

COLLECT

Almighty God,
 who wonderfully created us in your
 own image
 and yet more wonderfully restored us
 through your Son Jesus Christ:
 grant that, as he came to share in our
 humanity,
 so we may share the life of his
 divinity;
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 2:18-20. 26

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy wearing a linen ephod. His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the LORD repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the LORD"; and then they would return to their home. Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favour with the LORD and with the people.

PSALM Psalm 148

R Praise, O praise the name of the Lord.

Alleluia.

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
 praise him in the heights.
 Praise him, all you his angels;
 praise him, all his host. **R**

Praise him, sun and moon;
 praise him, all you stars of light.
 Praise him, heaven of heavens,
 and you waters above the heavens. **R**

Let them praise the name of the Lord;
 for he commanded and they were
 created.
 He made them fast for ever and ever;
 he gave them a law which shall not
 pass away. **R**

Praise the Lord from the earth,
 you sea monsters and all deeps;
 Fire and hail, snow and mist,
 tempestuous wind, fulfilling his word;
 Mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars;
 Wild beasts and all cattle,
 creeping things and birds on the
 wing; **R**

Kings of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of the world;
 Young men and women,
 old and young together;
 let them praise the name of the Lord. **R**

For his name only is exalted,
 his splendour above earth and
 heaven.

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. **R**

SECOND READING

Colossians 3:12-17

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

GOSPEL Luke 2:41-end

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

Every year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

POST COMMUNION

Heavenly Father,
 whose blessed Son shared at
 Nazareth the life of an earthly home:
 help your Church to live as one family,
 united in love and obedience,
 and bring us all at last to our home in
 heaven;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.

