

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT. AT FIRST VESPERS

Psalter: Week III

A glimpse into the kingdom of God

Vespers is the evening prayer of the Church. This is the hour of thanksgiving for the graces bestowed during the day of salvation that has just passed. In Sunday Vespers we review gratefully the history of God's kingdom in the Church and in individual souls. We see Christ our victorious King in his power (Philippians Ct.), and God's care over his chosen ones (Ps 112 & 115). There are two principal objects to our Vesper prayers: thanksgiving, and new courage to continue our pilgrimage during the coming week.

OPENING VERSE

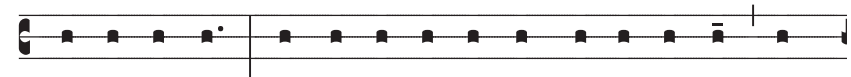
STAND

Celebrant:

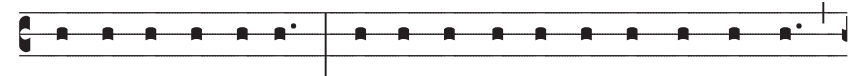
All:

O

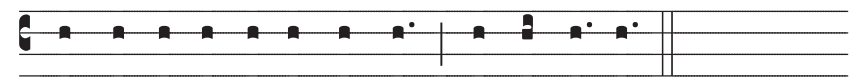
God, come to my as-sistance. *R.* O Lord, make



haste to help me. Glo-ry to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and



to the Ho-ly Spir-it: as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now,



and will be for ev-er. A-men. Al-le-lu-ia.

HYMN

7th century.

Conditor alme siderum. (L.M.)

1. *Creator of the stars of night,
Thy people's everlasting light,
Jesus, Redeemer, save us all,
And hear thy servants when they call.*

2. **Thou, grieving that the ancient curse
Should doom to death a universe,
Hast found the med'cine, full of grace,
To save and heal a ruined race.**

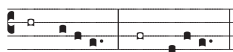
C 3. *Thou camest, the Bridegroom of the
Bride,
As drew the world to evening tide,
Proceeding from a virgin shrine,
The spotless Victim all divine.*

4. **At whose dread Name, majestic now,
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;
And things celestial thee shall own,
And things terrestrial, Lord alone.**

5. *O thou whose coming is with dread,
To judge and doom the quick and dead,
Preserve us, while we dwell below;
From ev'ry insult of the foe.*

A 6. **To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One,
Laud, honor, might, and glory be
From age to age, eternally.**

Amen.



Cantor : Rejoice, Jerusalem, / let your joy **overflow**; *
your Savior will come to you, / **alleluia**.

Psalm 112

Hymn of the humble

Humility, the foundation of God's kingdom, is the theme of this hymn; he who humbles himself will be exalted. I see the Church, an unfruitful mother in the eyes of the world, elevated as Mother of God's countless children. I see the Saints, as little ones in the dust, and yet placed as princes in the Kingdom; I see the "Man of Sorrows," humiliated unto the death of the Cross, but lifted up as King of that kingdom. Do I wish to go by any other way?

*He has cast down the mighty
and lifted up the lowly (Luke 1:52)*

Praise God always

Cantor : Praise, O servants of the **Lord**, *
praise the Name of the **Lord**!

All : May the Name of the **Lord** be **blest** *
both now and for **evermore**!

Praise his exalted Name

Cantor : From the rising of the sun to its **setting** *
praised be the Name of the **Lord**!

All : High above all nations is the **Lord**, *
above the heavens his **glory**.

Praise his gracious condescension

Cantor : Who is like the **Lord** our **God**, *
who has risen on high to his **throne**.

All : yet stoops from the heights to **look down**, *
to look down upon heaven and **earth**?

Cantor : From the dust he lifts up the **lowly**, *
from his misery he raises the **poor**.

All : to set him in the company of **princes**, *
yes, with the princes of his **people**.

Cantor : To the childless wife he gives a **home**, *
and gladdens her heart with **children**.

STATION AT SAINT PETER'S

"The Lord is now at hand: come, let us adore him."

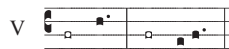
The First Coming: It is Mary who gives us Jesus: "Blessed are you, O Mary . . . those things shall be accomplished in you, which were spoken to you by the Lord."

It is from Bethlehem that the King, the Ruler, shall go forth who is to bring peace to all the nations, and who will deliver his people from the power of their enemies. In a special way our souls will share in this deliverance during the Christmas celebrations which mark the anniversary of the entrance into the world of Christ, the vanquisher of Satan. "Grant, we beseech you," the Church prays, "that the new birth of your only begotten Son may set us free, whom the old bondage holds under the yoke of sin." In the same way that St. John the Baptist prepared the Jews for the coming of the Messiah, so he prepares us for the union, closer every year, which our Lord forms with our souls at Christmas. "Make straight the way of the Lord," cried the forerunner of Christ. So let us make straight the way into our hearts, that our Savior may enter and give us his graces of life and freedom.

The Second Coming. It is our Lord's coming at the end of the world that St. Gregory alludes in his explanation of the Gospel: "John," he says, "the forerunner of the Redeemer, goes before our Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah who will be the forerunner of Christ as Judge." If we feel great joy at the approach of the Christmas feast, reminding us more of the lowly infant in the Manger, how much more should the thoughts of his Coming in all the splendor of his power and majesty fill us with a holy sense of triumph, since only then will our redemption be fully accomplished.

St. Paul writes to his Christians: "Rejoice in the Lord always: again, I say, rejoice . . . The Lord is near." As on Laetare Sunday in Mid-Lent, the priest may celebrate in rose-colored vestments. Rose is a paler kind of violet; it expresses some relaxation in penance, owing to the joy of the heavenly Jerusalem into which our Lord will lead us when time shall be no more. "Rejoice, O Jerusalem, with great rejoicing, for there shall come unto you a Savior." Let us greatly desire this coming which the Apostle tells us is near. We should long with a holy impatience that it may quickly come to pass. "Stir up, O Lord, your might, and come to save us." "Come, O Lord, and do not delay." "Through your Advent, deliver us, O Lord."

INTERCESSIONS



Celebrant : Jesus Christ is the joy and happiness of all who look forward to his coming. / Let us call upon him and **say** :

All : Come, Lord, / and do not **delay**.

Cantor : In joy we wait for your **coming**,

All : come, / **Lord Jesus**.

Cantor : Before time began, you shared life with the **Father**,

All : come now **and save** us.

Cantor : You created the world and all who **live** in it,

All : come to redeem the work of **your hands**.

Cantor : You did not hesitate to become man, subject to **death**,

All : come to free us from the power of **death**.

Cantor : You came to give us life to the **full**,

All : come and give us your unending **life**.

Cantor : You desire all people to live in love in your **kingdom**,

All : come and bring together /
those who long to see you face **to face**.

Celebrant : Our Father . . .

COLLECT

O God, who see how your people
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,
enable us, we pray,
to attain the joys of so great a salvation
and to celebrate them always
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
for ever and ever.

All : Amen.

Doxology

All : Glory to the Father, and to the **Son**, *
and to the **Holy Spirit** :

Cantor : as it was in the beginning, **is now**, *
and will be for ever. **Amen**.

Cantor : Rejoice, Jerusalem, / let your joy **overflow**; *
your Savior will come to you, / **alleluia**.



ANTIPHON 2

Cantor : I, the Lord, am coming to save you; / already **I am near**; *
soon I will free you from **your sins**.

Psalm 115

Thanksgiving and deliverance out of Egypt

Sunday's Holy Mass is thanksgiving for redemption.

*Through Christ let us offer to God
a continual sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13 : 5)*

Confidence in time of crisis: thanksgiving

Cantor : I trusted even **when I said** : *
"I am sorely **afflicted**,"

All : and when I said in **my alarm** : *
"No man can **be trusted**."

Cantor : How can I **repay the Lord** *
for his goodness **to me**?

All : The cup of salvation **I will raise**; *
I will call on **the Lord's** name.

Refrain

Cantor : My vows to the Lord **I will fulfill** *
before all **his people**.

Thanksgiving for salvation

All : O precious in the eyes of **the Lord** *
is the death of **his faithful**.

Cantor : Your servant, Lord, your servant **am I**; *
you have loosened **my bonds**.

All : A thanksgiving sacrifice **I make** : *
I will call on **the Lord's** Name.

Refrain

Cantor : My vows to the Lord I *will fulfill* *
before all *his people*,

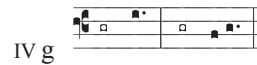
All : in the courts of the house *of the Lord*, *
in your midst, O *Jerusalem*.

Doxology

All : Glory to the Father, and *to the Son*, *
and to the Holy *Spirit* :

Cantor : as it was in the beginning, *is now*, *
and will be for ever. *Amen*.

Cantor : I, the Lord, am coming to save you ; / already *I am near* ; *
soon I will free you from *your sins*.



ANTIPHON 3

Cantor : Lord, send the Lamb, / the ruler of the *earth*, *
from the rock in the desert /
to the mountain of the daughter *of Sion*.

Canticle

Philippians 2:6-11

Christ, God's holy servant

Cantor : Though he was in the form of God, /
Jesus did not deem equality with *God* *
something to *be grasped* at.

All : Rather, he emptied himself /
and took the form of a *slave*, *
being born in the likeness *of men*.

Cantor : He was known to be of human *estate*, *
and it was thus that he humbled *himself*

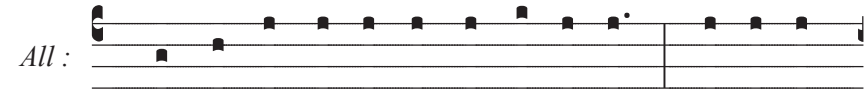
All : obediently accepting even *death*, *
death on a *cross* !

Cantor : Because of this, /
God highly *exalted* him *
and bestowed on him the name /
above every *other name*,

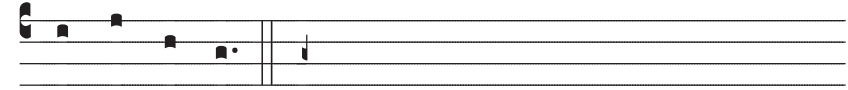
All : So that at Jesus' name /
every knee must *bend* *
in the heavens, on the earth, and under *the earth*,



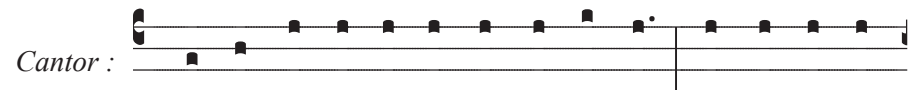
his children for ev- er.



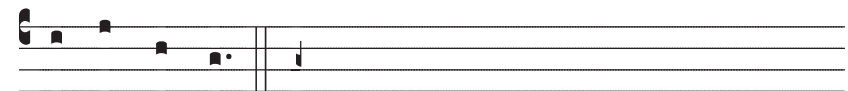
10. Glo- ry to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, * and to the



Ho- ly Spir- it :



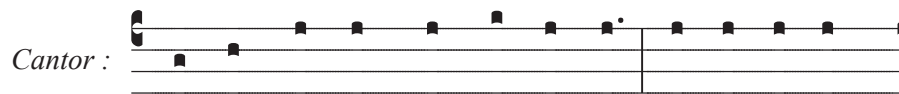
11. as it was in the be- gin-ning, is now * and will be for



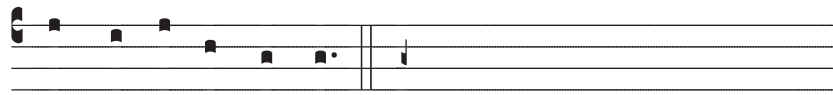
ev- er. A- men. *The antiphon is repeated by the Cantor.*

ANTIPHON

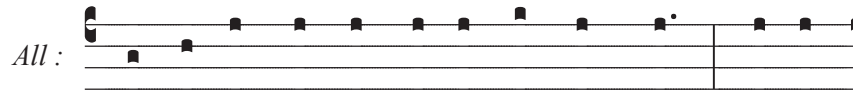
Cantor : There was no god before me /
and after me there *will be none* ; *
every knee shall bend in worship, /
and every *tongue shall praise* me.



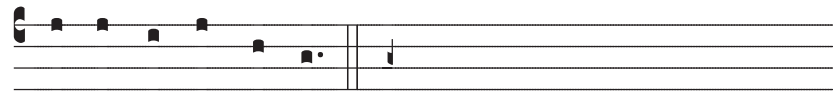
5. He has shown the strength of his arm, * he has scattered



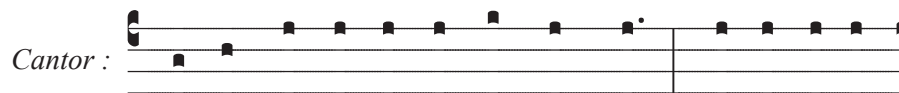
the proud in their con-ceit.



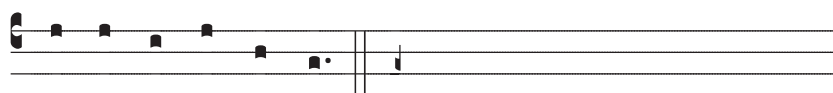
6. He has cast down the might-y from their thrones, * and has



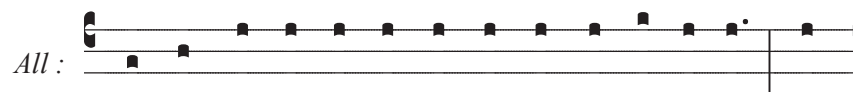
lift-ed up the low-ly.



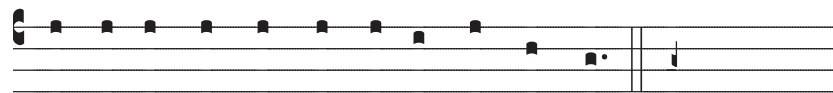
7. He has filled the hun-gry with good things, * and the rich he



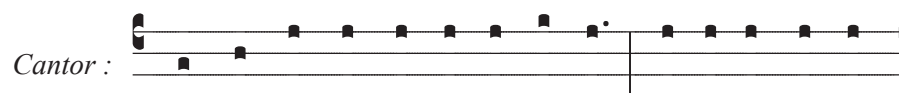
has sent a-way emp-ty.



8. He has come to the help of his ser-vant, Is- ra- el * for



he has re-mem-bered his promise of mer- cy,



9. the prom-ise he made to our fa-thers, * to A-bra-ham and

Cantor : and every tongue proclaim /
to the glory of God the **Father** : *
JESUS CHRIST IS LORD !

All : Glory to the Father, and to the **Son**, *
and to the Holy **Spirit** :

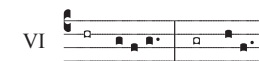
Cantor : as it was in the beginning, is **now**, *
and will be for ever. **Amen**.

Cantor : Lord, send the Lamb, / the ruler of the **earth**, *
from the rock in the desert /
to the mountain of the daughter of **Sion**.

READING

1 *Thessalonians* 5:23-24

May the God of peace make you perfect in holiness. May he preserve you whole and entire, spirit, soul, and body, irreproachable at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls us is trustworthy, therefore he will do it.



RESPONSORY

Cantor : Let us *see*, **O Lord**, *
your mercy *and love*.

All : Let us *see*, **O Lord**, *
your mercy *and love*.

Cantor : And grant us *your salvation*, *

All : your mercy *and love*.

Cantor : Glory to the Father, and to the **Son**, *
and to the Holy **Spirit**.

All : Let us *see*, **O Lord**, *
your mercy *and love*.

ANTIPHON AT MAGNIFICAT

Cantor : There was no god before me /
and after me there *will be none*; *
every knee shall bend in worship, /
and every *tongue shall praise* me.

CANTICLE OF MARY

STAND

The antiphon is sung by the Cantor. Tone VIII.

The Cantor begins the Canticle, and alternates verses with All.

The soul rejoices in the Lord

Luke I : 46-55

VIII G

M

Y soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, * and

my spir- it re-joic- es in God my Sav- ior.

All :

2. for he has looked with fav-or on his low-ly servant. * From

this day all gen- er- a- tions will call me bless-ed :

Cantor :

3. the Al-might-y has done great things for me, * and ho- ly

is his Name.

All :

4. He has mer- cy on those who fear him * in ev- 'ry gen-

er- a- tion.