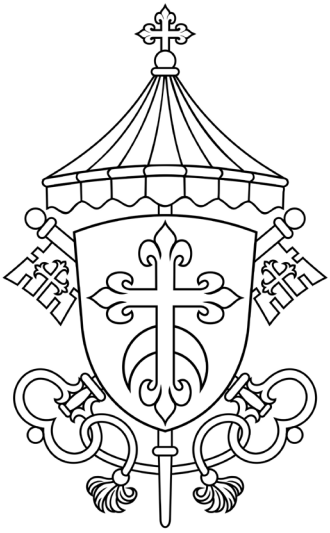
ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



Solemn Vespers and Benediction

The Office of Evening Prayer

FIRST SUNDAY
OF ADVENT

29 November 2026
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.

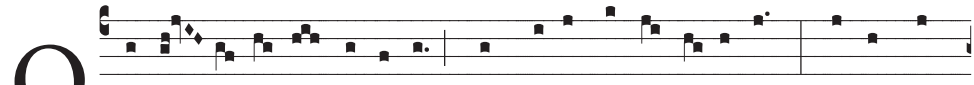
Bishops, priests, deacons, and many men and women in consecrated life pray the Liturgy of the Hours each day. Their work is organised around this prayer, keeping God always at the centre of their days. Lay people are encouraged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours as well, especially Morning and Evening 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.

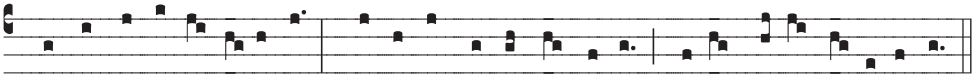
As the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the altar all kneel and sing:



O sa- lu- tá- ris Hósti- a, * **Quae cæ-li pandis ós-ti-um, Bel-la præ-**
O Victim bringing saving grace, who open wide the gate of heaven: our foes assail



munt hostí-li- a, Da ro-bur, fer au-xí- li-um. U-ni tri-nó-que Dó-mino
and press us hard; give us your strength, bring us your aid. To you be everlasting praise and glory,



Sit sempi-térna glóri- a, Qui vitam si-ne tér-mino Nobis donet in pátri- a.
One and Triune Lord, who grant us life that knows no end, for ever in our heavenly home.



A- men.

ORDER OF VESPERS

INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

℣. Deus, in adiutorium meum intende. *O God, come to our aid.*

℟. Domine, ad adiuvandum me festina. *O Lord, make haste to help us.*
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 *as it was in the beginning,*
et nunc et semper *is now, and ever shall be,*
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen. Alleluia. *world without end. Amen. Alleluia.*

OFFICE HYMN

Conditor alme siderum, *Creator of the stars of night,*
æterna lux credentium, *Thy people's everlasting light,*
Christe, redemptor omnium, *O Christ, thou saviour of us all,*
exaudi preces supplicum. *We pray thee, hear us when we call.*

Qui condolens interitu *To thee the travail deep was known*
mortis perire sæculum, *That made the whole creation groan*
salvasti mundum languidum, *Till thou, Redeemer, shouldest free*
donans reis remedium *Thine own in glorious liberty.*

Vergente mundi vespere, *When the old world drew on toward night,*
uti sponsus de thalamo, *Thou camest, not in splendour bright*
egressus honestissima *As monarch, but the humble child*
Virginis matris clausula. *Of Mary, blameless mother mild.*

Cuius forti potentiæ *At thy great name, O Jesu, now*
genu curvantur omnia; *All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;*
cælestia, terrestria *And things celestial thee shall own,*
nutu fatentur subdita. *And things terrestrial, Lord alone.*

Te, Sancte, fide quæsumus, *Come in thy holy might, we pray;*
venture iudex sæculi, *Redeem us for eternal day*
conserva nos in tempore *From every power of darkness, when*
hostis a telo perfidi. *Thou judgest all the sons of men.*

Sit, Christe, rex piissime, *To God the Father, God the Son,*
tibi Patrique gloria *And God the Spirit, Three in One,*
cum Spiritu Paraclito, *Laud, honour, might, and glory be*
in sempiterna sæcula. Amen. *From age to age eternally. Amen.*

All sit.

PSALMODY

FIRST ANTIPHON

IUCUNDARE, filia Sion, et exsulta satis, filia Ierusalem, alleluia.

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Sion, shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem, alleluia.

PSALM 109 (110)

Dixit Dominus Domino meo: «Sede a dextris meis,	*The Lord's revelation to my Master:* *'Sit on my right:*
donec ponam inimicos tuos: scabellum pedum tuorum».	*your foes I will put* *beneath your feet.'*
Virgam potentiæ tuæ emittet Dominus ex Sion: dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.	*The Lord will wield from Zion your sceptre of power:* *rule in the midst of all your foes.*
Tecum principatus in die virtutis tuæ, in splendoribus sanctis: ex utero ante luciferum genui te.	*A prince from the day of your birth* *on the holy mountains;* *from the womb before the dawn I begot you.*
Iuravit Dominus et non pænitebit eum: «Tu es sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech».	*The Lord has sworn an oath he will not change.* *'You are a priest for ever,* *a priest like Melchizedek of old.'*
Dominus a dextris tuis: conquassabit in die iræ suæ reges.	*The Master standing at your right hand* *will shatter kings in the day of his wrath.*
De torrente in via bibet: propterea exaltabit caput.	*He shall drink from the stream by the wayside* *and therefore he shall lift up his head.*
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.*

The Antiphon is repeated.

SECOND ANTIPHON

REX noster adveniet Christus, quem Ioannes prædicavit Agnum esse venturum.

Christ our King will come. He is the Lamb that John announced.

PSALM 113A (114)

In exitu Israel de Ægypto,	*When Israel came forth from Egypt,*
domus Iacob de populo barbaro,	*Jacob's sons from an alien people,*
factus est Iuda sanctuarium eius,	*Judah became the Lord's temple,*
Israel potestas eius.	*Israel became his kingdom.*
Mare vidit et fugit,	*The sea fled at the sight:*
Iordanis conversus est retrorsum;	*the Jordan turned back on its course,*
montes saltaverunt ut arietes,	*the mountains leapt like rams*
et colles sicut agni ovium.	*and the hills like yearling sheep.*
Quid est tibi, mare, quod fugisti?	*Why was it, sea, that you fled,*
Et tu, Iordanis,	*that you turned back, Jordan,*
quia conversus es retrorsum?	*on your course?*
Montes, quod saltastis sicut arietes,	*Mountains, that you leapt like rams;*
et colles, sicut agni ovium?	*hills, like yearling sheep?*
A facie Domini contremisce, terra,	*Tremble, O earth, before the Lord,*
a facie Dei Iacob,	*in the presence of the God of Jacob,*
qui convertit petram	*who turns the rock*
in stagna aquarum	*into a pool*
et silicem in fontes aquarum.	*and flint into a spring of water.*
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.

THIRD ANTIPHON

ECCE venio cito, et merces mea mecum est, dicit Dominus: dare unicuique secundum opera sua.

Behold I am coming soon to reward every man according to his deeds, says the Lord.

CANTICLE
Apocalypse 19:1-2. 5-7

Salus et gloria et virtus Deo nostro:	*Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,*
Alleluia.	*Alleluia.*
quia vera et iusta iudicia eius.	*his judgements are true and just.*
Alleluia, alleluia.	*Alleluia, alleluia.*
Laudem dicite Deo nostro, omnes servi eius:	*Praise our God, all you his servants,*
Alleluia.	*Alleluia.*
et qui timetis eum, pusilli et magni!	*you who fear him, small and great.*
Alleluia, alleluia.	*Alleluia, alleluia.*
Quoniam regnavit Dominus,	*The Lord our God,*
Deus noster omnipotens:	*the Almighty, reigns,*
Alleluia.	*Alleluia.*
Gaudeamus et exsultemus et demus gloriam ei.	*let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory.*
Alleluia, alleluia.	*Alleluia, alleluia.*
Quia venerunt nuptiæ Agni:	*The marriage of the Lamb has come,*
Alleluia.	*Alleluia.*
et uxor eius præparavit se.	*and his bride has made herself ready.*
Alleluia, alleluia.	*Alleluia, alleluia.*
Gloria Patri et Filio:	*Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
Alleluia.	*Alleluia.*
et Spiritui Sancto.	*and to the Holy Spirit,*
Alleluia, alleluia.	*Alleluia, alleluia.*
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper	*as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,*
Alleluia.	*Alleluia.*
et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	*world without end. Amen.*
Alleluia, alleluia.	*Alleluia, alleluia.*

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, misericordiam tuam.	*Show us, Lord, your steadfast love.*
℣. Et salutare tuum da nobis.	℟. *And grant us your salvation.*
℣. Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.	℟. *Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

All stand.

MAGNIFICAT ANTIPHON

NE timeas, Maria, invenisti gratiam apud Dominum: ecce concipies et paries Filium, alleluia.

Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Behold, you will conceive and bear a son, alleluia.

MAGNIFICAT

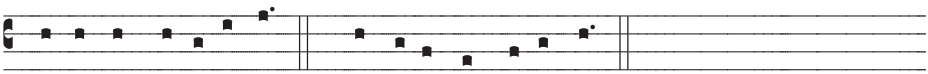
Octavi toni — *Diego Ortiz (c.1510–c.1570)*

Magnificat anima mea Dominum,	*My soul* *glorifies the Lord,*
et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo,	*my spirit rejoices* *in God, my Saviour.*
quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ. Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes,	*He looks on his servant in her lowliness;* *henceforth all ages* *will call me blessed.*
quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, et sanctum nomen eius,	*The Almighty works marvels for me.* *Holy his name!*
et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.	*His mercy is from age to age,* *on those who fear him.*
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit superbos mente cordis sui;	*He puts forth his arm in strength* *and scatters the proud-hearted.*
deposuit potentes de sede; et exaltavit humiles;	*He casts the mighty from their thrones* *and raises the lowly.*
esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes.	*He fills the starving with good things,* *sends the rich away empty.*
Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiæ suæ,	*He protects Israel, his servant,* *remembering his mercy,*
sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in sæcula.	*the mercy promised to our fathers,* *to Abraham and his sons 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.*

The Antiphon is repeated.

INTERCESSIONS

We pray to our Lord, who is the way, the truth, and the life.



℣. Dominum deprecemur. ℟. **Te, rogamus, audi nos.**
Let us pray to the Lord. *We ask you, hear our prayer.*

Gabriel announced your coming to the Virgin Mary: Son of the most High, come to claim your kingdom. ℟.

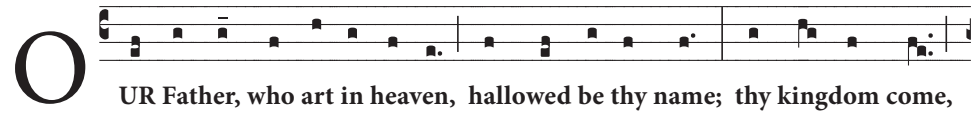
John the Baptist rejoiced to see your day: come, bring us your salvation. ℟.

Simeon acknowledged you, Light of the World: bring your light to all men of goodwill. ℟.

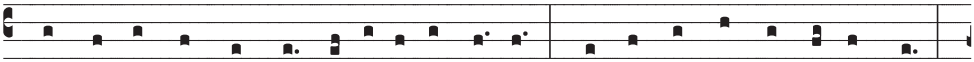
We look for you as watchmen look for the dawn: you are the sun that will wake the dead to new life. ℟.

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

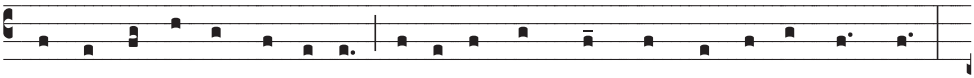
All sing



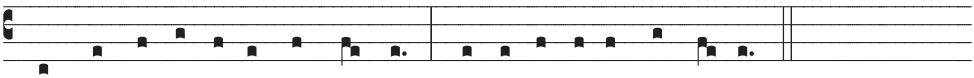
OUR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,



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-ta-tion, but de-liv-er us from e- vil.

COLLECT

GRANT, almighty Father,
that when Christ comes again
we may go out to meet him
bearing the harvest of good works
achieved by your grace.
We pray that he will receive us into the company of the saints
and call us into the kingdom of heaven.
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

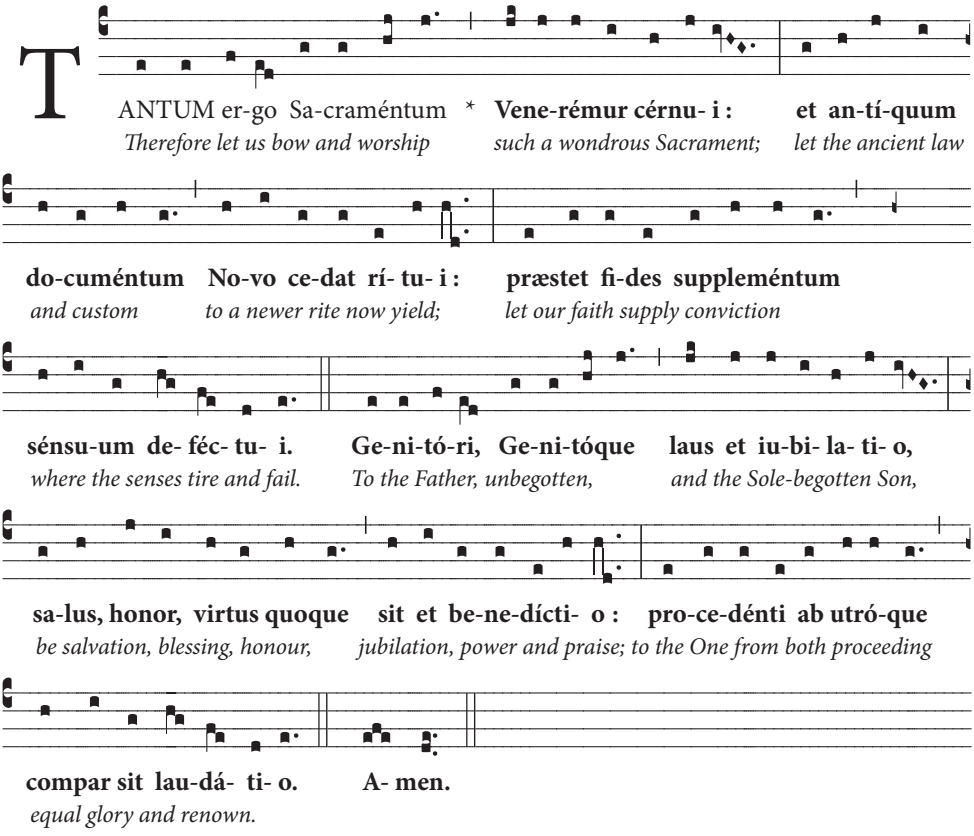
THE MOTET

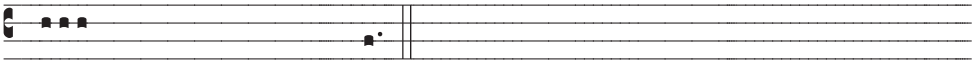
AD te levavi oculos meos qui habitas in cælis. Ecce sicut oculi servorum in manibus dominorum suorum sicut oculi ancillæ in manibus dominæ suæ; ita oculi nostri ad Dominum Deum nostrum donec misereatur nostri.

To you have I lifted up my eyes, you who dwell in the heavens; my eyes, like the eyes of slaves on the hand of their lords. Like the eyes of a servant on the hand of her mistress, so our eyes are on the Lord our God till he show us his mercy.

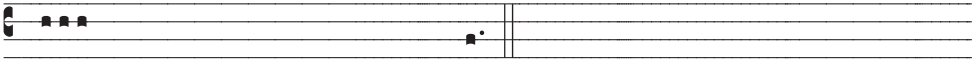
Robert White (c.1538–1574)

All sing


TANTUM er-go Sa-craméntum * Vene-rémur cérnu- i : et an-tí-quum
Therefore let us bow and worship such a wondrous Sacrament; let the ancient law
do-cuméntum No-vo ce-dat rí- tu- i : præstet fi-des suppleméntum
and custom to a newer rite now yield; let our faith supply conviction
sénsu-um de- féc- tu- i. Ge-ni-tó-ri, Ge-ni-tóque laus et iu-bi- la- ti- o,
where the senses tire and fail. To the Father, unbegotten, and the Sole-begotten Son,
sa-lus, honor, virtus quoque sit et be-ne-dícti- o : pro-ce-dénti ab utró-que
be salvation, blessing, honour, jubilation, power and praise; to the One from both proceeding
compar sit lau-dá- ti- o. A- men.
equal glory and renown.



℣ Panem de cælo præstitísti e- is.
You gave them bread from heaven.



℟ **Omne delectaméntum in se habén- tem.**
Containing in itself all sweetness.

Oremus.

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.

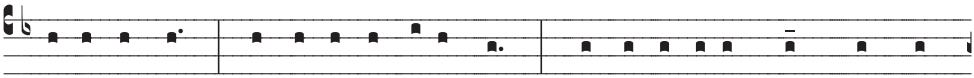
℟ **Amen.**

Let us pray.

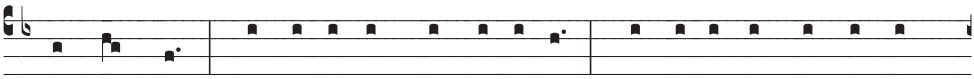
O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament have left us a memorial of your Passion, grant us, we pray, so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood that we may always experience in ourselves the fruits of your redemption, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

BENEDICTION *is given.*

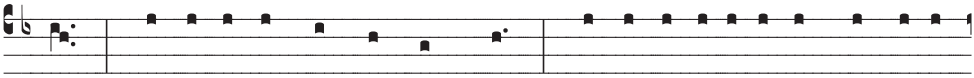
THE DIVINE PRAISES



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



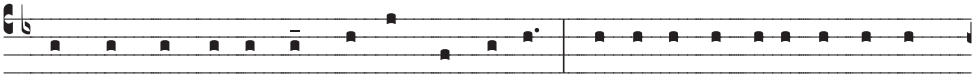
and true Man. Blessèd be the Name of Je-sus. Blessèd be his Most Sacred



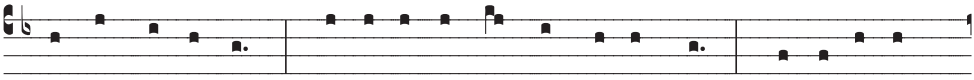
Heart. Blessèd be his Most Precious Blood. Blessèd be Jesus in the Most Holy



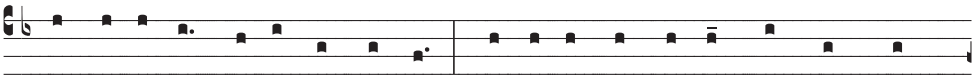
Sacrament of the Al-tar. Blessèd be the Holy Spi-rit, the Pa-raclete. Blessèd be



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

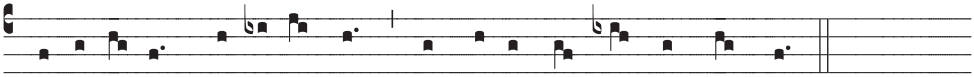


name of Ma-ry, Virgin and Mother. Blessèd be Saint Joseph, her most chaste



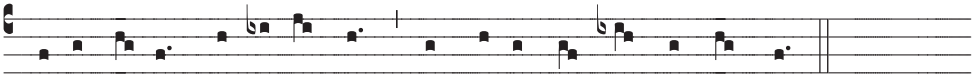
spouse. Blessèd be God in his Angels and in his Saints.

As the Blessed Sacrament is reposed, all sing



A-do-rémus * **in æ-tér-num Sanc-tís-si-mum Sa- cra-mén-tum.**
Let us adore for ever the most Holy Sacrament.

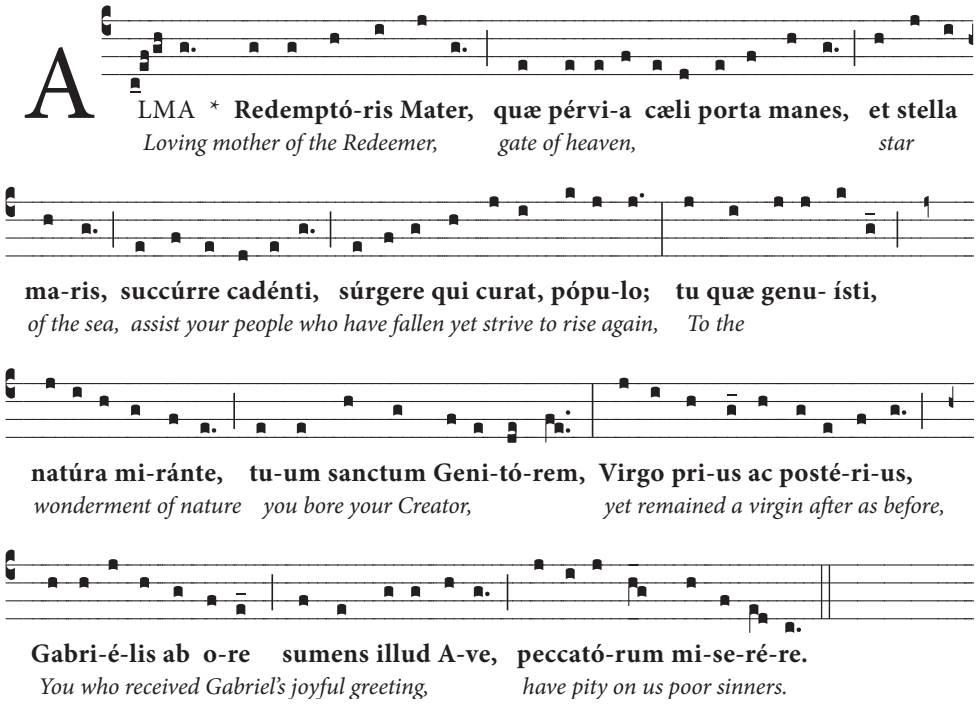
Laudate Dominum omnes gentes: laudate eum omnes populi.	*O praise the Lord, all you nations;* *acclaim him, all you peoples!*
Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia eius: et veritas Domini manet in æternum.	*For his merciful love has* *prevailed over us;* *and the Lord's faithfulness endures forever.*
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-rémus * 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



ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Liturgical Improvisation No 2 (on 'Conditor alme siderum') *George Oldroyd (1886–1951)*

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