

Readings for Wednesday, March 18

Psalm 81

- 1 Sing with joy to God our strength * and raise a loud shout to the God of Jacob.
- 2 Raise a song and sound the timbrel, * the merry harp, and the lyre.
- 3 Blow the ram's-horn at the new moon, * and at the full moon, the day of our feast.
- 4 For this is a statute for Israel, * a law of the God of Jacob.
- 5 He laid it as a solemn charge upon Joseph, * when he came out of the land of Egypt.
- 6 I heard an unfamiliar voice saying, * "I eased his shoulder from the burden; his hands were set free from bearing the load."
- 7 You called on me in trouble, and I saved you; * I answered you from the secret place of thunder and tested you at the waters of Meribah.
- 8 Hear, O my people, and I will admonish you: * O Israel, if you would but listen to me!
- 9 There shall be no strange god among you; * you shall not worship a foreign god.
- 10 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and said, * "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it."
- 11 And yet my people did not hear my voice, * and Israel would not obey me.
- 12 So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their hearts, * to follow their own devices.
- 13 Oh, that my people would listen to me! * that Israel would walk in my ways!
- 14 I should soon subdue their enemies * and turn my hand against their foes.
- 15 Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him, * and their punishment would last for ever.
- 16 But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat * and satisfy him with honey from the rock.

Psalm 82

- 1 God takes his stand in the council of heaven; * he gives judgment in the midst of the gods:
- 2 "How long will you judge unjustly, * and show favor to the wicked?"
- 3 Save the weak and the orphan; * defend the humble and needy;
- 4 Rescue the weak and the poor; * deliver them from the power of the wicked.
- 5 They do not know, neither do they understand; they go about in darkness; * all the foundations of the earth are shaken.
- 6 Now I say to you, 'You are gods, * and all of you children of the Most High;
- 7 Nevertheless, you shall die like mortals, * and fall like any prince.'"
- 8 Arise, O God, and rule the earth, * for you shall take all nations for your own.

First Reading: Genesis 45:16-28

When the report was heard in Pharaoh's house, 'Joseph's brothers have come', Pharaoh and his servants were pleased. Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Say to your brothers, "Do this: load your animals and go back to the land of Canaan. Take your father and your households and come to me, so that I may give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you may enjoy the fat of the land.'" You are further charged to say, "Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Give no thought to your possessions, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'" ' The sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them wagons according to the instruction of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. To each one of them he gave a set of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of garments. To his father he sent the following: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey. Then he sent his brothers on their way, and as they were leaving he said to them, 'Do not quarrel along the way.' So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. And they told him, 'Joseph is still alive! He is even ruler over all the land of Egypt.' He was stunned; he could not believe them. But when they told him all the words of

Joseph that he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. Israel said, 'Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I must go and see him before I die.'

Reader: Here what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: **Thanks be to God.**



Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Mark 6:13-29

They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them. King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders

to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**



Collect of the Day

Celebrant:

Almighty God, you know that we have no power in 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, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Celebrant & People: **Amen.**

Readings for Wednesday, March 25

Psalms 119:121-144

- 121 I have done what is just and right; * do not deliver me to my oppressors.
- 122 Be surety for your servant's good; * let not the proud oppress me.
- 123 My eyes have failed from watching for your salvation * and for your righteous promise.
- 124 Deal with your servant according to your loving-kindness * and teach me your statutes.
- 125 I am your servant; grant me understanding, * that I may know your decrees.
- 126 It is time for you to act, O LORD, * for they have broken your law.
- 127 Truly, I love your commandments * more than gold and precious stones.

- 128 I hold all your commandments to be right for me; * all paths of falsehood I abhor.
- 129 Your decrees are wonderful; * therefore I obey them with all my heart.
- 130 When your word goes forth it gives light; * it gives understanding to the simple.
- 131 I open my mouth and pant; * I long for your commandments.
- 132 Turn to me in mercy, * as you always do to those who love your Name.
- 133 Steady my footsteps in your word; * let no iniquity have dominion over me.
- 134 Rescue me from those who oppress me, * and I will keep your commandments.
- 135 Let your countenance shine upon your servant * and teach me your statutes.
- 136 My eyes shed streams of tears, * because people do not keep your law.
- 137 You are righteous, O LORD, * and upright are your judgments.
- 138 You have issued your decrees * with justice and in perfect faithfulness.
- 139 My indignation has consumed me, * because my enemies forget your words.
- 140 Your word has been tested to the uttermost, * and your servant holds it dear.
- 141 I am small and of little account, * yet I do not forget your commandments.
- 142 Your justice is an everlasting justice * and your law is the truth.

143 Trouble and distress have come upon me, * yet your commandments are my delight.

144 The righteousness of your decrees is everlasting; * grant me understanding, that I may live.



First Reading: Genesis 50:15-26

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them. So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's household; and Joseph lived one hundred ten years. Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; the children of Machir son of Manasseh were also born on Joseph's knees. Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die; but God will surely come to you, and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." So Joseph made the Israelites swear, saying, "When God comes to you, you shall carry up my bones from here." And Joseph died, being one hundred ten years old; he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Reader: Here what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: **Thanks be to God.**



Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Mark 8:11-26

The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, asking him for a sign from heaven, to test him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation." And he left them, and getting into the boat again, he went across to the other side. Now the disciples had forgotten to bring any bread; and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod." They said to one another, "It is because we have no bread." And becoming aware of it, Jesus said to them, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" And they said to him, "Seven." Then he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?" They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Can you see anything?" And the man looked up and said, "I can see people, but they look like trees, walking." Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. Then he sent him away to his home, saying, "Do not even go into the village."

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**



Collect of the Day

Celebrant:

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Celebrant & People: **Amen.**

Readings for Wednesday, April 1

Psalm 128

- 1 Happy are they all who fear the LORD, * and who follow in his ways!
- 2 You shall eat the fruit of your labor; * happiness and prosperity shall be yours.
- 3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house, * your children like olive shoots round about your table.
- 4 The man who fears the LORD * shall thus indeed be blessed.
- 5 The LORD bless you from Zion, * and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.
- 6 May you live to see your children's children; * may peace be upon Israel.

Psalm 129

- 1 "Greatly have they oppressed me since my youth," * let Israel now say;
- 2 "Greatly have they oppressed me since my youth, * but they have not prevailed against me."
- 3 The plowmen plowed upon my back * and made their furrows long.
- 4 The LORD, the Righteous One, * has cut the cords of the wicked.
- 5 Let them be put to shame and thrown back, * all those who are enemies of Zion.

- 6 Let them be like grass upon the housetops, * which withers before it can be plucked;
- 7 Which does not fill the hand of the reaper, * nor the bosom of him who binds the sheaves;
- 8 So that those who go by say not so much as, "The LORD prosper you. * We wish you well in the Name of the LORD."

Psalm 130

- 1 Out of the depths have I called to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice; * let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
- 2 If you, LORD, were to note what is done amiss, * O LORD, who could stand?
- 3 For there is forgiveness with you; * therefore you shall be feared.
- 4 I wait for the LORD; my soul waits for him; * in his word is my hope.
- 5 My soul waits for the LORD, more than watchmen for the morning, * more than watchmen for the morning.
- 6 O Israel, wait for the LORD, * for with the LORD there is mercy;
- 7 With him there is plenteous redemption, * and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.



First Reading: Exodus 7:8-24

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a wonder,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.'" So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the Lord had commanded; Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same by their secret arts. Each one threw down his staff, and they became snakes; but Aaron's staff

swallowed up theirs. Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said. Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; stand by at the river bank to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that was turned into a snake. Say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, "Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness.'" But until now you have not listened. Thus says the Lord, "By this you shall know that I am the Lord." See, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall be turned to blood. The fish in the river shall die, the river itself shall stink, and the Egyptians shall be unable to drink water from the Nile.'" The Lord said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt—over its rivers, its canals, and its ponds, and all its pools of water—so that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the whole land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.'" Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and of his officials he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the river, and all the water in the river was turned into blood, and the fish in the river died. The river stank so that the Egyptians could not drink its water, and there was blood throughout the whole land of Egypt. But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said. Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. And all the Egyptians had to dig along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the river.

Reader: Here what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: **Thanks be to God.**



Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Mark 10:1-16

He left that place and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan. And crowds again gathered around him; and, as was his custom, he again taught them. Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, "Is it

lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.” But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**



Collect of the Day

Celebrant:

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Celebrant & People: **Amen.**