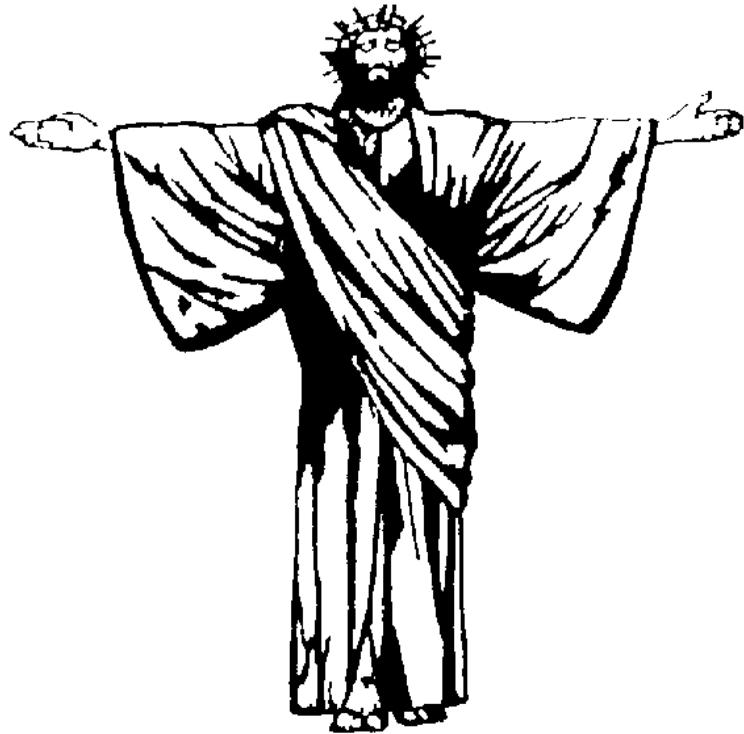


*Good Friday Night  
Tenebrae  
Office of Reading*



*The word Tenebrae means “darkness”. Much of the Christian world recalls that around 2000 years ago, Christ was crucified. His followers, were likely in the throws of despair, and their hope shattered. Their Lord and Messiah was crucified and is now laid in the tomb. Christians throughout the world mark this night by solemn prayer. As the service proceeds, the light diminishes just as the apostles and early followers of Jesus saw the light of Christ be extinguished as He endured His sorrowful Passion and Crucifixion*

Before we begin the service the high altar is stripped of the cross, candles and other adornments. This custom represents the emptiness and the sorrow that the early Christians must have experienced when their hope in Christ the Messiah seemed to be fading.

**Opening Hymn:** *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent*

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
And with fear and trembling stand,  
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,  
For with blessing in his hand  
Christ our Lord to earth descends now,  
Our full homage to demand.

Rank on rank the host of heaven  
Spreads its vanguard on the way,  
As the Light of Light descends now  
From the realms of endless day,  
That the powers of hell may vanish  
As the darkness clears away.

**Psalm 22:2-23**

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

North My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress.  
O my God, I call by day and you give no reply;  
I call by night and I find no peace.

South Yet you, O God, are holy,  
enthroned on the praises of Israel.  
In you our fathers put their trust;  
they trusted and you set them free.

North When they cried to you, they escaped.  
In you they trusted and never in vain.  
But I am a worm and no man,  
scorned by men, despised by the people.

South All who see me deride me.  
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.  
"He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;  
let him release him if this is his friend."

North Yes, it was you who took me from the womb,  
entrusted me to my mother's breast.  
To you I was committed from my birth,  
from my mother's womb you have been my God.

South Do not leave me alone in my distress;  
come close, there is none else to help.  
Many bulls have surrounded me,  
fierce bulls of Bashan close me in.

North Against me they open wide their jaws,  
like lions, rending and roaring.  
Like water I am poured out,  
disjointed are all my bones.

South My heart has become like wax,  
it is melted within my breast.  
Parched as burnt clay is my throat,  
my tongue cleaves to my jaws.

North Many dogs have surrounded me,  
a band of the wicked beset me.  
They tear holes in my hands and my feet  
and lay me in the dust of death.

South I can count every one of my bones.  
These people stare at me and gloat;  
they divide my clothing among them.  
They cast lots for my robe.

North O Lord, do not leave me alone,  
my strength, make haste to help me!  
Rescue my soul from the sword,  
my life from the grip of these dogs.

South Save my life from the jaws of these lions,  
my poor soul from the horns of these oxen.  
I will tell of your name to my brethren  
and praise you where they are assembled.

All 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

Antiphon: They divided my garments among them; they cast lots for my  
clothing.

*Silence*

*The first candle is extinguished at this time*

**Reading:**

**From the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah  
(53:1-5, 10-11)**

*Who would believe what we have heard? To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; There was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him, nor appearance that would attract us to him. He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity, One of those from whom men hide their faces, spurned, and we held him in no esteem.*

*Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, While we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins, Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed.*

*We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; But the LORD laid upon him the guilt of us all.*

*Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; Like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth. Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away, and who would have thought any more of his destiny? When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people, A grave was assigned him among the wicked and a burial place with evildoers, Though he had done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood.*

*(But the LORD was pleased to crush him in infirmity.) If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the LORD shall be accomplished through him.*

*Because of his affliction he shall see the light in fullness of days; Through his suffering, my servant shall justify many, and their guilt he shall bear.*

*Lector: The Word of the Lord*

*People: Thanks be to God*

*Silence*

*The second candle is extinguished at this time*

**Psalm 4**

**Antiphon:** In Peace I will lie down and sleep.

North Answer when I call, my saving God.  
In my troubles, you cleared a way;  
show me favor; hear my prayer.

South How long will you people mock my honor,  
love what is worthless, chase after lies?  
Know that the LORD works wonders for the faithful;  
the LORD hears when I call out.

North Tremble and do not sin;  
upon your beds ponder in silence.  
Offer fitting sacrifice and trust in the LORD.

South Many say, "May we see better times!  
LORD, show us the light of your face!"  
But you have given my heart more joy  
than they have when grain and wine abound.

North In peace I shall both lie down and sleep,  
for you alone, LORD, make me secure.

All 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

Antiphon: In Peace I will lie down and sleep.

*The third candle is extinguished*

**Reading:** From the Old Testament Book of Wisdom (2:1, 12-22)

They who said among themselves, thinking not aright: Let us beset the just one, because he is obnoxious to us; he sets himself against our doings, Reproaches us for transgressions of the law and charges us with violations of our training. He professes to have knowledge of God and styles himself a child of the LORD. To us he is the censure of our thoughts; merely to see him is a hardship for us, Because his life is not like other men's, and different are his ways.

He judges us debased; he holds aloof from our paths as from things impure. He calls blest the destiny of the just and boasts that God is his Father. Let us see whether his words be true; let us find out what will happen to him. For if the just one be the son of God, he will defend him and deliver him from the hand of his foes. With revilement and torture let us put him to the test that we may have proof of his gentleness and try his patience.

Let us condemn him to a shameful death; for according to his own words, God will take care of him." These were their thoughts, but they erred; for their wickedness blinded them, And they knew not the hidden counsels of God; neither did they count on a recompense of holiness nor discern the innocent souls' reward.

Lector: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

*Silence*

*A fourth candle is extinguished at this time*

### **Psalm 38**

Antiphon: They sought to take my life by violence.

North O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger;  
do not punish me, Lord, in your rage.  
Your arrows have sunk deep in me;  
your hand has come down upon me.

South Through your anger all my body is sick:  
through my sin, there is no health in my limbs.

My guilt towers higher than my head;  
it is a weight too heavy to bear.

North My wounds are foul and festering,  
the result of my own folly.  
I am bowed and brought to my knees.  
I go mourning all the day long.

South All my frame burns with fever;  
all my body is sick.  
Spent and utterly crushed,  
I cry aloud in anguish of heart.

North O Lord, you know all my longing;  
my groans are not hidden from you  
My heart throbs, my strength is spent;  
the very light has gone from my eyes.

South My friends avoid me like a leper;  
those close to me stand far off.  
Those who plot against my life lay snares;  
those who seek my ruin speak of harm,  
planning treachery all the day long.

North But I am like the deaf who cannot hear,  
like the dumb unable to speak  
I am like a man who hears nothing,  
in whose mouth is no defense.

South I count on you, O Lord: it is you,  
Lord God, who will answer.  
I pray: "Do not let them mock me,  
those who triumph if my foot should slip."

North For I am on the point of falling  
and my pain is always before me.  
I confess that I am guilty  
and my sin fills me with dismay.

South My wanton enemies are numberless  
and my lying foes are many.  
They repay me evil for good  
and attack me for seeking what is right.

North O Lord, do not forsake me!  
My God, do not stay afar off!  
Make haste and come to my help,  
O Lord, my God, my savior!

All 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

Antiphon: They sought to take my life by violence.

Silence

A fifth candle is extinguished at this time

**Reading:** From the Catecheses by Saint John Chrysostom, bishop  
(Cat. 3, 13-19: SC 50, 174-177) - *The power of Christ's blood*

If we wish to understand the power of Christ's blood, we should go back to the ancient account of its prefiguration in Egypt. Sacrifice a lamb without blemish, commanded Moses, and sprinkle its blood on your doors. If we were to ask him what he meant, and how the blood of an irrational beast could possibly save men endowed with reason, his answer would be that the saving power lies not in the blood itself, but in the fact that it is a sign of the Lord's blood. In those days, when the destroying angel saw the blood on the

doors he did not dare to enter, so how much less will the devil approach now when he sees, not that figurative blood on the doors, but the true blood on the lips of believers, the doors of the temple of Christ.

If you desire further proof of the power of this blood, remember where it came from, how it ran down from the cross, flowing from the Master's side. The gospel records that when Christ was dead, but still hung on the cross, a soldier came and pierced his side with a lance and immediately there poured out water and blood. Now the water was a symbol of baptism and the blood, of the holy eucharist. The soldier pierced the Lord's side, he breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and made it my own. So also with the lamb: the Jews sacrificed the victim and I have been saved by it.

There flowed from his side water and blood. Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolized baptism and the holy eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from baptism, the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit, and from the holy eucharist. Since the symbols of baptism and the eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he had fashioned Eve from the side of Adam. Moses gives a hint of this when he tells the story of the first man and makes him exclaim: Bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh! As God then took a rib from Adam's side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and the water after his own death.

Do you understand, then, how Christ has united his bride to himself and what food he gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are both brought into being and nourished. As a woman nourishes her child with her own blood and milk, so does Christ unceasingly nourish with his own blood those to whom he himself has given ~~life~~ <sup>silence</sup>

The sixth candle is extinguished

**Psalm 16**

Antiphon: My body shall rest in hope.

North Keep me safe, O God; in you I take refuge  
I say to the Lord, you are my Lord,  
you are my only good.  
Worthless are all the false gods of the land.

South Accursed are all who delight in them.  
They multiply their sorrows who court other gods.  
Blood libations to them I will not pour out,  
nor will I take their names upon my lips.

North LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,  
you have made my destiny secure.  
Pleasant places were measured out for me;  
fair to me indeed is my inheritance.

South I bless the LORD who counsels me;  
even at night my heart exhorts me.  
I keep the LORD always before me;  
with the Lord at my right,  
I shall never be shaken.

North Therefore my heart is glad, my soul rejoices;  
my body also dwells secure,  
For you will not abandon me to Sheol,  
nor let your faithful servant see the pit.

South You will show me the path to life,  
abounding joy in your presence,  
the delights at your right hand forever.

All 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

Antiphon: My body shall rest in hope.

*The seventh candle is extinguished*

**Reading:** From the Letter to the Hebrews  
Therefore, let us be on our guard while the promise of entering  
into his rest remains, that none of you seem to have failed. For in fact  
we have received the good news just as they did. But the word that they  
heard did not profit them, for they were not united in faith with those  
who listened.

For we who believed enter into (that) rest, just as he has said:  
"As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter into my  
rest,'"  
and yet his works were accomplished at the foundation of the world.  
For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh day in this manner,  
"And God rested on the seventh day from all his works"; and again, in  
the previously mentioned place, "They shall not enter into my rest."

Therefore, since it remains that some will enter into it, and those  
who formerly received the good news did not enter because of  
disobedience, he once more set a day, "today," when long afterwards  
he spoke through David, as already quoted: "Oh, that today you would  
hear his voice: 'Harden not your hearts.'"

Now if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken  
afterwards of another day. Therefore, a Sabbath rest still remains for  
the people of God. And whoever enters into God's rest, rests from his  
own works as God did from his. Therefore, let us strive to enter into  
that rest, so that no one may fall after the same example of  
disobedience.

Indeed, the word of God is living and effective, sharper than  
any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints  
and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.  
No creature is concealed from him, but everything is naked and  
exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

*Silence*

*The eighth candle is extinguished*

Antiphon: Lift high the ancient portals. The King of Glory enters.

## Psalm 24

North West The earth is the LORD'S and all it holds,  
the world and those who live there.  
For God founded it on the seas,  
established it over the rivers.

South Who may go up the mountain of the LORD?  
Who can stand in his holy place?  
"The clean of hand and pure of heart,  
who are not devoted to idols,  
who have not sworn falsely.

North They will receive blessings from the LORD,  
and justice from their saving God.  
Such are the people that love the LORD,  
that seek the face of the God of Jacob."

South Lift up your heads, O gates;  
rise up, you ancient portals,  
that the king of glory may enter.

North Who is this king of glory?  
The LORD, a mighty warrior,  
the LORD, mighty in battle.

South Lift up your heads, O gates;  
rise up, you ancient portals,  
that the king of glory may enter.

North Who is this king of glory?  
The LORD of hosts  
is the king of glory.

All: 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

Antiphon: Lift high the ancient portals. The King of Glory enters.

## *Silence*

*The ninth candle is extinguished*

**From an Ancient Homily on Holy Saturday (from the Vatican Website [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va))**

*The Lord's descent into hell*

"What is happening? Today there is a great silence over the earth, a great silence, and stillness, a great silence because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages. God has died in the flesh, and the underworld has trembled.

Truly he goes to seek out our first parent like a lost sheep; he wishes to visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. He goes to free the prisoner Adam and his fellow-prisoner Eve from their pains, he who is God, and Adam's son.

The Lord goes in to them holding his victorious weapon, his cross. When Adam, the first created man, sees him, he strikes his breast in terror and calls out to all: 'My Lord be with you all.' And Christ in reply says to Adam: 'And with your spirit.' And grasping his hand he raises him up, saying: 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.

'I am your God, who for your sake became your son, who for you and your descendants now speak and command with authority those in prison: Come forth, and those in darkness: Have light, and those who sleep: Rise.

'I command you: Awake, sleeper, I have not made you to be held a prisoner in the underworld. Arise from the dead; I am the life of the dead. Arise, O man, work of my hands, arise, you who were fashioned in my image. Rise, let us go hence; for you in me and I in you, together we are one undivided person.

'For you, I your God became your son; for you, I the Master took on your form; that of slave; for you, I who am above the heavens came on earth and under the earth; for you, man, I became as a man

without help, free among the dead; for you, who left a garden, I was handed over to Jews from a garden and crucified in a garden.

‘Look at the spittle on my face, which I received because of you, in order to restore you to that first divine inbreathing at creation. See the blows on my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image. 'See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon your back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you, who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one.

‘I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you, who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from your sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you.

‘But arise, let us go hence. The enemy brought you out of the land of paradise; I will reinstate you, no longer in paradise, but on the throne of heaven. I denied you the tree of life, which was a figure, but now I myself am united to you, I who am life. I posted the cherubim to guard you as they would slaves; now I make the cherubim worship you as they would God."The cherubim throne has been prepared, the bearers are ready and waiting, the bridal chamber is in order, the food is provided, the everlasting houses and rooms are in readiness; the treasures of good things have been opened; the kingdom of heaven has been prepared before the ages."

*The Tenth Candle is extinguished*

### **Closing Prayer**

Almighty, ever-living God, whose Only-begotten Son descended to the realm of the dead, and rose from there to glory, grant that your faithful people, who were buried with him in baptism, may, by his resurrection, obtain eternal life. We make our prayer through our Christ our Lord.

Door Slams!