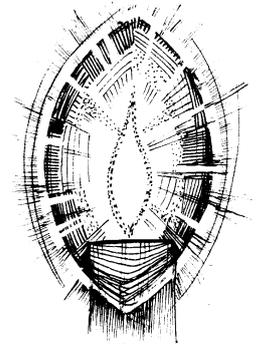


# An Order for Night Prayer (Compline)

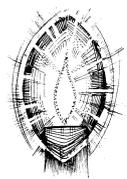
The ancient office of Compline derives its name from a Latin word meaning 'completion' (completorium). It is above all a service of quietness and reflection before rest at the end of the day. It is most effective when the ending is indeed an ending, without additions, conversation or noise. If there is an address, or business to be done, it should come first. If the service is in church, those present depart in silence; if at home, they go quietly to bed.



Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray,  
and in your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,  
for the love of your only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

*If you are saying Compline with other members of your household, you may want to choose one person to say the words in bold, and the rest may respond. If you are on your own, you may find it helpful to read all the words aloud. These words have been said at the end of the day for hundreds of years, through all sorts of difficult times. They are being said now in monastic communities, and in rooms and flats and houses throughout the world. Saying them aloud, even if we are on our own, joins us with a great cloud of witnesses. I shall be saying Compline at home at 10pm on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week. You are welcome to join me.*

*Val*



## PREPARATION

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

**Amen.**

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
**who made heaven and earth.**

*A period of silence for reflection on the past day may follow...*

**Most merciful God,  
we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.**

O God, make speed to save us.  
O Lord, make haste to help us.

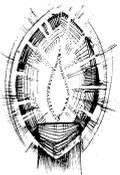
**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*The following or another suitable hymn may be sung or said*

Before the ending of the day,  
Creator of the world, we pray  
That you, with steadfast love, would keep  
Your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,  
From fears and terrors of the night;  
Tread underfoot our deadly foe  
That we no sinful thought may know.

O Father, that we ask be done  
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son;  
And Holy Spirit, by whose breath  
Our souls are raised to life from death.



## **THE WORD OF GOD**

**MONDAY**

**Psalm 4**

Answer me when I call, O God of my right!  
You gave me room when I was in distress.  
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

How long, you people, shall my honour suffer shame?  
How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies?  
But know that the LORD has set apart the faithful for himself;  
the LORD hears when I call to him.

When you are disturbed, do not sin;  
ponder it on your beds, and be silent.  
Offer right sacrifices,  
and put your trust in the LORD.

There are many who say, 'O that we might see some good!  
Let the light of your face shine on us, O LORD!'  
You have put gladness in my heart  
more than when their grain and wine abound.  
I will both lie down and sleep in peace;  
for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down in safety.

### **Short Reading**

Thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.

*Isaiah 30.15*

**TUESDAY**

**Psalm 143**

Hear my prayer, O LORD;  
give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness;  
answer me in your righteousness.

Do not enter into judgement with your servant,  
for no one living is righteous before you.

For the enemy has pursued me,  
crushing my life to the ground,  
making me sit in darkness like those long dead.

Therefore my spirit faints within me;  
my heart within me is appalled.

I remember the days of old,  
I think about all your deeds,  
I meditate on the works of your hands.  
I stretch out my hands to you;  
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.

Answer me quickly, O LORD;  
my spirit fails.  
Do not hide your face from me,  
or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.  
Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning,  
for in you I put my trust.  
Teach me the way I should go,  
for to you I lift up my soul.

Save me, O LORD, from my enemies;  
I have fled to you for refuge.  
Teach me to do your will,  
for you are my God.  
Let your good spirit lead me  
on a level path.

For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life.  
In your righteousness bring me out of trouble.  
In your steadfast love cut off my enemies,  
and destroy all my adversaries,  
for I am your servant.

**Short Reading**

Jesus said, 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

*Matthew 11.28-end*

**WEDNESDAY**

**Psalm 31.1-5**

In you, O LORD, I seek refuge;  
do not let me ever be put to shame;  
in your righteousness deliver me.  
Incline your ear to me;  
rescue me speedily.  
Be a rock of refuge for me,  
a strong fortress to save me.

You are indeed my rock and my fortress;  
for your name's sake lead me and guide me,  
take me out of the net that is hidden for me,  
for you are my refuge.  
Into your hand I commit my spirit;  
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

**Short Reading**

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

*1 Peter 5.6,7*

*The following responsory may be said*

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**  
For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.  
**I commend my spirit.**  
Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.  
**Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

*The Nunc dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said or sung*

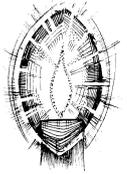
**Save us, O Lord, while waking,  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ  
and asleep may rest in peace.**

Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: ♦  
your word has been fulfilled.  
My own eyes have seen the salvation ♦  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;  
A light to reveal you to the nations ♦  
and the glory of your people Israel.

*Luke 2.29-32*

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Save us, O Lord, while waking,  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ  
and asleep may rest in peace.



### **PRAYERS**

*Intercessions and thanksgivings may be offered here...*

### **The Collect**

#### **Monday**

Be present, O merciful God,  
and protect us through the  
silent hours of this night,  
so that we who are wearied  
by the changes and chances of  
this fleeting world,  
may rest upon your eternal  
changelessness;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### **Tuesday**

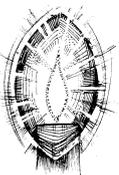
Look down, O God, from your  
heavenly throne,  
illuminate the darkness of this  
night with your celestial  
brightness,  
and from the children of light  
banish the deeds of darkness;  
through Jesus Christ our  
Saviour.

#### **Wednesday**

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares  
of the enemy;  
may your holy angels dwell with  
us and guard us in peace,  
and may your blessing be always  
upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Silence may be kept...*

*The Lord's Prayer may be said...*



### **THE CONCLUSION**

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
**for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.**  
Abide with us, Lord Jesus,  
**for the night is at hand and the day is now past.**

As the night watch looks for the morning,  
**so do we look for you, O Christ.**

The Lord bless us and watch over us;  
the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us;  
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace.

**Amen.**