

An Order for Night Prayer (Compline) during Advent



Preparation

Our loving God grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.
Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord
who made heaven and earth.

A period of silence for reflection on the past day follows.

The following or other suitable words of penitence may be used

**Most merciful God,
we confess to you,
before the whole company of heaven and one another,
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed
and in what we have failed to do.
Forgive us our sins,
heal us by your Spirit
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.**

○ God, make speed to save us.
○ Lord, make haste to help us.

**Glory to God, Creator, Word, Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

The following is sung or said together

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray
That you, with steadfast love, would keep
Your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,
From fears and terrors of the night;
Tread underfoot our deadly foe
That we no sinful thought may know.

O Father, that we ask be done
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son;
And Holy Spirit, by whose breath
Our souls are raised to life from death. Amen.

The Word of God

Psalmody

either or both of the following Psalms may be said, we pause at the asterisk

Psalm 139

1 O Lord, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.

2 You mark out my journeys and my resting place*
and are acquainted with all my ways.

3 For there is not a word on my tongue, *
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

4 You encompass me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.

5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, *
so high that I cannot attain it.

6 Where can I go then from your spirit? •
Or where can I flee from your presence?

7 If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

8 If I take the wings of the morning *
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

9 Even there your hand shall lead me, *
your right hand hold me fast.

10 If I say, 'Surely the darkness will cover me *
and the light around me turn to night,'

11 Even darkness is no darkness with you;
the night is as clear as the day; *
darkness and light to you are both alike.

12 For you yourself created my inmost parts;*
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

13 I thank you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; *
marvellous are your works, my soul knows well.

14 My frame was not hidden from you, *
when I was made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth.

15 Your eyes beheld my form, as yet unfinished; *
already in your book were all my members written,

16 As day by day they were fashioned *
when as yet there was none of them.

17 How deep are your counsels to me, O God! *
How great is the sum of them!

18 If I count them, they are more in number than the sand, *
and at the end, I am still in your presence.

Psalm 134

1 Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the
Lord, *
you that by night stand in the house of our God.

2 Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary *
and bless the Lord.

3 The Lord who made heaven and earth *
give you blessing out of Zion.

At the end of the psalmody, the following is said

**Glory to God, Creator, Word, Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Scripture Reading

Short Reading: the following or some other

In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and trust shall be your strength.
Our God waits to be gracious to you; blessed are those who wait for God.

Isaiah 30.15,18

Responsory

Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit.

Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit.

For you have redeemed me, loving God of truth.

I commend my spirit.

Glory to God, Creator, Word, Spirit.

Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit.

Keep me as the apple of your eye.

Hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Gospel Canticle

*The **Nunc dimittis** (Song of Simeon) is sung or said together*

Antiphon: Come O Lord and visit us in peace;
that we may joy before you with a perfect heart.

1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace.*
your word has been fulfilled.

2 My own eyes have seen the salvation *
which you have prepared in the sight of every
people;

3 A light to reveal you to the nations *
and the glory of your people Israel.

Luke 2.29-32

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Antiphon: Come O Lord and visit us in peace;
that we may joy before you with a perfect heart.

Prayers

Intercessions and thanksgivings may be offered here.

The Collects

Silence is kept. One or more of these collects may be used

Lighten our darkness, we beseech you, O God, and in your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of your only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this life may rest in your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Look down, O Lord, from your heavenly throne, and illumine this night with your celestial brightness; that by night as by day your people may glorify your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snare of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

and/or this

O God, your unfailing providence sustains the world we live in and the life we live: Watch over those, both night and day, who work while others sleep, and grant that we may never forget that our common life depends upon each other's toil; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

This Collect for Advent is used at the end

Intimate God,
we yearn for the light of your coming
and the warmth of your embrace;
focus our hearts on the truly important
and keep us centered on that still point, Jesus our Emmanuel,
who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer,
an alternative reworking from New Zealand

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on
earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,
for the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,
so do we look for you, O Christ.

Watch Lord with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend your sick ones, O Lord Jesus Christ; give rest to your weary ones, bless your dying ones, soothe your suffering ones, pity your afflicted ones, shield your joyous ones. And all for your love's sake. Amen.

Blessing

May God bless us,
that in us may be found love and humility,
obedience and thanksgiving,
discipline, gentleness and peace.
Amen.