

The Theme of Today's Liturgy

The Holy Innocent Martyrs are the baby boys killed by King Herod when he hears of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem (*Gospel*). With their death, they both precede and follow the Lamb (Christ) where He will eventually go (*Epistle*). At the same time, their silent martyrdom speaks Our Lord's praise (*Introit*) and emboldens us to pray for such faith to join their witness in our living (*Collect*).

Introit

Psalm 8:1. Antiphon: Psalm 8:2



P Out of the mouth of babies and infants, You have established strength because | of Your foes, *
to still the enemy and the a- | venger.

C O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in | all the earth! *
You have set Your glory above the | heavens.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son *
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning, *
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Out of the mouth of babies and infants, You have established strength because | of Your foes, *
to still the enemy and the a- | venger.

Collect of the Day

O God, whose martyred innocents proclaimed Your praise not by speaking but by dying, mortify all vices within us, that our lives may confess in deed Your faith which our tongues profess; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Collect of Commemorating the Nativity

Grant, we beseech You, almighty God, that the new birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free, who are held in the old bondage under the yoke of sin; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Old Testament

Exodus 1:8-22

In those days: There arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies

and fight against us, and so go up out of the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Ramases. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor. Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live." But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?" And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them." Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them. So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive."

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Psalm 124:7, 8

P Our soul has escaped | as a bird *
from the hand of the | fowlers,

C the snare is broken and we | have escaped. *

Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heav- | en
and earth.

Epistle

Revelation 14:1-5

In those days: I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men,

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↑ - Please stand • ↓ - Please sit

This Week's Psalm

This week's Psalm is Psalm 93.

This Psalm reminds us that the Lord wrapped in swaddling clothes (rags and diapers) is the same Lord robed and clothed in strength and majesty. He is the One through Whom all things were made, and who the whole earth must answer to. He is mightier than anything in all creation. Yet, more sure than all of that, is His Word and promise (v 5) that He will come and save us. And because of this, we are also clothed – in the holiest He gives us by virtue of His birth.

Prayer

O Lord Almighty, Jesus Christ, who, clothed with the Father's strength, set heaven, sea, and earth in their places, hear Your humble servants, give us faith in Your testimonies, and clothe us with strength and beautiful holiness; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Sequence Hymn

382, *We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth*

Holy Gospel Reading

St. Matthew 2:13-18

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the second chapter.

C (♪) **Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

At that time: An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C (♪) **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

The Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs

✠ Sunday 28 December Anno Domini 2025 ✠



A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted.

– *Jeremiah 31:15*

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