

March 18th

Saint CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Feast

St. Cyril (313-387) was Bishop of Jerusalem at the time of Arianism. He experienced many trials, related to the defence of the faith defined at Nicaea. Three times he was exiled, and the third time for 11 years, but he underwent this ordeal with courage, as a true witness to the divinity of Jesus.

He is best known for his "Catecheses" or instructions for catechumens, which manifest his concern for the formation of new Christians. The desire he had for them to be admitted to baptism and the strength of faith he witnessed to them, are a precious testimony to the vitality of the Church of Jerusalem in the 4th century. He is the outstanding promoter of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

In his baptismal catechesis, Saint Cyril expresses his faith and desire to communicate his love for Christ. These are incentives for us to progress in our knowledge of Jesus, the Son of God, who gave us a new birth through Baptism.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Ezek 34: 11. 23-24

For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will look after and tend my sheep. I will appoint one shepherd over them to pasture them; he shall pasture them and be their shepherd. I, the LORD, will be their God.

COLLECT

O God, who through the Bishop Saint Cyril of Jerusalem led your Church in a wonderful way to a deeper sense of the mysteries of salvation, grant us, through his intercession, that we may so acknowledge your Son as to have life ever more abundantly.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the first letter of Saint John the Apostle 5: 1-5

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we looked upon and touched with our hands concerns the Word of life -for the life was made visible; we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was made visible to us- what we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; for our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing this so that our joy may be complete. Now this is the message that we have heard from him and proclaim to you: God is light, 2 and in him there is no darkness at all.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 19: 8. 9. 10. 11 (R. 9b)

R. The ordinances of the Lord are true^{[[L]]}_{SEP} and righteous altogether.

1. The law of the LORD is perfect;
it revives the soul.

The decrees of the LORD are steadfast;

they give wisdom to the simple.

2. The precepts of the LORD are right;
they gladden the heart.
The command of the LORD is clear;
it gives light to the eyes.

3. The fear of the LORD is pure,
abiding forever.
The judgments of the LORD are true;
they are, all of them, just.

4. They are more to be desired than gold,
than quantities of gold.
And sweeter are they than honey,
than honey flowing from the comb.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION John 15: 9b. 5b

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Remain in my love. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.

R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Saint John 15: 1-8

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we celebrate the divine mysteries, O Lord, we pray, may the Holy Spirit fill us with that light of faith by which he constantly enlightened blessed Cyril for the spreading of your glory.

Through Christ our Lord...

PREFACE

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

COMMUNION ANTIPHON John 10: 10

I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O Lord, who have refreshed us with Christ, the Bread of Life, grant that He who is our Master may so teach us that on this feast of blessed Cyril we may open ourselves to the truth and put it into practice in charity,
Through Christ our Lord...