

CHRIST THE KING

Collect

Eternal God,
you exalted Jesus Christ to rule over all things,
and have made us instruments of his kingdom:
by your Spirit empower us to love the unloved,
and to minister to all in need,
then at the last bring us to your eternal realm
where we may be welcomed into your everlasting joy
and may worship and adore you for ever;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

1st Reading

Jeremiah 23.1-6

¹ Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord . ² Therefore, thus says the Lord , the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord . ³ Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord . ⁵ The days are surely coming, says the Lord , when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

Psalm

Song of Zechariah

Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel:
 you have come to your people and set them free.
You have raised up for us a mighty Saviour:
 born of the house of your servant David.
Through your holy prophets, you promised of old:
 to save us from our enemies, from the hands of
 all who hate us,
To show mercy to our forebears:
 and to remember your holy covenant.
This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:
 to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship you without fear:
 holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High:
 for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,
To give God's people knowledge of salvation:
 by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God:
 the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death:
 and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

2nd Reading

Colossians 1.11-20

¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.
¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; ¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible,

whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Gospel

Luke 23.33-43

³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷ and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.' ³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?' ⁴¹ And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' ⁴² Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' ⁴³ He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'