

Vespers for Christmas Eve

Opening Sentence

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel; my heart teaches me, night after night. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not fall. *Psalm 16:7,8*

The Invitatory and Psalter

V: O God, make speed to save us.

R: 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 for ever. Amen.

Alleluia

O Gracious Light Phos hilaron

O gracious Light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

The Psalm or Psalms Appointed

Psalm 59 Eripe me de inimicis

My merciful God comes to meet me, hallelujah.

¹ Rescue me from my enemies, O God; *
protect me from those who rise up against me.

² Rescue me from evildoers *
and save me from those who thirst for my blood.

³ See how they lie in wait for my life, how the mighty gather together against me; *
not for any offense or fault of mine, O LORD.

⁴ Not because of any guilt of mine *
they run and prepare themselves for battle.

⁵ Rouse yourself, come to my side, and see; *
for you, LORD God of hosts, are Israel's God.

⁶ Awake, and punish all the ungodly; *
show no mercy to those who are faithless and evil.

⁷ They go to and fro in the evening; *
they snarl like dogs and run about the city.

⁸ Behold, they boast with their mouths, and taunts are on their lips; *
"For who, they say, will hear us?"

⁹ But you, O LORD, you laugh at them; *

you laugh all the ungodly to scorn.

¹⁰ My eyes are fixed on you, O my Strength; *
for you, O God, are my stronghold.

¹¹ My merciful God comes to meet me; *
God will let me look in triumph on my enemies.

¹² Slay them, O God, lest my people forget; *
send them reeling by your might and put them down, O Lord our shield.

¹³ For the sins of their mouths, for the words of their lips, for the cursing and lies that they utter, *
let them be caught in their pride.

¹⁴ Make an end of them in your wrath; *
make an end of them, and they shall be no more.

¹⁵ Let everyone know that God rules in Jacob, *
and to the ends of the earth.

¹⁶ They go to and fro in the evening; *
they snarl like dogs and run about the city.

¹⁷ They forage for food, *
and if they are not filled, they howl.

¹⁸ For my part, I will sing of your strength; *
I will celebrate your love in the morning;

¹⁹ For you have become my stronghold, *
a refuge in the day of my trouble.

²⁰ To you, O my Strength, will I sing; *
for you, O God, are my stronghold and my merciful God.
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.

My merciful God comes to meet me, hallelujah.

Psalm 60 *Deus, repulisti nos*

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

¹ O God, you have cast us off and broken us; *
you have been angry; oh, take us back to you again.

² You have shaken the earth and split it open; *
repair the cracks in it, for it totters.

³ You have made your people know hardship; *
you have given us wine that makes us stagger.

⁴ You have set up a banner for those who fear you, *
to be a refuge from the power of the bow.

⁵ Save us by your right hand and answer us, *
that those who are dear to you may be delivered.

⁶ God spoke from his holy place and said: *
"I will exult and parcel out Shechem; I will divide the valley of Succoth.

⁷ Gilead is mine and Manasseh is mine; *
Ephraim is my helmet and Judah my scepter.

⁸ Moab is my wash-basin, on Edom I throw down my sandal to claim it, *
and over Philistia will I shout in triumph."

⁹ Who will lead me into the strong city? *
who will bring me to Edom?

¹⁰ Have you not cast us off, O God? *

you no longer go out, O God, with our armies.

¹¹ Grant us your help against the enemy, *
for vain is the help of man.

¹² With God we will do valiant deeds, *
and he shall tread our enemies under foot.

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.

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

Psalm 123 *Ad te levavi oculos meos*

My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people, hallelujah.

¹ To you I lift up my eyes, *
to you enthroned in the heavens.

² As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, *
and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,

³ So our eyes look to the LORD our God, *
until he show us his mercy.

⁴ Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy, *
for we have had more than enough of contempt,

⁵ Too much of the scorn of the indolent rich, *
and of the derision of the proud.

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.

My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people, hallelujah.

The Lessons

A reading from Philippians 2:5-11 (NRSV)

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death~ even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Here ends the Reading.

The Root of Jesse has budded; the Star has come out of Jacob; a Virgin has given birth to the Savior. We praise you, O God.

The Song of Mary *Magnificat*

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 fathers, *

to Abraham and his children for ever.

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.

The Root of Jesse has budded; the Star has come out of Jacob; a Virgin has given birth to the Savior. We praise you, O God.

The Prayers

V: The Lord be with you.

R: *And also with you.*

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Suffrages A

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;

R. And grant us your salvation.

V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

R. Let your people sing with joy.

V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

R. For only in you can we live in safety.

V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;

R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

V. Let your way be known upon earth;

R. Your saving health among all nations.

V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;

R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Collect of the Day

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A Prayer of Self-Dedication

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray you, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Prayer for Mission

O God and Father of all, whom the whole heavens adore: Let the whole earth also worship you, all nations obey you, all tongues confess and bless you, and men and women everywhere love you and serve you in peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

[\[Include authorized intercessions or thanksgivings-opens new window\]](#)

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. *Amen. Ephesians 3:20*

The Angelus

The Angel of the Lord announced to Mary
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your 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 your word

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus

*Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

And the Word was made flesh.
And dwelled among us.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R: *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

Let us pray:

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***