

Collect

Eternal God, who bestowed such grace upon your servant Etheldreda that she gave herself wholly to the life of prayer and to the service of your true religion: grant that we, like her, may so live our lives on earth seeking your kingdom that by your guiding we may be joined to the glorious fellowship of your saints; 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**Genesis 15.1–12, 17–18**

A reading from the book of Genesis

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' But Abram said, 'O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' But the word of the Lord came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness. Then he said to him, 'I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.' But he said, 'O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?' He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.' He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your

descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,

Psalm 105.1–9

- 1 O give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name; ♦ make known his deeds among the peoples.
- 2 Sing to him, sing praises, ♦ and tell of all his marvellous works.
- 3 Rejoice in the praise of his holy name; ♦ let the hearts of them rejoice who seek the Lord.
- 4 Seek the Lord and his strength; ♦ seek his face continually.
- 5 Remember the marvels he has done, ♦ his wonders and the judgements of his mouth,
- 6 O seed of Abraham his servant, ♦ O children of Jacob his chosen.
- 7 He is the Lord our God; ♦ his judgements are in all the earth.
- 8 He has always been mindful of his covenant, ♦ the promise that he made for a thousand generations:
- 9 The covenant he made with Abraham, ♦ the oath that he swore to Isaac,

Gospel**Matthew 7.15–20**

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

'Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.

Additional Collect

Merciful God, who gave such grace to your servant Etheldreda that she served you with singleness of heart and loved you above all things: help us, whose communion with you has been renewed in this sacrament, to forsake all that holds us back from following Christ and to grow into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.