

St. James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church
743 Prospect Street | La Jolla, CA 92037

Compline-by-Candlelight

The service of Compline, according to The Book of Common Prayer, is an act of worship with roots deep in the life of the Church. Its origins lie in the daily monastic offices of the Middle Ages, although in its meanings we are taken back to the very roots of the Christian faith.

Compline is a service that is said or sung at the end of the day, indeed the last prayers before bedtime. We begin with prayers for “a peaceful night and a perfect end” followed by psalms appointed for the evening, a plea for protection and peace. We then hear a reading from the Gospel, we sing an ancient Latin hymns and prayers both familiar, such as the Lord’s Prayer, and collects particular to Compline with special intentions for peace through the night. The service culminates in the Nunc Dimittis, the Song of Simeon, who rejoiced when he finally beheld the Messiah. At the end of the service we sing Regina Coeli, a devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, into whose care we entrust ourselves and the whole church.

The entire service is chanted by the choir. We play our part by active listening and prayerful reflection. The worship we offer together today is but a small part of the far greater offering—the ceaseless praise of the whole Church throughout the world, at all times and in all places, and of the worship of the glorious company of heaven itself.

Order of Service

The Officiant begins

O God, make speed to save us.

People O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Alleluia.

Psalm 4

- 1 Answer me when I call, O God, defender of my cause; *
you set me free when I am hard-pressed;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.
- 2 "You mortals, how long will you dishonor my glory; *
how long will you worship dumb idols
and run after false gods?"
- 3 Know that the LORD does wonders for the faithful; *
when I call upon the LORD, he will hear me.
- 4 Tremble, then, and do not sin; *
speak to your heart in silence upon your bed.
- 5 Offer the appointed sacrifices *
and put your trust in the LORD.

- 6 Many are saying,
"Oh, that we might see better times!" *
Lift up the light of your countenance upon us, O LORD.
- 7 You have put gladness in my heart, *
more than when grain and wine and oil increase.
- 8 I lie down in peace; at once I fall asleep; *
for only you, LORD, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 31

- 1 In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame: *
deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; *
make haste to deliver me.
- 3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold; *
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me.
- 4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, *
for you are my tower of strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, *
for you have redeemed me,
O LORD, O God of truth.

Psalm 134

- 1 Behold now, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, *
you that stand by night in the house of the LORD.
- 2 Lift up your hands in the holy place and bless the LORD; *
the LORD who made heaven and earth bless you out of Zion.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Lesson *Jeremiah 14:9, 22*

Lord, you are in the midst of us, and we are called by your
Name: Do not forsake us, O Lord our God.

People Thanks be to God.

Office Hymns

Christe, qui lux es et dies Sarum Antiphonale, Mode IV

O Christ, which art the Light and Day, who darksome night dost drive away:
Thee very Light of Light we own, who hast thy glorious light made known.

All holy Lord, to thee we bend, Thy servants through this night defend:
O grant us calm repose in thee, a quiet night from perils free.

Let not dull sleep the soul oppress, nor crafty foe the heart poses:
Nor Satan's wiles the flesh allure, to make us in thy sight impure.

Let but the eyes due slumber take, the heart to thee be aye awake:
And thy Right Hand protection be to them who love and trust in thee.

Look down, O Lord, our strong defense; repress our foes' proud insolence:
Preserve and govern us for good, the purchase of thy precious Blood.

Remember us, dear Lord, we pray, pent in this cumb'ring frame of clay:
Thou only canst the soul defend; be with us, Savior, in the end.

All praise to Good the Father be; all praise, eternal Son, to thee:
Whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Ghost for evermore. Amen.

Te lucis ante terminum Sarum Festal Mode, Mode VIII

To thee, before the close of day, Creator of the world we pray:
That with thy wonted favor, thou would'st be our guard and keeper now.

From all ill dreams defend our eyes, from nightly fears and fantasies:
Tread under foot our ghostly foe, that no pollution we may know.

O Father, that we ask be done, through Jesus Christ, thine only Son:
Who with the Holy Ghost and thee shall live and reign eternally. Amen.

The Responsory

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

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

Officiant For you have redeemed me, O Lord, O God of truth.

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

Officiant Keep us, O Lord, as the apple of your eye;

People Hide us under the shadow of your wings.

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Officiant Let us pray.

Officiant Lord have mercy upon us.
People Christ have mercy upon us.
 Lord have mercy upon us.
 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 daily bread.
 And forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
Officiant O Lord, arise and help us.
People And deliver us for thy Name's sake.
Officiant Turn us again, O Lord of hosts.
People Show the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.
Officiant Lord hear our prayer:
People And let our cry come unto thee.

The Collects

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Savior 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 thy eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, sooth the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous: all for thy love's sake. *Amen.*

The Song of Simeon *Nunc Dimittis*

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Lord, you now have set your servant free *
 to go in peace as you have promised;

For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, *
 whom you have prepared for all the world to see:

A Light to enlighten 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 will be for ever. Amen.

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with
Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Concluding Versicle and Blessing

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless us and keep us. *Amen.*

Marian Anthem *Regina Coeli*

Antonio Lotti (c. 1667-1740)

Sung in Latin.

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
For He whom you were worthy to bear, alleluia.
Now has risen, as He said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.

