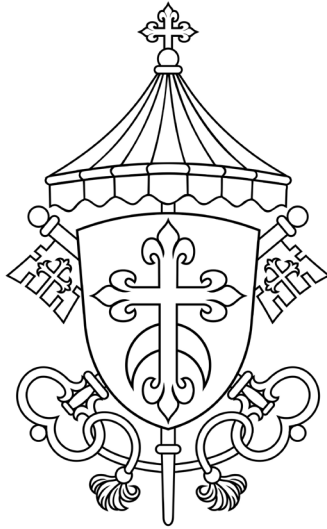


ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



First Vespers

The Office of Evening Prayer

THE HOLY FAMILY
OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH

30 December 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.

**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

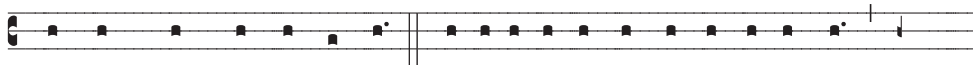
At the sound of the Sacristy bell all stand.

INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

♯



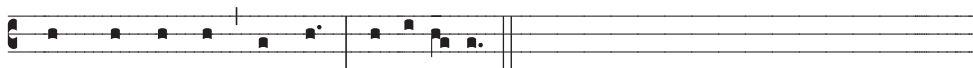
O God, come to our aid.



♯ **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 HYMN

Un-to us is born a Son, King of quires su - per - nal; See on earth his
life be-gun, Of lords the Lord e - ter - nal, of lords the Lord e - ter - nal.

Christ, from heav'n descending low,
Comes on earth a stranger:
Ox and ass their Owner know
Becradled in a manger.

This did Herod sore affray,
And grievously bewilder;
So he gave the word to slay,
And slew the little childer.

Of his love and mercy mild
This the Christmas story:
And oh, that Mary's gentle Child
Might lead us up to glory!

O and A and A and O,
Cum cantibus in choro,
Let our merry organ go,
Benedicamus Domino.

*Puer nobis
Piae Cantiones (1582)*

*Puer nobis nascitur
tr. George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934)*

All sit.

PSALMODY

All sing the FIRST ANTIPHON

Mode I



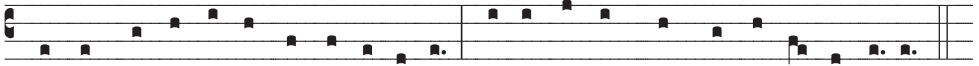
Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary; of her was born Jesus Christ.

PSALM 112 (113)



- Cantor* 1 Praise, O servants | of the | Lord, *
praise the name | of the | Lord!
- All* 2 **May the name of the | Lord be | blessed *
both now and for | ever- | more!**
- 3 From the rising of the | sun to its | setting *
praised be the name | of the | Lord!
- 4 **High above all nations | is the | Lord, *
above the heav- | ens his | glory.**
- 5 Who is like the | Lord, our | God, *
who has risen on high | to his | throne
- 6 **yet stoops from the | heights to look | down, *
to look down upon heav- | en and | earth?**
- 7 From the dust he | lifts up the | lowly, *
from his misery he rais- | es the | poor
- 8 **to set him in the | company of | princes, *
yes, with the princes | of his | people.**
- 9 To the childless wife he | gives a | home *
and gladdens her | heart with | children.
- 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.



Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid. Mary has conceived by the Ho-ly Spirit.

PSALM 147 (147B)



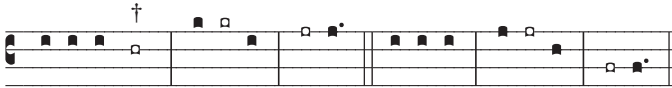
- Cantor* 1 O praise the | Lord, Je- | rusalem! *
Zion, | praise your | God!
- All* 2 **He has strengthened the | bars of your | gates *
he has blessed the | children with- | in you.**
- 3 He established | peace on your | borders, *
he feeds you with | finest | wheat.
- 4 **He sends out his | word to the | earth *
and swiftly runs | his com- | mand.**
- 5 He showers down snow | white as | wool, *
he scatters | hoarfrost like | ashes.
- 6 **He hurls down | hailstones like | crumbs. *
The waters are frozen | at his | touch;**
- 7 he sends forth his | word and it | melts them: *
at the breath of his mouth the | waters | flow.
- 8 **He makes his word | known to | Jacob, *
to Israel his laws | and de- | crees.**
- 9 He has not dealt thus with | other | nations; *
he has not taught them | his de- | crees.
- 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.



The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

CANTICLE
Ephesians 1:3-10



- Cantor* 1 Blessed be the | God and | Father *
of our Lord | Jesus | Christ,
- All* 2 **who has | blessed us in | Christ *
with every spiritual blessing in the | heavenly | places.**
- 3 He chose | us in | him *
before the foundation | of the | world,
- 4 **that we | should be | holy *
and | blameless be- | fore him.**
- 5 He destined us in love †
to be his sons through | Jesus | Christ, *
according to the purpose | of his | will,
- 6 **to the praise of his | glorious | grace *
which he freely bestowed on us | in the Be- | loved.**
- 7 In him we have redemption | through his | blood, *
the forgiveness | of our | trespasses,
- 8 **according to the riches | of his | grace *
which he | lavished up- | on us.**
- 9 He has made known to us †
in all | wisdom and | insight *
the mystery | of his | will,
- 10 **according | to his | purpose *
which he set | forth in | Christ.**
- 11 His purpose he set | forth in | Christ *
as a plan for the | fullness of | time,
- 12 **to unite all | things in | him, *
things in heaven and | things on | earth.**



13 Glory be to the Father and | to the | Son *
 and to the | Holy | Spirit,

14 as it was in the beginning, is now, and | ever | shall be, *
 world without | end. A- | men.

All repeat the ANTIPHON



The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

SCRIPTURE READING

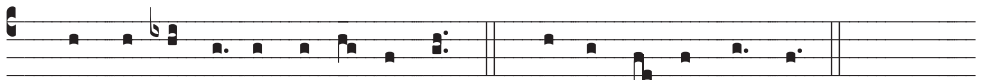
2 Corinthians 8:9

YOU know how generous our Lord Jesus Christ has been: he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that through his poverty you might become rich.

THE SHORT RESPONSORY



The Word became flesh, * and he lived a-mong us.



∇ From his fulness we have all received. ℞ **And he lived a-mong us.**

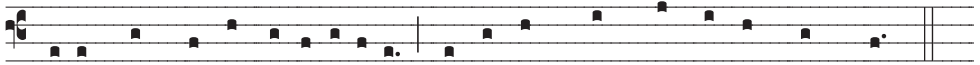


∇ Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spi-rit.



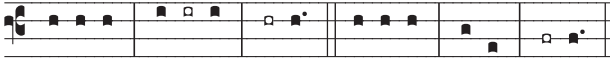
℞ **The Word became flesh, and he lived a-mong us.**

All stand.



Jesus stayed behind in Je-rusalem. His parents sought him among their friends.

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 | away | empty.
- 8 **He has come to the help of his | servant | Israel ***
for he has remembered his pro- | mise of | mercy,
- 9 the promise he | made to our | fathers, *
to Abraham and his child- | ren 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

Let us adore the Son of the living God, who became son in a human family.

℟. **Lord Jesus, bless our families.**

By your obedience to Mary and Joseph, teach us how to respect proper authority and order. ℟.

By the love that filled your home, give our families the grace of loving harmony and peace. ℟.

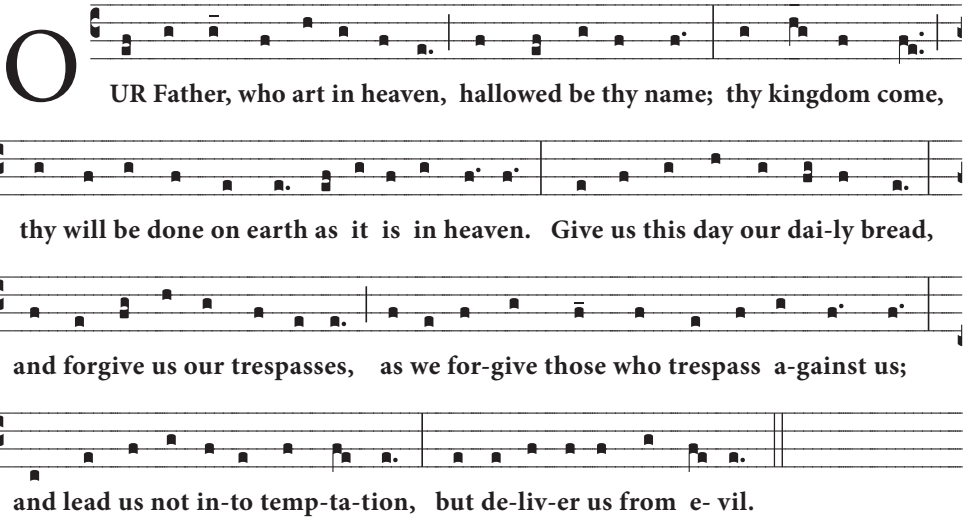
Your first intent was the honour of your Father. May God be the heart of all our family life. ℟.

Your parents found you teaching in your Father's house. Help us, like you, to seek first the Father's will. ℟.

By your reunion with Mary and Joseph in the joy of heaven, welcome our dead into the family of the saints. ℟.

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

All sing



O UR 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

GOD our Father,
in the Holy Family of Nazareth
you have given us the true model of a Christian home.
Grant that by following Jesus, Mary and Joseph
in their love for each other and in the example of their family life,
we may come to your home of peace and joy.
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.**

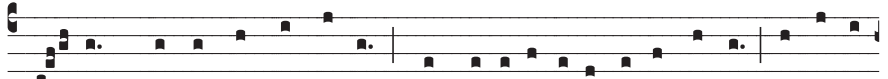
Let us bless the Lord.

℟: **Thanks be to God.**

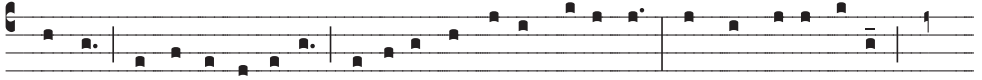
All sing

THE ANTIPHON TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

A



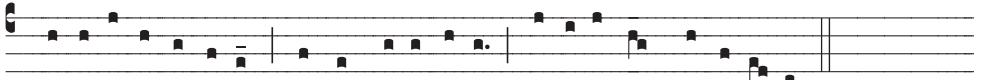
LMA * Redemptó-ris Mater, quæ pérvia cæli porta manes, et stella
Loving mother of the Redeemer, gate of heaven, star



ma-ris, succúrre cadénti, súrgere qui curat, pópu-lo; tu quæ genu- ísti,
of the sea, assist your people who have fallen yet strive to rise again, To the



nátúra mi-ránte, tu-um sanctum Geni-tó-rem, Virgo pri-us ac posté-ri-us,
wonderment of nature you bore your Creator, yet remained a virgin after as before,



Gabri-é-lis ab o-re sumens illud A-ve, peccató-rum mi-se-ré-re.
You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting, have pity on us poor sinners.

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