

The Liturgical Lessons

The Lectionary

Acts 15:21 “For **Moses** has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, **being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.**”

1 Timothy 4:13 Till I come, give attention **to reading**, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Revelation 5:4-5 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. **Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.**”

The Old Testament

Luke 4:16-17; 21 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17And **He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah.** And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ... 21And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Acts 13:27 “For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even **the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath**, have fulfilled them in condemning Him.

The Epistle

Ephesians 3:2-5 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, 3how that by revelation **He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:**

Colossians 4:16 Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

1 Thessalonians 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.

The Gradual (*gradus* = step of the altar)

John 5:39; 46 “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they **which testify of Me.**... 46“For if you believed **Moses**, you would believe Me; for **he wrote about Me.**

The Hallelujah

Psalm 103:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Revelation 19:1; 3-4; 6 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “**Alleluia!** Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! ... 3Again they said, “**Alleluia!** Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” 4And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! **Alleluia!**” ... 6And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “**Alleluia!** For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!”

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 7:24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

The Liturgical Lessons

{Other readings may precede = **Old Testament**}

Epistle

Gradual

{and/or Triple Hallelujah}

{The Sentence for the Season}

{Sequence Hymn}

During Lent = The Tract replaces the Gradual.

During Easter = The Alleluia replaces the Gradual.

Doxology: “Glory be to Thee, O Lord.”

Holy Gospel

Response/Ascription: “Praise be to Thee, O Christ.”

--**The readings** from either

a) two ambos, or

b) from the horns of the altar {*Epistle from south-side, Gospel from north-side*}, or

c) from one ambo=lectern.

--Originally a *lectio continua*, consecutively as long as time permits, then pericopes (“a portion cut out” = list of readings).

--At first the readings were simply marked in the letter/book. Then a separate manuscript called a Comes (companion). Later the book was called Textus, or Evangelarium, and was highly ornamented and decorated.

--First started with the three high festivals, and their historical observance.

--The readings were regularly chanted.

--**Epistle** prepares for the Gospel (Like John the Baptist preparing the way of the Lord)

--Epistle is a sermon/application of the Gospel

--With the Epistle, sometimes an Old Testament lesson was used.

--Jerome (342-420 AD) is credited with the organization/choice of pericopes. St. Gregory the Great (540-604 AD) with the reduction to two readings.

--**Gradual** – a psalm was sung as one reader ascended and another descended

--**Holy Gospel** is given special honor (candles, incense, etc.). It is the climax of the Service of the Word.

--p.151 In the 4th century, the Apostolic Constitution already had the people rise/stand.

--The doxology speaks of the glory (the attribute of God) by which He has kept His Word and sent to us the Savior and the Good News(Gospel) of our salvation.

--The Response/Ascription addresses our Lord Jesus as the truly present Christ!

--Since the 5th century, the Deacon has been accorded the privileged of reading the Gospel.