

Christ the Saviour Ealing



Spiritual Resources
for Advent 2020
Week 4

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Introduction

In this last week of Advent our thoughts turn to Our Lady, the woman called by God to participate in the drama of salvation. The time of waiting is almost over as the Incarnation draws near, the pivotal point in history which changes things for ever. In this, the strangest of years, when so many have suffered through illness, anxiety or isolation, we each have our tale to tell. Christmas is God's tale, and it is one of peace and unconditional love as light emerges from the darkness. May we in this holy season find hope renewed, love strengthened and our faith deepened.

With my love and prayers,



The Advent Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Life is a Constant Advent

Life is a constant Advent season: we are continually waiting to become, to discover, to complete, to fulfil. Hope, struggle, fear, expectation and fulfilment are all part of our Advent experience. The world is not as just, not as loving, not as whole as we know it can and should be. But the coming of Christ and his presence among us-as one of us-give us reason to live in hope: that light will shatter the darkness, that we can be liberated from our fears and prejudices, that we are never alone or abandoned.

May this Advent season be a time for bringing hope, transformation and fulfilment into the Advent of our lives.

Daily Reflections

The Fourth Sunday of Advent, 20th December

In the fourth and final week of Advent we consider Mary's call to receive Christ. Her fiat – saying Yes to God – shaped not only her future, but that of our world. We too are invited to say our Yes to God as we recall the words of Meister Eckhart 'the ternal birth must take place in you'

Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations.
He hath showed strength with his arm, he hath scattered the proud
 in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat, And hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel,
 as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

St Luke 1. 46-55

Our Lady

The Church cannot insist too much on the true position of Mary, for it is a strong hedge around the doctrine of the Incarnation. Every grace of Mary's, every prerogative, every dignity she has is hers simply because she is the Mother of Christ, and it is wholly for his sake that we honour her, nor do we give her any honour which does not of necessity redound to him.

Dom John Chapman (1865-1933)

From A Christmas Carol

*I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.
I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future.
The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me.
I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.*

Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

Monday 21st December

The *O Antiphons* are Magnificat antiphons used at Evening Prayer of the last seven days of Advent in Western Christian traditions. They are referred to as the *O Antiphons* because the title of each one begins with the interjection O. Each antiphon is a name of Christ, one of his attributes mentioned in Scripture.

O Oriens

O Dayspring, splendour of light eternal and sun of righteousness:
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Saying Yes to God

As the poor and faithful of Israel had said 'Yes' to God in anguish of spirit, not seeing how things could work out but conscious only of the tearing away from what had gone before and the venture forward into the dark unknown, at God's word, so Mary was being asked to make the leap of faith in response to God's self-offer and invitation. There were no models for understanding, no comforting precedents, because this thing had never happened before. The flesh-taking of the Son of God was much more than a fulfilment of Israel's expectations, much more than a satisfactory tying up of all the strands of hope.. it was the unheard-of gift, the breaking in of the wholly new thing.

Like the prophets and the anonymous believers before her, she let go of familiar, intelligible patterns and ways of relating to God and the universe, of those frameworks which had genuinely supported meaning hitherto, and were indeed God-given. She said her 'Yes' to the Beyond, she let go of her securities, faced the misunderstanding, bore the shame, accepted her own bewilderment and risk. She was herself reborn to a new existence, that she might bring forth life for many. There was joy for her, and in newness of life she danced with the Beyond that was within.

The Coming of God, Maria Boulding (1929-2009)

Truth

This is the truth that sets us free: that God loves us, welcomes us, delights in us, but also that God sees us and knows us and reveals to us the truth about ourselves, all the while extending his hand in which lay the gifts of forgiveness, healing, reconciliation and hope ... living water for our parched and weary souls.

Br David Vryhof SSJE

Don't ask yourself what the world needs.
Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that.
Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.

Howard Thurman (1899-1981)

Tuesday 22nd December

O Rex Gentium

King of the nations, and their desire, the corner-stone making both one:
Come and save us, whom you formed from the dust.

Advent: The Mystery Begins

The mystery begins
Where the winter finds its feet
the rush of frost and chill
competes with the old hope of incarnation

Darker nights unfold
and with the fading of the light
the sun weakens

held by this frozen earth
wrapped in winter's frost
the mystery of the ancient hope is alight once more

for from the stump of Jesse
the dry old tree of David's line
comes a new branch

a new shoot
cracking through the season
with a promise yet unfulfilled

this is the hoping
the waiting
the advent

Let us gather round the words
the prophets spoke long ago
and believe:

Emmanuel is on the way.

Roddy Hamilton

So, out of the dark, see our great Spring begins
- Our Christ, the new Song, breaking out in the fields and hedgerows,
The heart of Man! O the new temper of Christ, in veins and branches!
He comes, our Sun, to melt the eternal ice
Of death, the crusts of Time round the sunken soul -
Coming again in the spring of the world, clothed with the scarlet-coloured Blood of our
martyrdoms - the fire of spring.

Dame Edith Sitwell (1887-1964)

Wednesday 23rd December

O Emmanuel

O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the desire of all nations and their Saviour:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.

The Sound of Silence

Silence is a presence of God. It is in this silence that we shall hear a voice deep within us, speaking to our nobler selves, calling us to high ideals and generous instincts. Silence is the voice of God, sometimes no louder than a whisper, but speaking to us unmistakably if we learn to listen, to listen to God. That silence, that presence of God, will bring peace to our troubled and divided hearts. It will help to heal and restore our society.

St Anselm, a monk of a monastery in Normandy and later Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote: 'Come now, turn aside from your daily employment. Escape for a moment from the tumult of your thoughts, put aside your weighty cares. Let your burdensome distractions wait. Free yourself for a while for him. Enter the inner chamber of your soul. Shut out everything except God and that which will help you in seeking him. When you have shut the door say to him: 'I seek your face. Lord, it is your face I seek. Lord my God, teach my heart where and how to seek you.'

To see God as he is, his beauty and goodness, his power and his truth, to rejoice in the vision of him - for this we are made. It is the purpose of our being, to see the countenance of God, to know his glory.

'No-one can see me and live.' But God is gracious. He meets our needs and stoops to help our weakness, to give hints of the glory that is in him. In all that is true, beautiful and good we can find him, if we look, reflect and pray. He gives light to dispel the darkness in our souls. Our senses are windows through which a ray from the glory shines into the inner chamber of our souls.

Like a lover he wants to be closer, to walk with us, to be one with us. So he sent his Son. To see this child in swaddling clothes lying in a manger, is to see God himself - God made man for us. His humanity hides and reveals at the same time the God that he is.

Celebrating the Incarnation - God becoming man - 'we escape from the tumult of our hearts, leave our wearisome toil, and enter the inner chamber of our - soul' to listen to his Word: the Word calls us through the mist of ignorance and apathy to be silent, to listen to the sound of stillness and so to see in the child born of Mary, the Word who became flesh.

Basil Hume (1923-199)

... And then, just when everything is bearing down on us to such an extent that we can scarcely withstand it, the Christmas message comes to tell us that all our ideas are wrong, and that what we take to be evil and dark is really good and light because it comes from God. Our eyes are at fault, that is all. God is in the manger, wealth in poverty, light in darkness, succour in abandonment. No evil can befall us; whatever men may do to us, they cannot but serve the God who is secretly revealed as love and rules the world and our lives.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas*

Thursday 24th December

The Coming

And God held in his hand a small globe. Look, he said.
The son looked. Far off, as through water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce colour. The light burned there;
crusted buildings cast their shadows; a bright Serpent,
a river uncoiled itself, radiant with slime.

On a bare Hill a bare tree saddened the sky.
Many people held out their thin arms to it,
as though waiting for a vanished April
To return to its crossed boughs.
The son watched them.
Let me go there, he said.

R S Thomas (1913-2000)

Nativity

Immensity cloistered in thy dear womb,
Now leaves His well-belov'd imprisonment,
There He hath made Himself to His intent
Weak enough, now into the world to come;
But O, for thee, for Him, hath the inn no room?
Yet lay Him in this stall, and from the Orient,
Stars and wise men will travel to prevent
The effect of Herod's jealous general doom.
Seest thou, my soul, with thy faith's eyes, how He
Which fills all place, yet none holds Him, doth lie?
Was not His pity towards thee wondrous high,
That would have need to be pitied by thee?
Kiss Him, and with Him into Egypt go,
With His kind mother, who partakes thy woe.

John Donne (1572-1631)

While peaceful silence enwrapped all things,
and night in her own swiftness was in mid course,
Thine all-powerful Word O Lord leaped from heaven out of the royal throne,
A stern warrior, into the midst of the doomed land.

The Book of Wisdom 18. 14

The Child

Said the Child ... I love you...
I shall love you as long as you live
And when you are dead
I shall love you as long as I live,
And when I am dead
I shall love you as long as God lives.
When death passes by
There is rebirth of love,
Recurring, unswerving,
Philosophically wrought.
What more can God ask
Of the faithful than this?

Dame Ninette de Valois (1898-2001)

The Word was made Flesh

Oh, hearken, for this is wonder!
Light looked down and beheld Darkness;
'Thither will I go,' said Light.
Peace looked down and beheld war.
'Thither will I go,' said Peace.
Love looked down and beheld Hatred.
'Thither will I go,' said Love.
So came Light, and shone.
So came Peace, and gave rest.
So came Love, and brought life.
And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.

From Brother Sun, Laurence Housman (1865-1959)

And In The End

Constantly he comes. He came as a man into our human situation, accepted human experience as his own and lived it through to the bitter end, in order that what was bitter might be turned to sweetness and human experience become an expression of his sacrificial, redeeming love. He has transformed it from the inside, and offered us the possibility of allowing him to transform it in our lives too. The one historical unique birth at Bethlehem makes possible his birth in the many lives of those who will receive him, to whom he gives the power to become children of God. He is born in us continually as our minds, our actions, our reactions, our relationships, our experience and our prayer are Christified. But this is a lifetime's task, and we need to pray constantly from the still pre-Christian areas in us: 'Come, Lord Jesus'.

The Coming of God, Maria Boulding (1929-2009)

The Christmas Silence

Hushed are the pigeons cooing low
On dusty rafters of the loft;
And mild-eyed oxen, breathing soft,
Sleep on the fragrant hay below.

Dim shadows in the corner hide;
The glimmering lantern's rays are shed
Where one young lamb just lifts his head,
Then huddles 'gainst his mother's side.

Strange silence tingles in the air;
Through the half-open door a bar
Of light from one low-hanging star
Touches a baby's radiant hair.

No sound: the mother, kneeling, lays
Her cheek against the little face.
Oh human love! Oh heavenly grace!
'Tis yet in silence that she prays!

Ages of silence end to-night;
Then to the long-expectant earth
Glad angels come to greet His birth
In burst of music, love, and light!

Margaret Deland (1857-1945)

St Stephen

Witness for Jesus, man of fruitful blood,
Your martyrdom begins and stands for all.
They saw the stones, you saw the face of God,
And sowed a seed that blossomed in St. Paul.
When Saul departed breathing threats and slaughter
He had to pass through that Damascus gate
Where he had held the coats and heard the laughter
As Christ, alive in you, forgave his hate,
And showed him the same light you saw from heaven
And taught him, through his blindness, how to see;
Christ did not ask 'Why were you stoning Stephen?'
But 'Saul, why are you persecuting me?'
Each martyr after you adds to his story,
As clouds of witness shine through clouds of glory.

Malcolm Guite (b 1957)

The Angelus

This devotion is traditionally recited in the morning, at noon, and again in the evening. It reminds us of the centrality of the Incarnation in our lives and in our world. Wherever you may find yourself you are invited to join in its recitation.

The angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now
and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Behold, the handmaid of the Lord.
Be it unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary ...

And the word was made flesh.
And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary ...

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God:
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Almighty God, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his ✠ Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



Daily Offices

You may like to use one or more of the following services as a daily basis for your prayer.

Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline are designed for the time of day.

Prayer During the Day can be used at any point.

To accompany the services, we offer a biblical reading for each day.

Sunday 20th December

For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give -the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. *2 Corinthians 3. 6 - 12*

Monday 21st December

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation., for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities; - all things were created -through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. *Colossians 1. 15, 20*

Tuesday 22nd December

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation. *Isaiah 12. 2*

Wednesday 23rd December

Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. *Isaiah 12. 3*

Thursday 24th December Christmas Eve

There is nothing in all creation that is able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8. 39*

Friday 25th December Christmas Day

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not ... There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.

Saturday 26th December

Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. *Isaiah 7.13-14*

A Simple Form of Morning Prayer

Opening Sentences

O Lord, open thou our lips
And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

✠ O God, make speed to save us
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

Praise ye the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Benedictus – The Song of Zechariah

✠ Blessed be the Lord God of Israel :
for he hath visited, and redeemed his people;
And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us :
in the house of his servant David;
As he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets :
which have been since the world began;
That we should be saved from our enemies :
and from the hands of all that hate us;
To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers :
and to remember his holy covenant;
To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham :
that he would give us,
That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies :
might serve him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before him :
all the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest :
for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people :
for the remission of their sins;
Through the tender mercy of our God :
whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us;
To give light to them that sit in darkness,
and in the shadow of death :
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

Reading

A reading for the day can be found on page 10.

Prayers

- ❖ Give thanks for a new day, for all God's blessings.
- ❖ Pray for those we will encounter today, and those far from us.
- ❖ Pray for the blessing of peace for all nations and people.
- ❖ Pray that our time may be consecrated by the presence of Christ.

The Lord's Prayer

Collects

The Collect of the Fourth Week of Advent

God our redeemer, who prepared the blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Collect for Peace

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord,
in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life,
whose service is perfect freedom;
defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies;
that we, surely trusting in thy defence,
may not fear the power of any adversaries;
through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect for Grace

O Lord, our heavenly Father,
almighty and everlasting God,
who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day;
defend us in the same with thy mighty power;
and grant that this day we fall into no sin,
neither run into any kind of danger,
but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance,
to do always that is righteous in thy sight;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Conclusion

✠ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.

Prayer During the Day

Preparation

✠ O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

You have been my helper

and under the shadow of your wings will I rejoice.

Praise

A hymn, song, canticle, extempore praise or this –

For the gift of his Spirit:

blessed be Christ.

For the catholic Church:

blessed be Christ.

For the means of grace:

blessed be Christ.

For the hope of glory:

blessed be Christ.

For the triumphs of his gospel:

blessed be Christ.

For the lives of his saints:

blessed be Christ.

In joy and in sorrow:

blessed be Christ.

In life and in death:

blessed be Christ.

Now and to the end of the ages:

blessed be Christ.

from A Litany of the Resurrection

The Word of God

Psalmody

Sunday: Psalm 2

Why are the nations in tumult,

and why do the peoples devise a vain plot?

The kings of the earth rise up,

and the rulers take counsel together,

against the Lord and against his anointed:

‘Let us break their bonds asunder

and cast away their cords from us.’

He who dwells in heaven shall laugh them to scorn;

the Lord shall have them in derision.

Then shall he speak to them in his wrath

and terrify them in his fury:

'Yet have I set my king
upon my holy hill of Zion.'
I will proclaim the decree of the Lord;
he said to me: 'You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.
Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance
and the ends of the earth for your possession.
You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'
Now therefore be wise, O kings;
be prudent, you judges of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear, and with trembling kiss his feet,
lest he be angry and you perish from the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Happy are all they
who take refuge in him.

Monday: Psalm 15

Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may rest upon your holy hill?
Whoever leads an uncorrupt life
and does the thing that is right;
Who speaks the truth from the heart
and bears no deceit on the tongue;
Who does no evil to a friend
and pours no scorn on a neighbour;
In whose sight the wicked are not esteemed,
but who honours those who fear the Lord.
Whoever has sworn to a neighbour
and never goes back on that word;
Who does not lend money in hope of gain,
nor takes a bribe against the innocent;
Whoever does these things
shall never fall.

Tuesday: Psalm 42.1-7

As the deer longs for the water brooks,
so longs my soul for you, O God.
My soul is athirst for God, even for the living God;
when shall I come before the presence of God?
My tears have been my bread day and night,
while all day long they say to me, 'Where is now your God?'
Now when I think on these things, I pour out my soul:
how I went with the multitude
and led the procession to the house of God,
With the voice of praise and thanksgiving,
among those who kept holy day.

Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul,
and why are you so disquieted within me?
O put your trust in God;
for I will yet give him thanks,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Wednesday: Psalm 96

Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord and bless his name;
tell out his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the nations
and his wonders among all peoples.
For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;
he is more to be feared than all gods.
For all the gods of the nations are but idols;
it is the Lord who made the heavens.
Honour and majesty are before him;
power and splendour are in his sanctuary.
Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples;
ascribe to the Lord honour and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name;
bring offerings and come into his courts.
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before him.
Tell it out among the nations that the Lord is king.
He has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.
Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
Let the fields be joyful and all that is in them;
let all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord.
For he comes, he comes to judge the earth;
with righteousness he will judge the world
and the peoples with his truth.

Thursday: Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.
He will not suffer your foot to stumble;
he who watches over you will not sleep.
Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel
shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord himself watches over you;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,

So that the sun shall not strike you by day,
neither the moon by night.
The Lord shall keep you from all evil;
it is he who shall keep your soul.
The Lord shall keep watch over your going out
and your coming in,
from this time forth for evermore.

Friday: Psalm 125

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but stands fast for ever.
As the hills stand about Jerusalem,
so the Lord stands round about his people,
from this time forth for evermore.
The sceptre of wickedness shall not hold sway
over the land allotted to the righteous,
lest the righteous turn their hands to evil.
Do good, O Lord, to those who are good,
and to those who are true of heart.
Those who turn aside to crooked ways
the Lord shall take away with the evildoers;
but let there be peace upon Israel.

Saturday: Psalm 133

Behold how good and pleasant it is
to dwell together in unity.
It is like the precious oil upon the head,
running down upon the beard,
Even on Aaron's beard, running down upon the collar of his clothing.
It is like the dew of Hermon running down upon the hills of Zion.
For there the Lord has promised his blessing:
even life for evermore.

Each psalm ends with

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Short readings – A reading for the day can be found on page 10.

Response

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
St Matthew 5.3

Prayers

- ❖ The universal Church
- ❖ Bishops, synods and all who lead the Church
- ❖ The leaders of the nations
- ❖ The natural world and the resources of the earth
- ❖ All who are in any kind of need

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening
into the house and gate of heaven,
to enter that gate and dwell in that house,
where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light;
no noise nor silence, but one equal music;
no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession;
no ends or beginnings, but one equal eternity;
in the habitations of your glory and dominion,
world without end. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Conclusion

May God give us grace to follow his saints in glory.
Amen.



A Simple Form of Evening Prayer

Opening Sentences

O Lord, open thou our lips.

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

✠ O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Praise ye the Lord.

The Lord's Name be praised.

Magnificat – The Song of Mary

✠ My soul doth magnify the Lord :
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded :

the lowliness of his hand-maiden.

For behold, from henceforth :

all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me :

and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him :

throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm :

he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat :

and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things :

and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel :

as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :

world without end. Amen.

Reading

A reading for the day can be found on page 10.

Prayers

- ❖ Give thanks for the day past, for the means of grace and the hope of glory.
- ❖ Pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick in body, mind or spirit.
- ❖ Pray for those who have died, those we have loved, those who have inspired us.
- ❖ As the day fades we commend ourselves to the love and mercy of God.

The Lord's Prayer

Collects

The Collect of the Fourth Week of Advent

God our redeemer, who prepared the blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Collect for Peace

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed: Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

The Collect for Aid Against All Perils

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Conclusion

✠ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

Compline

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end. Amen.

Brethren be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith.

(1 Peter 5.8)

But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us:

Thanks be to God.

O God, make speed to save us:

O Lord, make haste to help us.

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

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Praise ye the Lord:

The Lord's name be praised.

One or more of the following psalms is read:

Psalm 4

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness
thou hast set me at liberty when I was in trouble;
have mercy upon me and hearken unto my prayer.

O ye sons of men, how long will ye blaspheme mine honour
and have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing?

Know this also, that the Lord hath chosen to himself the man that is godly
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

Stand in awe and sin not commune with your own heart,
and in your chamber, and be still.

Offer the sacrifice of righteousness:
and put your trust in the Lord.

There be many that say:

Who will show us any good?

Lord, lift thou up:

the light of thy countenance upon us.

Thou hast put gladness in my heart:

since the time that their corn, and wine, and oil, increased.

I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest:

for it is thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety.

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:**

**as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Psalm 31

In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust
let me never be put to confusion, deliver me in thy righteousness.
Bow down thine ear to me; make haste to deliver me
and be thou my strong rock, and house of defence,
that thou mayest save me.
For thou art my strong rock, and my castle
be thou also my guide, and lead me for thy name's sake.
Draw me out of the net, that they have laid privily for me
for thou art my strength.
Into thy hands I commend my spirit
for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Psalm 91

Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the most High
shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say unto the Lord, thou art my hope, and my stronghold
my God, in him will I trust.
For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter
and from the noisome pestilence.
He shall defend thee under his wings,
and thou shalt be safe under his feathers
his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night
nor for the arrow that flieth by day.
For the pestilence that walketh in darkness
nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noon-day.
A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand
at thy right hand
but it shall not come nigh thee.
Yea, with thine eyes shalt thou behold,
and see the reward of the ungodly
For thou, Lord, art my hope;
thou hast set thine house of defence very high.
There shall no evil happen unto thee
neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.
For he shall give his angels charge over thee,
to keep thee in all thy ways
They shall bear thee in their hands;
that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.

Thou shalt go upon the lion and adder
the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.
Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him
I will set him up, because he hath known my name.

He shall call upon me, and I will hear him.
Yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him,
and bring him to honour.
With long life will I satisfy him and shew him my salvation.

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Psalm 134

Behold now, praise the Lord all ye servants of the Lord.
Ye that by night stand in the house of the Lord
even in the courts of the house of our God.
Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the Lord.
The Lord that made heaven and earth
give thee blessing out of Sion.

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Reading: the following, or the daily reading (p10).

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

St Matthew 11:28-30

followed by short silence.

Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit:
Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

For thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth:
I commend my spirit.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Te lucis ante terminum

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray,
that with thy wonted favour thou
wouldst be our guard and keeper now.

From all ill dreams defend our eyes,
from nightly fears and fantasies;
tread under foot our ghostly foe,
that no pollution we may know.

O Father, that we ask be done,
through Jesus Christ thine only Son,
who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,
doth live and reign eternally. Amen.

Keep me as the apple of an eye:
Hide me under the shadow of thy wings.

Antiphon

Preserve us, O Lord, while waking,
**and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep we may rest in peace.**

Nunc Dimittis – The Song of Simeon

✠ **Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:
according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation:
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles:
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

**Preserve us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep we may rest in peace.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

**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, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers:
To be praised and glorified above all for ever.

Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit:
Let us praise him and magnify him for ever.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, in the firmament of heaven:
To be praised and glorified above all for ever.

The Almighty and most merciful Lord guard us
and give us his blessing.
Amen.

Silence for recollection

**We confess to God Almighty, the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit, that we have sinned in thought, word,
and deed, through our own grievous fault.
Wherefore we pray God to have mercy upon us.**

Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us:
That thy people may rejoice in thee?

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us:
And grant us thy salvation.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin:
O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, hear our prayer:
And let our cry come unto thee.

One or more of the following Collects is said:

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we, who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may repose upon thy eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Look down, O Lord, from thy heavenly throne, illuminate the darkness of this night with thy celestial brightness, and from the children of light banish the deeds of darkness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, who at this evening hour didst rest in the sepulchre, and didst thereby sanctify the grave to be a bed of hope to thy people: make us so to abound in sorrow for our sins, which were the cause of thy passion, that when our bodies lie in the dust, our souls may live with thee: who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God world without end. Amen.

Visit, we beseech thee, O Lord, this place and drive away all the snares of the enemy; let thy holy angels dwell herein to preserve us in peace; and may thy blessing be upon us evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for thy love's sake. Amen.

We will lay us down in peace and take our rest:

For it is thou, Lord, only that makest us dwell in safety.

The Lord be with you:

And with thy spirit.

Let us bless the Lord:

Thanks be to God.

✠ The Almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

Amen.

May the divine assistance remain with us always,

✠ and may the faithful departed, through the mercy of God,
rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.



The Office may conclude with the Salve Regina:

Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiae;
vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae,
ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.
Eia, ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos
misericordes oculos ad nos converte;
et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exilium ostende.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

*Hail, O Queen, mother of mercy;
our life, our sweetness and our hope, hail.
To you do we cry, the banished, children of Eve;
to you do we sigh, lamenting and weeping in this vale of tears; therefore, our advocate, your
eyes of mercy turn towards us,
And Jesus, the blessed fruit of your womb, to us, after this exile, reveal.
O clement, O devoted, O sweet Virgin Mary.*