

The Collect of the Day for Paula and Eustochium, Compel us, O God, to attend diligently to your Word, as did your faithful servants Paula and Eustochium; that, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we may find it profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; and that thereby we may be made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Psalm 34 *Read responsively by the half-verse, breaking at the asterisk.* BCP pp. 627-629

- 1 I will bless the LORD at all times; * **and praise shall ever be in my mouth.**
- 2 I will glory in the LORD; * **let the humble hear and rejoice.**
- 3 Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD; * **let us exalt God's Name together.**
- 4 I sought, and the LORD answered me * **and delivered me out of all my terror.**
- 5 Look upon the most High and be radiant, * **and let not your faces be ashamed.**
- 6 I called in my affliction and the LORD heard me * **and saved me from all my troubles.**
- 7 The angel of the LORD encompasses those who fear him, * **and the LORD will deliver them.**
- 8 Taste and see that the LORD is good; * **happy are they who trust in the LORD!**
- 9 Fear the Most High, you that are God's saints, * **for those who fear the LORD lack nothing.**
- 10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger, * **but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good.**
- 11 Come, children, and listen to me; * **I will teach you the fear of the LORD.**
- 12 Who among you loves life * **and desires long life to enjoy prosperity?**
- 13 Keep your tongue from evil-speaking * **and your lips from lying words.**
- 14 Turn from evil and do good; * **seek peace and pursue it.**
- 15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, * **and the ears of the LORD are open to their cry.**
- 16 The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, * **to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.**
- 17 The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them * **and delivers them from all their troubles.**
- 18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted * **and will save those whose spirits are crushed.**
- 19 Many are the troubles of the righteous, * **but the LORD will deliver them out of them all.**
- 20 The LORD will keep safe all their bones; * **not one of them shall be broken.**
- 21 Evil shall slay the wicked, * **and those who hate the righteous will be punished.**
- 22 O LORD you will ransom the life of your servants, * **and none will be punished who trust in you.**

First Reading: A Reading from the Book of Judith (8:9-17)

When Judith heard the harsh words spoken by the people against the ruler, because they were faint for lack of water, and when she heard all that Uzziah said to them, and how he promised them under oath to surrender the town to the Assyrians after five days, she sent her maid, who was in charge of all she possessed, to summon Uzziah and Chabris and Charmis, the elders of her town. They came to her, and she said to them: "Listen to me, rulers of the people of Bethulia! What you have said to the people today is not right; you have even sworn and pronounced this oath between God and you, promising to surrender the town to our enemies unless the Lord turns and helps us within so many days. Who are you to put God to the test today, and to set yourselves up in the place of God in human affairs? You are putting the Lord Almighty to the test, but you will never learn anything! You cannot plumb the depths of the human heart or understand the workings of the human mind; how do you expect to search out God, who made all these things, and find out his mind or comprehend his thought? No, my brothers, do not anger the Lord our God. For if he does not choose to help us within these five days, he has power to protect us within any time he pleases, or even to destroy us in the presence of our enemies. Do not try to bind the purposes of the Lord our God; for God is not like a human being, to be threatened, or like a mere mortal, to be won over by pleading. Therefore, while we wait for his deliverance, let us call upon him to help us, and he will hear our voice if it pleases him."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: A Reading from the Gospel of Luke (8:1-3)

Jesus went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Paula and Eustochium of Rome, Monastics and Scholars, 404 and c.419, Paula (b. 347) was descended from Cornelia Africana, the mother of the Gracchi. As Cornelia was the model of a Roman Matron whose sons were her only jewels, so Paula became the model of the Desert Mother whose wealth was surrendered to the service of God. Married at a young age, she had five children and was widowed at age 32. Though she had lived in patrician luxury, after being widowed she was inspired by the example of Marcella (January 31) and devoted her life to the worship of God, rigorous asceticism, and service to the needy. Both Marcella and Paula converted their palaces into monasteries and gathered to them many windows and virgins. In 382 Paula met Jerome who had come to Rome at the invitation of Bishop Damasus, and was residing in the home of Marcella. Paula and her daughter Eustochium (b. 386) took to the irascible scholar and preacher of asceticism. They became Jerome's dearest companions and the only antidotes to his infamous wrath. They restrained his temper and frequently recalled him to the mildness and humility that Christ enjoins. While urged by her noble family to marry, Eustochium, under the guidance of Jerome, made a vow of perpetual virginity. Jerome's famous *De custodia virginitatis* was written for her instruction. Fluent in Greek, Paula and Eustochium were ardent students of the scriptures and they quickly mastered Hebrew under Jerome's tutelage. When he left to return to the East, Paula and Eustochium followed after him, making a pilgrimage of the Holy Land. The three of them settled in Bethlehem and there Paula had four monasteries erected—one for men, over which Jerome presided, and three for women. In Bethlehem, their passion for the study of scripture only grew, and their challenging questions led Jerome to write many of his commentaries. Under Paula's persuasive and persistent influence, Jerome undertook a new Latin translation of the Bible from the original languages, which came to be known as the Vulgate. Paula also provided the books that were essential to Jerome's work. She and Eustochium suggested revisions to his translation drafts and edited all his works, and the women of their convents were the scribes who made copies of the finished work available. Paula and Eustochium were Jerome's colleagues in this work and without them there would be no Vulgate. Paula presided over the Bethlehem monasteries for twenty years until her death in 404. In his eulogy for her, Jerome wrote: "If all the members of my body were turned into tongues and all my joints were to utter human voices, I should be unable to say anything worthy of the holy and venerable Paula." After the death of her mother, Eustochium assumed direction of the monasteries. Eustochium died in 419 or 420, her eyes closed by her niece Paula, who took over direction of the monasteries after her death.