

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



Solemn Vespers and Benediction

The Office of Evening Prayer

SECOND SUNDAY
OF ADVENT

7 December 2025
5.00pm

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.**

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

At the sound of the Sacristy bell all stand.

As the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the altar all kneel and sing:



O sa - lu - tá - ris Hó - sti - a, Quae cae - li pan - dis ós - ti - um,
O saving Victim, opening wide the gate of Heaven to man below;



Bel - la pre - munt ho - stí - li - a, Da ro - bur, fer au - xí - li - um.
Our foes press hard on every side; thine aid supply; thy strength bestow.



U - ni tri - nó - que Dó - mi - no Sit sem - pi - tér - na gló - ri - a,
All praise and thanks to thee ascend, for ever more, blest one in three.



Qui vi - tam si - ne tér - mi - no No - bis do - net in pá - tri - a.
O grant us life that shall not end, in our true native land with thee.



A - men.

ORDER OF VESPERS

INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

℣ Deus, in adiutorium meum intende.	<i>O God, come to our aid.</i>
℟ Domine, ad adiuvandum me festina.	<i>O Lord, make haste to help us.</i>
Gloria Patri et Filio	<i>Glory be to the Father and to the Son</i>
et Spiritui Sancto.	<i>and to the Holy Spirit,</i>
Sicut erat in principio	<i>as it was in the beginning,</i>
et nunc et semper	<i>is now, and ever shall be,</i>
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen. Alleluia.	<i>world without end. Amen. Alleluia.</i>

OFFICE HYMN

Conditor alme siderum, æterna lux credentium, Christe, redemptor omnium, exaudi preces supplicum.	<i>Creator of the stars of night, Thy people's everlasting light, O Christ, thou saviour of us all, We pray thee, hear us when we call.</i>
Qui condolens interitu mortis perire sæculum, salvastis mundum languidum, donans reis remedium	<i>To thee the travail deep was known That made the whole creation groan Till thou, Redeemer, shouldest free Thine own in glorious liberty.</i>
Vergente mundi vespere, uti sponsus de thalamo, egressus honestissima Virginis matris clausula.	<i>When the old world drew on toward night, Thou camest, not in splendour bright As monarch, but the humble child Of Mary, blameless mother mild.</i>
Cuius forti potentia genu curvantur omnia; cælestia, terrestria nutu fatentur subdita.	<i>At thy great name, O Jesu, now All knees must bend, all hearts must bow; And things celestial thee shall own, And things terrestrial, Lord alone.</i>
Te, Sancte, fide quæsumus, venture iudex sæculi, conserva nos in tempore hostis a telo perfidi.	<i>Come in thy holy might, we pray; Redeem us for eternal day From every power of darkness, when Thou judgest all the sons of men.</i>
Sit, Christe, rex piissime, tibi Patrique gloria cum Spiritu Paraclito, in sempiterna sæcula. Amen.	<i>To God the Father, God the Son, And God the Spirit, Three in One, Laud, honour, might, and glory be From age to age eternally. Amen.</i>

All sit.

PSALMODY

FIRST ANTIPHON

ECCE in nubibus cæli Dominus veniet
cum potestate magna, alleluia.

*Behold, the Lord will come on the clouds of
heaven with great strength. Alleluia.*

PSALM 109 (110)

Dixit Dominus Domino meo: *The Lord's revelation to my Master:*
«Sede a dextris meis, *'Sit on my right:*

donec ponam inimicos tuos: *your foes I will put*
scabellum pedum tuorum». *beneath your feet.'*

Virgam potentiæ tuæ emittet Dominus ex Sion: *The Lord will wield from Zion your sceptre of power:*
dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum. *rule in the midst of all your foes.*

Tecum principatus in die virtutis tuæ, *A prince from the day of your birth*
in splendoribus sanctis: *on the holy mountains;*
ex utero ante luciferum genui te. *from the womb before the dawn I begot you.*

Iuravit Dominus et non pænitebit eum: *The Lord has sworn an oath he will not change.*
«Tu es sacerdos in æternum secundum *'You are a priest for ever,*
ordinem Melchisedech». *a priest like Melchizedek of old.'*

Dominus a dextris tuis: *The Master standing at your right hand*
conquassabit in die iræ suæ reges. *will shatter kings in the day of his wrath.*

De torrente in via bibet: *He shall drink from the stream by the wayside*
propterea exaltabit caput. *and therefore he shall lift up his head.*

Gloria Patri et Filio, *Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
et Spiritui Sancto. *and to the Holy Spirit,*

Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper *as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,*
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen. *world without end. Amen.*

The Antiphon is repeated.

SECOND ANTIPHON

ECCE apparebit Dominus et non mentietur; si moram
fecerit, exspecta eum, quia veniet et non tardabit, alleluia.

*The Lord will come and will not disappoint us. Wait for him if he
seems to delay, for he will surely come, alleluia.*

PSALM 113B (115)

Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam super misericordia tua et veritate tua.	<i>Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to your name give the glory for the sake of your love and your truth,</i>
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Quare dicent gentes: «Ubi est Deus eorum?».	<i>lest the heathen say: ‘Where is their God?’</i>
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Deus autem noster in cælo, omnia, quæcumque voluit, fecit.	<i>But our God is in the heavens; he does whatever he wills.</i>
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Simulacra gentium argentum et aurum, opera manuum hominum.	<i>Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands.</i>
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Os habent et non loquentur, oculos habent et non videbunt.	<i>They have mouths but they cannot speak; they have eyes but they cannot see;</i>
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Aures habent et non audient, nares habent et non odorabunt.	<i>they have ears but they cannot hear; they have nostrils but they cannot smell.</i>
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Manus habent et non palpabunt, pedes habent et non ambulabunt; non clamabunt in gutture suo.	<i>With their hands they cannot feel; with their feet they cannot walk. (No sound comes from their throats.)</i>
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Similes illis erunt, qui faciunt ea, et omnes, qui confidunt in eis.	<i>Their makers will come to be like them and so will all who trust in them.</i>
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Domus Israel speravit in Domino: adiutorium eorum et scutum eorum est.	<i>Sons of Israel, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield.</i>
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Domus Aaron speravit in Domino: adiutorium eorum et scutum eorum est.	<i>Sons of Aaron, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield.</i>
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Qui timent Dominum, speraverunt in Domino: adiutorium eorum et scutum eorum est.	<i>You who fear him, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield.</i>
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Dominus memor fuit nostri et benedicet nobis: *He remembers us, and he will bless us;*
benedicet domui Israel, *he will bless the sons of Israel.*
benedicet domui Aaron, *(He will bless the sons of Aaron.)*

benedicet omnibus, qui timent Dominum, *The Lord will bless those who fear him,*
pusillis cum maioribus. *the little no less than the great:*

Adiciat Dominus super vos, *to you may the Lord grant increase,*
super vos et super filios vestros. *to you and all your children.*

Benedicti vos a Domino, *May you be blessed by the Lord,*
qui fecit cælum et terram. *the maker of heaven and earth.*

Cæli, cæli sunt Domino, *The heavens belong to the Lord*
terram autem dedit filiis hominum. *but the earth he has given to men.*

Non mortui laudabunt te, Domine, *The dead shall not praise the Lord,*
neque omnes, qui descendunt in silentium, *nor those who go down into the silence.*

sed nos, qui vivimus, benedicimus Domino *But we who live bless the Lord*
ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum. *now and for ever. Amen.*

Gloria Patri et Filio, *Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
et Spiritui Sancto. *and to the Holy Spirit,*

Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper: *as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,*
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen. *world without end. Amen.*

SECOND ANTIPHON

ECCE apparebit Dominus et non mentietur; si moram
fecerit, exspecta eum, quia veniet et non tardabit, alleluia.

*The Lord will come and will not disappoint us. Wait for him if he
seems to delay, for he will surely come, alleluia.*

THIRD ANTIPHON

DOMINUS legifer noster, Dominus rex
noster: ipse veniet et salvabit nos.

*The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our king:
he will come and make us whole.*

CANTICLE

Apocalypse 19:1-2. 5-7

Salus et gloria et virtus Deo nostro:	<i>Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,</i>
Alleluia.	<i>Alleluia.</i>
quia vera et iusta iudicia eius.	<i>his judgements are true and just.</i>
Alleluia, alleluia.	<i>Alleluia, alleluia.</i>

Laudem dicite Deo nostro, omnes servi eius:	<i>Praise our God, all you his servants,</i>
Alleluia.	<i>Alleluia.</i>
et qui timetis eum, pusilli et magni!	<i>you who fear him, small and great.</i>
Alleluia, alleluia.	<i>Alleluia, alleluia.</i>

Quoniam regnavit Dominus,	<i>The Lord our God,</i>
Deus noster omnipotens:	<i>the Almighty, reigns,</i>
Alleluia.	<i>Alleluia.</i>

Gaudeamus et exultemus et demus gloriam ei.	<i>let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory.</i>
Alleluia, alleluia.	<i>Alleluia, alleluia.</i>

Quia venerunt nuptiæ Agni:	<i>The marriage of the Lamb has come,</i>
Alleluia.	<i>Alleluia.</i>
et uxor eius præparavit se.	<i>and his bride has made herself ready.</i>
Alleluia, alleluia.	<i>Alleluia, alleluia.</i>

Gloria Patri et Filio:	<i>Glory be to the Father and to the Son</i>
Alleluia.	<i>Alleluia.</i>
et Spiritui Sancto.	<i>and to the Holy Spirit,</i>
Alleluia, alleluia.	<i>Alleluia, alleluia.</i>

Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper	<i>as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,</i>
Alleluia.	<i>Alleluia.</i>
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	<i>world without end. Amen.</i>
Alleluia, alleluia.	<i>Alleluia, alleluia.</i>

The Antiphon is repeated.

REJOICE in the Lord always; again I will say,
Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance.
The Lord is at hand.

SHORT RESPONSORY

Ostende nobis, Domine, *Show us, Lord,*
misericordiam tuam. *your steadfast love.*

℣. Et salutare tuum da nobis. ℟. *And grant us your salvation.*

℣. Gloria Patri et Filio *Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
et Spiritui Sancto. ℟. *and to the Holy Spirit.*

All stand.

MAGNIFICAT ANTIPHON

VENIET fortior me post me, cuius non sum dignus solvere
corrigiam calceamentorum eius.

*Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than
I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his
sandals.*

MAGNIFICAT

Octavi Toni

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

Magnificat anima mea Dominum,	<i>My soul glorifies the Lord,</i>
et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo,	<i>my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.</i>
quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ. Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes,	<i>He looks on his servant in her lowliness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed.</i>
quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, et sanctum nomen eius,	<i>The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name!</i>
et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.	<i>His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him.</i>
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit superbos mente cordis sui;	<i>He puts forth his arm in strength and scatters the proud-hearted.</i>
deposuit potentes de sede; et exaltavit humiles;	<i>He casts the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly.</i>
esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes.	<i>He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty.</i>
Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiæ suæ,	<i>He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy,</i>
sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in sæcula.	<i>the mercy promised to our fathers, to Abraham and his sons for ever.</i>
Gloria Patri et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.	<i>Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,</i>
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	<i>as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.</i>

The Antiphon is repeated.

INTERCESSIONS

The voice of John crying in the wilderness is echoed tonight in the voice of the Church:

R. Make our hearts ready, O Lord!

For your coming to us in grace this Advent: R.

For the work we must do in creating a more just world: R.

For the understanding we shall need this week for our families and friends: R.

For our death, for our judgement, for eternal life with you: R.

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

ALMIGHTY and merciful God,
let neither our daily work nor the cares of this life
prevent us from hastening to meet your Son.
Enlighten us with your wisdom
and lead us into his company.
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.**

The Choir sings

THE MOTET

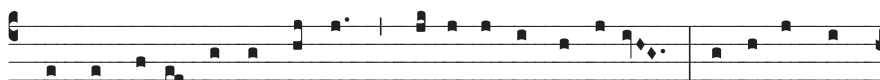
VIGILATE, nescitis enim quando Dominus domus veniat, sero, an media nocte, an galli cantu, an mane. Vigilate ergo, ne, cum venerit repente inveniatis vos dormientes. Quod autem dico vobis, omnibus dico, Vigilate.

Be watchful, for you do not know the hour when the master of the house will come, in the evening, the middle of the night, at cock-crow, or in the morning. So be watchful, lest, when he comes suddenly he should find you asleep. What I say to you, then, I say to all: Be watchful.

William Byrd (c.1540–1623)

All sing

T



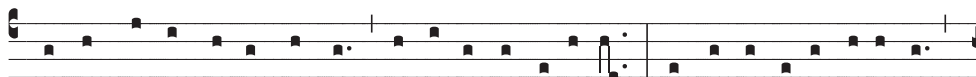
ANTUM er-go Sa-craméntum * Vene-rémur cégnu-i : et an-tí-quum
Therefore we, before him bending, this great Sacrament revere; types and shadows



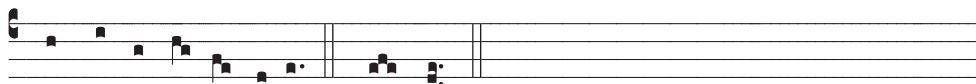
do-cuméntum No-vo ce-dat rí-tu-i : præstet fi-des suppleméntum
have their ending, for the newer rite is here; faith our outward sense befriending,



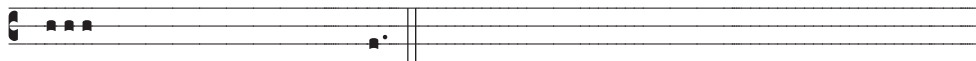
sénsu-um de-féc-tu-i. Ge-ni-tó-ri, Ge-ni-tó-que laus et iu-bi-la-ti-o,
makes our inward vision clear. Glory let us give and blessing to the Father and the Son,



sa-lus, honor, virtus quoque sit et be-ne-dícti-o : pro-ce-dénti ab utró-que
honour, thanks, and praise addressing while eternal ages run; ever too his love confessing,



compar sit lau-dá-ti-o. A-men.
who from both with both is One.



∇ Panem de cælo præstitisti e- is.

You gave them bread from heaven.



℞ Omne delectaméntum in se habén- tem.

Containing in itself all sweetness.

Oremus.

Let us pray.

DEUS, qui nobis sub sacramento
mirabili passionis tuæ memoriam
reliquisti: tribue quæsumus, ita nos corporis
et sanguinis tui sacra mysteria venerari; ut
redemptionis tuæ fructum in nobis iugiter
sentiamus. Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula
sæculorum.

*O God, who in a wonderful Sacrament
has left us a memorial of your passion:
grant us so to venerate the sacred
mysteries of your Body and Blood, that
we may perceive within ourselves the fruit
of thy redemption; who lives and reigns
for ever and ever.*

℞ Amen.

BENEDICTION *is given.*

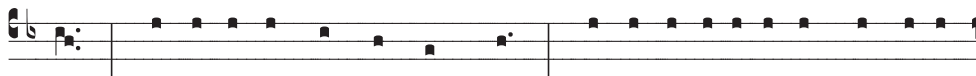
THE DIVINE PRAISES



Blessèd be God. Blessèd be his Holy Name. Blessèd be Jesus Christ, true God



and true Man. Blessèd be the Name of Je-sus. Blessèd be his Most Sacred



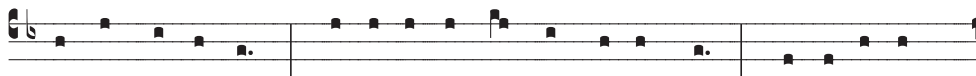
Heart. Blessèd be his Most Precious Blood. Blessèd be Jesus in the Most Holy



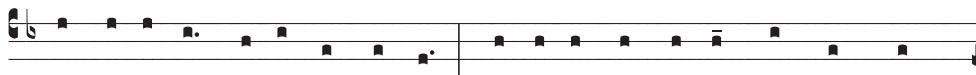
Sacrament of the Al-tar. Blessèd be the Holy Spi-rit, the Pa-raclete. Blessèd be



the great Mother of God, Ma-ry most Ho-ly. Blessèd be her Holy and Imma-



cu-late Conception. Blessèd be her Glorious Assumption. Blessèd be the

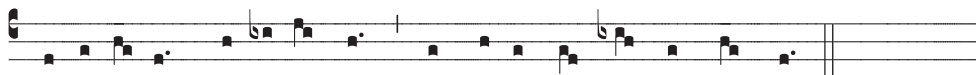


name of Ma-ry, Virgin and Mother. Blessèd be Saint Joseph, her most chaste



spouse. Blessèd be God in his Angels and in his Saints.

As the Blessed Sacrament is reposed, all sing



A-do-ré-mus * in æ-tér-num Sanc-tís-si-mum Sa-cra-mén-tum.

Let us adore for ever the most Holy Sacrament.

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes:
laudate eum omnes populi.

*O praise the Lord, all you nations,
acclaim his all you peoples!*

Quoniam confirmata est super nos
misericordia eius:
et veritas Domini manet in æternum.

*Strong is his
love for us;
he is faithful for ever.*

Gloria Patri, et Filio:
et Spiritui Sancto,

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

sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper:
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

*as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.*



A-do-ré-mus * in æ-tér-num Sanc-tís-si-mum Sa-cra-mén-tum.

Let us adore for ever the most Holy Sacrament.

All sing

THE ANTIPHON TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

A LMA * Redemptó-ris Mater, quæ pérvī-a 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

natúra 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.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Liturgical Improvisation No 2 (on 'Conditor alme siderum')

George Oldroyd (1886–1956)

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