

Concerning the Service

The name *Tenebrae* (the Latin word for “darkness” or “shadows”) has for centuries been applied to the ancient monastic night and early morning services (Matins and Lauds) of the last three days of Holy Week, which in medieval times came to be celebrated on the preceding evenings.

Apart from the chant of the Lamentations (in which each verse is introduced by a letter of the Hebrew alphabet), the most conspicuous feature of the service is the gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights in the church until only a single candle, considered a symbol of our Lord, remains.

Toward the end of the service this candle is hidden, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end, a loud noise is made, symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the resurrection (Matthew 28:2), the hidden candle is restored to its place, and by its light all depart in silence.

By drawing upon material from each of the former three offices of *Tenebrae*, this service provides an extended meditation upon, and a prelude to, the events in our Lord’s life between the Last Supper and the Resurrection.

Tenebrae 1

Tenebrae

The ministers enter the church in silence and proceed to their places. The Office then begins immediately with the Antiphon on the first Psalm. It is customary to sit for the Psalmody.

First Nocturn

Antiphon 1

Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

Psalm 69:1-23 *Salvum me fac*

- 1 Save me, O God, *
for the waters have risen up to my neck.
- 2 I am sinking in deep mire, *
and there is no firm ground for my feet.
- 3 I have come into deep waters, *
and the torrent washes over me.
- 4 I have grown weary with my crying;
my throat is inflamed; *
my eyes have failed from looking for my God.
- 5 Those who hate me without a cause are more than the
hairs of my head; my lying foes who would destroy me
are mighty. *
- Must I then give back what I never stole?
- 6 O God, you know my foolishness, *
and my faults are not hidden from you.
- 7 Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through
me, Lord God of hosts; *

let not those who seek you be disgraced because of me, O
God of Israel.

8 Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach, *
and shame has covered my face.

9 I have become a stranger to my own kindred, *
an alien to my mother's children.

10 Zeal for your house has eaten me up; *
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

11 I humbled myself with fasting, *
but that was turned to my reproach.

12 I put on sack-cloth also, *
and became a byword among them.

13 Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, *
and the drunkards make songs about me.

14 But as for me, this is my prayer to you, *
at the time you have set, O Lord:

15 "In your great mercy, O God, *
answer me with your unfailing help.

16 Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; *
let me be rescued from those who hate me
and out of the deep waters.

17 Let not the torrent of waters wash over me,
neither let the deep swallow me up; *
do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me.

18 Answer me, O Lord, for your love is kind; *
in your great compassion, turn to me.'

19 "Hide not your face from your servant; *
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.

20 Draw near to me and redeem me; *
because of my enemies deliver me.

21 You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor;

my adversaries are all in your sight.”

22 Reproach has broken my heart, and it cannot be healed; *

I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters, but I could find no one.

23 They gave me gall to eat, * and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

Antiphon 2

Let them draw back and be disgraced who take pleasure in my misfortune.

Psalm 70 *Deus, in adiutorium*

1 Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; *

O Lord, make haste to help me.

2 Let those who seek my life be ashamed and altogether dismayed; *

let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.

3 Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat over me turn back, *

because they are ashamed.

4 Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; * let those who love your salvation say for ever, “Great is the Lord!”

5 But as for me, I am poor and needy; * come to me speedily, O God.

6 You are my helper and my deliverer; * O Lord, do not tarry.

Antiphon 3

Arise, O God, maintain my cause.

Psalm 74 Ut quid, Deus?

1 O God, why have you utterly cast us off? *
why is your wrath so hot against the sheep of your
pasture?

2 Remember your congregation that you purchased long
ago, *
the tribe you redeemed to be your inheritance,
and Mount Zion where you dwell.

3 Turn your steps toward the endless ruins; *
the enemy has laid waste everything in your sanctuary.

4 Your adversaries roared in your holy place; *
they set up their banners as tokens of victory.

5 They were like men coming up with axes to a grove of
trees; *
they broke down all your carved work with hatchets
and hammers.

6 They set fire to your holy place; *
they defiled the dwelling-place of your Name
and razed it to the ground.

7 They said to themselves, "Let us destroy them
altogether." *

They burned down all the meeting-places of God
in the land.

8 There are no signs for us to see;
there is no prophet left; *
there is not one among us who knows how long.

9 How long, O God, will the adversary scoff? *
will the enemy blaspheme your Name for ever?

10 Why do you draw back your hand? *
why is your right hand hidden in your bosom?

- 11 Yet God is my King from ancient times, *
victorious in the midst of the earth.
- 12 You divided the sea by your might *
and shattered the heads of the dragons upon the waters;
- 13 You crushed the heads of Leviathan *
and gave him to the people of the desert for food.
- 14 You split open spring and torrent; *
you dried up ever-flowing rivers.
- 15 Yours is the day, yours also the night; *
you established the moon and the sun.
- 16 You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; *
you made both summer and winter.
- 17 Remember, O Lord, how the enemy scoffed, *
how a foolish people despised your Name.
- 18 Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts;
never forget the lives of your poor.
- 19 Look upon your covenant; *
the dark places of the earth are haunts of violence.
- 20 Let not the oppressed turn away ashamed; *
let the poor and needy praise your Name.
- 21 Arise, O God, maintain your cause; *
remember how fools revile you all day long.
- 22 Forget not the clamor of your adversaries, *
the unending tumult of those who rise up against you.
- V. Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked:
R. From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.

*All stand for silent prayer. The appointed Reader then goes to
the lectern, and everyone else sits down.*

Lesson 1

A Reading from the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet. [1:1-14]

Aleph. How solitary lies the city, once so full of people! How like a widow has she become, she that was great among the nations! She that was queen among the cities has now become a vassal.

Beth. She weeps bitterly in the night, tears run down her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her; all become her enemies.

Gimel. Judah has gone into the misery of exile and of hard servitude; she dwells now among the nations, but finds no resting place; all her pursuers overtook her in the midst of her anguish.

Daleth. The roads to Zion mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts; all her gates are desolate, her priests groan and sigh; her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

He. Her adversaries have become her masters, her enemies prosper; because the Lord has punished her for the multitude of her rebellions; her children are gone, driven away as captives by the enemy.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

Responsory 1 *In monte Oliveti*

On the mount of Olives Jesus prayed to the Father:

Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

V. Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.

R. *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak*

Lesson 2

Waw. And from Daughter Zion all her majesty has departed; her princes have become like stags that can find no pasture, and that run without strength before the hunter.

Zayin. Jerusalem remembers in the days of her affliction and bitterness all the precious things that were hers from the days of old; when her people fell into the hand of the foe, and there was none to help her; the adversary saw her, and mocked at her downfall.

Heth. Jerusalem has sinned greatly, therefore she has become a thing unclean; all who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; and now she sighs, and turns her face away.

Teth. Uncleanness clung to her skirts, she took no thought of her doom; therefore her fall is terrible, she has no comforter. "O Lord, behold my affliction, for the enemy has triumphed."

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

Responsory 2 *Tristis est anima mea*

V. My soul is very sorrowful, even to the point of death;
R. *remain here, and watch with me. Now you shall see the crowd who will surround me; you will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.*

V. Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

R. *You will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you*

Lesson 3

Yodh. The adversary has stretched out his hand to seize all her precious things; she has seen the Gentiles invade her sanctuary, those whom you had forbidden to enter your congregation.

Kaph. All her people groan as they search for bread; they sell their own children for food to revive their strength. "Behold, O Lord, and consider, for I am now beneath contempt!"

Lamedh. Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted, on the day of his burning anger.

Mem. From on high he sent fire, into my bones it descended; he spread a net for my feet, and turned me back; he has left me desolate and faint all the day long.

Nun. My transgressions were bound into a yoke; by his hand they were fastened together; their yoke is upon my neck; he has caused my strength to fail. The Lord has delivered me into their hands, against whom I am not able to stand up.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

Responsory 3 *Ecce vidimus eum*

V. Lo, we have seen him without beauty or majesty,

R. *with no looks to attract our eyes.*

*He bore our sins and grieved for us,
he was wounded for our transgressions,
and by his scourging we are healed.*

V. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows:

R. *And by his scourging we are healed.*

Second Nocturn

Antiphon 4

The kings of the earth rise up in revolt, and the princes plot together, against the Lord and against his Anointed.

Psalm 2 *Quare fremuerunt gentes?*

- 1 Why are the nations in an uproar? *
Why do the peoples mutter empty threats?
- 2 Why do the kings of the earth rise up in revolt,
and the princes plot together, *
against the Lord and against his Anointed?
- 3 "Let us break their yoke," they say; *
"let us cast off their bonds from us."
- 4 He whose throne is in heaven is laughing; *
the Lord has them in derision.
- 5 Then he speaks to them in his wrath, *
and his rage fills them with terror.
- 6 "I myself have set my king *
upon my holy hill of Zion."
- 7 Let me announce the decree of the Lord: *
he said to me, "You are my Son;
this day have I begotten you.
- 8 Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for
your inheritance *
and the ends of the earth for your possession.
- 9 You shall crush them with an iron rod *
and shatter them like a piece of pottery."
- 10 And now, you kings, be wise; *
be warned, you rulers of the earth.
- 11 Submit to the Lord with fear, *
and with trembling bow before him;

12 Lest he be angry and you perish; *
for his wrath is quickly kindled.

13 Happy are they all *
who take refuge in him!

Antiphon 5

They divide my garments among them; they cast lots for
my clothing.

Psalm 22:1-21 *Deus, Deus meus*

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? *
and are so far from my cry and from the words of my
distress?

2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer;
by night as well, but I find no rest.

3 Yet you are the Holy One, *
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

4 Our forefathers put their trust in you; *
they trusted, and you delivered them.

5 They cried out to you and were delivered; *
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

6 But as for me, I am a worm and no man, *
scorned by all and despised by the people.

7 All who see me laugh me to scorn; *
they curl their lips and wag their heads, saying,

8 "He trusted in the Lord; let him deliver him; *
let him rescue him, if he delights in him."

9 Yet you are he who took me out of the womb, *
and kept me safe upon my mother's breast.

10 I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born; *
you were my God when I was still in my mother's womb.

11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near, *
and there is none to help.
12 Many young bulls encircle me; *
strong bulls of Bashan surround me.
13 They open wide their jaws at me, *
like a ravening and a roaring lion.
14 I am poured out like water;
all my bones are out of joint; *
my heart within my breast is melting wax.
15 My mouth is dried out like a pot-sherd;
my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; *
and you have laid me in the dust of the grave.
16 Packs of dogs close me in,
and gangs of evildoers circle around me; *
they pierce my hands and my feet;
I can count all my bones.
17 They stare and gloat over me; *
they divide my garments among them;
they cast lots for my clothing.
18 Be not far away, O Lord; *
you are my strength; hasten to help me.
19 Save me from the sword, *
my life from the power of the dog.
20 Save me from the lion's mouth, *
my wretched body from the horns of wild bulls.
21 I will declare your Name to my brethren; *
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.

Antiphon 6

False witnesses have risen up against me, and also those
who speak malice.

Psalm 27 *Dominus illuminatio*

1 The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear? *

the Lord is the strength of my life;
of whom then shall I be afraid?

2 When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh, *
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who
stumbled and fell.

3 Though an army should encamp against me, *
yet my heart shall not be afraid;

4 And though war should rise up against me, *
yet will I put my trust in him.

5 One thing have I asked of the Lord;
one thing I seek; *

that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days
of my life;

6 To behold the fair beauty of the Lord *
and to seek him in his temple.

7 For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe
in his shelter; *

he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling
and set me high upon a rock.

8 Even now he lifts up my head *
above my enemies round about me.

9 Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation
with sounds of great gladness; *

I will sing and make music to the Lord.

10 Hearken to my voice, O Lord, when I call; *
have mercy on me and answer me.

11 You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." *
Your face, Lord, will I seek.

12 Hide not your face from me, *
nor turn away your servant in displeasure.
13 You have been my helper;
cast me not away; *
do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.
14 Though my father and my mother forsake me, *
the Lord will sustain me.
15 Show me your way, O Lord; *
lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.
16 Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries, *
for false witnesses have risen up against me,
and also those who speak malice.
17 What if I had not believed
that I should see the goodness of the Lord *
in the land of the living!
18 O tarry and await the Lord's pleasure;
be strong, and he shall comfort your heart; *
wait patiently for the Lord.

V. They divide my garments among them:
R. *They cast lots for my clothing.*

All stand for silent prayer. The appointed Reader then goes to the lectern, and everyone else sits down.

Lesson 4

A Reading from the Treatise of Saint Augustine the Bishop on the Psalms.

Hear my prayer, O God; do not hide yourself from my petition. Listen to me and answer me. I mourn in my trial

and am troubled.” These are the words of one disquieted, in trouble and anxiety. He prays under much suffering, desiring to be delivered from evil. Let us now see under what evil he lies; and when he begins to speak, let us place ourselves beside him, that, by sharing his tribulation, we may also join in his prayer.

“I mourn in my trial,” he says, “and am troubled.”

When does he mourn? When is he troubled?

He says, “In my trial.” He has in mind the wicked who cause him suffering, and he calls this suffering his “trial.”

Do not think that the evil are in the world for no purpose, and that God makes no good use of them. Every wicked person lives either that he may be corrected, or that through him the righteous may be tried and tested.

Responsory 4 *Tamquam ad latronem*

V. Have you come out as against a robber,

R. with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me; but now, behold, you scourge me, and lead me away to be crucified.

V. When they had laid hands on Jesus and were holding him, he said:

R. Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me; but now, behold, you scourge me, and lead me away to be crucified.

Lesson 5

Would that those who now test us were converted and tried with us; yet though they continue to try us, let us not hate them, for we do not know whether any of them will

persist to the end in their evil ways. And most of the time, when you think you are hating your enemy, you are hating your brother without knowing it.

Only the devil and his angels are shown to us in the Holy Scriptures as doomed to eternal fire. It is only their amendment that is hopeless, and against them we wage a hidden battle. For this battle the Apostle arms us, saying, "We are not contending against flesh and blood," that is, not against human beings whom we see, "but against the principalities, against the powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." So that you may not think that demons are the rulers of heaven and earth, he says, "of the darkness of this world."

He says, "of the world," meaning the lovers of the world -- of the "world," meaning the ungodly and wicked -- the "world" of which the Gospel says, "And the world knew him not."

Responsory 5 *Tenebrae factae sunt*

V. Darkness covered the whole land when Jesus had been crucified;

R. and about the ninth hour he cried with a loud voice:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And he bowed his head and handed over his spirit.

V. Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said:

Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

R. And he bowed his head and handed over his spirit.

Lesson 6

"For I have seen unrighteousness and strife in the city."
See the glory of the cross itself. On the brow of kings that

cross is now placed, the cross which enemies once mocked. Its power is shown in the result. He has conquered the world, not by steel, but by wood. The wood of the cross seemed a fitting object of scorn to his enemies, and standing before that wood they wagged their heads, saying, "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." He stretched out his hands to an unbelieving and rebellious people.

If one is just who lives by faith, one who does not have faith is unrighteous. Therefore when he says "unrighteousness," understand that it is unbelief. The Lord then saw unrighteousness and strife in the city, and stretched out his hands to an unbelieving and rebellious people. And yet, looking upon them, he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Responsory 6 *Ecce quomodo moritur*

V. See how the righteous one perishes,

R. and no one takes it to heart. The righteous are taken away, and no one understands. From the face of evil the righteous one is taken away, and his memory shall be in peace.

V. Like a sheep before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away:

R. And his memory shall be in peace.

Third Nocturn

Antiphon 7

God is my helper; it is the Lord who sustains my life.

Psalm 54 *Deus, in nomine*

1 Save me, O God, by your Name; *
in your might, defend my cause.

2 Hear my prayer, O God; *
give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For the arrogant have risen up against me,
and the ruthless have sought my life, *
those who have no regard for God.

4 Behold, God is my helper; *
it is the Lord who sustains my life.

5 Render evil to those who spy on me; *
in your faithfulness, destroy them.

6 I will offer you a freewill sacrifice *
and praise your Name, O Lord, for it is good.

7 For you have rescued me from every trouble; *
and my eye has seen the ruin of my foes.

Antiphon 8

At Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling is in Zion.

Psalm 76 *Notus in Judæa*

1 In Judah is God known; *
his Name is great in Israel.

2 At Salem is his tabernacle, *
and his dwelling is in Zion.

3 There he broke the flashing arrows, *
the shield, the sword, and the weapons of battle.

4 How glorious you are! *
more splendid than the everlasting mountains!

5 The strong of heart have been despoiled;
they sink into sleep; *

none of the warriors can lift a hand.

6 At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, *
both horse and rider lie stunned.

7 What terror you inspire! *

who can stand before you when you are angry?

8 From heaven you pronounced judgment; *
the earth was afraid and was still;

9 When God rose up to judgment *

and to save all the oppressed of the earth.

10 Truly, wrathful Edom will give you thanks, *
and the remnant of Hamath will keep your feasts.

11 Make a vow to the Lord your God and keep it; *
let all around him bring gifts to him who is worthy
to be feared.

12 He breaks the spirit of princes, *
and strikes terror in the kings of the earth.

Antiphon 9

I have become like one who has no strength, lost among
the dead.

Psalm 88 *Domine, Deus*

1 O Lord, my God, my Savior, *

by day and night I cry to you.

2 Let my prayer enter into your presence; *
incline your ear to my lamentation.

3 For I am full of trouble; *

my life is at the brink of the grave.

4 I am counted among those who go down to the Pit; *

I have become like one who has no strength;

5 Lost among the dead, *
like the slain who lie in the grave,
6 Whom you remember no more, *
for they are cut off from your hand.
7 You have laid me in the depths of the Pit, *
in dark places, and in the abyss.
8 Your anger weighs upon me heavily, *
and all your great waves overwhelm me.
9 You have put my friends far from me;
you have made me to be abhorred by them; *
I am in prison and cannot get free.
10 My sight has failed me because of trouble; *
Lord, I have called upon you daily;
I have stretched out my hands to you.
11 Do you work wonders for the dead? *
will those who have died stand up and give you thanks?
12 Will your loving-kindness be declared in the grave? *
your faithfulness in the land of destruction?
13 Will your wonders be known in the dark? *
or your righteousness in the country where all
is forgotten?
14 But as for me, O Lord, I cry to you for help; *
in the morning my prayer comes before you.
15 Lord, why have you rejected me? *
why have you hidden your face from me?
16 Ever since my youth, I have been wretched and at the
point of death; *
I have borne your terrors with a troubled mind.
17 Your blazing anger has swept over me; *
your terrors have destroyed me;

18 They surround me all day long like a flood; *
they encompass me on every side.

19 My friend and my neighbor you have put away from
me, *
and darkness is my only companion.

V. He has made me dwell in darkness:

R. Like the dead of long ago.

*All stand for silent prayer. The appointed Reader then goes to the
lectern, and everyone else sits down.*

Lesson 7

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews. [4:15—5:10;
9:11-15a]

We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people.

Responsory 7 *Eram quasi agnus*

V. I was like a trusting lamb led to the slaughter.

R. I did not know it was against me that they devised schemes, saying, Let us destroy the tree with its fruit;

let us cut him off from the land of the living.

V. All my enemies whispered together against me,
and devised evil against me, saying:

*R. I did not know it was against me that they devised
schemes, saying, Let us destroy the tree with its fruit;
let us cut him off from the land of the living.*

Lesson 8

And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also, Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, this day have I begotten you;" as he says also in another place, "You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and, being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Responsory 8 *Velum templi*

V. The veil of the temple was torn in two,

R. and the earth shook, and the thief from the cross cried out, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

V. The rocks were split, the tombs were opened,
and many bodies of the saints who slept were raised:

R. And the earth shook, and the thief from the cross cried out, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Lesson 9

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that are to come, then, through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

Responsory 9 *Sepulto Domino*

V. When the Lord was buried, they sealed the tomb,

R. *rolling a great stone to the door of the tomb;
and they stationed soldiers to guard him.*

V. The chief priests gathered before Pilate,
and petitioned him:

R. *And they stationed soldiers to guard him.*

Lauds

Antiphon 10

God did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.

Psalm 63:1-8 Deus, Deus meus

1 O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; *
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.

2 Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, *
that I might behold your power and your glory.

3 For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; *
my lips shall give you praise.

4 So will I bless you as long as I live *
and lift up my hands in your Name.

5 My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, *
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips;

6 When I remember you upon my bed, *
and meditate on you in the night watches.

7 For you have been my helper, *
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

8 My soul clings to you; *
your right hand holds me fast.

Antiphon 11

He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and he opened not his mouth.

Psalm 90:1-12 Domine, refugium

1 Lord, you have been our refuge *
from one generation to another.

2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born, *
from age to age you are God.

3 You turn us back to the dust and say, *
"Go back, O child of earth."

4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday
when it is past * and like a watch in the night.

5 You sweep us away like a dream; *
we fade away suddenly like the grass.

6 In the morning it is green and flourishes; *
in the evening it is dried up and withered.

7 For we consume away in your displeasure; *
we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.

8 Our iniquities you have set before you, *
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

9 When you are angry, all our days are gone; *
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

10 The span of our life is seventy years,
perhaps in strength even eighty; *
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow,
for they pass away quickly and we are gone.

11 Who regards the power of your wrath? *
who rightly fears your indignation?

12 So teach us to number our days *
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

Antiphon 12

They shall mourn for him as one mourns for an only
child; for the Lord, who is without sin, is slain.

Psalm 143 Domine, exaudi

1 Lord, hear my prayer,
and in your faithfulness heed my supplications; *
answer me in your righteousness.

2 Enter not into judgment with your servant, *
for in your sight shall no one living be justified.

3 For my enemy has sought my life;
he has crushed me to the ground; *
he has made me live in dark places like those who
are long dead.

4 My spirit faints within me; *
my heart within me is desolate.

5 I remember the time past;
I muse upon all your deeds; *
I consider the works of your hands.

6 I spread out my hands to you; *
my soul gasps to you like a thirsty land.

7 O Lord, make haste to answer me; my spirit fails me; *
do not hide your face from me
or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.

8 Let me hear of your loving-kindness in the morning,
for I put my trust in you; *
show me the road that I must walk,
for I lift up my soul to you.

9 Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord, *
for I flee to you for refuge.

10 Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God
let your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

11 Revive me, O Lord, for your Name's sake; *
for your righteousness' sake, bring me out of trouble.

12 Of your goodness, destroy my enemies
and bring all my foes to naught, *
for truly I am your servant.

Antiphon 13

From the gates of hell, O Lord, deliver my soul.

The Song of Hezekiah [Isaiah 38:10-20]

1 In my despair I said,

“In the noonday of my life I must depart; *
my unspent years are summoned to the portals of death.”

2 And I said,

“No more shall I see the Lord in the land of the living, *
never more look on my kind among dwellers on earth.

3 My house is pulled down and I am uncovered, *
as when a shepherd strikes his tent.

4 My life is rolled up like a bolt of cloth, *
the threads cut off from the loom.

5 Between sunrise and sunset my life is brought to an end;
I cower and hope for the dawn.

6 Like a lion he has crushed all my bones; *
like a swallow or thrush I utter plaintive cries;
I mourn like a dove.

7 My weary eyes look up to you; *
Lord, be my refuge in my affliction.”

8 But what can I say? for he has spoken; *
it is he who has done this.

9 Slow and halting are my steps all my days, *
because of the bitterness of my spirit.

10 O Lord, I recounted all these things to you
and you rescued me; *

when entreated, you restored my life.

11 I know now that my bitterness was for my good, *
for you held me back from the pit of destruction,
you cast all my sins behind you.

12 The grave does not thank you, nor death give you
praise; *

nor do those at the brink of the grave hang on your
promises.

13 It is the living, O Lord,
the living who give you thanks as I do this day; *

14 You, Lord, are my Savior; *

I will praise you with stringed instruments
all the days of my life, in the house of the Lord.

Ant. From the gates of hell, O Lord, deliver my soul.

Antiphon 14

O Death, I will be your death; O Grave, I will be your
destruction.

Psalm 150

1 Praise God in his holy temple; *
praise him in the firmament of his power.

2 Praise him for his mighty acts; *
praise him for his excellent greatness.

3 Praise him with the blast of the ram's-horn; *
praise him with lyre and harp.

4 Praise him with timbrel and dance; *
praise him with strings and pipe.

5 Praise him with resounding cymbals; *
praise him with loud-clanging cymbals.

6 Let everything that has breath
*praise the Lord.

Ant. O Death, I will be your death; O Grave, I will be
your destruction.

V. My flesh also shall rest in hope:

R. You will not let your holy One see corruption.

*All stand. During the recitation of the following Canticle, the
candles at the Altar, and all other lights in the church (except
the one remaining at the top of the triangular candlestick), are
extinguished.*

Antiphon

Now the women sitting at the tomb made lamentation,
weeping for the Lord.

Canticle 16: Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *
he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers *
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God *

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the
shadow of death, *

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. Now the women sitting at the tomb made
lamentation, weeping for the Lord.

*After the Canticle, during the repetition of the Antiphon, the
remaining candle is taken from the stand and hidden beneath
or behind the Altar; or in some other convenient place.*

All kneel for the following anthem

Christus factus est

Christ for us became obedient unto death, even death
on a cross; therefore God has highly exalted him and
bestowed on him the Name which is above every
name.

A brief silence is observed.

The following Psalm is then said quietly.

Psalm 51 Miserere mei, Deus

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; *

in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness * and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, * and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you only have I sinned * and done what is evil in your sight.

5 And so you are justified when you speak * and upright in your judgment.

6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, * a sinner from my mother's womb.

7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, * and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; * wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, * that the body you have broken may rejoice.

10 Hide your face from my sins * and blot out all my iniquities.

11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, * and renew a right spirit within me.

12 Cast me not away from your presence * and take not your holy Spirit from me.

13 Give me the joy of your saving help again * and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

14 I shall teach your ways to the wicked, * and sinners shall return to you.

15 Deliver me from death, O God, *

and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,
O God of my salvation.

16 Open my lips, O Lord, *
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

17 Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, *
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.

18 The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; *
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

19 Be favorable and gracious to Zion, *
and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

20 Then you will be pleased with the appointed sacrifices,
with burnt-offerings and oblations; *
then shall they offer young bullocks upon your altar.

The Officiant says the Collect without chant, and without the usual conclusion.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this
your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was
willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of
sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross.

*Nothing further is said; but a noise is made, and the remaining
candle is brought from its hiding place and replaced on the
stand.*

By its light the ministers and people depart in silence.

