

Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary

THURSDAY - Evening Prayer

God, come to my assistance.
- Lord, make haste to help me

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

HYMN

What Child is this who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Or:

Rejoice, mother and heaven,
maiden and cloud, virgin and throne,
the boast and foundation of our Church.
Plead earnestly for us
that through you
we may obtain mercy on the Day of Judgment
and attain the good things reserved
for those who love God,
through the grace and love our Lord Jesus Christ,
to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit
be glory, power, and honor
now and for ever and for all eternity. Amen.

Saint John Chrysostom (344/354-407)

PSALMODY

Ant 1: You have been endowed from your birth with princely gifts; in eternal splendor, before the dawn of light on earth, I have begotten you.

Or: Mary received a blessing from the Lord and loving kindness from God her savior.

Psalm 144

Prayer for victory and peace

Christ learned the art of warfare when he overcame the world, as he said: "I have overcome the world" (Saint Hilary)

I

Blessed be the Lord, my rock,
who trains my arms for battle,
who prepares my hands for war.

He is my love, my fortress;
he is my stronghold, my savior
my shield, my place of refuge.
He brings peoples under my rule.

Lord, what is man that you care for him,
mortal man, that you keep him in mind;
man, who is merely a breath
whose life fades like a passing shadow?

Lower your heavens and come down;
touch the mountains; wreath them in smoke.
Flash your lightnings; rout the foe,
shoot your arrows and put them to flight.

Reach down from heaven and save me;
draw me out from the mighty waters,
from the hands of alien foes
whose mouths are filled with lies,
whose hands are raised in perjury.

Glory be to the Father, ...

Ant 1: You have been endowed from your birth with princely gifts; in eternal splendor, before the dawn of light on earth, I have begotten you.

Or: Mary received a blessing from the Lord and loving kindness from God her savior.

Ant. 2 With the Lord is unfailing love; great is his power to save.

Or: The Most High has made his dwelling place a holy temple.

II

To you, O God, will I sing a new song;
I will play on the ten-stringed harp

to you who give kings their victory,
who set David your servant free.

You set him free from the evil sword;
you rescued him from alien foes
whose mouths were filled with lies,
whose hands were raised in perjury.

Let our sons then flourish like saplings
grown tall and strong from their youth,
our daughters graceful as columns,
adorned as though for a palace.

Let our barns be filled to overflowing
with crops of every kind;
our sheep increasing by thousands,
myriads of sheep in our fields,
our cattle heavy with young,

no ruined wall, no exile,
no sound of weeping in our streets.
Happy the people with such blessings;
happy the people whose God is the Lord.

Glory be to the Father, ...

Ant. 2 With the Lord is unfailing love; great is his power to save.

Or: The Most High has made his dwelling place a holy temple.

Ant 3: In the beginning, before time began, the Word was God; today he is born, the Savior of the world.

Or: Glorious things are said of you, O Virgin Mary.

Canticle

Revelation 11:17-18; 12:10b-12a
The judgment of God

We praise you, the Lord God Almighty,
Who is and who was.
You have assumed your great power,
You have begun your reign.

The nations have raged in anger,
But then came your day of wrath
And the moment to judge the dead:
The time to reward your servants the prophets
And the holy ones who revere you,
The great and the small alike.

Now have salvation and power come,
The reign of our God and the authority
Of his Anointed One,
For the accuser of our brothers is cast out,
Who night and day accused them before God.

They defeated him by the blood of the Lamb
And by the word of their testimony;
Love for life did not deter them from death.
So rejoice, you heavens,
And you that dwell therein!

Glory be to the Father, ...

Ant 3: In the beginning, before time began, the Word was God; today he is born, the Savior of the world.

Or: Glorious things are said of you, O Virgin Mary.

FIRST READING

Galatians 4:4-5

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption.

OR

1 John 3:1-8

See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure, as he is pure.

Everyone who commits sin commits lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who remains in him sins; no one who sins has seen him or known him. Children, let no one deceive you. The person who acts in righteousness is righteous, just as he is righteous. Whoever sins belongs to the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. Indeed, the Son of God was revealed to destroy the works of the devil.

SECOND READING

From a homily by St. John Chrysostom , bishop
(*Orientalia Christiana*, vol. 32 [1966])

The birth of Mary's Son

Believe what we say about the Virgin, and do not hesitate to confess her to be both servant and Mother of God, both virgin and mother. She is a servant as the creature of him who was born of her; she is the Mother of God inasmuch as of her God was born in human flesh. She is a virgin because she did not conceive from the seed of man; she is a mother because she gave birth and became the mother of him who before all eternity was begotten of the Father.

She is therefore the mother of the Lord of angels and our mother; from her the Son of God received the human body in which he consented to be crucified. Do you desire to know how far the Virgin surpasses the power of heaven? Give me your attention then. They veil their faces as they hover in fear and trembling, but she offers the human race to God, and through her we receive the forgiveness of our sins. She bore him whom the angels glorified when they came with reverence to be present at his birth. *Glory to God in the highest, they sang, and peace to his people on earth.*

RESPONSORY

After the birth of your Son, you remained a virgin.

- After the birth of your Son, you remained a virgin.

Mother of God, intercede for us;

- you remained a virgin.

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

- After the birth of your Son, you remained a virgin.

Or:

I shall glorify you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

- I shall glorify you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

You have not let my enemies rejoice over me

- for you have rescued me.

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

- I shall glorify you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

CANTICLE OF MARY

Luke 1:46-55

Ant: Christ the Lord is born today; today the Savior has appeared. Earth echoes songs of angel choirs, archangels' joyful praise. Today on earth his friends exult: Glory to God in the highest.

My soul rejoices in the Lord.

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.

Ant: Christ the Lord is born today; today the Savior has appeared. Earth echoes songs of angel choirs, archangels' joyful praise. Today on earth his friends exult: Glory to God in the highest.

INTERCESSIONS

At the birth of Jesus, angels proclaimed peace to the world.
We worship him now with joy, and we pray with hearts full of faith:

-May your birth bring peace to all.

Lord, fill your holy people with whatever good they need,
- let the mystery of your birth be the source of our peace.

You came as chief shepherd and guardian of our lives,
- let the pope and bishops be faithful channels of your many gifts of grace.

King from all eternity, you desired to be born within time
and to experience the day-to-day life of men and women,
- share your gift of unending life with us, weak people doomed to death.

Awaited from the beginning of the world, you came only in the fullness of
time,
-now reveal your presence to those who are expecting you.

You became one of us and gave new life to our human condition in the grip of death,
-now give the fullness of life to all who have died.

Our Father...

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord God,
we praise you for creating us,
and still more for restoring us in Christ.
Your Son shared our weakness;
may we share his glory,
for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Alternative Prayer

God of love, Father of all,
the darkness that covered the earth
has given way to the bright dawn of your Word made flesh.
Make us a people of this light.
Make us faithful to your Word,
that we may bring your life to the waiting world.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

May the Lord bless us,
protect us from evil
and bring us to everlasting life.
- Amen.