

Affirmation Prayer...

Christ leads us through the narrow gate: let us give thanks and praise!

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia!

Hymn **Meter: 87 87 D**

Heedless soul of mine, bethink thee
Ere thine hours on earth are past—
Ere thou fly to spirit-regions,
If thou real treasure has.
Where will be thine endless dwelling?
Where thine everlasting home?
What thy portion, joy or mourning,
In the world beyond the tomb?
When these eyes shall lose their luster—
Fading with the failing breath,
And roll, lightless, in the conflict,
With inexorable death;
How will thou survive the anguish—
How sustain all earthly loss,
If thou know not the Redeemer,
If thou cling not to his cross?

Psalm 1

Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. (Lk 13:24)

Jesus warns that all are invited to feast in God's kingdom, but not all will choose to come. The gate is narrow, the road is hard, and we are sometimes tempted to sit at home in comfort and dine at the table of our own will rather than make the attempt. Let us pray for the grace to accept Jesus' call to us to become good and faithful disciples, walking in his ways.

Happy indeed is the man
who follows not the counsel of the wicked;
nor lingers in the way of sinners
nor sits in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the Lord
and who ponders his law day and night.
He is like a tree that is planted
beside the flowing waters,
that yields its fruit in due season
and whose leaves shall never fade;
and all that he does shall prosper.
Not so are the wicked, not so!
For they like winnowed chaff
shall be driven away by the wind.
When the wicked are judged they shall not stand,
nor find room among those who are just;
for the Lord guards the way of the just
but the way of the wicked leads to doom.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, heeding his voice, and holding fast to him.

I will walk in the presence of the Lord/in the land of the living. (cf. Ps 116:9)

Canticle of Zechariah

You will show me the path of life,/ the fullness of joy in your presence,/ at your right hand happiness for ever. (cf. Ps 16:11)

All: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; he has come to his people and set them free. He has raised up for us a mighty savior, born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old that he would save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us. He promised to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham: to set us free from the hands of our enemies, free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Intercessions

As we make the choices that will shape our lives today, we pray:

R/ Show us the path of life!

When we are faced with difficult decisions: **R/**

When we struggle to choose your priorities rather than our own: **R/**

When we lose the way: **R/**

Personal intentions

All: Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

God of light and life, you sent us your Son to show us the way to you. Let us walk by his light and follow your word, that we may one day dwell with you for ever in heaven. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

