

An Order for Night Prayer (Compline)

The ancient office of Compline derives its name from a Latin word meaning 'completion' (completorium). It is above all a service of quietness and reflection before rest at the end of the day. It is most effective when the ending is indeed an ending, without additions, conversation or noise. If there is an address, or business to be done, it should come first. If the service is in church, those present depart in silence; if at home, they go quietly to bed.

Preparation

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

All Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord

All who made heaven and earth.

A period of silence for reflection on the past day may follow.

All 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.

O God, make speed to save us.

All O Lord, make haste to help us.

All 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.
Alleluia.

Hymn

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.

The Word of God

Psalmody

Psalm 4

¹ Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness; ♦
you set me at liberty when I was in trouble;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

² How long will you nobles dishonour my glory; ♦
how long will you love vain things and seek after falsehood?

³ But know that the Lord has shown me his marvellous kindness;
♦
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

⁴ Stand in awe, and sin not; ♦
commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

⁵ Offer the sacrifices of righteousness ♦
and put your trust in the Lord.

⁶ There are many that say, 'Who will show us any good?' ♦
Lord, lift up the light of your countenance upon us.

⁷ You have put gladness in my heart, ♦
more than when their corn and wine and oil increase.

⁸ In peace I will lie down and sleep, ♦
for it is you Lord, only, who make me dwell in safety.

At the end of the psalmody, the following is said or sung

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.

Scripture Reading

You, O Lord, are in the midst of us and we are called by your name;
leave us not, O Lord our God.

Jeremiah 14.9

Responsory

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

All Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.

All I commend my spirit.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

All Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Keep me as the apple of your eye.

All Hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Gospel Canticle

The Nunc dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said or sung: Luke 2.29–32

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.

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.

Prayers

Intercessions and thanksgivings may be offered here.

The Collect

Silence may be kept.

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;

All for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,

All for the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,

All so do we look for you, O Christ.

Other forms of Daily Prayer may be found on this web page:

<http://www.oremus.org/cofe.html>

(as well as the Church of England website, even prayer Apps)

Copyright acknowledgment (where not already indicated above):

Some material included in this service is copyright: © The Archbishops' Council 2000