

everything that God commanded Him as foretold in the Old Testament reading for today. Knowledge of God, though necessary, is not sufficient of itself. The evil spirits proclaim the knowledge of Jesus both in His humanity and in His Divinity. What ultimately matters is our relationship with God, not simply knowing of Him but knowing Him through our faith as the God of the world and Author of our Salvation. Twice in this reading the people recognize the authority in Jesus' teaching, but they failed to recognize the authority as that of God. Jesus' authority is His Divinity. The people proclaimed the teaching to be "new." Actually what Jesus was teaching was as old as the creation of the world. It was lost in the time of unbelieving hearts and was being renewed in the hearts of the redeemed.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

© Almighty God, You are the fountain of all mercies, and the source of all comfort. You are more ready to hear than we are to pray. You are more ready to save than we are to repent. As we lift our hearts to You we give You our humble and heartfelt thanks for all Your gifts and graces.

Make us mindful of Your desire to save all people in Jesus. Show us the fields ready for the harvest. Open our eyes to the vast multitudes who await the sound of the Gospel. Inform our hearts as we come to an enlarged sense of our responsibility, as stewards of Your riches, to fund, assist, and pray for laborers for the harvest.

Enlighten our minds, O God, that we may know Your will and walk in Your paths. Lead us in all truth, and instill in us charity toward all mankind. Grant us a larger faith in Your mighty power, a deeper trust in Your merciful providence, and a more perfect love of Your Son. Help us see in Him Your image, the revelation of Your grace, the reflection of Your glory, the incarnation of Your Word, the manifestation of Your presence, and the evidence of Your care for all the children of world; whatever age they might be.

Comfort and bless those who are afflicted, that they may in love perceive Your good and gracious will and find release from all their trials. Preserve and maintain good government, integrity, honest citizenship, and dignity. Put down all who are self-seeking opportunists, all who intend revolution and strife, and suppress those who seek power through the weakness of others.

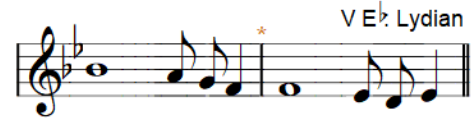
Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (Time of silent prayer.)

Keep us and all Your people in the unity of the faith and in oneness with Christ through His Church. We ask all these things in His name and for the sake of Jesus.

© Amen.

EPIPHANY FOUR

Chant Tone



<p>Introit</p> <p>Many are the sorrows of the — wicked,* but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.</p> <p>Blessèd is the one whose transgression is for — given,* whose sin is — covered.</p> <p>Blessèd is the man against whom the Lord counts no in — iquity,* and in whose spirit there is no deceit.</p> <p>I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my in — iquity;* I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.</p>	<p>Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;* surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not — reach him.</p> <p>You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from — trouble;* you surround me with shouts of de liverance.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Many are the sorrows of the — wicked,* but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.</p> <p><i>(Antiphon, Psalm 32:10; Psalm 32:1-2, 5-7)</i></p>
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Collect of the Day

Almighty God, You know we live in the midst of so many dangers that in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Praise the Lord, all — nations!*
Extol Him, all — peoples!
For great is His | Love toward us,*
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures for — ever.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory | due His name;*
bring an offering and come in | to His courts!

(Psalm 117:1-2a; 96:8)

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ENTRANCE PRAYER: We thank You, our heavenly Father, for the care You have extended to us during the night. We praise You for permitting us to see the light of another day. Glorious are all Your works and marvelous are all Your Words. For putting Your Word in the mouth of Your prophets, we praise and glorify You. For raising up a prophet like Yourself from our midst, even our own Lord Jesus Christ, we adore Your most Holy name. For the full revelation of Your will in Your Word made flesh, we praise You. Continue us in Your Word through the work of Your Holy Spirit and grant us grace to always be Your people. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

THROUGHOUT HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY, JESUS WAS A CONSTANT SOURCE OF AMAZEMENT TO THE PEOPLE. Not only did He display Divine attributes, (His ability to heal, His ability to cast out evil spirits) Jesus also displayed Divine knowledge (He spoke with an authority concerning the things in Scripture as if He is the author, {which He is,} and He spoke of the Word of reconciliation with God through faith.) The teachers of the people had begun to debate many things in the Bible, and many of the Doctrines that come from the Bible. The Saducees had given up on the knowledge of a resurrection and the Pharisees (for all intent and purpose) had given up on the knowledge of a Savior being born among His people. Jesus, in His display of Divinity both in His action and in His words, was and still is that constant source of amazement to the people of the world.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Blessèd Is The Believer

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 32:10;) Psalm 32:1-2, 5-7

Psalm 32 was David giving instruction concerning what we must do to be happy. In general, we are told that our happiness consists in the things of God, and not in the wealth of this world. Happiness is in spiritual blessings, and not the stuff we gather in this life.

COLLECT

Suffering is the only thing that is common to people in the world. Christians know that suffering comes as a result of sin. We ask, therefore to be blessed by God with the ability to avoid temptations and with His strength and protection to avoid anything that is dangerous to our salvation.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Deuteronomy 18:15-20

These verses provide guidance on determining the genuineness of the prophet. There are five signs provided by Moses for this purpose. 1. The prophet will be an Israelite. 2. He will speak the name of God with the Word of God. 3. He will have a foreknowledge of the immediate future. 4. The message will conform to what God has already said. 5. The prophet will perform miracles. Jesus completely and totally fulfilled those signs.

GRADUAL—Psalm 117:1-2a, 96:8

Psalm 117 in two verses, is a general song of praise for all God has done for us, in making us over into His people, His disciples. Psalm 96 was sung as the Arc was moved into Jerusalem. It looks beyond that event to the reign of the Christ and especially when the Gentiles will join in the celebration of the kingdom, when we are all allowed to be called as disciples of Jesus.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Paul was dealing with some of the same issue that still exist today. Limited knowledge, misunderstanding, and disregard for other people's level of understanding, may result in sinning against another person. In Paul's scheme of things, love drives all of our dealings in the world as we attempt to play out our life as a Christian. Human beings know some things about God on the basis of nature. We cannot, on our own, recognize the reality of the One true God or understand the false work of idolatry from nature. The danger is the exercise of Christian freedom without concern for the weak brother who may be offended and fall away because of the free exercise of our faith.

GOSPEL LESSON—Mark 1:21-28

Our text makes convincingly clear that the prophet (like Moses) promised in the Old Testament had indeed come. He came faithfully speaking of