

**OPENING PRAYER**

Almighty God,  
 whose only Son has opened for us  
 a new and living way into your presence:  
 give us pure hearts and steadfast wills  
 to worship you in spirit and in truth;  
 through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
 who is alive and reigns with you  
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**FIRST READING - James 1.17-27**

*A reading from the letter of James*

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act - they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

This is the word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

**PSALM - Psalm 15**

Response: *O Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia! alleluia!

Welcome with meekness the implanted word  
 that has the power to save your souls.  
 Alleluia!

**GOSPEL - Mark 7.1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

*Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark  
 Glory to you, O Lord.*

When the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' Jesus said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines." You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.' Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile. For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to you, O Christ.*

**PRAYER AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE**

Great and holy God,  
 accept our offering of labour and love:  
 may we bring you true and spiritual worship  
 and be one with you  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord God, the source of truth and love,  
 keep us faithful to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
 united in prayer and the breaking of bread,  
 and one in joy and simplicity of heart,  
 in Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*