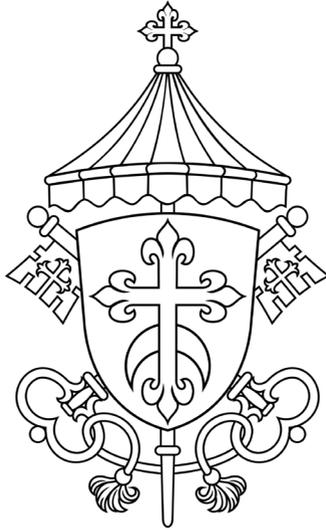


# ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



## First Vespers

The Office of Evening Prayer

Fourth Sunday  
of Lent

*Laetare Sunday*

14 March 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 Lauds and Vespers is a regular part of the life and worship of St Mary's Cathedral.

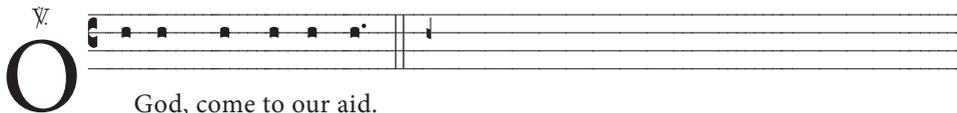
**TO MAINTAIN A SPIRIT OF REVERENCE AND SOLEMNITY,  
PLEASE TURN OFF AND REFRAIN FROM USING ALL MOBILE TELEPHONES  
AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

# ORDER OF VESPERS

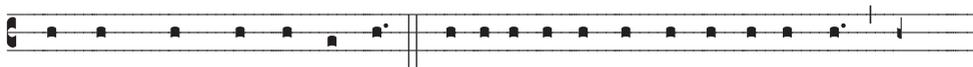
*At the sound of the Sacristy bell all stand.*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

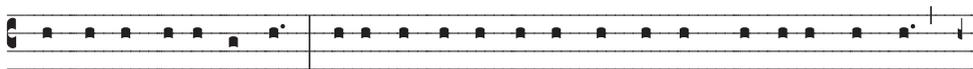
♯



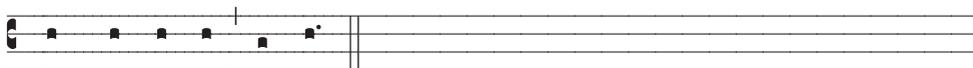
**O** God, come to our aid.



♯ **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,

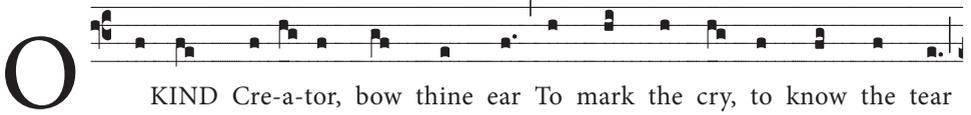


world without end. A-men.

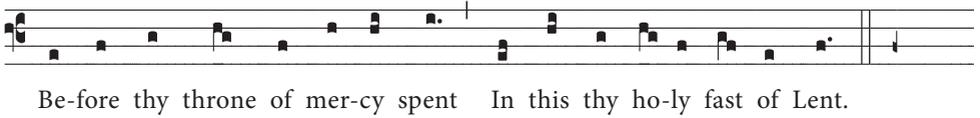
*All sing*

## THE OFFICE HYMN

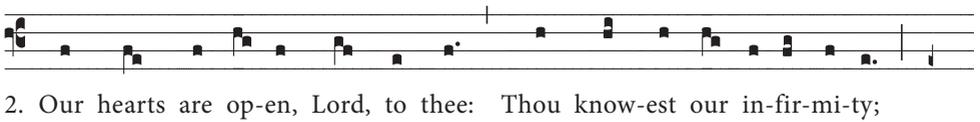
**O** KIND Cre-a-tor, bow thine ear To mark the cry, to know the tear



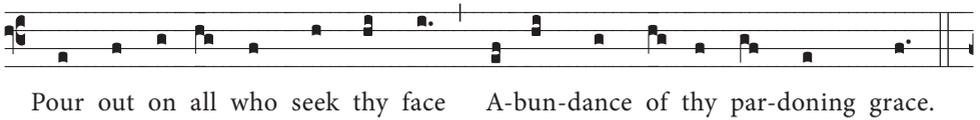
Be-fore thy throne of mer-cy spent In this thy ho-ly fast of Lent.



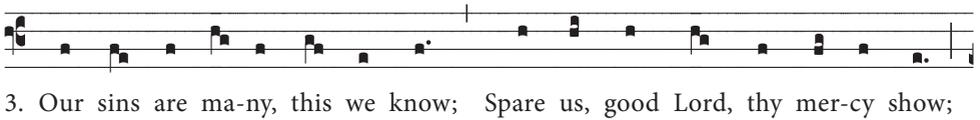
2. Our hearts are op-en, Lord, to thee: Thou know-est our in-fir-mi-ty;



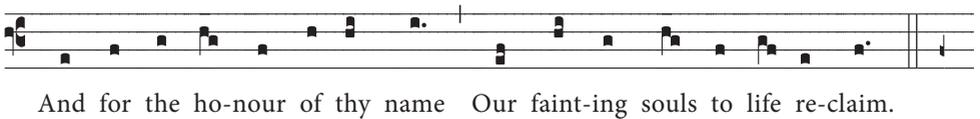
Pour out on all who seek thy face A-bun-dance of thy par-doning grace.



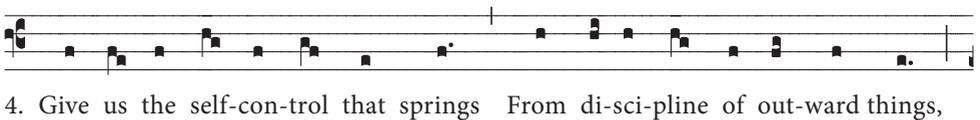
3. Our sins are ma-ny, this we know; Spare us, good Lord, thy mer-cy show;



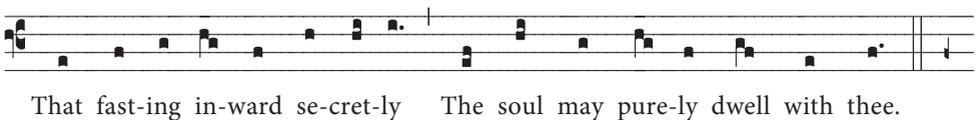
And for the ho-nour of thy name Our faint-ing souls to life re-claim.



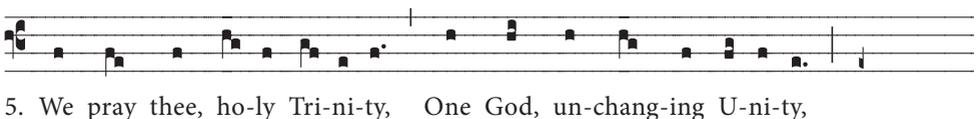
4. Give us the self-con-trol that springs From di-sci-pline of out-ward things,



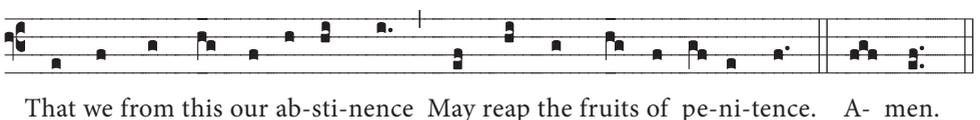
That fast-ing in-ward se-cret-ly The soul may pure-ly dwell with thee.



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

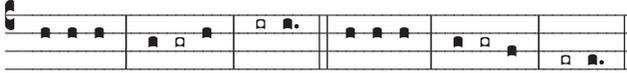
All sing the FIRST ANTIPHON

Mode II\*



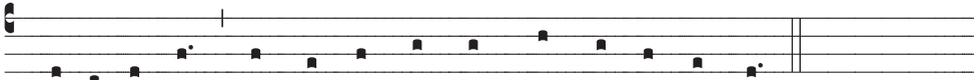
Let us enter God's house with re-joicing.

## PSALM 121 (122)



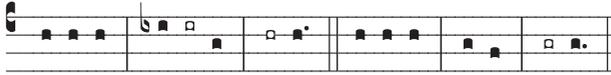
- Cantor* 1 I rejoiced when I | heard them | say: \*  
Let us go | to God's | house.
- All* 2 **And now our | feet are | standing \*  
within your gates, | O Je- | rusalem.**
- 3 Jerusalem is built | as a | city \*  
strong- | ly com- | pact.
- 4 **It is there that the | tribes go | up, \*  
the tribes | of the | Lord.**
- 5 For Israel's | law it | is, \*  
there to praise | the Lord's | name.
- 6 **There were set the | thrones of | judgment \*  
of the | house of | David.**
- 7 For the peace of Jeru- | salem | pray: \*  
Peace be | to your | homes!
- 8 **May peace reign | in your | walls, \*  
in your pa- | laces, | peace!**
- 9 For love of my breth- | ren and | friends \*  
I say: | Peace up- | on you.
- 10 **For love of the house | of the | Lord \*  
I will ask | for your | good.**
- 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.



Sleepers a-wake, rise from the dead; and Christ will give you light.

PSALM 129 (130)



- Cantor* 1 Out of the depths I cry to | you, O | Lord, \*  
Lord, | hear my | voice!
- All* 2 **O let your | ears be at- | tentive \*  
to the voice | of my | pleading.**
- 3 If you, O Lord, should | mark our | guilt, \*  
Lord, who | would sur- | vive?
- 4 **But with you is | found for- | giveness: \*  
for this | we re- | vere you.**
- 5 My soul is waiting | for the | Lord. \*  
I count | on his | word.
- 6 **My soul is longing | for the | Lord \*  
more than watch- | man for | daybreak.**
- 7 Let the watchman | count on | daybreak \*  
and Israel | on the | Lord.
- 8 **Because with the | Lord there is | mercy \*  
and fullness | of re- | demption,**
- 9 Israel indeed he | will re- | deem \*  
from all | its in- | iquity.
- 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.



**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.

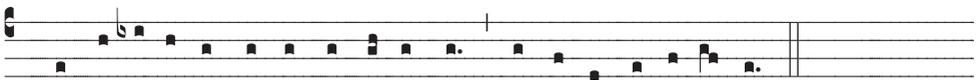
THE SHORT RESPONSORY



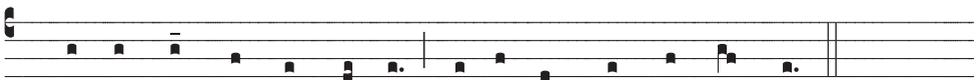
℞ Hear us, Lord, and have mer-cy, for we have sinned a-against you.



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



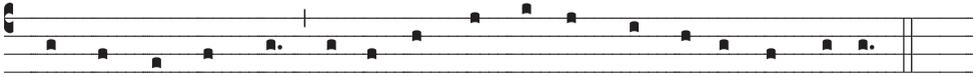
℣ Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spi-rit.



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

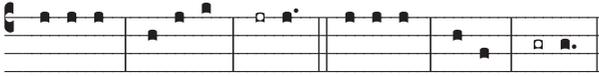
*All stand.*

MODE VIII



The man was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

MAGNIFICAT

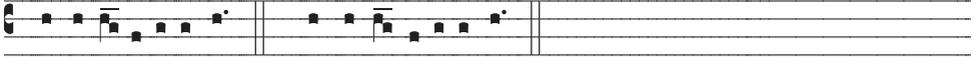


- Cantor* 1 My soul proclaims the great- | ness of the | Lord, \*  
my spirit rejoices in | God my | Saviour;
- All* 2 **for he has looked with favour on | his lowly | servant, \***  
**and from this day all generations will | call me | blessèd.**
- 3 The Almighty has done | great things for | me, \*  
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 migh- | ty 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 proclaim the greatness of God and pray to him, for he cares for all people.



☩ Ky-ri-e e-lé-i-son. ☩ **Ky-ri-e e-lé-i-son.**

God of all truth, grant every good gift to the college of bishops and preserve in the faith of the apostles the people you have entrusted to them. ☩

May all who share in the one bread of life be filled with your love; may they be united more closely in the body of your Son. ☩

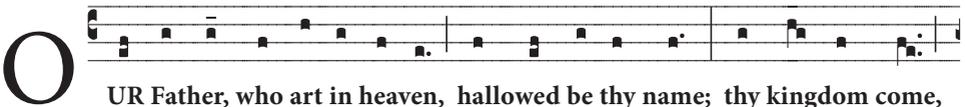
Help us to put aside our selfish ways; let us put on Christ, the new man. ☩

May sinners share in the blessings of Christ's atonement; may they find repentance and forgiveness. ☩

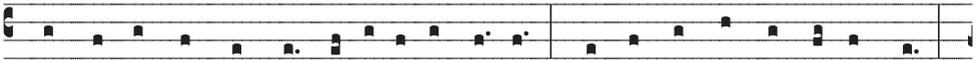
Let the dead praise your goodness in the peace of heaven; there we hope to glorify your name for ever. ☩

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

*All sing*



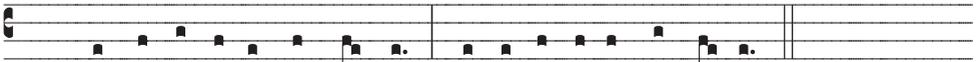
**O**UR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,



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

**L**ORD God, in your surpassing wisdom  
You reconcile man to yourself through your Word.  
Grant that your Christian people  
may come with eager faith and ready will  
to celebrate the Easter festival.  
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.**

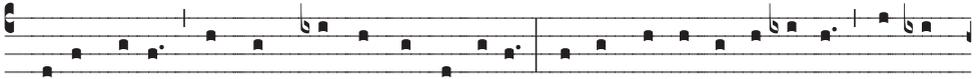
Let us bless the Lord.

℟: **Thanks be to God.**

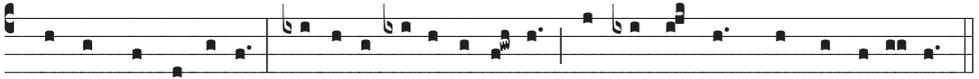
All sing

## 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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