



VIGILS
OF THE DEAD

At Fr Abbot's signal, all stand for the Invitatory Psalm (Psalm 94):

VI

 R E-GEM CU- i ómni- a vi-vunt, • Ve-ní-te ad- o-rémus.

The Choir repeats: Regem cui ómnia vivunt, • Veníte adorémus.

VI

 V E-NÍ-TE, exsultémus Dómi-no, ju-bi-lémus De-o



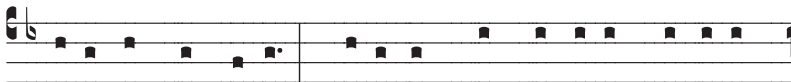
sa-lu-tá-ri nostro: præ-occu-pémus fá-ci-em e-jus in



conféssi-óne, et in psalmis ju-bi-lémus e-i. Re-gem.



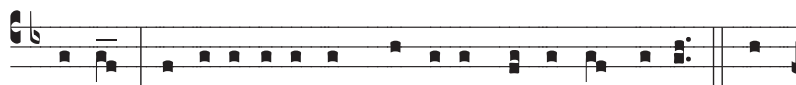
Quóni- am De- us magnus Dómi-nus, et Rex magnus



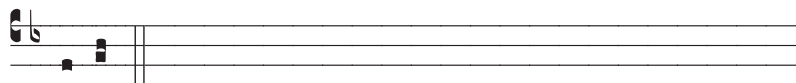
super omnes de-os: quóni- am non re-péllat Dóminus



ple-bem su- am, qui- a in manu e-jus sunt omnes fines



terrae, et alti-túdi-nes mónti-um ipse cónspi-cit. Ve-



ni-te.



Quó-ni-am ipsí-us est ma-re, et ipse fe-cit il-lud, et



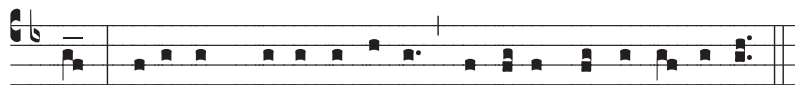
á-ri-dam fundavé-runt manus e-jus: vení-te, ad-o-rémus,



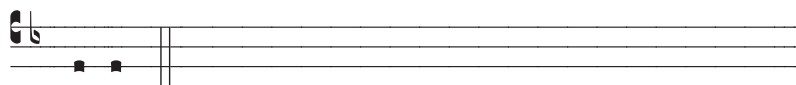
et pro-ci-dámus ante De-um: plo-rémus co-ram Dómi-



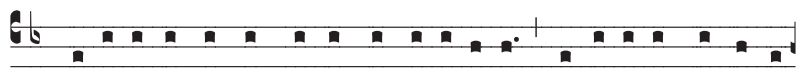
no, qui fe-cit nos: qui-a ipse est Dómi-nus De-us nos-



ter: nos autem pópu-lus e-jus, et oves páscu-æ e-jus.



Regem.



Hódi-e si vo-cem e-jus audi-é-ri-tis, no-lí-te obdu-rá-re



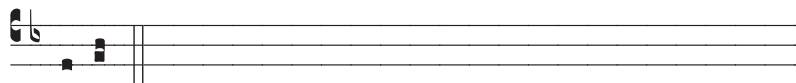
corda vestra, sic-ut in exa-cerba-ti-óne se-cúndum di-



em tenta-ti-ónis in de-sérto: u-bi tentavé-runt me pat-



res vestri, probavé-runt et vi-dé-runt ó-pe-ra me-a. Ve-



ni-te.



Quadra-gínta annis pró-ximus fu-i gene-ra-ti-óni hu-



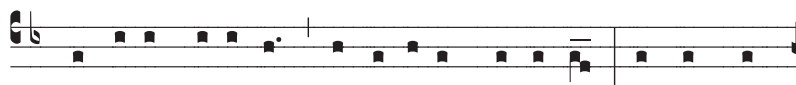
ic, et di-xi: Semper hi errant corde: ipsi ve-ro non



cognové-runt vi- as me- as, qui-bus ju-rá-vi in i-ra me-



a, si intro-íbunt in réqui-em me-am. Regem.



Réqui-em æté-rnam do-na e- is Dómi-ne: et lux per-



pé-tu- a lú-ce- at e- is. • Ve-ní-te. Regem.

At the end of the Invitatory, all sit for the Psalmody.

*First Nocturn**Ant. 1:*

O Lord my God • Let me lead my life in your presence.

*(Tone 1)*

PSALM 5

Morning prayer for help

To my words give ear, O Lord, †
 give heed to my groaning.
 Attend to the sound of my cries, —
 my King and my God.
 It is you whom I invoke, O Lord. †
 In the morning you hear me;
 in the morning I offer you my prayer, —
 watching and waiting.

You are no God who loves evil; †
 no sinner is your guest.
 The boastful shall not stand their ground before
 your face.
 You hate all who do evil: —
 you destroy all who lie.
 The deceitful and bloodthirsty man the Lord detests.

But I through the greatness of your love —
 have access to your house.
 I bow down before your holy temple, filled with awe.
 Lead me, Lord, in your justice, †
 because of those who lie in wait;
 make clear your way before me.

No truth can be found in their mouths, †
 their heart is all mischief
 their throat a wide-open grave, —
 all honey their speech.
 Declare them guilty, O God. †
 Let them fail in their designs.
 Drive them out for their many offences; —
 for they have defied you.

Those you protect shall be glad and ring out their joy.
 You shelter them; in you they rejoice, —
 those who love your name.
 It is you who bless the just man, O Lord:
 you surround him with favour as with a shield.

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated.

Ant. 2:

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in a single system, all in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. The first staff begins with a treble clef and contains the melody for the first line of text. The second staff continues the melody for the second line of text. The third staff contains a series of rhythmic patterns, likely representing a recitation or a specific liturgical rhythm, with vertical lines indicating the placement of the text below.

Be mer - ci - ful, O Lord, and res - cue my soul •
 for no - one in hell can praise you.

(Tone 5)

PSALM 6

Prayer for God's help in time of distress

Lord, do not reprove me in your anger; †
 punish me not, in your rage.
 Have mercy on me, Lord, I have no strength;
 Lord, heal me, my body is racked;
 my soul is racked with pain.

But you, O Lord, how long? †
 Return, Lord, rescue my soul.
 Save me in your merciful love;
 for in death no one remembers you;
 from the grave, who can give you praise?

I am exhausted with my groaning; †
 every night I drench my pillow with tears;
 I bedew my bed with weeping.
 My eyes waste away with grief;
 I have grown old surrounded by my foes.

Leave me, all you who do evil; †
 for the Lord has heard my weeping.
 The Lord has heard my plea; —
 the Lord will accept my prayer.
 All my foes will retire in confusion,
 foiled and suddenly confounded.

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated:

Be mer - ci - ful, O Lord, and res - cue my soul •

for no - one in hell can praise you.

Ant. 3:

Let my pur-su-er • not tear me to pie-ces like a li-on,
and drag me off with no-one to res-cue me.

(Tone A4)

PSALM 7

The prayer of the innocent man subjected to slander

Lord God, I take refuge in you.
From my pursuer save me and rescue me,
lest he tear me to pieces like a lion
and drag me off with no one to rescue me.

Lord God, if my hands have done wrong, †
if I have paid back evil for good,
I who saved my unjust oppressor:
then let my foe pursue me and seize me, †
let him trample my life to the ground
and lay my soul in the dust.

Lord, rise up in your anger, †
rise against the fury of my foes;
my God, awake! You will give judgment.
Let the company of nations gather round you,
taking your seat above them on high.

The Lord is judge of the peoples. †
Give judgment for me, O Lord;
I am just and innocent of heart.
Put an end to the evil of the wicked! †
Make the just stand firm,
you who test mind and heart, O just God!

God is the shield that protects me, †
 who saves the upright of heart.
 God is a just judge, slow to anger;
 but he threatens the wicked every day,
 men who will not repent.

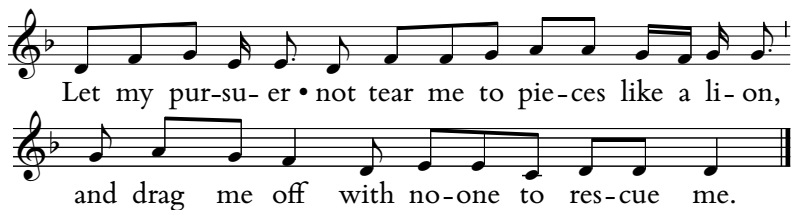
God will sharpen his sword;
 he has braced his bow and taken aim.
 For them he has prepared deadly weapons;
 he bars his arrows with fire.

Here is one who is pregnant with malice,
 conceives evil and brings forth lies.
 He digs a pitfall, digs it deep;
 and in the trap he has made he will fall.

His malice will recoil on himself;
 on his own head his violence will fall.
 I will thank the Lord for his justice:
 I will sing to the Lord, the Most High.

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated:



Let my pur-su-er • not tear me to pie-ces like a li-on,
 and drag me off with no-one to res-cue me.

FIRST READING

One of the following readings is chosen:

A reading from the book of Job (14:1-15)

The mortality of human beings

A MORTAL, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble, comes up like a flower and withers, flees like a shadow and does not last. Do you fix your eyes on such a one? Do you bring me into judgment with you? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one can. Since their days are determined, and the number of their months is known to you, and you have appointed the bounds that they cannot pass, look away from them, and desist, that they may enjoy, like labourers, their days. For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its root grows old in the earth, and its stump dies in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant.

But mortals die, and are laid low; humans expire, and where are they? As waters fail from a lake, and a river wastes away and dries up, so mortals lie down and do not rise again; until the heavens are no more, they will not awake or be roused out of their sleep. O that you would hide me in Sheol, that you would conceal me until your wrath is past, that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If mortals die, will they live again? All the days of my service I would wait until my release should come. You would call, and I would answer you; you would long for the work of your hands.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the book of Wisdom (1:12-15; 2:23-24; 5:14-17)

Though they seem to die, the righteous live forever in the Lord

Do not invite death by the error of your life,
or bring on destruction by the works of your hands;
because God did not make death,
and he does not delight in the death of the living.
For he created all things so that they might exist;
the generative forces of the world are wholesome,
and there is no destructive poison in them,
and the dominion of Hades is not on earth.
For righteousness is immortal
for God created us for incorruption,
and made us in the image of his own eternity,
but through the devil's envy death entered the world,
and those who belong to his company experience it.
Because the hope of the ungodly is like
thistledown carried by the wind,
and like a light frost driven away by a storm;
it is dispersed like smoke before the wind,
and it passes like the remembrance
of a guest who stays but a day.
But the righteous live for ever,
and their reward is with the Lord;
the Most High takes care of them.
Therefore they will receive a glorious crown
and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord,
because with his right hand he will cover them,
and with his arm he will shield them.

The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armour,
and will arm all creation to repel his enemies;

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the First letter of St Paul to the Corinthians
(15:20-28)

The resurrection of Christ is the basis of all our hope

BUT IN fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For 'God has put all things in subjection under his feet.' But when it says, 'All things are put in subjection,' it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the First letter of St Paul to the Corinthians (15: 51-58)

When we die, we will be clothed with the imperishability of Christ

LISTEN, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.

Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?’

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the Second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians (4:16-5:10)

Our earthly body will be raised up into an eternal dwelling place in God

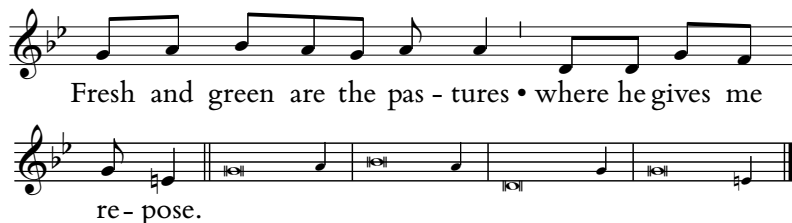
SO WE do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight

of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling—if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

Thanks be to God.

*Second Nocturn**Ant. 4:*


Fresh and green are the pas - tures • where he gives me
re - pose.

(Tone 20)

PSALM 22

The Good Shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.
He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated.

Ant. 5:

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is a treble clef with a melody consisting of quarter and eighth notes. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a simple accompaniment of quarter notes. The lyrics 'Do not re-mem-ber • the sins of my youth.' are written below the top staff, with a dot between 'ber' and 'the'.

(Tone 18)

PSALM 24

Begging for forgiveness & salvation

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. †
I trust you, let me not be disappointed;
do not let my enemies triumph.
Those who hope in you shall not be disappointed,
but only those who wantonly break faith.

Lord, make me know your ways.
Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me
for you are God my saviour.

In you I hope all the day long †
because of your goodness, O Lord.
Remember your mercy, Lord, —
and the love you have shown from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth.
Remember me in your love.

The Lord is good and upright.
He shows the path to those who stray,
he guides the humble along the right path;
he teaches his way to the poor.

His ways are faithfulness and love
for those who keep his covenant and will.
Lord, for the sake of your name
forgive my guilt; for it is great.

If anyone fears the Lord
he will show him the path he should choose.
His soul shall live in happiness
and his children shall possess the land.

The Lord's friendship is for those who revere him;
to them he reveals his covenant.
My eyes are always on the Lord;
for he rescues my feet from the snare.

Turn to me and have mercy
for I am lonely and poor.
Relieve the anguish of my heart
and set me free from my distress.

See my affliction and my toil
and take all my sins away.
See how many are my foes;
how violent their hatred for me.

Preserve my life and save me.
Do not disappoint me, you are my refuge.
May innocence and uprightness protect me: †
for my hope is in you, O Lord.
Redeem Israel, O God, from all his distress.

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated:



Ant. 6:

I am sure I shall see the Lord's good-ness •
in the land of the liv-ing.

(Tone 7)

PSALM 26

Trust in time of affliction

The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

When evil-doers draw near
to devour my flesh,
it is they, my enemies and foes,
who stumble and fall.

Though an army encamp against me
my heart would not fear.
Though war break out against me
even then would I trust.

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, †
 for this I long,
 to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
 to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
 to behold his temple.

For there he keeps me safe in his tent
 in the day of evil.
 He hides me in the shelter of his tent,
 on a rock he sets me safe.

And now my head shall be raised
 above my foes who surround me.
 I shall offer in his tent a sacrifice of joy.
 I will sing and make music for the Lord.

O Lord, hear my voice when I call; †
 have mercy and answer.
 Of you my heart has spoken: —
 'Seek his face.'
 It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
 hide not your face.

Dismiss not your servant in anger; †
 you have been my help.
 Do not abandon or forsake me, O God my help!
 Though father and mother forsake me,
 the Lord will receive me.

Instruct me, O Lord, in your way;
 on an even path lead me —
 because of those who lie in wait.
 Protect me from the greed of my enemies †
 false witnesses who rise against me,
 breathing out fury.

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
 in the land of the living.
 Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
 Hope in the Lord!

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated:

I am sure I shall see the Lord's good- ness •
 in the land of the liv- ing.

SECOND READING

On the Commemoration of All Souls, the reading is as follows:

A reading from the book of St Ambrose on the death of his brother Satyrus (2.40-41, 46-7, 132-3)

There should be in us a disposition towards dying

IT is obvious that death is a gain and life a penalty. Saint Paul says
 it: 'For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.' What does Christ mean to us here if not the death of the body and the breath of life? And so we must die with him in order to live with him. There should be in us a daily habit and disposition towards dying so that our soul may learn to cut away all carnal desire and take on itself the likeness of death, by seeing things as from the height of heaven, out of reach of the lusts of the world, where they cannot bind it to themselves; so it shall escape the punishment of spiritual death. The law of the flesh, we know, wars against the law of the

mind enmeshing it in the law of error. And what remedy have we? 'Who will deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Indeed, we have a healer, so let us make use of his remedy. Our remedy is Christ's grace and 'the body of death' means our physical nature. Therefore we must exile ourselves from our bodies lest we be exiled from Christ. Even though we are still in the body we should not desire the things of the flesh, and while not denying all natural appetites we should prize the gifts of grace above all.

The world has been redeemed by one man's death. Christ need not have died unless he had willed it, yet he did not think a shameful death a thing to be avoided, nor that there was any better way to save us than by dying. So his death is every man's life. We are signed and sealed by his death. It is his death we proclaim when we pray, that we preach when we offer sacrifice. His death is victory and sacrament.

Thanks be to God.

Otherwise, one of the following readings is chosen:

A reading from the Letters of St Braulio of Saragossa (19)

Our hope comes from the resurrection of Christ

CHRIST, the hope of all who have faith, calls those who leave this world; not the dead but those who are asleep. He says, 'Lazarus, our friend, is asleep.' Nor would the holy apostle have us grieve over those who are asleep. His reason is that if our faith holds that all who believe in Christ shall not die forever, as the gospel says, then we know by faith that because he is not dead so neither shall we die.

May this hope of resurrection put heart into us since we shall see again in heaven those whom we lose on earth. All we have to do is to believe firmly in Christ and obey his commandments. Such is his power that he can raise the dead more easily than we can arouse the sleeping.

We say this but then some emotion starts our tears once again and the feeling of selfish longing prevails over the believing heart. Such is the wretchedness of our humanity that everything that happens in our lives without Christ is mere emptiness.

We belong not to ourselves but to him who redeemed us. Our will must always be dependent on his, which is why we pray, 'Thy will be done'. That is also the reason that we must say with Job as he mourned, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.' Let us say that with Job here on earth. If we imitate him in the present circumstances we shall not be unlike him in heaven.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the sermons of St Anastasius of Antioch (Or 5:6-7, 9)

Our rising to new life in Christ brings us to full maturity in him

‘BUT GOD is not God of the dead, but of the living.’ Consequently, the dead over whom he who lives has power are no longer dead but alive. Life has power over them so that they may live without any further fear of death just as Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again.

Raised up and freed from corruption they shall see death no more. They will share in the resurrection of Christ just as he shared in their death. For no other reason did he descend to earth, whose

bars are barriers to eternity, except to ‘shatter the doors of bronze, and cut in two the bars of iron.’ He came to lead our lives away from corruption to himself and gave us freedom in place of slavery.

If the work of this arrangement of providence does not seem to be finished yet – men still die and their bodies rot in the grave – this should in no way undermine our faith. In advance of all the good things already mentioned we have even now received a pledge through Christ, our first-fruits. Through him we attain the highest heaven and take our places with him who carried us up to the heights with himself. That is what Saint Paul says somewhere, ‘He raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.’ The fulfilment will be ours at the time appointed by the Father when we shall lay aside childhood and reach mature manhood.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the Revelations of Julian of Norwich (75)

To the Christian, even death is proof of God’s love for us

I SAW that God can supply all our needs. There are three things that I would say we need: love, longing and pity – the pity of love to protect us in our time of need, and the longing of the same love to draw us up to heaven. For the thirst of God is to include everyman within himself, and it is through this thirst that he has drawn his holy ones into their present blessedness. He is ever drawing and drinking, as it were, as he gets these living members, yet he still thirsts and longs.

I saw that God’s longing takes three forms but all have the same object. (The same is true of us too, in the matter of longing and ob-

ject alike). The first is his longing to teach us to know and love him more and more – which both suits and helps us. The second is his longing to have us share in his blessedness, like souls who have been taken out of suffering into heaven. The third is to fill us full of bliss – this will happen on the Last Day, when we shall be filled full to everlasting. For I saw that there will be an end to pain and sorrow for those to be saved. And we shall receive not only the same bliss that souls in heaven already know, but a new one in addition, which will flow in abundance from God and fill us to the brim. These are the good things that he has planned to give us from the very first. They are now stored and hidden within himself, for till that time comes no creature is fit enough or capable of receiving them.

In this fulfilment we shall see the true reason why God has done all the things he has, and the reason, too, for all those things he has permitted. The bliss and the fulfilment will be so vast in its immensity that the whole creation, wondering and astonished, will have for God a dread so great and reverent and beyond anything known before, that the very pillars of heaven will tremble and quake! But there will be no pain in this trembling and dread; it is wholly right that the worth and majesty of God should thus be seen by his creatures, who tremble in dread and quake in humble joy, as they marvel at the greatness of God their Maker, and the insignificance of all that is made.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the Manual for Interior Souls by Jean Nicolas Grou

Death is the gateway to eternal repose in God

‘**C**OME to me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you: and you shall find rest for your souls.’ This invitation was addressed to every man on earth: no other than Jesus Christ has ever given them such an invitation; and all have the greatest interest in experiencing the reality of this promise. We all suffer in this world more or less, either from anxiety of mind, or sorrow of heart or pain of body. And nevertheless we all long for rest, we seek it eagerly and we wear ourselves out all our lives in this search without ever attaining the object of our desires. Where is this rest to be found?

It is to be found in God and in God alone. Jesus Christ came into the world to teach us this truth, and it is the greatest lesson that he has given us. ‘You have made us for yourself’ writes Saint Augustine, ‘and our heart finds no rest until it rests in you.’

What must we do to repose in God? We must give ourselves entirely to him and we must sacrifice to him everything else. If we only give ourselves partly to him, if we make some reservation, if we keep back some attachment, it is clear that our rest cannot be entire or perfect because trouble will glide in by that place in our heart that is not united to God. That is why so few Christians enjoy a real peace – a peace that is continual, full and unchanging. They do not fix their rest in God alone, they do not entrust everything to him.

There is no true rest to be found but in utter abandonment. This rest is as unchangeable as God is; it is exalted, as God is, above all

created things; it is secret and intimate because it is only God whose peace pierces to the very depths of our hearts.

This may seem like a dream or a fancy to those who have never experienced it. But let us believe Saint Paul who speaks to us of the peace that passes all understanding; let us believe our Lord Jesus Christ who calls this rest his peace, a Divine peace which the world cannot give or take away. A peace which we can never obtain by our own efforts, because it is the gift of God and is his reward for the absolute gift of ourselves which we have made to him.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the sermons of St Augustine (172.1-3)

Mourning the dead is natural, but our mourning should be full of hope

IT IS inevitable that we should be sad when those we love depart from us by dying. Although we know they are not leaving us for ever, that they have but gone a little ahead of us, that we who remain will follow them, nevertheless our nature shrinks from death, and when it takes a loved one we are filled with sorrow simply because of our love for that person. That is why the Apostle did not tell us that we should not be saddened, but that we should not be saddened in the same way as those who have no hope. In the death of those who are close to us we experience both sadness at the necessity of losing them, and hope of getting them back. By the former we are distressed, by the latter consoled; in the one our weakness touches us, in the other faith restores us. In our loss the human condition mourns, but through hope the divine promise heals.

Accordingly, the solemn pomp of the burial rites, the thronging funeral procession, the costly and careful interment, the raising of

a rich monument at the grave – all these things are some kind of solace for the living but no help to the dead. However, there is no doubt that the dead are helped by the prayers of Holy Church, by the saving sacrifice, and by alms dispensed for their souls; these things are done that they may be more mercifully dealt with by the Lord than their sins deserve. The whole Church observes the custom handed down by our fathers: that those who have died within the fellowship of Christ's body and blood should be prayed for when they are commemorated in their own place at the holy sacrifice, and that we should be reminded that this sacrifice is offered for them as well. When these acts of mercy are solemnly performed for their sake, who can doubt that we are truly giving them our support? The prayers we offer to God for them are not futile. We must not waver in our belief that they are profitable to the dead, to those of the dead at least who have lived in such a way before death that these things can be useful to them afterward.

Faithful hearts should be allowed, then, to mourn for their loved ones, but with a grief that can be healed; let them shed over our mortal condition tears that can be wiped away, tears that can be quickly checked by the joy of that faith which assures us that when believers die they go but a little distance from us that they may pass to a better state. Let the loving care of friends be an added consolation, whether it be expended on the funeral rites or devoted to those who grieve. Due attention should be paid to the burial and the construction of tombs for the dead, according to our means, for these are counted as good works in the scriptures. But people whose love for their dead is spiritual as well as physical should pay much greater, more careful and more earnest attention to those things – sacrifices, prayers, and almsgiving – which can assist those who though their bodies may be dead are still alive in spirit.

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the sermons of Bl. Ogerius of Locedio (6.5-6)

We receive our place in the kingdom through the grace of God

BY SAYING 'my Father's house', Jesus means God's temple, God's kingdom, which consists of all the just, among whom there are many differences. These differences are the rooms in that house, that is, the different degrees of honour which have been prepared by predestination. Yet labour is required if we hope to reach them. That is why the Apostle writes: 'Those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified.' And this is what Jesus himself says: 'Otherwise I would have told you, for I am going to prepare a place for you; and after I have gone and prepared you a place I will come again and take you to myself so that where I am you may be also.'

'In my Father's house there are varying rewards for merit. But because they have been prepared by predestination there is no need for me to prepare other dwellings thereby predestination.' Since, however, they have not yet been prepared by labour, he adds: 'But after I have gone and prepared you a place I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also.' It is as if he were saying: 'In my Father's house there is a room predestined for you; but I am going to the Father, and I will prepare it for you by my labour. In my Father's house you have an eternal dwelling, but you cannot reach it except by great toil. You have rooms in my Father's house only through God's gracious gift; but I want you to have them now through me as well.'

'I am withdrawing from you in my divinity, and I will prepare for you, in my humanity, the indescribable blessedness which in my divinity I prepared for you from the beginning of the world.'

There is no possibility of your enjoying the unspeakable delights of everlasting life unless I am first released from the flesh and then clad in it again. I shall ascend to heaven and send you the Holy Spirit who will teach you to perform good works and to be thankful; for it is by labour that you are to reach the realm of everlasting happiness prepared for you by predestination.’

The Lord Jesus daily prepares a place for his faithful followers when he shows God the Father that he suffered in the flesh for the salvation of the human race. In this way he bestows upon us in his humanity the place he prepared in his divinity. As often as we do some good work – fasting, praying, reading, meditating, weeping either because of our sins or because of our desire to see Christ, visiting the sick, feeding the hungry, and all the other good works which would take a long time to list – he who said ‘Without me you can do nothing,’ is preparing that blessed place in heaven for us. When he comes to render to all according to their works, he will lead us into those blessed rooms, provided we have believed in him and loved him in our lifetime. That is what he means by saying: ‘I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also. I will appear on Judgment Day and lead you into those rooms, so that you may remain with me there for ever.’

Thanks be to God.

or:

A reading from the sermons of St Odilo of Cluny (De Res. 5)

Christ's resurrection should fill us with confidence about our own resurrection

CHRISTIANS are absolutely certain of the divine promise that the dead will rise again. Truth himself made the promise and Truth cannot lie. The promise given by Truth concerning the resurrection of the dead is reliable because, since Truth cannot lie,

he must fulfill all he has promised. Moreover, to give us certain proof that bodies will rise again, the Lord himself deigned to demonstrate this to us in his own body. Christ rose so that Christians may not doubt that they too will rise: for what happened first in the head will happen later in the body.

Now we should realise, beloved, that there are two deaths and two resurrections; Scripture speaks of a first death and a second death. The first, moreover, has two parts: in the one the guilty soul forsakes its Creator by sinning; in the other it is, by God's judgment, separated from its body as a penalty. The second death includes the death of the body and the everlasting punishment of the soul. The first death temporarily separates from their bodies the souls of good and bad alike. In the second death the wicked alone suffer torment in both body and soul for ever.

In the past all were subject to both deaths, for original sin made everyone liable to punishment. But the immortal and righteous Son of God came and took mortal flesh from us in order to die for us. In that flesh he bore the punishment for sin, but without any guilt, for there could be no sin in him. God's Son thus accepted on our behalf the second part of the first death, the death of the body alone, and by so doing rescued us from the control of sin and from the torment of everlasting punishment.

Christ now continues his merciful work: to those whom he encourages to live a good life he gives faith so that they may believe correctly, and charity so that they may readily devote themselves to good works. On the last day he will graciously raise them up in the body in order to give them everlasting blessedness. Therefore, beloved, now that our souls have been restored to life by faith, let us live uprightly so that we may rise to everlasting joy in our bodies as well. Let us be aware of the gift Christ has given us in the first

resurrection, so that when we rise in the body we may deserve to reign with our Saviour for ever. Then death will be swallowed up in victory, and believers will be given true life and true joy. In return for their faith and good works they will receive the kingdom of heaven from their Saviour who is God Almighty, and who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit through endless ages. Amen.

Thanks be to God.

Third Nocturn

Ant. 7:



(Tone A1)

PSALM 39

Thanksgiving and request for help

I waited, I waited for the Lord,
 he stooped down to me and heard my cry.
 He drew me from the deadly pit, —
 from the miry clay.
 He set my feet upon a rock and made my footsteps firm.

He put a new song in my mouth, †
 a song of praise to our God.
 Many shall see and fear and shall trust in the Lord.
 Happy the man who puts his trust in the Lord
 who does not turn to the proud, —
 to those who follow false gods.

How many, O Lord my God,
are the wonders and designs you have worked for us;
you have no equal.
Should I proclaim and speak of them, —
they are more than I can tell!

You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings,
but an open ear.
You do not ask for holocaust and victim.
Instead, here am I.

In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will.
My God, I delight in your law
in the depth of my heart.

Your justice I have proclaimed
in the great assembly.
My lips I have not sealed;
you know it, O Lord.

I have not hidden your justice in my heart
but declared your faithful help.
I have not hidden your love and your truth
from the great assembly.

O Lord, you will not withhold
your compassion from me.
Your merciful love and your truth
will always guard me.

For I am beset with evils too many to be counted.
My sins have fallen upon me till I cannot see.
They are more than the hairs of my head
and my courage fails me.

O Lord, come to my rescue,
 Lord, come to my aid.
 O let there be shame and confusion
 on those who seek my life.

O let them turn back in confusion,
 who delight in my harm.
 Let them be appalled, covered with shame,
 who jeer at my lot.

O let there be rejoicing and gladness
 for all who seek you.
 Let them ever say: 'The Lord is great,'
 who love your saving help.

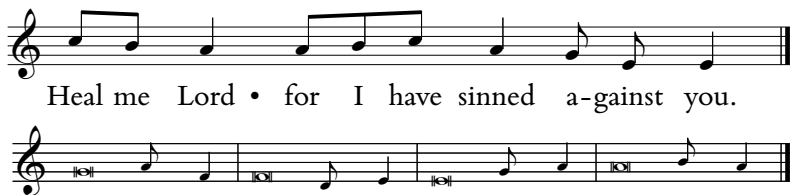
As for me, wretched and poor,
 the Lord thinks of me.
 You are my rescuer, my help,
 O God, do not delay.

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated:



O Lord, come to my res - cue • Lord, come to my aid.

Ant. 8:*(Tone 16)*

PSALM 40

Prayer in sickness

Happy the man who considers the poor and the weak.
 The Lord will save him in the day of evil,
 will guard him, give him life, make him happy in
 the land
 and will not give him up to the will of his foes.

The Lord will help him on his bed of pain,
 he will bring him back from sickness to health.
 As for me, I said: 'Have mercy, O Lord,
 heal my soul for I have sinned against you.'

My foes are speaking evil against me.
 'How long before he dies and his name be forgotten?'
 They come to visit me and speak empty words,
 their hearts full of malice, they spread it abroad.

My enemies whisper together against me.
 They all weigh up the evil which is on me:
 'Some deadly thing has fastened upon him,
 he will not rise again from where he lies.'

Thus even my friend, in whom I trusted,
 who ate my bread, has turned against me.
 But you, have mercy on me, O Lord.
 Let me rise once more and I will repay them.

By this I shall know that you are my friend,
 if my foes do not shout against me in triumph.
 If you uphold me I shall be unharmed
 and set in your presence for evermore.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel
 from age to age, forever.

Glory be...

The Antiphon is repeated:

Heal me Lord • for I have sinned a-against you.

Ant. 9:

My soul is thirsting for God; • when can I
 en - ter and see the face — of God?

(Tone 8)

PSALM 41

The exile's nostalgia for the Lord's temple

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,
 so my soul is yearning for you, my God.
 My soul is thirsting for God, —
 the God of my life;
 when can I enter and see the face of God?

My tears have become my bread,
 by night, by day,
 as I hear it said all the day long:
 'Where is your God?'

These things will I remember as I pour out my soul:
 how I would lead the rejoicing crowd into the house
 of God,
 amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,
 the throng wild with joy.

Why are you cast down, my soul,
 why groan within me?
 Hope in God; I will praise him still,
 my saviour and my God.

My soul is cast down within me as I think of you,
 from the country of Jordan and Mount Hermon, —
 from the Hill of Mizar.

Deep is calling on deep in the roar of waters:
 your torrents and all your waves swept over me.

By day the Lord will send his loving kindness;
 by night I will sing to him, —
 praise the God of my life.

I will say to God, my rock: —
 'Why have you forgotten me?
 Why do I go mourning oppressed by the foe?'

With cries that pierce me to the heart, my enemies
 revile me,
 saying to me all the day long: —
 'Where is your God?'

Why are you cast down, my soul, —
 why groan within me?
 Hope in God; I will praise him still, —
 my saviour and my God.

Glory be...

GOSPEL READING

After the Gospel is read, all kneel and pray in silence until Fr Abbot gives the signal. The Vigil ends with the appropriate Collect.

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed (2 Nov):

LISTEN kindly to our prayers, O Lord, and, as our faith in Your Son, raised from the dead, is deepened, so may our hope of resurrection for your departed servants also find new strength. Through Christ our Lord.

Commemoration of Deceased Relatives, Friends & Benefactors (5 Nov):

GOD, giver of pardon and loving author of our salvation, grant, we pray you, in your mercy, that, through the intercession of Blessed Mary, ever-Virgin, and all your Saints, the members, friends, and benefactors of our community, who have passed from this world, may attain a share in eternal happiness. Through Christ our Lord.

For a Priest:

GRANT, we pray, O Lord, that the soul of N., your servant and Priest, whom you honoured with sacred office while he lived in this world, may exult for ever in the glorious home of heaven. Through Christ our Lord.

or:

HEAR with favour our prayers, which we humbly offer, O Lord, for the salvation of the soul of N., your servant and priest, that he, who devoted a faithful ministry to your name, may rejoice in the perpetual company of your Saints. Through Christ our Lord.

For a monk, not a priest:

GRANT, we pray, almighty God, that the soul of your servant N., who for love of Christ walked the way of perfect charity, may rejoice in the coming of your glory and together with his brothers may delight in the everlasting happiness of your Kingdom.

All pray in silence until Fr Abbot gives the signal.

