

"Weep not for me, O Mother, beholding in the sepulchre the Son whom thou hast conceived without seed in thy womb. For I shall rise and shall be glorified, and as God I shall exalt in everlasting glory those who magnify thee with faith and love."

"O Son without beginning, in ways surpassing nature was I blessed at Thy strange birth, for I was spared all travail. But now beholding Thee, my God, a lifeless corpse, I am pierced by the sword of bitter sorrow. But arise, that I may be magnified."

"By mine own will the earth covers me, O Mother, but the gatekeepers of hell tremble as they see me, clothed in the blood-stained garment of vengeance: for on the Cross as God have I struck down mine enemies, and I shall rise again and magnify thee."

"Let the creation rejoice exceedingly, let all those born on earth be glad: for hell, the enemy, has been despoiled. Ye women, come to meet me with sweet spices: for I am delivering Adam and Eve with all their offspring, and on the third day I shall rise again."

*(9th Ode of the Canon for Matins of the Great and Holy Saturday)*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
by Your powerful Word You govern all things,  
you have buried the shame of the Cross and the iron nails,  
you have broken the bars of the bronze doors and descended into  
hell,  
you have shone with the brightness of Your light  
on all those who were sitting in the shadow of death;  
Son of righteousness, risen from the tomb,  
shine upon our darkness with the radiant light of Your risen Body.

Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY  
NIGHT LITURGY  
OF THE DEPOSITION AND BURIAL  
OF THE LORD



*This Liturgy celebrates the journey of Christ into the realm of Death and Hades. The effect of his redemption works at both a conscious and unconscious level, affecting the whole cosmic order. The place of the Mother of God and of Jesus' friends and allies is also celebrated and reminds us of the importance of these 'lesser' figures of the Passion.*

*A large Crucifix stands on the altar. The church is in semi-darkness. A low table, representing the Tomb of Christ and surrounded by candles and flowers, stands in the centre of the church.*

*The Liturgy begins with Night Prayer*

## THE PREPARATION (*Please stand*)

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

*All:* **Amen.**

*Off:* Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father **+**,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*All:* **Amen. Glory to you, O Christ, glory to you!**

*A period of silence follows, for reflection on the past day after which we say:*

*Off:* Most merciful God,

*All:* **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.**

*Off:* **+** O God, make speed to save us.

*All:* **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

### *HYMN*

1. Servant of God, remember  
The stream thy soul bedewing,  
The grace that came upon thee  
Anointing and renewing.

2. When kindly slumber calls thee,  
Upon thy bed reclining,  
Trace thou the cross of Jesus,  
Thy heart and forehead signing.

3. The cross dissolves the darkness,  
And drives away temptation;  
It calms the wavering spirit  
By quiet consecration.

4. Begone, begone, the terrors  
Of vague and formless dreaming;  
Begone, thou fell deceiver  
With all thy boasted scheming.

5. Begone, thou crooked serpent,  
Who, twisting and pursuing,  
By fraud and lie preparest  
The simple soul's undoing.

6. Tremble, for Christ is near us,  
Depart, for here He dwelleth,  
And this, the sign thou knowest,  
Thy strong battalions quelleth.

7. Then while the weary body  
Its rest in sleep is nearing,  
The heart will muse in silence  
On Christ and His appearing.

## THE WORD OF GOD *(Please sit)*

### THE PSALMODY *Psalm 139.1-18*

- 1 O Lord, you have searched me out and known me;\*  
you know my sitting down and my rising up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.
- 2 **You mark out my journeys and my resting place \*  
and are acquainted with all my ways.**
- 3 For there is not a word on my tongue,\*  
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.
- 4 **You encompass me behind and before \*  
and lay your hand upon me.**
- 5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, \*  
so high that I cannot attain it.
- 6 **Where can I go then from your spirit? \*  
Or where can I flee from your presence?**
- 7 If I climb up to heaven, you are there; \*  
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
- 8 **If I take the wings of the morning \*  
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,**
- 9 Even there your hand shall lead me, \*  
your right hand hold me fast.
- 10 **If I say, Surely the darkness will cover me \*  
and the light around me turn to night,**
- 11 Even darkness is no darkness with you;  
the night is as clear as the day; \*  
darkness and light to you are both alike.
- 12 **For you yourself created my inmost parts; \*  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.**
- 13 My frame was not hidden from you, \*  
when I was made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.

- 15 As day by day they were fashioned \*  
when as yet there was none of them.**
- 16 How deep are your counsels to me, O God! \*  
How great is the sum of them!
- 17 If I count them, they are more in number than the sand, \*  
and at the end, I am still in your presence.**

*(The Gloria is not said)*

*Psalm 3*

- 1 O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me; \*  
many are saying to me, ‘There is no help for you in God.’
- 2 But you, O Lord, are a shield around me, \*  
my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.**
- 3 I cry aloud to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy hill. \*  
I lie down and sleep; I wake again, for the Lord sustains me.
- 4 I am not afraid of tens of thousands of people \*  
who have set themselves against me all around.**
- 5 Rise up, O Lord! Deliver me, O my God! \*  
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;  
you break the teeth of the wicked.
- 6 Deliverance belongs to the Lord; \*  
may your blessing be on your people!**

*(The Gloria is not said)*

*A READING*

The whole of creation was changed when it saw you, O Christ, hanging on the Cross. The sun was darkened and the foundations of the earth were shaken; all things suffered with the Creator of all. Of your own will you have endured this for our sakes: Glory to you, Lord, glory to you!

*THE RESPONSE*

*Off:* Save me, O God: for the waters are come up, even to my throat.  
*All:* **They gave me poison for food:  
and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.**

## COMMEMORATION OF THE SORROWFUL MOTHER

### *THE HOLY GOSPEL*

*Off 1:*   ✙ A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (19:31-42)

*(A period of reflective silence follows)*

*Off 2:*   I entreat you, gracious Lord, with your divine light, shine upon the souls of those who, with love, seek you: may they know you, Word of God, as God in very truth who call them from the pit of sin.

*Off 3:*   Broken and distraught with grief, Joseph and Nicodemus took down the body of their Master from the Cross. The holy Virgin Mother wept as she took him upon her knees; her tears flowed down upon him and in grief she kissed him.

***All:*    “My Son, my Lord and God, you were the only hope of your handmaid, my life and the light of my eyes; and now, alas, I have lost you, my sweet and most beloved child!”**

*Off 1:*   No one is able to see God, upon whom the ranks of angels dare not gaze; yet through you, the all-pure Virgin, the Word took flesh and showed himself to us.

***All:*    With all the hosts of heaven we magnify him and we call you blessed.**

*Off: 2*   “Now heal the wound of my soul, O my Child. Rise and still my pain and sorrow. For you have power, O Master, and can perform what you will.”

***All:*    “How have you not seen the depths of my tender love?” the Lord said to the Holy Virgin. “Because I wish to save my creature, I have accepted to die. But I shall rise again and as God shall magnify you in heaven and on earth.”**

*Off 3:*   Going down to death, O Life immortal, you have slain hell with the light of your Divinity. And when you have raised up the dead from their dwelling place, all the powers of heaven cried aloud:

***All:*    “Praise the Lord, all you peoples!”**

## COMMEMORATION OF THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

*(The Cross is taken from the altar and placed on the table. It is covered with a cloth and sprinkled with Holy Water. Please gather round. All unnecessary lights are put out)*

*Off 1:* Noble Joseph, taking down your most body from the Tree, wrapped it in clean linen with sweet spices, and laid it in a new Tomb.

**All: Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.**

*Off 2:* When you, the Redeemer of all, were laid for the sake of all, in a new Tomb, hell was brought to scorn and, seeing you, drew back in fear. The bars were broken and Adam in thanksgiving sang:

**All: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.**

*Off 3:* The Master of all is seen lying in death, and in a new tomb he is laid, who empties the tombs of the dead.

**All: I will praise you with sincerity of heart, as I learn your righteous judgements.**

*Off.1:* The flesh of God is hidden now beneath the earth, like a candle underneath the bushel, and it drives away the darkness in Hell.

*(A candle is extinguished)*

**All: I am but a stranger on earth; do not hide your commandments from me.**

*Off.2:* The whole creation was altered by your Passion: for all things suffered with you knowing, O Word, that you hold all things together in unity.

**All: My soul pines away for sorrow, O raise me up according to your word.**

*Off.3:* You have come down to earth, O Master, to save Adam: and not finding him there, you have sought him in hell.

*(A candle is extinguished)*

**All: Guide me in the path of your commandments for therein is my delight.**

*Off.1:* Uplifted on the Cross, you have uplifted with yourself all the living: and then descending beneath the earth, raised those that lie buried there.

*Off.2:* Willingly, O Saviour, you have gone down beneath the earth and have restored the dead to life, leading them back to the glory of the Father.

*(A candle is extinguished)*

**All: Your word is a lantern to my feet and a light to my path.  
O let my soul live that I may praise you,  
and let your judgements be my help!**

*Off.3:* O Word and God of all, in our hymns we praise you with the Father and your Holy Spirit, and we glorify your divine burial.

*(A candle is extinguished)*

*(The following Contakion for the Departed may then be said or sung, either in the church or in the cemetery during which the graves are sprinkled with Holy Water)*

**Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints:  
where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.  
You only are immortal, the creator and maker of all:  
and we are mortal, formed of the earth.  
And unto earth shall we return,  
For so you did ordain when you created me, saying:  
'Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return  
All we go down to the dust:  
And weeping o'er the grave, we make our song:  
Glory to you! Glory to you! Glory to you!**

**Give rest ... )**

*Off.1:* May he who, for us and for our salvation, endured in the flesh the dread Passion, the life-giving Cross **+** and the burial among the dead, Christ our true God, grant us his blessing + now and forever and to the ages of ages. **Amen.**

*(All depart in silence)*