

Liturgy of the Hours
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

OFFICE OF READINGS

March 30, 2024

{ Holy Saturday }



Stand and make sign of cross

God, come to my assistance.

— Lord, make haste to help me.

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.

HYMN

I shall praise the Savior's glory,
Of his flesh the mystery sing,
And the blood, all price excelling,
Shed by our immortal King:
God made man for our salvation,
Who from Virgin pure did spring.

Born for us, and for us given,
Born a man like us below,
Christ as man with man residing,
Lived the seed of truth to sow,
Suffered bitter death unflinching,
And immortal love did show.

On the night before he suffered,
Seated with his chosen band,
Jesus, when they all had feasted,
Faithful to the law's command,
Far more precious food provided:
Gave himself with his own hand.

Word made flesh, true bread of heaven,
By his word made flesh to be,
From the wine his blood is taken,
Though our senses cannot see,
Faith alone which is unshaken
Shows pure hearts the mystery.

Therefore we, before him falling,
This great sacrament revere;

Ancient forms are now departed,
For new acts of grace are here,
Faith our feeble senses aiding,
Makes the Savior's presence clear.

To the everlasting Father
And his Son who reigns on high,
With the Holy Ghost proceeding
Forth from each eternally,
Be all honor, glory, blessing,
Power and endless majesty.

Melody: Pange, Lingua 87.87.87; Music: Mode III Vatican Plainsong; Text: Pange, Lingua, Saint Thomas Aquinas, c. 1225-1274; Translator: Edward Caswall, 1814-1878, adapted by Anthony G. Petti; © 1971 by Faber Music Ltd. Reproduced from NEW CATHOLIC HYMNAL by permission of the publishers.

Sit or stand

PSALMODY

Antiphon 1

In peace, I will lie down and sleep.

Psalm 4

Thanksgiving

The resurrection of Christ was God's supreme and wholly marvelous work (Saint Augustine).

When I cáll, ánswer me, O Gód of jústice; *
from ánguish you reléased me; have mércy and héar me!

O mén, how lóng will your héarts be clósed, *
will you lóve what is fútile and séek what is fálse?

It is the Lórd who grants fávors to thóse whom he lóves; *
the Lórd héars me whenéver I cáll him.

Fear him; do not sín: pónder on your béd and be stíll. *
Make jústice your sácrifice and trúst in the Lórd.

“What can bríng us háppiness?” mány sáy. *
Let the líght of your fáce shíne on us, O Lórd.

You have pút into my héart a gréater jóy *

than they have from abundance of corn and new wine.

I will lie down in peace and sleep comes at once *
for you alone, Lórd, make me dwell in safety.

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.

Antiphon

In peace, I will lie down and sleep.

Antiphon 2

My body shall rest in hope.

Psalm 16

God is my portion, my inheritance

The Father raised up Jesus from the dead and broke the bonds of death (Acts 2:24).

Preserve me, Gód, I take refuge in you. †
I say to the Lórd: “You are my Gód. *
My happiness lies in you alone.”

He has put into my heart a marvellous love *
for the faithful ones who dwell in his land.
Those who choose other gods increase their sorrows. †
Never will I offer their offerings of blood. *
Never will I take their name upon my lips.

O Lórd, it is you who are my portion and cup; *
it is you yourself who are my prize.
The lot marked out for me is my delight: *
welcome indeed the heritage that falls to me!

I will bless the Lórd who gives me counsel, *
who even at night directs my heart.
I keep the Lórd ever in my sight: *
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm.

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad; *
even my body shall rest in safety.

For yóu will not léave my sóul among the déad, *
nor lét your belóved knów decáy.

You will shów me the páth of lífe, †
the fúllness of jóy in your présence, *
at your ríght hand háppiness for éver.

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.

Antiphon

My body shall rest in hope.

Antiphon 3

Lift high the ancient portals. The King of glory enters.

Psalm 24

The Lord's entry into his temple

Christ opened heaven for us in the manhood he assumed (St. Irenaeus)

The Lórd's is the éarth and its fúllness, *
the wórld and áll its péoples.
It is hé who sét it on the séas; *
on the wáters he máde it firm.

Who shall clímb the móuntain of the Lórd? *
Who shall stánd in his hólý pláce?
The mán with clean hánds and pure héart, †
who desíres not wóρθless thínghs, *
who has not swórn so as to decéive his néíghbor.

He shall recéive bléssings from the Lórd *
and rewárd from the Gód who sáves him.
Súch are the mén who séek him, *
seek the fáce of the Gód of Jácob.

O gátes, lift hígh your héads; †
grow hígher, áncient dóors. *
Let him énter, the kíng of glóry!

Whó is the kíng of glóry? †
The Lórd, the míghty, the váliant, *
the Lórd, the váliant in wár.

O gátes, lift hígh your héads; †
grow hígher, áncient dóors. *
Let him énter, the kíng of glóry!

Who is hé, the kíng of glóry? †
Hé, the Lórd of ármies, *
hé is the kíng of glóry.

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.

Antiphon

Lift high the ancient portals. The King of glory enters.

VERSE

Take up my cause and rescue me.

— Be true to your word, give me life.

Sit

READINGS

First reading

From the letter to the Hebrews

4:1-13

Let us strive to enter the Lord's rest

While the promise of entrance into his rest still holds, we ought to be fearful of disobeying lest any one of you be judged to have lost his chance of entering. We have indeed heard the good news, as they did. But the word which they heard did not profit them, for they did not receive it in faith.

It is we who have believed who enter into that rest, just as God said:

“Thus I swore in my anger,

“They shall never enter into my rest.”

Yet God’s work was finished when he created the world, for in reference to the seventh day Scripture somewhere says, “And God rested from all his work on the seventh day”; and again, in the place we have referred to, God says, “They shall never enter into my rest.”

Therefore, since it remains for some to enter, and those to whom it was first announced did not because of unbelief, God once more set a day, “today,” when long afterward he spoke through David the words we have quoted:

“Today, if you should hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.”

Now if Joshua had led them into the place of rest, God would not have spoken afterward of another day. Therefore a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God. And he who enters into God’s rest, rests from his own work as God did from his. Let us strive to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall, in imitation of the example of Israel’s unbelief.

Indeed, God’s word is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword. It penetrates and divides soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the reflections and thoughts of the heart. Nothing is concealed from him; all lies bare and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.

Responsory

See Matthew 27:66, 60, 62

They buried the Lord and sealed the tomb by rolling a large stone in front of it.

— They stationed soldiers there to guard it.

The chief priests asked Pilate for a guard.

— They stationed soldiers there to guard it.

Second reading

From an ancient homily on Holy Saturday

(PG 43, 439. 451. 462–463)

The Lord descends into hell

Something strange is happening—there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and hell trembles with fear.

He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, he who is both God and the son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the cross, the weapon that had won him the victory. At the sight of him Adam, the first man he had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone: “My Lord be with you all.” Christ answered him: “And with your spirit.” He took him by the hand and raised him up, saying: “Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.”

I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. Out of love for you and for your descendants I now by my own authority command all who are held in bondage to come forth, all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise. I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in me and I am in you; together we form only one person and we cannot be separated.

For your sake I, your God, became your son; I, the Lord, took the form of a slave; I, whose home is above the heavens, descended to the earth and beneath the earth. For your sake, for the sake of man, I became like a man without help, free among the dead. For the sake of you, who left a garden, I was betrayed to the Jews in a garden, and I was crucified in a garden.

See on my face the spittle I received in order to restore to you the life I once breathed into you. See there the marks of the blows I

received in order to refashion your warped nature in my image. On my back see the marks of the scourging I endured to remove the burden of sin that weighs upon your back. See my hands, nailed firmly to a tree, for you who once wickedly stretched out your hand to a tree.

I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side for you who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side has healed the pain in yours. My sleep will rouse you from your sleep in hell. The sword that pierced me has sheathed the sword that was turned against you.

Rise, let us leave this place. The enemy led you out of the earthly paradise. I will not restore you to that paradise, but I will enthrone you in heaven. I forbade you the tree that was only a symbol of life, but see, I who am life itself am now one with you. I appointed cherubim to guard you as slaves are guarded, but now I make them worship you as God. The throne formed by cherubim awaits you, its bearers swift and eager. The bridal chamber is adorned, the banquet is ready, the eternal dwelling places are prepared, the treasure houses of all good things lie open. The kingdom of heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity.

Responsory

Our shepherd, the source of the water of life, has died. The sun was darkened when he passed away. But now man's captor is made captive.

— This is the day when our Savior broke through the gates of death.

He has destroyed the barricades of hell, overthrown the sovereignty of the devil.

— This is the day when our Savior broke through the gates of death.

Stand

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray.

All-powerful and ever-living God,
your only Son went down among the dead
and rose again in glory.
In your goodness
raise up your faithful people,
buried with him in baptism,
to be one with him
in the eternal life of heaven,
where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

— Amen.

Acclamation

Let us praise the Lord.

— And give him thanks.

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