

Collect

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First Reading

Acts 17.15, 22–18.1

A reading from the book of Acts

Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and after receiving instructions to have Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible, they left him.

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, ‘Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, “To an unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.” Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.’

When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, ‘We will hear you again about this.’ At that point Paul left them. But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.

Psalm 148.1–2, 11–end

- 1 Alleluia. Praise the Lord from the heavens; ♦
praise him in the heights.
- 2 Praise him, all you his angels; ♦
praise him, all his host.
- 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples, ♦
princes and all rulers of the world;
- 12 Young men and women,
old and young together; ♦
let them praise the name of the Lord.
- 13 For his name only is exalted, ♦
his splendour above earth and heaven.
- 14 He has raised up the horn of his people
and praise for all his faithful servants, ♦
the children of Israel, a people who are near
him. Alleluia.

Gospel

John 16.12–15

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

‘I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.’

Collect on the Eve of Ascension Day

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that as we believe your only–begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we in heart and mind may also ascend and with him continually dwell; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.