



Concerning the Service

The name *Tenebrae* (the Latin word for “darkness” or “shadows”) has for centuries been applied to the ancient monastic night and early morning services (Matins and Lauds) of the last three days of the Holy Week, which in medieval times came to be celebrated on the preceding evenings.

Apart from the chant of the Lamentations (in which each verse is introduced by a letter of the Hebrew alphabet), the most conspicuous feature of the service is the gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights in the church until only a single candle, considered a symbol of our Lord, remains. Toward the end of the service this candle is hidden, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end, a loud noise is made, symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the resurrection (Matthew 28:2); the hidden candle is restored to its place, and by its light all depart in silence.

In **The Book of Occasional Services**, provision is made for Tenebrae on Wednesday evening only, in order that the proper liturgies of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday may find their place as the principal services of those days. By drawing upon material from each of the former three offices of Tenebrae, this service provides an extended meditation upon, and a prelude to, the events in our Lord’s life between the Last Supper and the Resurrection.

*(Adapted from **The Book of Occasional Services**, 1994)*

Church of the Ascension
Frankfort, Ky.

Tenebrae

Presider: The Rev. Peter Doddema, *Priest* Assisted by: Nicole Doddema

Please be seated. The office begins immediately with the antiphon for the first psalm.

Nocturne

Psalm 69:1-23

All say

ANTIPHON

Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

Save me, / O God, *
for the waters have risen up / to my neck.

**I am sinking in / deep mire, *
and there is no firm ground / for my feet.**

I have come into deep / waters, *
and the torrent washes / over me.

**I have grown weary with my crying; my throat is / inflamed; *
my eyes have failed from looking / for my God.**

Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head;
my lying foes who would destroy me are / mighty. *
Must I then give back what I / never stole?

**O God, you know my / foolishness, *
and my faults are not hidden / from you.**

Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me, Lord God / of hosts; *
let not those who seek you be disgraced because of me, O God of / Israel.

**Surely, for your sake I have suffered / reproach, *
and shame has / covered my face.**

I have become a stranger to my own / kindred, *
an alien to my mother's / children.

**Zeal for your house has eaten / me up; *
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen up/on me.**

I humbled myself with / fasting, *
but that was turned to / my reproach.

**I put on sack-cloth / also, *
and became a byword a/mong them.**

Those who sit at the gate murmur a/gainst me, *
and the drunkards make songs a/bout me.

**But as for me, this is my prayer / to you, *
at the time you have set, / O Lord:**

“In your great mercy, / O God, *
answer me with your un/failing help.

**Save me from the mire; do not let / me sink; *
let me be rescued from those who hate me and out of / the deep waters.**

Let not the torrent of waters wash over me, neither let the deep swallow / me up; *
do not let the Pit shut its mouth up/on me.

**Answer me, O Lord, for your love / is kind; *
in your great compassion, / turn to me.”**

“Hide not your face from / your servant; *
be swift and answer me, for I am / in distress.

**Draw near to me and re/deem me; *
because of my enemies de/liver me.**

You know my reproach, my shame, and my dis/honor; *
my adversaries are all / in your sight.”

**Reproach has broken my heart, and it cannot / be healed; *
I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters, but I could / find no one.**

They gave me gall / to eat, *
and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar / to drink.

ANTIPHON

THE FIRST CANDLE IS EXTINGUISHED.

Psalm 70

All say

ANTIPHON Let them draw back and be disgraced who take pleasure in my misfortune.

Be pleased, O God, to de/liver me; *
O Lord, make haste to / help me.

**Let those who seek my life be ashamed and altogether / dismayed; *
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and / be disgraced.**

Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat over me / turn back, *
because they / are ashamed.

**Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad / in you; *
let those who love your salvation say for ever, / “Great is the Lord!”**

But as for me, I am poor and / needy; *
come to me speedily, / O God.

You are my helper and my de/liverer; *

O Lord, do not / tarry.

ANTIPHON

THE SECOND CANDLE IS EXTINGUISHED.

Psalm 74

All say

ANTIPHON Arise, O God, maintain my cause.

O God, why have you utterly cast / us off? *
Why is your wrath so hot against the sheep of your / pasture?

**Remember your congregation that you purchased long / ago, *
the tribe you redeemed to be your inheritance, and Mount Zion / where you dwell.**

Turn your steps toward the endless / ruins; *
the enemy has laid waste everything in your / sanctuary.

**Your adversaries roared in your ho/ly place; *
they set up their banners as tokens of / victory.**

They were like men coming up with axes to a grove / of trees; *
they broke down all your carved work with hatchets and / hammers.

**They set fire to your / holy place; *
they defiled the dwelling-place of your Name and razed it / to the ground.**

They said to themselves, “Let us destroy them alto/gether.” *
They burned down all the meeting-places of God / in the land.

**There are no signs for us to see; there is no pro/phet left; *
there is not one among us who knows / how long.**

How long, O God, will the adversa/ry scoff? *
Will the enemy blaspheme your Name for / ever?

**Why do you draw back / your hand? *
Why is your right hand hidden in your / bosom?**

Yet God is my King from an/cient times, *
victorious in the midst / of the earth.

**You divided the sea by / your might *
and shattered the heads of the dragons up/on the waters;**

You crushed the heads of Levi/athan *
and gave him to the people of the desert / for food.

**You split open spring and / torrent; *
you dried up ever-flowing / rivers.**

Yours is the day, yours also / the night; *
you established the moon / and the sun.

**You fixed all the boundaries of / the earth; *
you made both summer and / winter.**

Remember, O Lord, how the ene/my scoffed, *
how a foolish people de/spised your Name.

**Do not hand over the life of your dove to / wild beasts; *
never forget the lives / of your poor.**

Look upon your / covenant; *
the dark places of the earth are / haunts of violence.

**Let not the oppressed turn away / ashamed; *
let the poor and needy / praise your Name.**

Arise, O God, maintain / your cause; *
remember how fools revile you / all day long.

**Forget not the clamor of your / adversaries, *
the unending tumult of those who rise up a/gainst you. **ANTIPHON****

THE THIRD CANDLE IS EXTINGUISHED.

Versicle

Officiant Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked.
People **From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.**

*Please stand for silent prayer.
The appointed Reader then remains standing
while the rest of the congregation is seated for the readings.*

Lesson 1 A Reading from the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet [1:1-14]

Aleph. How solitary lies the city, once so full of people! How like a widow has she become, she that was great among the nations! She that was queen among the cities has now become a vassal.

Beth. She weeps bitterly in the night, tears run down her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her; all become her enemies.

Gimel. Judah has gone into the misery of exile and of hard servitude; she dwells now among the nations, but finds no resting place; all her pursuers overtook her in the midst of her anguish.

Daleth. The roads to Zion mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts; all her gates are desolate, her priests groan and sigh; her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

He. Her adversaries have become her masters, her enemies prosper; because the Lord has punished her for the multitude of her rebellions; her children are gone, driven away as captives by the enemy.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

Responsory 1 *In monte Oliveti*

Officiant On the Mount of Olives Jesus prayed to the Father:

People **Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

Officiant Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.

People **The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

Lesson 2

Waw. And from Daughter Zion all her majesty has departed; her princes have become like stags that can find no pasture, and that run without strength before the hunter.

Zayin. Jerusalem remembers in the days of her affliction and bitterness all the precious things that were hers from the days of old; when her people fell into the hand of the foe, and there was none to help her; the adversary saw her, and mocked at her downfall.

Heth. Jerusalem has sinned greatly, therefore she has become a thing unclean; all who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; and now she sighs, and turns her face away.

Teth. Uncleanness clung to her skirts, she took no thought of her doom; therefore her fall is terrible, she has no comforter. "O Lord, behold my affliction, for the enemy has triumphed."

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

Responsory 2 *Tristis est anima mea*

Officiant My soul is very sorrowful, even to the point of death;

People **Remain here, and watch with me. Now you shall see the crowd who will surround me; you will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.**

Officiant Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

People **You will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.**

Lesson 3

- Yodb.* The adversary has stretched out his hand to seize all her precious things; she has seen the Gentiles invade her sanctuary, those whom you had forbidden to enter your congregation.
- Kaph.* All her people groan as they search for bread; they sell their own children for food to revive their strength. "Behold, O Lord, and consider, for I am now beneath contempt!"
- Lamedb.* Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted, on the day of his burning anger.
- Mem.* From on high he sent fire, into my bones it descended; he spread a net for my feet, and turned me back; he has left me desolate and faint all the day long.
- Nun.* My transgressions were bound into a yoke; by his hand they were fastened together, their yoke is upon my neck; he has caused my strength to fail. The Lord has delivered me into their hands, against whom I am not able to stand up.
- Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

Responsory 3

Ecce vidimus eum

Officiant

Lo, we have seen him without beauty or majesty,

People

with no looks to attract our eyes. He bore our sins and grieved for us, he was wounded for our transgressions, and by his scourging we are healed.

Officiant

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

People

And by his scourging we are healed.

Lauds

Psalm 63:1-8

All say

ANTIPHON

God did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.

O God, you are my God, eagerly / I seek you; *
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there / is no water.

**Therefore I have gazed upon you in your / holy place, *
that I might behold your power and your / glory.**

For your loving-kindness is better than / life itself; *
my lips shall / give you praise.

**So will I bless you as long / as I live *
and lift up my hands / in your Name.**

My soul is content, as with marrow and / fatness, *
and my mouth praises you with / joyful lips.

**When I remember you up/on my bed, *
and meditate on you in the / night watches.**

For you have been my / helper, *
and under the shadow of your wings / I will rejoice.

My soul / clings to you; *

your right hand / holds me fast. **ANTIPHON**

THE FOURTH CANDLE IS EXTINGUISHED.

The Song of Hezekiah [Isaiah 38:10-20]

All say

ANTIPHON From the gates of hell, O Lord, deliver my soul.

In my despair I said, "In the noonday of my life I / must depart; *
my unspent years are summoned to the / portals of death."

**And I said, "No more shall I see the Lord in the land of the / living, *
never more look on my kind among / dwellers on earth.**

My house is pulled down and I am un/coversed, *
as when a shepherd / strikes his tent.

**My life is rolled up like a / bolt of cloth, *
the threads cut off / from the loom.**

Between sunrise and sunset my life is brought / to an end; *
I cower and hope / for the dawn.

Like a lion he has crushed / all my bones; *
like a swallow or thrush I utter plaintive cries; I / mourn like a dove.

My weary eyes look / up to you; *
Lord, be my refuge in / my affliction.”

But what can I say? for he has / spoken; *
it is he / who has done this.

Slow and halting are my steps / all my days, *
because of the bitterness of / my spirit.

O Lord, I recounted all these things to you and you / rescued me; *
when entreated, you re/stored my life.

I know now that my bitterness was / for my good, *
for you held me back from the pit of destruction, you cast all my / sins behind you.

The grave does not thank you nor death / give you praise; *
nor do those at the brink of the grave hang / on your promises.

It is the living, / O Lord, *
the living who give you thanks as / I do this day;

You, Lord, are my / Savior; *
I will praise you with stringed instruments all the days of my life,
in the / house of the Lord. **ANTIPHON**

THE FIFTH CANDLE IS EXTINGUISHED.

Psalm 150

All say

ANTIPHON O Death, I will be your death; O Grave, I will be your destruction.

Praise God in his holy / temple; *
praise him in the firmament of his / power.

Praise him for his migh/ty acts; *
praise him for his excellent / greatness.

Praise him with the blast of the / ram’s-horn; *
praise him with / lyre and harp.

Praise him with timbrel / and dance; *
praise him with / strings and pipe.

Praise him with resounding / cymbals; *
praise him with loud-/clanging cymbals.

Let everything that / has breath *
praise the / Lord. **ANTIPHON**

Versicle

Officiant: My flesh also shall rest in hope:
People: **You will not let your holy One see corruption.**

*Please stand.
The congregation sings the following Canticle together.*

*DURING THE CANTICLE, THE SIXTH CANDLE AND ALL OTHER LIGHTS IN THE CHURCH ARE EXTINGUISHED
(EXCEPT THE ONE REMAINING AT THE TOP OF THE TRIANGULAR CANDLESTICK).*

Canticle 16: *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*

The Song of Zechariah [Luke 1:68-79]

All say

ANTIPHON Now the women sitting at the tomb made lamentation, weeping for the Lord.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of / Israel; *
he has come to his people and / set them free.

**He has raised up for us a mighty / savior, *
born of the house of his servant / David.**

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our / enemies, *
from the hands of all / who hate us.

**He promised to show mercy to our / fathers *
and to remember his holy / covenant.**

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham,
to set us free from the hands of our / enemies, *

**Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight all the days / of our life.**

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the / Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to pre/pare his way.

**To give his people knowledge of sal/vation *
by the forgiveness / of their sins.**

In the tender compassion of / our God *
the dawn from on high shall break u/pon us,

**To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow / of death, *
and to guide our feet into the / way of peace. **ANTIPHON****

*AFTER THE CANTICLE, DURING THE REPETITION OF THE ANTIPHON,
THE REMAINING CANDLE IS HIDDEN BEHIND THE ALTAR.*

Please kneel for the following prayer.

The Officiant and People say together:

Christ for us became obedient unto death, even death on a cross; therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the Name which is above every name.

Silence will be observed.

Continued on next page

The Officiant and People will say the following psalm together in a quiet tone:

Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
Wash me through and through from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.
And so you are justified when you speak
and upright in your judgment.
Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,
a sinner from my mother's womb.
For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
I shall teach your ways to the wicked,
and sinners shall return to you.
Deliver me from death, O God,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.
Open my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice,
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
Be favorable and gracious to Zion,
and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with the appointed sacrifices,
with burnt-offerings and oblations;
then shall they offer young bullocks upon your altar.

Closing Prayer

Officiant:

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross.

NOTHING FURTHER IS SAID.

*A NOISE IS MADE,
AND THE REMAINING CANDLE IS BROUGHT FROM ITS HIDING PLACE
AND REPLACED ON THE ALTAR.*

THIS SIGNALS THE CONCLUSION OF THE SERVICE.

*BY THE LIGHT OF THE REMAINING CANDLE,
ALL DEPART IN SILENCE.*