

Tenebrae Welcome

Leader:

Welcome to this Tenebrae Service in which we anticipate the Triduum by sitting in darkness and listening to the Scriptures that express the suffering of Christ but also the trust and hope in the Lord of the future.

This service is rich in symbolism. In monasteries, this is the service for morning prayer on Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Candles are gradually extinguished to represent the growing darkness that developed as the time of Christ's death on the cross approached. The Christ candle is removed for a brief time to represent his time in the tomb and then returned to represent the resurrection.

Tenebrae

Cantor: Lamentations

Here begins the Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah.

Aleph. How lonely she is now the once crowded city!

Widowed is she who was mistress over nations;

the princess among the provinces has been made a toiling slave.

Beth. Bitterly she weeps at night, tears upon her cheeks,

with not one to console her of all her dear ones;

her friends have all betrayed her and become her enemies.

Ghimel. Judah has fled into exile from oppression and cruel slavery;

yet where she lives among the nations she finds no place to rest:

all her persecutors come upon her where she is narrowly confined.

Daleth. The roads to Sion mourn for lack of pilgrims going to her feasts;

all her gateways are deserted, her priests groan, and her virgins sigh;

she is in bitter grief.

He. Her foes are uppermost, her enemies are at ease;

the Lord has punished her for her many sins.

Her little ones have gone away,

captive before the foe.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord, your God.

Jod. The foe stretched out his hand to all her treasures;

she has seen those nations enter her sanctuary

whom you forbade to come into your assembly.

Caph. All her people groan, searching for bread;

they give their treasures for food, to retain the breath of life.

“Look, O Lord, and see how worthless I have become!”

Lamed. “Come, all you who pass by the way,

look and see whether there is any suffering like my suffering,

which has been dealt me when the Lord afflicted me

on the day of his blazing wrath.”

Mem. “From on high he sent fire down into my very frame;

he spread a net for my feet, and overthrew me.

He left me desolate, in pain all the day.

Nun. “He has kept watch over my sins;

by his hand they have been plaited;

they have settled about my neck,

he has brought my strength to its knees;

the Lord has delivered me into their grip,

I am unable to rise.”

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord, your God.

Aleph. I am a man who knows affliction from the rod of his anger.

Aleph. One whom he has led and forced to walk in darkness, not in the light;

Aleph. Against me alone he brings back his hand again and again all the day.

Beth. He has worn away my flesh and my skin, he has broken my bones;

Beth. He has beset me round about with poverty and weariness;

Beth. He has left me to dwell in the dark like those long dead.

Ghimel. He has hemmed me in with no escape and weighed me down with chains;

Ghimel. Even when I cry out for help, he stops my prayer.

Ghimel. He has blocked my ways with fitted stones, and turned my paths aside.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord, your God.

At the conclusion candles are extinguished

Leader: Opening Prayer

We ask for God's presence as we are gathered here in the darkness before the great Triduum.

Let us quiet our minds, calm our hearts
and open our spirit.

Let us be uplifted in soul and hasten near by
to suffer with the one who suffered for us.

Let us lay aside all of our earthly concerns,
and walk with Jesus.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Reader: Psalm 116

I love the LORD, who listened
to my voice in supplication,

Who turned an ear to me
on the day I called.

I was caught by the cords of death;
the snares of Sheol had seized me;
I felt agony and dread.

Then I called on the name of the LORD,
"O LORD, save my life!"

II

Gracious is the LORD and righteous;
 yes, our God is merciful.
The LORD protects the simple;
 I was helpless, but he saved me.
Return, my soul, to your rest;
 the LORD has been very good to you.
For my soul has been freed from death,
 my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.
I shall walk before the LORD
 in the land of the living.

III

I kept faith, even when I said,
 “I am greatly afflicted!”
I said in my alarm,
 “All men are liars!”
How can I repay the LORD
 for all the great good done for me?
I will raise the cup of salvation
 and call on the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
 in the presence of all his people.
Dear in the eyes of the LORD
 is the death of his devoted.
LORD, I am your servant,
 your servant, the child of your maidservant;
 you have loosed my bonds.
I will offer a sacrifice of praise
 and call on the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
 in the presence of all his people,
In the courts of the house of the LORD,
 in your midst, O Jerusalem.

At the conclusion candles are extinguished

SILENCE

Psalm 22 (interspersed with sung refrain)

Congregation Refrain:

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Reader

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Why so far from my call for help,
from my cries of anguish?

My God, I call by day, but you do not answer;
by night, but I have no relief.

Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the glory of Israel.

In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted and you rescued them.

To you they cried out and they escaped;
in you they trusted and were not disappointed.

Sing Refrain

But I am a worm, not a man,
scorned by men, despised by the people.

All who see me mock me;
they curl their lips and jeer;
they shake their heads at me:

“He relied on the LORD—let him deliver him;
if he loves him, let him rescue him.”

For you drew me forth from the womb,
made me safe at my mother’s breasts.

Upon you I was thrust from the womb;
since my mother bore me you are my God.

Sing Refrain

Do not stay far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is no one to help.

Many bulls surround me;
fierce bulls of Bashan encircle me.

They open their mouths against me,

lions that rend and roar.
Like water my life drains away;
all my bones are disjointed.
My heart has become like wax,
it melts away within me.
As dry as a potsherd is my throat;
my tongue cleaves to my palate;
you lay me in the dust of death.
Dogs surround me;
a pack of evildoers closes in on me.
They have pierced my hands and my feet
I can count all my bones.
They stare at me and gloat;
they divide my garments among them;
for my clothing they cast lots.

Sing Refrain

But you, LORD, do not stay far off;
my strength, come quickly to help me.
Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life from the grip of the dog.
Save me from the lion's mouth,
my poor life from the horns of wild bulls.
Then I will proclaim your name to my brethren;
in the assembly I will praise you:
"You who fear the LORD, give praise!
All descendants of Jacob, give honor;
show reverence, all descendants of Israel!
For he has not spurned or disdained
the misery of this poor wretch,
Did not turn away from me,
but heard me when I cried out.
I will offer praise in the great assembly;
my vows I will fulfill before those who fear him.
The poor will eat their fill;
those who seek the LORD will offer praise.
May your hearts enjoy life forever!"

Sing Refrain

All the ends of the earth
will remember and turn to the LORD;
All the families of nations
will bow low before him.
For kingship belongs to the LORD,
the ruler over the nations.
All who sleep in the earth
will bow low before God;
All who have gone down into the dust
will kneel in homage.
And I will live for the LORD;
my descendants will serve you.
The generation to come will be told of the Lord,
that they may proclaim to a people yet unborn
the deliverance you have brought.

Sing Refrain

At the conclusion candles are extinguished.

Silence

Reader: 1 Peter 2:21-25

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps.

“He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was insulted, he returned no insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten; instead, he handed himself over to the one who judges justly.

He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

For you had gone astray like sheep, but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

At the conclusion candles are extinguished.

Silence

Cantor: Kyrie Eleison—Congregation repeats

Leader: Let us pray,

For the Church of God throughout the World, for the Holy Father, all bishops and church leaders and the unity of all who believe in Jesus Almighty God. You have shown Your glory to all the nations in Christ, Your Son. Guide the work of Your Church; help us to keep the faith, to proclaim your name and to bring salvation to people everywhere.

We Pray

Cantor: Kyrie Eleison—Congregation repeats

Leader: Let us pray,

For those who have leadership and responsibility. Guide them to make just decisions for all people—recognizing no difference in race, sex, color, or age. Forgive the sins of hatred, injustice and prejudice. Heal the deep wounds of our sins.

We Pray

Cantor: Kyrie Eleison—Congregation repeats

Leader: Let us pray,

For peace and justice in our community, our home, our Church and our world. Help us to set up values once again that will lead us to holiness. Take away our self-centeredness and make us aware of the needs of all around us. Inspire us to share our abundance.

We Pray

Cantor: Kyrie Eleison—Congregation repeats

Leader: Let us pray

For our young people. May they see in us signs of Your truth, healing, courage, strength and concern. May we find time to listen to their cries for help when they are overcome with peer-pressure and influences that contradict their values.

We Pray

Cantor: Kyrie Eleison—Congregation repeats

Leader: Let us pray,

For all who are sick. Let us find the time to visit, encourage and pray with them. Let us find ways to minister to them spiritually, in every caring manner. Let us bring new courage to the depressed and anxious.

We Pray

Cantor: Kyrie Eleison—Congregation repeats

Leader: Let us pray,

For all who have died, especially our own relatives, friends and parishioners. May they rise to share the glorious life of their risen Savior.

We Pray

Cantor: Kyrie Eleison—Congregation repeats

Leader: Let us pray,

Our Father...

(The last white candle symbolizing Christ is removed for awhile to remind us of His death and burial. It is then returned to its place in anticipation of our Lord's resurrection.)

All Depart In Silence