

Readings: Feria

First Reading: 2 Mac 7:1, 20-31

It happened that seven brothers with their mother were arrested
and tortured with whips and scourges by the king,

to force them to eat pork in violation of God's law.

Most admirable and worthy of everlasting remembrance was the mother,
who saw her seven sons perish in a single day,
yet bore it courageously because of her hope in the Lord.
Filled with a noble spirit that stirred her womanly heart with manly courage,
she exhorted each of them
in the language of their ancestors with these words:
"I do not know how you came into existence in my womb;
it was not I who gave you the breath of life,
nor was it I who set in order
the elements of which each of you is composed.
Therefore, since it is the Creator of the universe
who shapes each man's beginning,
as he brings about the origin of everything,
he, in his mercy,
will give you back both breath and life,

because you now disregard yourselves for the sake of his law."

Antiochus, suspecting insult in her words,
thought he was being ridiculed.
As the youngest brother was still alive, the king appealed to him,
not with mere words, but with promises on oath,
to make him rich and happy if he would abandon his ancestral customs:
he would make him his friend
and entrust him with high office.
When the youth paid no attention to him at all,
the king appealed to the mother,
urging her to advise her boy to save his life.
After he had urged her for a long time,
she went through the motions of persuading her son.
In derision of the cruel tyrant,
she leaned over close to her son and said in their native language:
"Son, have pity on me, who carried you in my womb for nine months,
nursed you for three years, brought you up,
educated and supported you to your present age.
I beg you, child, to look at the heavens and the earth
and see all that is in them;
then you will know that God did not make them out of existing things;
and in the same way the human race came into existence.
Do not be afraid of this executioner,
but be worthy of your brothers and accept death,

so that in the time of mercy I may receive you again with them."

She had scarcely finished speaking when the youth said:
"What are you waiting for?
I will not obey the king's command.
I obey the command of the law given to our fathers through Moses.
But you, who have contrived every kind of affliction for the Hebrews,

will not escape the hands of God."

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 17:1bcd, 5-6, 8b and 15

R/ Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

Hear, O LORD, a just suit;
attend to my outcry;
hearken to my prayer from lips without deceit.
R/ Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

My steps have been steadfast in your paths,
my feet have not faltered.
I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God;
incline your ear to me; hear my word.
R/ Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings.
But I in justice shall behold your face;
on waking, I shall be content in your presence.

R./ Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.

Gospel Reading: Lk 19:11-28

Jesus was now near Jerusalem and the people with him thought that God's reign was about to appear. So as they were listening to him, Jesus went on to tell them a parable. He said, "A man of noble birth went to a distant place to have himself appointed king of his own people, after which he would return. Before he left, he summoned ten of his servants and gave them ten pounds. He said: 'Put this money to work until I get back.' But his compatriots who disliked him sent a delegation after him with this message: 'We do not want this man to be our king.'

"He returned, however, appointed as king. At once he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, to find out what profit each had made. The first came in and reported: 'Sir, your pound has earned ten more.'

"The master replied: 'Well done, my good servant. Since you have proved yourself capable in a small matter, I can trust you to take charge of ten cities.' The second reported: 'Sir, your pound earned five more pounds.' The master replied: 'Right, take charge of five cities.'

"The third came in and said: 'Sir, here is your money which I hid for safekeeping. I was afraid of you for you are an exacting person; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow.' The master replied: 'You worthless servant, I will judge you by your own words. So you knew I was an exacting person, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow! Why, then, did you not put my money on loan so that when I got back I could have collected it with interest?'

"Then the master said to those standing by: 'Take from him that pound, and give it to the one with ten pounds.' They objected: 'But, sir, he already has ten!' I tell you; everyone who has will be given more; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for my enemies who did not want me to be king, bring them in and execute them right here in my presence."

So Jesus spoke, and he went on ahead of them, on his way to Jerusalem.
