

CHAPTER 4 PRAYER SERVICE

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: It is only right, with all the powers of our heart and mind, to praise you, Father, and your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: Dear Father, by your wondrous condescension of loving kindness toward us, your servants, you gave up your Son. Dear Jesus, you paid the debt of Adam for us to the Eternal Father by your blood poured forth in loving kindness. You cleared away the darkness of sin by your magnificent and radiant Resurrection. You broke the bonds of death and rose from the grave as a Conqueror. You reconciled heaven and earth. Our life had no hope of eternal happiness before you redeemed us. Your Resurrection has washed away our sins, restored our innocence, and brought us joy. How inestimable is the tenderness of your love! Amen.

Reader: A reading from the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: God is our refuge and our strength.

Reader: God is our refuge and our strength,
an ever-present help in distress.
Thus we do not fear, though earth be shaken
and mountains quake to the depths of the sea,
Though its waters rage and foam
and mountains totter at its surging.

All: God is our refuge and our strength.

Reader: Streams of the river gladden the city of God,
the holy dwelling of the Most High.

God is in its midst; it shall not be shaken;
God will help it at break of day.
Though nations rage and kingdoms totter,
he utters his voice and the earth melts.
The LORD of hosts is with us;
our stronghold is the God of Jacob.

All: God is our refuge and our strength.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter said in reply, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus said to him in reply, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: Oh God, you established your Church on Earth to be a light to the nations and a stronghold in times of distress. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and give us the grace we need to live out our unique callings within your Church.

We pray for the pope, bishops, priests and deacons who lead us. We pray for religious sisters and brothers who inspire and serve us. We pray for families who lay down their lives out of love for one another. We pray for the poor and marginalized who feel isolated and alone. We pray for young people who are discerning God’s will for their lives. We pray for children who are learning and living their faith.

May all that we do—in our daily interactions and in the work of our lifetimes—be for your greater glory. We entrust these prayers to Mary, Mother of the Church, as we pray, Hail Mary . . .

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.