

Vespers

Vespers

℣: O God, make speed to save us .

℞: O Lord, make haste to help us .

℣: Glory to the Father , and to the Son , and to the Holy Spirit .

℞: As it was in the beginning , is now , and will be forever .

Amen (Alleluia)

Ambrosian Hymn

As given for a particular season, or feast, or as in the Weekly Psalter.

Magnae Deus potentiae

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

A hymn attributed to St. Gregory the Great (540-604)

God of power !

You spoke into the waters all that lives there,

You filled them

And set life into the sky .

A Vespers Office for a Thursday

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Vespers

Pressed down were the waters ,
Pushed by unfolding heaven ;
Exploding from a single seed
all that is created , expressing it into space ;

Grant us, your servants,
- those washed by water and washed by blood -
the power not to slip;
let us not know the weariness of death.

Uncrushed when we fall ;
Humble when we rise -
Breathless, we meet our true selves,
Not proud, not stunned.

Grace us, holy Father,
In accord with Jesus , one with the Father
and the Holy Spirit,
Sovereign through all ages . Amen

Psalmody

*Psalmody for Vespers consists of three or four psalms (with antiphons) as given for a particular season, or feast, or as in the Weekly Psalter. After each psalm, prior to the antiphon, the **Glory** is recited.*

Antiphon 1

Lord , you have searched me out and known me .

Psalm 139

*God , who sees
Domine , probasti*

Lord , you have searched me out and known me ;
you know my sitting down and my rising up ;
you discern my thoughts from afar .

You trace my journeys and my resting-places
and are acquainted with all my ways .

Indeed , there is not a word on my lips ,
but you , O Lord , know it altogether .

You press upon me behind and before
and lay your hand upon me .

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ;
it is so high that I cannot attain to it .

Vespers

Where can I go then from your Spirit ?
where can I flee from your presence ?
If I climb up to heaven , you are there ;
if I make the grave my bed , you are there also .
If I take the wings of the morning
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ,
Even there your hand will lead me
and your right hand hold me fast .

If I say , “ Surely the darkness will cover me ,
and the light around me turn to night , ”
Darkness is not dark to you ;
the night is as bright as the day ;
darkness and light to you are both alike .

<pause>

For you yourself created my inmost parts ;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb .
I will thank you because I am marvelously made ;
your works are wonderful , and I know it well .
My body was not hidden from you ,
while I was being made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth .
Your eyes beheld my limbs , yet unfinished in the womb ;
all of them were written in your book ;
they were fashioned day by day ,
when as yet there was none of them .

How deep I find your thoughts , O God !
how great is the sum of them !
If I were to count them , they would be more in number
than the sand ;
to count them all , my life span would need to
be like yours .

Oh, that you would slay the wicked , O God !
You that thirst for blood, depart from me .
They speak despitefully against you ;
your enemies take your Name in vain .
Do I not hate those, O Lord , who hate you ?
and do I not loathe those who rise up against you ?
I hate them with a perfect hatred ;
they have become my own enemies .

Search me out , O God , and know my heart ;
try me and know my restless thoughts .

Look well whether there be any wickedness in me
and lead me in the way that is everlasting .

Glory to the Father , and the Son ,
and to the Holy Spirit ,
As it was in the beginning , is now , and will be forever ,
Amen

Vespers

Antiphon 1

Lord , you have searched me out and known me .

Antiphon 2

Keep me , O Lord , from the hands of the wicked ;
protect me from the violent .

Psalm 140

God , who delivers

Eripe me , Domine

Deliver me , O Lord, from evildoers ;
protect me from the violent ,
Who devise evil in their hearts
and stir up strife all day long .

They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent ;
adder's poison is under their lips .

Keep me , O Lord , from the hands of the wicked ;
protect me from the violent ,
who are determined to trip me up .
The proud have hidden a snare for me
and stretched out a net of cords ;
they have set traps for me along the path .

I have said to the Lord , “ You are my God ;
listen , O Lord , to my supplication .
O Lord God , the strength of my salvation ,
you have covered my head in the day of battle .

Do not grant the desires of the wicked , O Lord ,
Nor let their evil plans prosper .
Let not those who surround me lift up their heads ;
let the evil of their lips overwhelm them .
Let hot burning coals fall upon them ;
let them be cast into the mire , never to rise up again .”

A slanderer shall not be established on the earth ,
and evil shall hunt down the lawless .

I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the poor
and render justice to the needy .
Surely , the righteous will give thanks to your Name ,
and the upright shall continue in your sight .

Glory to the Father , and the Son ,
and to the Holy Spirit ,
As it was in the beginning , is now , and will be forever ,
Amen

Antiphon 2

Keep me , O Lord , from the hands of the wicked ;
protect me from the violent .

Antiphon 3

Hear my voice when I cry to you .

Vespers

Psalm 141

God , I call

Domine , clamavi

O Lord , I call to you; come to me quickly ;
hear my voice when I cry to you .

Let my prayer be set forth in your sight as incense ,
the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice .

Set a watch before my mouth , O Lord ,
and guard the door of my lips ;
let not my heart incline to any evil thing .

Let me not be occupied in wickedness with evildoers ,
nor eat of their choice foods .

Let the righteous smite me in friendly rebuke ;
let not the oil of the unrighteous anoint my head ;
for my prayer is continually against their wicked deeds .

Let their rulers be overthrown in stony places ,
that they may know my words are true .
As when a plowman turns over the earth in furrows ,
let their bones be scattered at the mouth of the grave .

But my eyes are turned to you , Lord God ;
in you I take refuge ;
do not strip me of my life .
Protect me from the snare which they have laid for me
and from the traps of the evildoers .

Let the wicked fall into their own nets ,
while I myself escape .

Glory to the Father , and the Son ,
and to the Holy Spirit ,
As it was in the beginning , is now , and will be forever ,
Amen

Antiphon 3

Hear my voice when I cry to you.

Vespers

Short Reading and Responsory

As given for a particular season, or feast, or as in the Weekly Psalter.

1 Corinthians 13:4-13

the gift of love

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Responsory

The Lord is my shepherd , I shall not want.

The Lord is my shepherd – he leads me beside still waters - I shall not want.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

The Lord is my shepherd , I shall not want.

Magnificat Antiphon

As given for a particular season, or feast, or as in the Weekly Psalter.

The Lord's mercy is from age to age on those who fear him.

Magnificat

The Song of Mary

Luke 1:46-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord ,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior ;
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant .
From this day all generations will call me blessed :
the Almighty has done great things for me ,
and holy is his Name .

He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation .

He has shown the strength of his arm ,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit .
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones ,
and has lifted up the lowly .

He has filled the hungry with good things ,
and the rich he has sent away empty .

He has come to the help of his servant Israel ,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy ,
The promise he made to our ancestors ,
to Abraham and his children for ever .

Vespers

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.

Magnificat Antiphon

The Lord's mercy is from age to age on those who fear him.

Litany

As given for a particular season, or feast, or as in the Weekly Psalter.

*It might be prayed as a form of Cross Vigil, on one's knees with arms
outstretched, forehead to the ground for the responses, and crossing one's
self when arising back to the knees.*

We pray for God's people throughout the world ;
for our Bishop Mark ; for this gathering ; and for all
ministers and all people .

We pray for the Church .

<pause>

Lord , have mercy.

We pray for peace ; for goodwill among nations ;
and for the well-being of all people .

We pray for justice and peace .

<pause>

Lord , have mercy.

We pray for the poor , the sick , the hungry ,
the oppressed , and those in prison .

We pray for those in any need or trouble .

<pause>

Lord , have mercy .

We pray for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him .

We pray that they may find and be found by him .

<pause>

Lord , have mercy .

We pray for the departed [especially _____] .

<pause>

Lord , have mercy .

We offer you our prayer for _____ .

We offer you our thanksgiving for _____ .

<pause>

Lord , have mercy .

We praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been
honored .

We pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day .

Vespers

<pause>

Lord , have mercy .

Our Father

Our Father , who art in heaven ,
hallowed be thy Name ,

thy kingdom come ,

thy will be done ,

on earth as it is in heaven .

Give us this day our daily bread .

And forgive us our trespasses ,

as we forgive those who trespass against us .

And lead us not into temptation ,

but deliver us from evil .

For thine is the kingdom (+), and the power , and the glory ,
for ever and ever . Amen .

Kýrie

℣: Lord, have mercy *or*

Kyrie eleison

℞: Christ, have mercy

Christe eleison

℣: Lord, have mercy

Kyrie eleison

Lord , have mercy upon us .

Kyrie eleison imas

Concluding Prayer

As given for a particular season, or feast, or as in the Weekly Psalter.

We come to you, Lord Jesus, tired from the burdens of this day. Teach us your gentleness and humility, and our hearts will find rest and peace, because you are faithful to your promises, now and forever.

Final Blessing

May the Lord bless us .

May he keep away all evil

And lead us to eternal life .

℞: Amen .

℣: Let us bless the Lord .

℞: Thanks be to God . (+)

Regarding a time for recitation of the Canonical Hours

Possible times for recitation of the Offices might be:

Vigils *begun sometime between midnight and 6 am, during the dark of night, though that may be difficult in certain places during certain seasons. Regardless, its recitation might ideally be some period of time prior to Lauds.*

Alternatively, Vigils could be recited during any part of the day, and approached as an Office of Readings.

Lauds *begun sometime around 6 am*

Terce *the “third hour”: begun at 9 am*

Sext *the “sixth hour”: begun at 12 o’clock Noon*

None *the “ninth hour”: begun at 3 pm*

Vespers *begun in the early evening*

Compline *finished directly before sleep*

"Indeed, nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God."
~ *Rule of Benedict, Chapter 43*