

## COLLECT

Almighty Father,  
whose will is to restore all things  
in your beloved Son, the King of all:  
govern the hearts and minds of  
those in authority,  
and bring the families of the nations,  
divided and torn apart by the  
ravages of sin,  
to be subject to his just and gentle  
rule;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

## FIRST READING

### (Alternative readings)

Either

#### Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16

*A reading from the book of Wisdom.*

Wisdom is radiant and unfading,  
and she is easily discerned by those  
who love her, and is found by those  
who seek her. She hastens to make  
herself known to those who desire  
her. One who rises early to seek  
her will have no difficulty, for she  
will be found sitting at the gate. To  
fix one's thought on her is perfect  
understanding, and one who is  
vigilant on her account will soon be  
free from care, because she goes  
about seeking those worthy of her,  
and she graciously appears to them  
in their paths, and meets them in  
every thought.

#### Or Amos 5:18-24

*A reading from the book of the prophet Amos.*

Alas for you who desire the day of  
the LORD! Why do you want the  
day of the LORD? It is darkness, not  
light; as if someone fled from a lion,  
and was met by a bear; or went  
into the house and rested a hand  
against the wall, and was bitten by  
a snake. Is not the day of the LORD  
darkness, not light, and gloom with  
no brightness in it? I hate, I despise  
your festivals, and I take no delight  
in your solemn assemblies. Even  
though you offer me your burnt-  
offerings and grain-offerings, I will  
not accept them; and the offerings

of well-being of your fatted animals  
I will not look upon. Take away from  
me the noise of your songs; I will  
not listen to the melody of your  
harps. But let justice roll down like  
waters, and righteousness like an  
ever-flowing stream.

## PSALM Psalm 70

**R** *You are my helper and deliverer.  
[O Lord, make haste to help me.]*

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;  
O Lord, make haste to help me.  
Let those who seek my life  
be ashamed and altogether  
dismayed;  
let those who take pleasure in  
my misfortune  
draw back and be disgraced. **R**

Let those who say to me "Aha!"  
and gloat over me turn back,  
because they are ashamed.  
Let all who seek you rejoice and be  
glad in you;  
let those who love your salvation  
say for ever,  
"Great is the Lord!" **R**

But as for me, I am poor and needy;  
come to me speedily, O God.  
You are my helper and my deliverer;  
O Lord, do not tarry. **R**

## SECOND READING

### 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

*A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.*

We do not want you to be  
uninformed, brothers and sisters,  
about those who have died, so  
that you may not grieve as others  
do who have no hope. For since  
we believe that Jesus died and  
rose again, even so, through Jesus,  
God will bring with him those who  
have died. For this we declare to  
you by the word of the Lord, that  
we who are alive, who are left  
until the coming of the Lord, will  
by no means precede those who  
have died. For the Lord himself,  
with a cry of command, with the  
archangel's call and with the sound  
of God's trumpet, will descend from  
heaven, and the dead in Christ will  
rise first. Then we who are alive,

who are left, will be caught up in  
the clouds together with them to  
meet the Lord in the air; and so  
we will be with the Lord for ever.  
Therefore encourage one another  
with these words.

## GOSPEL Matthew 25:1-13

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.*

Jesus spoke this parable to the  
disciples: "The kingdom of heaven  
will be like this. Ten bridesmaids  
took their lamps and went to meet  
the bridegroom. Five of them were  
foolish, and five were wise. When  
the foolish took their lamps, they  
took no oil with them; but the wise  
took flasks of oil with their lamps. As  
the bridegroom was delayed, all of  
them became drowsy and slept. But  
at midnight there was a shout, 'Look!  
Here is the bridegroom! Come  
out to meet him.' Then all those  
bridesmaids got up and trimmed  
their lamps. The foolish said to the  
wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for  
our lamps are going out.' But the  
wise replied, 'No! there will not be  
enough for you and for us; you had  
better go to the dealers and buy  
some for yourselves.' And while  
they went to buy it, the bridegroom  
came, and those who were ready  
went with him into the wedding  
banquet; and the door was shut.  
Later the other bridesmaids came  
also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to  
us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you,  
I do not know you.' Keep awake  
therefore, for you know neither the  
day nor the hour."

## POST COMMUNION

God of peace,  
whose Son Jesus Christ proclaimed  
the kingdom  
and restored the broken to  
wholeness of life:  
look with compassion on the  
anguish of the world,  
and by your healing power  
make whole both people and  
nations;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus  
Christ.