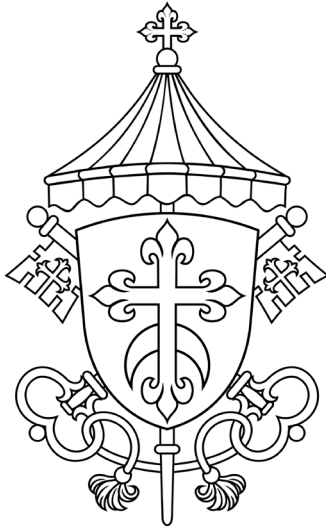


ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



Second Vespers

The Office of Evening Prayer

THE NATIVITY OF
SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

24 June 2023

5.30pm

THE OFFICE OF VESPERS

Vespers, also called Evening Prayer, is part of the Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office. In the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church fulfills Jesus' command to "pray continually". Through hymns, psalms, canticles, readings, and prayers, the people of God sanctify the day by continual praise of God and intercession for the needs of the world.

The Liturgy of the Hours includes several specified times of prayer. The most important times are Morning Prayer: Lauds (which takes place upon rising) and Evening Prayer: Vespers (which takes place as dusk begins to fall). The Office of Vespers gives thanks for the day just past and makes an evening sacrifice of praise to God.

Bishops, priests, deacons, and many men and women in consecrated life pray the Liturgy of the Hours each day. Their work is organised around this prayer, keeping God always at the centre of their days. Lay people are encouraged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours as well, especially Morning and Evening Prayer. The public singing of Lauds and Vespers is a regular part of the life and worship of St Mary's Cathedral.

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

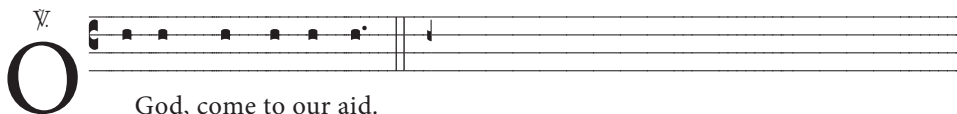
Apart from Mary and Joseph, John the Baptist is the only saint in the calendar who has two feasts to himself. One, in August, celebrates his death, and one, in June, celebrates his birth. And this is as it should be, for as Christ himself said, John was the greatest of the sons of men. The greatest, but also the most tragic. A prophet from before his birth, leaping in the womb to announce the coming of the incarnate God, his task was to proclaim the fulfilment of all prophecies – and thus his own obsolescence. And he did it: with unequalled courage he spread the news that he, the greatest of all men, was the least in the kingdom of heaven. His disciples, and the devil, would have preferred him to fight, to build his sect, to defeat this upstart whom he himself had baptized, to seize his place in history. But he did not – and so, rightly, he has his place, and he has glory in heaven. We envy the great and the talented, and sometimes we think that they themselves are beyond envy. But when they come across someone with greater gifts, as one day most of them will, they will see for the first time what it means to feel like us. Let us pray that they, like John the Baptist, may pass that test.

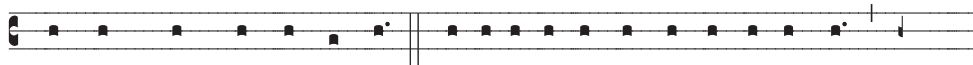
**TO MAINTAIN A SPIRIT OF REVERENCE AND SOLEMNITY,
PLEASE TURN OFF AND REFRAIN FROM USING ALL MOBILE TELEPHONES
AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

ORDER OF VESPERS

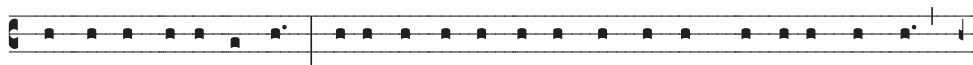
At the sound of the Sacristy bell all stand.

INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

O  God, come to our aid.



O Lord, make haste to help us. **Glory be to the Father and to the Son**



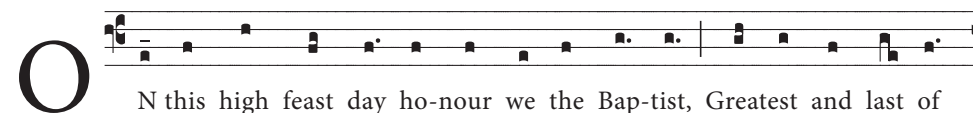
and to the Holy Spi-rit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,




world without end. A-men. Al-le-lu-ia.

All sing

THE OFFICE HYMN

O  N this high feast day ho-nour we the Bap-tist, Greatest and last of



Is-rael's line of pro-phets, Kins-man of Je-sus, he-rald of sal-va-tion,



Cho-sen fore-run-ner. 2. Lo, from the hea-vens Ga-bri-el des-cend-ing,



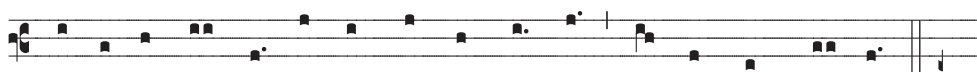
Brings to thy fa-ther ti-dings of thy com-ing, Tell-ing thy name, and all



thy life's high call-ing Du-ly announc-ing. 3. When Ze-cha-ri-ah doubted



what was told him, Dumbness assailed him, sealing firm the promise,



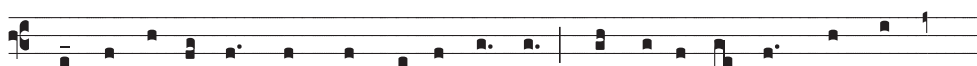
Till at thy nam-ing, lo, his voice re-sound-ed Loud in God's prais-es.



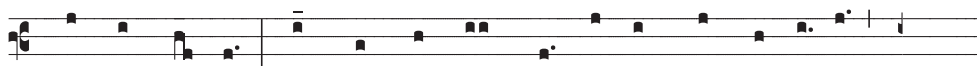
4. Greater art thou than all the sons of Adam, Lowly in spi-rit, faithful-ly



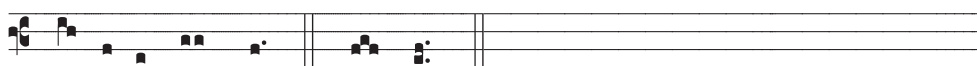
proclaiming Is-rael's Mes-si-ah, Jesus our Redeemer, Thus we ex-ult thee.



5. Fa-ther e-ter-nal, Son, and Ho-ly Spi-rit, God ev-er-last-ing, hear thy



peop-le's prais-es; Let saints on earth with all the saints in glo-ry,



Ev-er a-dore thee. A-men.

All sit.

PSALMODY

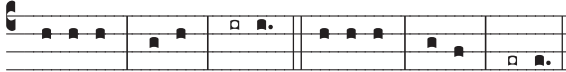
All sing the FIRST ANTIPHON

Mode IV



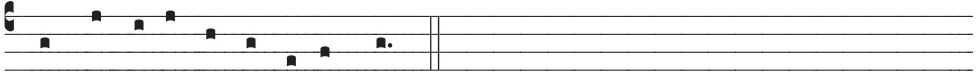
There was a man sent by God, whose name was John.

PSALM 14 (15)



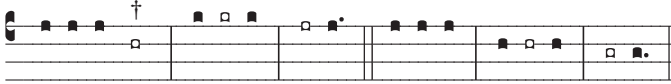
- Cantor* 1 Lord, who shall be admitted | to your | tent *
and dwell on your | holy | mountain?
- All* 2 **He who walks without fault;**
he who | acts with | justice *
and speaks the truth | from his | heart;
- 3 he who does not slander with his tongue;
He who does no wrong | to his | brother, *
who casts no slur | on his | neighbour,
- 4 **who holds the godless | in dis- | dain, ***
but honours those who | fear the | Lord;
- 5 he who keeps his pledge, | come what | may; *
who takes no interest | on a | loan
- 6 **and accepts no bribes a- | gainst the | innocent.**
Such a man will stand | firm for- | ever.
- 7 Glory be to the Father and | to the | Son *
and to the | Holy | Spirit,
- 8 **as it was in the beginning, is now, and | ever | shall be, ***
world without | end. A- | men.

All repeat the Antiphon.



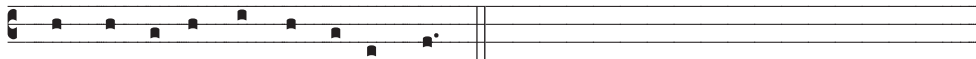
He came as a witness to the truth.

PSALM 111 (112)



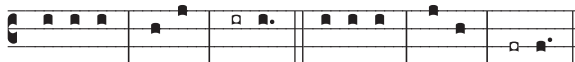
- | | | |
|---------------|----|--|
| <i>Cantor</i> | 1 | Happy the man who fears the Lord, *
who take delight in all his com- mands. |
| <i>All</i> | 2 | His sons shall be powerful on earth; *
the children of the upright are blessed. |
| | 3 | Riches and wealth are in his house; *
his justice stands firm for ever. |
| | 4 | He is a light in the darkness for the upright: *
he is generous, merci- ful and just. |
| | 5 | The good man takes pity and lends, *
he conducts his af- fairs with honour. |
| | 6 | The just man will never waver: *
he will be re- membered for ever. |
| | 7 | He has no fear of evil news; *
with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord. |
| | 8 | With a steadfast heart he will not fear; *
he will see the downfall of his foes. |
| | 9 | Open-handed, he gives to the <u>poor</u> ; †
his justice stands firm for ever. *
His head will be raised in glory. |
| | 10 | The wicked man sees and is <u>angry</u>, †
grinds his teeth and fades a- way; *
the desire of the wicked leads to doom. |
| | 11 | Glory be to the Father and to the Son *
and to the Holy Spirit, |
| | 12 | as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, *
world without end. A- men. |

All repeat the Antiphon.



John was like a brightly shining light.

CANTICLE
Apocalypse 15:3-4



- Cantor* 1 Great and wonderful | are your | deeds, *
O Lord God | the Al- | mighty.
- All* 2 **Just and true | are your | ways, ***
O King | of the | ages!
- 3 Who shall not fear and glorify your | name, O | Lord? *
For you a- | lone are | holy.
- 4 **All nations shall come and | worship | you, ***
for your judgements have | been re- | vealed.
- 5 Glory be to the Father and | to the | Son *
and to the | Holy | Spirit,
- 6 **as it was in the beginning, is now, and | ever | shall be, ***
world without | end. A- | men.

All repeat the Antiphon.

IT was Jesus, one of the descendants of David, that God made the Saviour of the people of Israel, as he had promised. Before the coming of Jesus, John preached to all the people of Israel that they should turn from their sins and be baptized. And as John was about to finish his mission, he said to the people: ‘Who do you think I am? I am not the one you are waiting for. But look! He is coming after me, and I am not good enough to take his sandals off his feet.’

THE SHORT RESPONSORY



Prepare a way for the Lord, * make his paths straight.



∇ There is one coming af-ter me who ex-ist-ed be-fore me. ⌘ **Make his paths...**



∇ Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spi-rit.



⌘ **Prepare a way for the Lord make his paths straight.**

All stand.



A-mong those born of women there was none greater than John the Baptist.

MAGNIFICAT



- Cantor* 1 My soul proclaims the greatness | of the | Lord, *
my spirit rejoices in | God my | Saviour;
- All* 2 **for he has looked with favour on his | lowly | servant, ***
and from this day all generations will | call me | blessèd.
- 3 The Almighty has done | great things for | me, *
holy | is his | Name.
- 4 **He has mercy on | those who | fear him *
in every | gene- | ration.**
- 5 He has shown the | strength of his | arm, *
he has scattered the proud in | their con- | ceit.
- 6 **He has cast down the mighty | from their | thrones, ***
and has lifted | up the | lowly.
- 7 He has filled the hungry | with good | things, *
and the rich he has | sent a-way | empty.
- 8 **He has come to the help of his | servant | Israel *
for he has remembered his | promise of | mercy,**
- 9 the promise he | made to our | fathers, *
to Abraham and his | children for | ever.
- 10 **Glory be to the Father and | to the | Son *
and to the | Holy | Spirit,**
- 11 As it was in the beginning, is now, and | ever | shall be, *
world without | end. A- | men.

All repeat the Antiphon.

INTERCESSIONS

God our Father, you chose John the Baptist to announce the kingdom of Christ to all men. Joyfully we pray, therefore:

℟. **Lord, guide us in the way of peace.**

Even in his mother's womb you chose John to prepare the way for your Son; give us the faith to know Christ, and to make him known. ℟.

You inspired the Baptist to recognize the Lamb of God: through us, let the world recognize your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. ℟.


You disposed your prophet to give way before Christ; give us the humility to let his light shine in the world. ℟.


You called John even to die for you; grant that we may share his burning zeal for the truth. ℟.

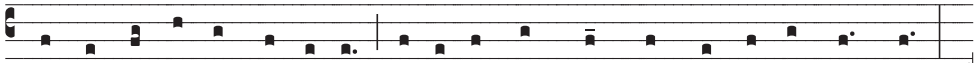
Remember the dead who have walked in the path of life: bring them to new life, cleansed from all stain of sin. ℟.


At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All sing


OUR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,


thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our dai-ly bread,


and forgive us our trespasses, as we for-give those who trespass a-gainst us;


and lead us not in-to temp-tation, but de-liv-er us from e- vil.

COLLECT

ALMIGHTY God and Father,
you sent Saint John the Baptist to the people of Israel
to make them ready for Christ the Lord.
Give us the grace of joy in the Spirit,
and guide the hearts of all the faithful
in the way of salvation and peace.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

℟: **Amen.**

CONCLUSION OF THE OFFICE

The Lord be with you.

℟: **And with your spirit.**

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

℟: **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

℟: **Thanks be to God.**

In the absence of a Priest:

The Lord bless us, and keep us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

℟: **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

℟: **Thanks be to God.**

All sing

THE ANTIPHON TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

S

Al-ve, Re-gí-na, * **ma-ter mi-se-ri-cór-di-ae** : **Vi-ta, dul-cé-do, et spes**
Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and

nostra, sal-ve. Ad te clamámus, éx-su-les, fí-li-i Hevae. Ad te su-spi-rámus,
our hope, hail. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up

ge-méntes et flén-tes in hac la-crimárum val-le. E-ia er-go, Ad-vo-cá-ta
our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious

nos-tra, il-los tu-os mi-se-ri-cór-des ó-cu-los ad nos con-vér-te. Et Ie-sum,
advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; And show

be-ne-díctum fructum ventris tu-i, no-bis post hoc ex-sí-li-um os-tén-de.
unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, after this our exile.

O cle-mens : O pi-a : O dul-cis Vir-go Ma-rí-a.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

St Mary's Cathedral

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