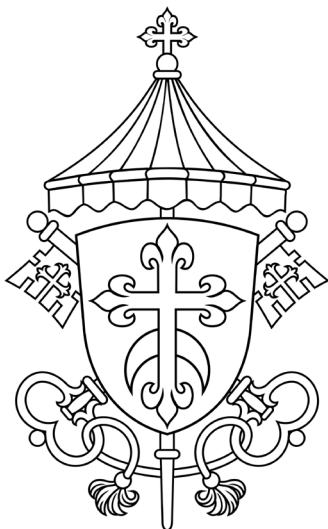


# ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



## First Vespers

The Office of Evening Prayer

First Sunday  
of Lent

21 February 2026  
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 Vespers is a regular part of the life and worship of St Mary's Cathedral.

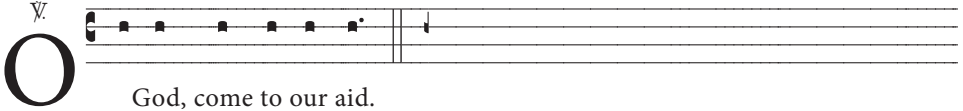
**TO MAINTAIN A SPIRIT OF REVERENCE AND SOLEMNITY,  
PLEASE TURN OFF AND REFRAIN FROM USING ALL MOBILE TELEPHONES  
AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

# ORDER OF VESPERS

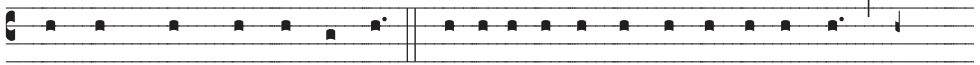
*At the sound of the Sacristy bell all stand.*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

♯



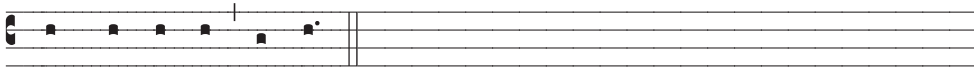
**O** God, come to our aid.



♯ **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,

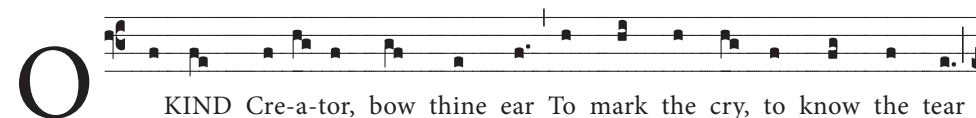


world without end. A-men.

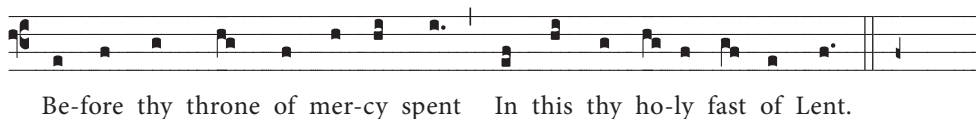
*All sing*

## THE OFFICE HYMN

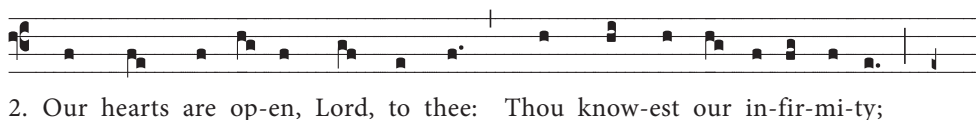
**O** KIND Cre-a-tor, bow thine ear To mark the cry, to know the tear



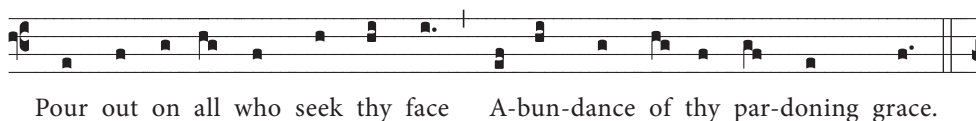
Be-fore thy throne of mer-cy spent In this thy ho-ly fast of Lent.



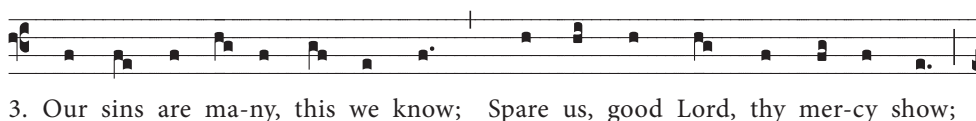
2. Our hearts are op-en, Lord, to thee: Thou know-est our in-fir-mi-ty;



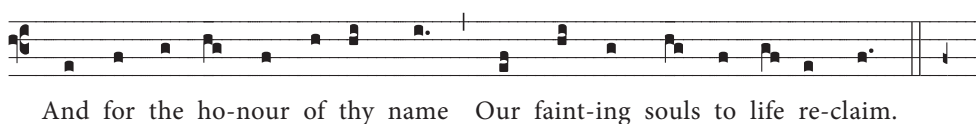
Pour out on all who seek thy face A-bun-dance of thy par-doning grace.



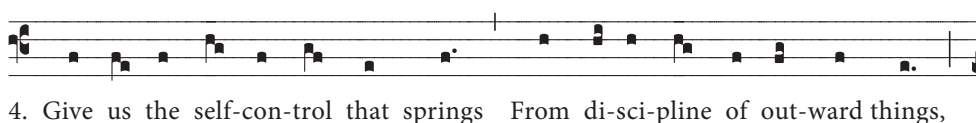
3. Our sins are ma-ny, this we know; Spare us, good Lord, thy mer-cy show;



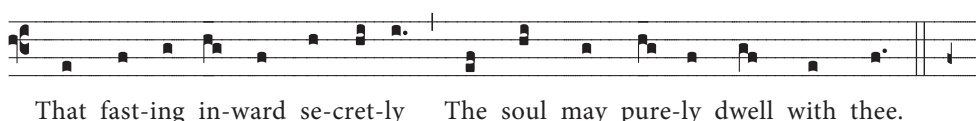
And for the ho-nour of thy name Our faint-ing souls to life re-claim.



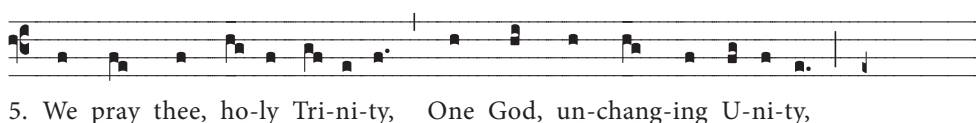
4. Give us the self-con-trol that springs From di-sci-pline of out-ward things,



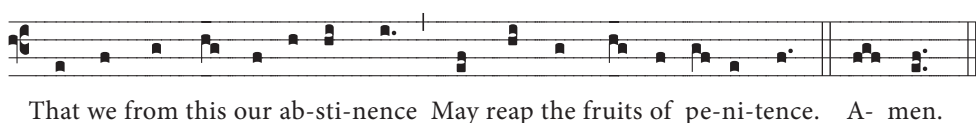
That fast-ing in-ward se-cret-ly The soul may pure-ly dwell with thee.



5. We pray thee, ho-ly Tri-ni-ty, One God, un-chang-ing U-ni-ty,



That we from this our ab-sti-nence May reap the fruits of pe-ni-tence. A- men.



*All sit.*

# PSALMODY

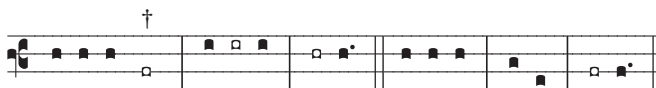
All sing the FIRST ANTIPHON

Mode II



Accept us, Lord, let our sacrifice be pleasing to you.

## PSALM 140 (141)



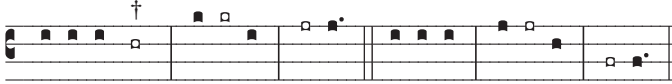
- Cantor* 1 I have called to you, Lord; | hasten to | help me! \*  
Hear my voice when I | cry to | you.
- All* 2 **Let my prayer arise be- | fore you like | incense, \***  
**the raising of my hands like an eve- | ning ob- | lation.**
- 3 Set, O Lord, a guard | over my | mouth; \*  
keep watch, O Lord, at the door | of my | lips!
- 4 **Do not turn my heart to things that are wrong, †**  
**to evil deeds with | men who are | sinners. \***  
**Never allow me to share | in their | feasting.**
- 5 If a good man strikes or reproves me it is kindness †  
but let the oil of the wicked not a- | noint my | head. \*  
Let my prayer be ever a- | gainst their | malice.
- 6 **Their princes were thrown down by the | side of the | rock; \***  
**then they understood that my | words were | kind.**
- 7 As a millstone is shattered to pieces | on the | ground, \*  
so their bones were strewn at the mouth | of the | grave.
- 8 **To you, Lord God, my | eyes are | turned: \***  
**in you I take refuge; | spare my | soul!**
- 9 From the trap they have laid for me | keep me | safe: \*  
keep me from the snares of those | who do | evil.
- 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.



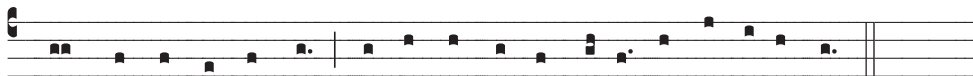
If you call to the Lord he will hear; if you cry he will say, 'Here I am'.

## PSALM 141 (142)



- Cantor* 1 With all my voice I cry to the Lord, †  
with all my voice I en- | treat the | Lord. \*  
I pour out my | trouble be- | fore him;
- All* 2 **I tell him all my dis-tress** †  
**while my spirit | faints with- | in me.** \*  
**But you, O Lord, | know my | path.**
- 3 On the way where | I shall | walk \*  
they have hidden a | snare to en- | trap me.
- 4 **Look on my | right and | see:** \*  
**there is no one who | takes my | part.**
- 5 I have no | means of es- | cape, \*  
not one who | cares for my | soul.
- 6 **I cry to you, O Lord.** †  
**I have said: | You are my | refuge** \*  
**all I have in the | land of the | living.**
- 7 Listen, then, | to my | cry \*  
for I am in the | depths of dis- | tress.
- 8 **Rescue me from | those who pur- | sue me** \*  
**for they are | stronger than | I.**
- 9 Bring my soul | out of this | prison \*  
and then I shall | praise your | name.
- 10 **Around me the | just will as- | semble** \*  
**because of your | goodness to | me.**
- 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.*

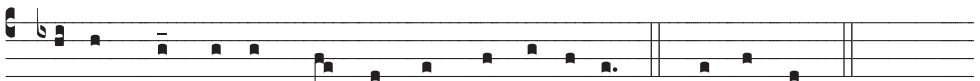


**W**E urge this appeal upon you: you have received the grace of God; do not let it go for nothing. God's own words are: In the hour of my favour I gave heed to you, on the day of deliverance I came to your aid. The hour of favour has now come; now, I say, has the day of deliverance dawned. In order that our service may not be brought into discredit, we avoid giving offence in anything. As God's servants, we try to recommend ourselves in all circumstances.

THE SHORT RESPONSORY



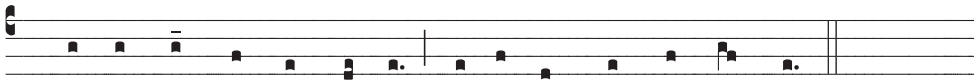
℞ Hear us, Lord, and have mer-cy, for we have sinned a-against you.



℣ Listen, Christ, to the prayers of those who cry to you. ℞ **For we have...**



℣ Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spi-rit.



℞ **Hear us, Lord, and have mer-cy, for we have sinned a-against you.**

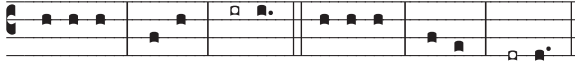
*All stand.*

MODE V



Man cannot live on bread alone but on every word from the mouth of God.

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 give glory to Christ the Lord. He is our master, our example and our brother.



✠ Ky-ri-e e-lé-i-son.    ✠ Ky-ri-e e-lé-i-son.

Lord Jesus, you became a man like us in every way, but did not sin; may we open our lives to others, share their laughter and tears, and grow day by day in love.    ✠

Let us serve you in the hungry and give you to eat; let us see you in the thirsty and give you to drink.    ✠

You raised up Lazarus from the dead; call sinners from their living death to faith and repentance.    ✠

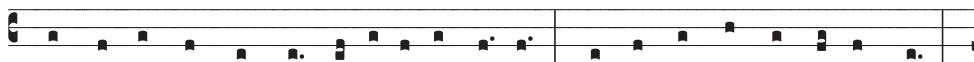
May we live up to the example of Mary and the saints; may we follow you more perfectly in everything.    ✠

Let the dead rise in your glory, let them rejoice for ever in your love.    ✠

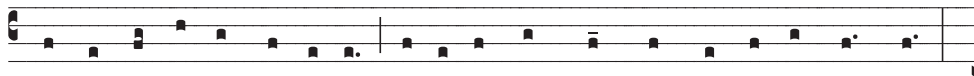
At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

*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

**T**HROUGH our annual Lenten observance, Lord,  
deepen our understanding of the mystery of Christ  
and make it a reality in the conduct of our lives.  
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** -ve, Re-gí-na cæ-ló-rum, \* **ave, Dómi-na ange-lórum, salve, ra-dix,**  
*Hail, Queen of Heaven, beyond compare, to whom the angels homage pay; Hail, Root of*

**salve, porta, ex qua mundo lux est orta. Gaude, Virgo glo-ri- ó-sa, su-per**  
*Jesse, Gate of Light, that opened for the world's new Day. Rejoice, O Virgin unsurpassed, in whom*

**omnes spe-ci- ó-sa; va-le, o valde de-có-ra, et pro no-bis Christum exó- ra.**  
*our ransom was begun, for all your loving children pray to Christ, our Saviour, and your Son.*

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