

Wednesday 28 December 2022
Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs

Liturgical Colour: Red. Year: A(I).

Readings at Mass

Entrance Antiphon

The innocents were slaughtered as infants for Christ;
spotless, they follow the Lamb
and sing for ever: Glory to you, O Lord.

Collect

O God, whom the Holy Innocents confessed
and proclaimed on this day,
not by speaking but by dying,
grant, we pray,
that the faith in you which we confess with our lips
may also speak through our manner of life.
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.

First reading

1 John 1:5-2:2

The blood of Jesus Christ purifies us all from sin

This is what we have heard from Jesus Christ,
and the message that we are announcing to you:
God is light; there is no darkness in him at all.
If we say that we are in union with God
while we are living in darkness,
we are lying because we are not living the truth.
But if we live our lives in the light,
as he is in the light,
we are in union with one another,
and the blood of Jesus, his Son,
purifies us from all sin.

If we say we have no sin in us,
we are deceiving ourselves
and refusing to admit the truth;
but if we acknowledge our sins,

then God who is faithful and just
will forgive our sins and purify us
from everything that is wrong.
To say that we have never sinned
is to call God a liar
and to show that his word is not in us.

I am writing this, my children,
to stop you sinning;
but if anyone should sin,
we have our advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ, who is just;
he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away,
and not only ours,
but the whole world's.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 123(124):2-5,7-8

Our life, like a bird, has escaped from the snare of the fowler.

If the Lord had not been on our side
when men rose up against us,
then would they have swallowed us alive
when their anger was kindled.

Our life, like a bird, has escaped from the snare of the fowler.

Then would the waters have engulfed us,
the torrent gone over us;
over our head would have swept
the raging waters.

Our life, like a bird, has escaped from the snare of the fowler.

Indeed the snare has been broken
and we have escaped.
Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

Our life, like a bird, has escaped from the snare of the fowler.

Gospel Acclamation

cf. Te Deum

Alleluia, alleluia!
We praise you, O God,
we acknowledge you to be the Lord;
the noble army of martyrs praise you, O Lord.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 2:13-18

The massacre of the innocents

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet:

I called my son out of Egypt.

Herod was furious when he realised that he had been outwitted by the wise men, and in Bethlehem and its surrounding district he had all the male children killed who were two years old or under, reckoning by the date he had been careful to ask the wise men. It was then that the words spoken through the prophet Jeremiah were fulfilled:

*A voice was heard in Ramah,
sobbing and loudly lamenting:
it was Rachel weeping for her children,
refusing to be comforted because they were no more.*

Prayer over the Offerings

Receive, O Lord, we pray,
the offerings of your devoted servants
and purify us as we faithfully serve these, your mysteries,
by which you grant justification
even to those who lack understanding.
Through Christ our Lord.

Communion Antiphon

Cf. Rev 14: 4

Behold those redeemed as the first fruits
of the human race for God and the Lamb,
and who follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Prayer after Communion

Grant, O Lord, abundant salvation to your faithful
as they receive your holy gifts

on the feast day of these, your Saints,
who, though still unable to profess your Son in speech,
were crowned with heavenly grace
on account of his birth.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.