

June 23rd.

Saints ZENO and ZENA, and all holy Martyrs of Transjordan.

In Transjordan: Memorial.

Elsewhere: Optional memorial

Many saints and martyrs who lived beyond the Jordan, in the current Transjordan, have marked it with the holiness of their lives and deaths. The martyrology mentions only the most important of these.

June 10, Petra: Saint Asterius bishop (4th century),

June 23, Amman-Philadelphia: Saints Zeno and Zena, martyred on the same day in 304, and whose martyrdom is recorded in the Acts.

August 1, Amman-Philadelphia: the martyrs Saints Cyril, Aquila, Peter, Domitian, Rufus and Alexander.

The martyrs are essentially witnesses, who by their lives, their words, their suffering and their death, assert their faith in the risen Christ. On this day when we rejoice in their victory over death and celebrate the joy of their coronation in heaven, let us ask the Lord to strengthen the bond of our faith in Christ to the point of laying down our lives for Him.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

They rejoice in heaven, all the saints who followed Christ. And because they have shed their blood for love of Christ, they rejoice with him forever.

COLLECT

Grant a joyful outcome to our prayers, O Lord, so that we, who each year devoutly honour the passion of the holy Martyrs Zeno, Zena and companions, may also imitate the constancy of their faith. Through our Lord Jesus Christ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Revelation 7: 9-17

I, John, had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue. They stood before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation comes from our God, who is seated on the throne, and from the Lamb." All the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They prostrated themselves before the throne, worshiped God, and exclaimed: "Amen. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honour, power, and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

Then one of the elders spoke up and said to me, "Who are these wearing white robes, and where did they come from?" I said to him, "My lord, you are the one who knows." He said to me, "These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. "For this reason they stand before God's throne and worship him day and night in his temple. The one who sits on the throne will shelter them. They will not hunger or thirst anymore, nor will the sun or any heat strike them. For the Lamb who is in the center of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 126: 1-2ab. 2ed-3. 4-5. 6. (R. cf 5)

R. Those who sow in tears, reap with shouts of joy.

1. When the LORD brought back the exiles of Sion,
we thought we were dreaming.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter;
on our tongues, songs of joy.

2. Then the nations themselves said, "What great deeds
the LORD worked for them!
What great deeds the LORD worked for us!
Indeed, we were glad.

3. Bring back our exiles, O LORD,
as streams in the south.
Those who are sowing in tears
will sing when they reap.

4. They go out, they go out, full of tears,
bearing seed for the sowing;
they come back, they come back with a song,
bearing their sheaves.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matt 5: 10

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

R. Alleluia..

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

10: 28-33

In those days, Jesus told His Apostles: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father".
The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, holy Father, the offerings we bring in commemoration of the holy Martyrs, and grant that we, your servants, may be found steadfast in confessing your name.
Through Christ our Lord.

PREFACE

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

COMMUNION ANTIPHON John 15:13

No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O God, who in your holy Martyrs have wonderfully made known the mystery of the Cross, graciously grant that, drawing strength from this sacrifice, we may cling faithfully to Christ and labour in the Church for the salvation of all.

Through Christ our Lord.