

April 15

SUNDAY OF THE WORLD CHURCH (Green Sunday)

Acts 9:23-31, I Peter 2:1-10, John 2:23-3:12

Psalm 44:1, 45:1 and 46:1

Alleluia, Alleluia. We have heard with our ears, O God, our ancestors have told us, what deeds you performed in their days, in the days of old.

My heart overflows with a goodly theme; I address my verses to the king; my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

The reading is from the Acts of the Apostles

When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night, to kill him; but his disciples took him by night and let him down over the wall, lowering him in a basket.

And when he had come to Jerusalem he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists; but they were seeking to kill him. And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him off to Tarsus.

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit it was multiplied.

(9:23-31)

Psalm 65:1

Alleluia, Alleluia. Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion; and to you prayers shall be offered in Jerusalem.

The reading is from the First Letter of Peter

So put away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander. Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation; for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes in him will not be put to shame." To you therefore who believe, he is precious, but for those who do not believe, "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner," and "A stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall"; for they stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy. (2:1-10)

Psalm 147:12-20

Alleluia, Alleluia. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!
For he strengthens the bars of your gates; he blesses your sons within you.
He makes peace in your borders; he fills you with the finest of the wheat.
He sends forth his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. He
gives snow like wool; he scatters hoarfrost like ashes. He casts
forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold? He
sends forth his word, and melts them; he makes his wind
blow, and the waters flow. He declares his word to
Jacob, his statutes and ordinances to Israel. He
has not dealt thus with any nation; they do
not know his ordinances. Praise the Lord!

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

Our Lord Jesus Christ:

Now he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did; but Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man; for he himself knew what was in man.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can this be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand this? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen; but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" (2:23-3:12)