name,
both small and great.**

Now the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Christ have come,
for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown
down,
who accuses them day and night before our God.

**And they have conquered him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
for they loved not their lives even unto death.
Rejoice, then, O heaven,
and you that dwell therein.**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
**as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Ant 3: **Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and in him God has been glorified. Alleluia!**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Scripture Reading

Acts 1:1-11

Jesus was lifted up while they looked on

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

Short Responsoy

I am ascending to my Father and your Father, alleluia, alleluia!

I am ascending to my Father and your Father, alleluia, alleluia!

I go to my God and your God, alleluia, alleluia!

I am ascending to my Father and your Father, alleluia, alleluia!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, alleluia, alleluia!

I am ascending to my Father and your Father, alleluia, alleluia!

GOSPEL CANTICLE

Magnificat

Luke 1:46-55

My soul rejoices in the Lord

Ant: King of Glory, Lord Almighty, * **today you have ascended victoriously above the heavens. Do not leave us as orphans without a guide, but send us the one whom you promised, the gift of the Father, the Spirit of Truth. Alleluia!**

My soul ✠ glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

The Almighty works marvels for me.

Holy his name!

**His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.**

He puts forth his arm in strength
and scatters the proud-hearted.
He casts the mighty from their thrones
and raises the lowly.

**He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.**

He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy,
the mercy promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and his sons for ever.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,**
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Ant: King of Glory, Lord Almighty, **today you have ascended victoriously above the heavens. Do not leave us as orphans without a guide, but send us the one whom you promised, the gift of the Father, the Spirit of Truth. Alleluia!**

CONCLUDING RITES

Intercessions and Our Father

Rejoicing, let us pray to Christ
who is seated at the right hand of the Father:

- ✠ King of glory, in you our mortal flesh has been lifted to the heights:
✠ **deliver us from the corruption of sin and restore us to immortal life.**
- ✠ Following the path of love, you came down to us from heaven:
✠ **let us follow that same path in our ascent to you.**
- ✠ You promised to draw all people to yourself:
✠ **do not let any of us be separated from your body.**
- ✠ You have ascended into heaven:
✠ **let us be there with you in our minds and hearts.**
- ✠ We await your coming in majesty on the great day of judgement:
✠ **may we then gaze upon your glory, with all the faithful departed.**

We pause to offer our own intentions

Let us now pray to the saviour in the words our Saviour gave us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Concluding Prayer

Gladden us with holy joys, almighty God,
and make us rejoice with devout thanksgiving,
for the Ascension of Christ your Son
is our exaltation,
and, where the Head has gone before in glory,
the Body is called to follow in hope.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Blessing

The Lord bless us, ✠ and keep us from all evil,
and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**