



TENEBRAE

FIRST NOCTURN

ANTIPHON 1

Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

Psalm 69:1-23

- ¹ Save me, O God, *
for the waters have come up even to my neck.
- ² I sink down in the deep mire, where there is no ground; *
I have come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.
- ³ I am weary of crying; my throat is dry; *
my sight fails me from waiting so long for my God.
- ⁴ Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; *
those who are my enemies, and would destroy me wrongfully, are mighty.
- ⁵ They bid me restore things I never took. *
O God, you know my foolishness, and my faults are not hidden from you.
- ⁶ Let not those who trust in you, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed because of me; *
let not those who seek you be confounded through me, O God of Israel.
- ⁷ Surely for your sake have I suffered reproach; *
shame has covered my face.
- ⁸ I have become a stranger to my brethren, *
unknown to my mother's children,
- ⁹ Because zeal for your house has consumed me, *
and the reproaches of those who reproached you have fallen upon me.
- ¹⁰ I wept, and humbled myself with fasting, *
but that was turned to my reproach.
- ¹¹ I put on sackcloth also, *
and I became a byword among them.
- ¹² Those who sit in the gate speak against me, *
and the drunkards make songs about me.
- ¹³ But, Lord, I make my prayer to you *
in an acceptable time.

- ¹⁴ Hear me, O God, in the multitude of your mercy, *
 even in the truth of your salvation.
- ¹⁵ Take me out of the mire, lest I sink; *
 O let me be delivered from those who hate me, and out of the deep waters.
- ¹⁶ Let not the floodwaters drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up, *
 and let not the pit shut its mouth upon me.
- ¹⁷ Hear me, O Lord, for your loving-kindness is good; *
 turn to me according to the multitude of your mercies;
- ¹⁸ And hide not your face from your servant, for I am in trouble; *
 O hasten and hear me.
- ¹⁹ Draw near to me and save me; *
 O deliver me because of my enemies.
- ²⁰ You have known my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; *
 my adversaries are all in your sight.
- ²¹ Reproach has broken my heart; I am full of heaviness; *
 I looked for some to have pity on me, but there was no one, neither have I
 found any to comfort me.
- ²³ Let their table become a snare for them, *
 and let their prosperity become a trap for them.
- ²² They gave me gall to eat, *
 and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

ANTIPHON 2

Let them draw back and be disgraced who take pleasure in my misfortune.

V. Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked:

R. From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.

LESSON 1

A Reading from the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet. [1:1-14]

Aleph. How solitary lies the city, once so full of people! How like a widow has she become, she that was great among the nations! She that was queen among the cities has now become a vassal.

Beth. She weeps bitterly in the night, tears run down her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her; all become her enemies.

Gimel. Judah has gone into the misery of exile and of hard servitude; she dwells now among the nations, but finds no resting place; all her pursuers overtook her in the midst of her anguish.

Daleth. The roads to Zion mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts; all her gates are desolate, her priests groan and sigh; her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

He. Her adversaries have become her masters, her enemies prosper; because the Lord has punished her for the multitude of her rebellions; her children are gone, driven away as captives by the enemy.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

RESPONSORY 1 *In monte Oliveti*

On the mount of Olives Jesus prayed to the Father:

Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

V. Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

LESSON 2

Waw. And from Daughter Zion all her majesty has departed; her princes have become like stags that can find no pasture, and that run without strength before the hunter.

Zayin. Jerusalem remembers in the days of her affliction and bitterness all the precious things that were hers from the days of old; when her people fell into the hand of the foe, and there was none to help her; the adversary saw her, and mocked at her downfall.

Heth. Jerusalem has sinned greatly, therefore she has become a thing unclean; all who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; and now she sighs, and turns her face away.

Teth. Uncleanness clung to her skirts, she took no thought of her doom; therefore her fall is terrible, she has no comforter. “O Lord, behold my affliction, for the enemy has triumphed.”

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

RESPONSORY 2 *Tristis est anima mea*

My soul is very sorrowful, even to the point of death;

Remain here, and watch with me. Now you shall see the crowd who will surround me; you will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.

V. Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

You will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.

LESSON 3

Yodh. The adversary has stretched out his hand to seize all her precious things; she has seen the Gentiles invade her sanctuary, those whom you had forbidden to enter your congregation.

Kaph. All her people groan as they search for bread; they sell their own children for food to revive their strength. “Behold, O Lord, and consider, for I am now beneath contempt!”

Lamedh. Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted, on the day of his burning anger.

Mem. From on high he sent fire, into my bones it descended; he spread a net for my feet, and turned me back; he has left me desolate and faint all the day long.

Nun. My transgressions were bound into a yoke; by his hand they were fastened together; their yoke is upon my neck; he has caused my strength to fail. The Lord has delivered me into their hands, against whom I am not able to stand up.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

RESPONSORY 3 *Ecce vidimus eum*

Lo, we have seen him without beauty or majesty,

with no looks to attract our eyes. He bore our sins and grieved for us, he was wounded for our transgressions, and by his scourging we are healed.

V. Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows:

And by his scourging we are healed.

SECOND NOCTURN

ANTIPHON 3

The kings of the earth rise up in revolt, and the princes plot together, against the Lord and against his Anointed.

Psalm 2

- ¹ Why do the nations so furiously rage together? *
 And why do the peoples devise a vain thing?
- ² The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together, *
 against the Lord and against his Anointed:
- ³ “Let us break their bonds asunder *
 and cast away their cords from us.”
- ⁴ He who dwells in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; *
 the Lord shall hold them in derision.
- ⁵ Then shall he speak to them in his wrath *
 and terrify them in his great anger:
- ⁶ “I myself have set my King *
 upon my holy hill of Zion.”
- ⁷ I will proclaim the decree of the Lord; *
 he said to me, “You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.
- ⁸ Ask of me, and I shall give you the nations for your inheritance *
 and the ends of the earth for your possession.
- ⁹ You shall bruise them with a rod of iron *
 and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”
- ¹⁰ Be wise now, O you kings; *
 be warned, you judges of the earth.
- ¹¹ Serve the Lord in fear, *
 and rejoice with trembling.
- ¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled. *
 Blessed are all those who put their trust in him.

ANTIPHON 4

They divide my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing.

LESSON 4

A Reading from the Treatise of Saint Augustine the Bishop on the Psalms. Psalm 55:1,2,10c

- ¹ Hear my prayer, O God, *
and hide not yourself from my petition.
- ² Give heed to me, and hear me, *
for I am troubled in my prayer and am tormented,
- ¹⁰ Day and night they go about within her walls; *
trouble and sorrow are in the midst of her.

Hear my prayer, O God; do not hide yourself from my petition. Listen to me and answer me. I mourn in my trial and am troubled.” These are the words of one disquieted, in trouble and anxiety. He prays under much suffering, desiring to be delivered from evil. Let us now see under what evil he lies; and when he begins to speak, let us place ourselves beside him, that, by sharing his tribulation, we may also join in his prayer.

“I mourn in my trial,” he says, “and am troubled.”

When does he mourn? When is he troubled? He says, “In my trial.” He has in mind the wicked who cause him suffering, and he calls this suffering his “trial.” Do not think that the evil are in the world for no purpose, and that God makes no good use of them. Every wicked person lives either that he may be corrected, or that through him the righteous may be tried and tested.

RESPONSORY 4 *Tamquam ad latronem*

Have you come out as against a robber,

with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me; but now, behold, you scourge me, and lead me away to be crucified.

V. When they had laid hands on Jesus and were holding him, he said:

Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me; but now, behold, you scourge me, and lead me away to be crucified.

LESSON 5

Would that those who now test us were converted and tried with us; yet though they continue to try us, let us not hate them, for we do not know whether any of them will persist to the end in their evil ways. And most of the time, when you think you are hating your enemy, you are hating your brother without knowing it.

Only the devil and his angels are shown to us in the Holy Scriptures as doomed to eternal fire. It is only their amendment that is hopeless, and against them we wage a hidden battle. For this battle the Apostle arms us, saying, “We are not contending against flesh and blood,” that is, not against human beings whom we see, “but against the principalities, against the powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world.” So that you may not think that demons are the rulers of heaven and earth, he says, “of the darkness of this world.”

He says, “of the world,” meaning the lovers of the world—of the “world,” meaning the ungodly and wicked—the “world” of which the Gospel says, “And the world knew him not.”

RESPONSORY 5 *Tenebrae factae sunt*

Darkness covered the whole land when Jesus had been crucified;

and about the ninth hour he cried with a loud voice: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And he bowed his head and handed over his spirit.

V. Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

And he bowed his head and handed over his spirit.

LESSON 6

“For I have seen unrighteousness and strife in the city.”

See the glory of the cross itself. On the brow of kings that cross is now placed, the cross which enemies once mocked. Its power is shown in the result. He has conquered the world, not by steel, but by wood. The wood of the cross seemed a fitting object of scorn to his enemies, and standing before that wood they wagged their heads, saying, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” He stretched out his hands to an unbelieving and rebellious people. If one is just who lives by faith, one who does not have faith is unrighteous.

Therefore when he says “unrighteousness,” understand that it is disbelief. The Lord then saw unrighteousness and strife in the city, and stretched out his hands to an

unbelieving and rebellious people. And yet, looking upon them, he said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

RESPONSORY 6 *Ecce quomodo moritur*

See how the righteous one perishes,

and no one takes it to heart. The righteous are taken away, and no one understands. From the face of evil the righteous one is taken away, and his memory shall be in peace.

V. Like a sheep before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away:

And his memory shall be in peace.

THIRD NOCTURN

ANTIPHON 6

God is my helper; it is the Lord who sustains my life.

ANTIPHON 7

I have become like one who has no strength, lost among the dead.

Psalm 88

- ¹ O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before you; *
 O let my prayer enter into your presence; incline your ear to my call.
- ² For my soul is full of trouble, *
 and my life draws nigh to the Grave.
- ³ I am counted as one of those who go down into the pit, *
 and I have become as one who has no strength.
- ⁴ I have become like the dead, and like the slain who lie in the grave, *
 whom you remember no more, and who are cut off from your hand.
- ⁵ You have laid me in the lowest pit, *
 in a place of darkness, and in the deep.
- ⁶ Your indignation lies heavy upon me, *
 and you have overwhelmed me with all your storms.
- ⁷ You have put my friends far from me, *
 and made me to be abhorred by them.
- ⁸ I am in prison; *
 I cannot go forth.

- ⁹ My sight fails because of trouble; *
 Lord, I have called daily upon you; I have stretched forth my hands unto you.
- ¹⁰ Do you show wonders among the dead, *
 or shall the dead rise up again and praise you?
- ¹¹ Shall your loving-kindness be shown in the grave, *
 or your faithfulness in destruction?
- ¹² Shall your wondrous works be known in the dark, *
 and your righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten?
- ¹³ Unto you have I cried, O Lord, *
 and early shall my prayer come before you.
- ¹⁴ Lord, why do you cast off my soul *
 and hide your face from me?
- ¹⁵ I am in misery, like one who is at the point of death; *
 even from my youth, your terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind.
- ¹⁶ Your wrathful displeasure goes over me, *
 and the fear of you has undone me.
- ¹⁷ Daily they come round about me like water, *
 and encompass me on every side.
- ¹⁸ My companions and neighbors you have put away from me, *
 and hidden my friends out of my sight.

V. He has made me dwell in darkness:

R. Like the dead of long ago.

LESSON 7

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. (Hebrews 4:15-5:3)

RESPONSORY 7 *Eram quasi agnus*

I was like a trusting lamb led to the slaughter.

I did not know it was against me that they devised schemes, saying, Let us destroy the tree with its fruit; let us cut him off from the land of the living.

V. All my enemies whispered together against me, and devised evil against me, saying:

Let us destroy the tree with its fruit; let us cut him off from the land of the living.

LESSON 8

And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also, Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “You are my Son, this day have I begotten you;” as he says also in another place, “You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and, being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

(Hebrews 5:4-10)

RESPONSORY 8 *Velum templi*

The veil of the temple was torn in two,

and the earth shook, and the thief from the cross cried out, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

V. The rocks were split, the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who slept were raised:

And the earth shook, and the thief from the cross cried out, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

LESSON 9

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that are to come, then, through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a

heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance. (Hebrews 9:11-15)

RESPONSORY 9 *Sepulto Domino*

When the Lord was buried, they sealed the tomb,
rolling a great stone to the door of the tomb; and they stationed soldiers to guard him.

V. The chief priests gathered before Pilate, and petitioned him:

And they stationed soldiers to guard him.

Lauds

ANTIPHON 8

God did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.

Psalm 63:1-8

- ¹ O God, you are my God; *
 early will I seek you.
- ² My soul thirsts for you, my flesh also longs after you, *
 in a barren and dry land where there is no water.
- ³ Thus I have looked upon you in your holy place, *
 that I might behold your power and glory.
- ⁴ For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; *
 my lips shall praise you.
- ⁵ As long as I live I will magnify you, *
 and lift up my hands in your Name.
- ⁶ My soul shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatness, *
 when my mouth praises you with joyful lips.
- ⁷ When I remember you on my bed, *
 I meditate on you in the watches of the night.
- ⁸ Because you have been my helper, *
 therefore under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

ANTIPHON 9

He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and he opened not his mouth.

ANTIPHON 10

O Death, I will be your death; O Grave, I will be your destruction.

Psalm 150

- ¹ Praise God in his holy temple; *
 praise him in the firmament of his power.
- ² Praise him for his mighty acts; *
 praise him for his excellent greatness.
- ³ Praise him with the blast of the ram's-horn; *
 praise him with lyre and harp.
- ⁴ Praise him with timbrel and dance; *
 praise him with strings and pipe.
- ⁵ Praise him with resounding cymbals; *
 praise him with loud-clanging cymbals.
- ⁶ Let everything that has breath*
 praise the Lord.

V. My flesh also shall rest in hope:

R. You will not let your holy One see corruption.

All stand. During the singing of the following Canticle, the candles at the Altar, and all other lights in the church except one are extinguished.

ANTIPHON 11

Now the women sitting at the tomb made lamentation, weeping for the Lord.

Canticle 16: Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *
 he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *
 born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old that he would save us from our
 enemies, *
 from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers *
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell 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.

All kneel, saying together:

Christ for us became obedient unto death, even death on a cross; therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the Name which is above every name.

The officiant says

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross.

The remaining candle is extinguished, and all depart in silence.