

February 26th

Saint PORPHYRY, Bishop of Gaza

In Gaza: memorial

Elsewhere: optional memorial

St. Porphyry (347-420), bishop of Gaza, was born to a wealthy family of Thessalonica. He left his home and wealth to take refuge in the desert of Skete, in Egypt, where he lived as a hermit for 5 years. He came to the Holy Land to visit the Holy Places and remained there, on the edge of the Jordan leading a life of penance. Illness then forced him then to adopt a different kind of life. He returned to Jerusalem and was ordained priest and oversaw the care of the Holy Cross (392). In 395 the people of Gaza addressed themselves to the Metropolitan of Caesarea, John, for a bishop able to face the persecution of the pagans, and he gave them Porphyry, after having consecrated him bishop. Through his holiness of life and his many miracles, he brought multitudes to the Christian faith. He died on 25 February 420.

The Gospel of Matthew presents Jesus as model of the pastor, announcing the Gospel, healing the sick and comforting them, full of compassion for the infirmities and weaknesses of his people. Porphyry lived according to this model, a holy Bishop raised up by God for his people in Gaza.

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. I, the LORD, will be their God.

COLLECT

Lord, you illumine your Church by the merits and teaching of the saints; enlighten our faith through the intercession of the bishop Saint Porphyry, so that our will may be subject to you and that we may serve you with a sincere heart.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the letter of saint Paul to the Colossians 1: 24-29

Brethren,

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church, of which I am a minister in accordance with God's stewardship given to me to bring to completion for you the word of God, the mystery hidden from ages and from generations past. But now it has been manifested to his holy ones, to whom God chose to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; it is Christ in you, the hope for glory. It is he whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. For this I labor and struggle, in accord with the exercise of his power working within me.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 23: 1-3a. 3b-4. 6 (R. 4)

R. Though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death, no evil would I fear, for you are with me.

1. The LORD is my shepherd.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me;  
he revives my soul.

2. Though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death,  
no evil would I fear,  
for you are with me.  
Your crook and your staff will give me comfort.

3. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life.  
In the LORD's own house shall I dwell  
for length of days unending.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 10: 14

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.  
I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me.  
R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

"The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few"

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 9: 35-38

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest."  
The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord our God, all that we present you with love. Through the intercession of St. Porphyry may our offering be agreeable to you and lead us to salvation.  
Through Christ our Lord...

PREFACE

Holy, holy, holy...

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Matt 11: 28

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed by the gift that comes from you, teach us, Lord, after the example of the blessed Porphyry, to confess the same faith and to practise what he taught.  
Through Christ our Lord....