PRAYER AFTER THE DIVINE OFFICE

Let every creature give unending praise, honor, power and glory throughout all eternity to the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity, the crucified humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the chaste Motherhood of Mary, the ever glorious and blessed Virgin, and to the entire assembly of saints, and may we be granted the forgiveness of our sins.

Blessed is the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary which bore the Son of the Eternal Father. And blessed are the breasts which nursed Christ our Lord.

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

Holy God, we praise thy Name ; Hark ! The loud celestial hymn
Lord of all, we bow before thee ; Angel choirs above are raising ;
All on earth thy scepter 'claim ; Cherubim and seraphim, 
All in heav’n above adore thee ; In unceasing chorus praising, 
Infinite thy vast domain ; Fill the heav’ns with sweet accord :
Everlasting is thy reign. Holy, holy, holy Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE THE DIVINE OFFICE

Open my lips, O Lord, to praise your holy Name. Cleanse my heart of any vain, evil, or distracting thoughts. Give light to my mind and fervor to my will; enable me to recite this Office worthily, attentively, and devoutly, so that my prayer will be heard in the presence of your divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, I offer you this Hour with the divine intention you had while on earth offering praises to God.

EXPOSITION AND ADORATION OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

O Salutaris Hostia

O salutáris hóstia,
Quæ cæli pandis óstium,
Bella premunt hostíliá ;
Da robur, fer auxílium.
Uni trinóque Dómino
Sit sempiterna glória :
Qui vitam sine término
Nobis donet in pátria.
Amen.

O Saving Victim opening wide
The gate of heav’n to man below :
Our foes press on from every side ;
Thine aid supply, thy strength bestow.

Uni trinóque Dómino
Sit sempiterna glória :
Qui vitam sine término
Nobis donet in pátria.
Amen.

All praise and thanks to thee ascend
For evermore, blest One in Three ;
O grant us life that shall not end
In our true native land with thee.

A time of silent adoration follows.
THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT. AT SECOND 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 (Ps 109), and God’s care over his chosen ones (Ps 110). There are two principal objects to our Vesper prayers: thanksgiving, and new courage to continue our pilgrimage.

OPENING VERSE

O God, come to my assistance. R: O Lord, make haste to help me. 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.

HYMN

6th cent. Saint Gregory the Great
Audi, benigne Conditor. (L.M.)

C 1. O merciful Creator, hear! To us in pity bow thine ear; Accept the tearful prayer we raise In this our fast of forty days.

A 2. Our hearts are open, Lord, to thee; Thou knowest our infirmity; Pour out on all who seek thy face Abundance of thy pard’ning grace.

C 3. Our sins are many, this we know; Spare us, good Lord, thy mercy show; And for the honor of thy Name Our fainting souls to life reclaim.

A 4. Give us the self-control that springs From discipline of outward things, That fasting inward, secretly The soul may purely dwell with thee.

C 5. We pray thee, Holy Trinity, One God, unchanging Unity, That we, from this our abstinence May reap the fruits of penitence. Amen.

Benediction of the most Blessed Sacrament

Tantum ergo Sacramentum Veneremur cernui; Et antiquum documentum Novo cedat ritui; Praestet fides supplemendum Sensusum defectui.

Genitori, Genitioque Laus et iubilatio, Salus, honor, virtus, quoque Sit et benedictio: Procedentia ab utroque Compar sit laudatio. Amen.

Panem de caelo præstísti eis (T. P. allelúia). Omne delectamentum in se habentem (T. P. allelúia).

Oremus.

DEUS, qui nobis sub sacramento mirabili, passiónis tuæ memóriam reliquisti: ut redemptionis nostræ fructum in nobis iúgiter sentiamus: Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Let us pray.

O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament have left us a memorial of your Passion,* grant us, we pray, so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood that we may always experience in ourselves the fruits of your redemption. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

The Divine Praises

V Compare sit laudatio. Amen.

Cantor: Blessed be God.* Blessed be his holy Name.

All: Blessed be Jesus Christ, / true God and true man.* Blessed be the Name of Jesus.

Cantor: Blessed be his most Sacred Heart.* Blessed be his most Precious Blood.

All: Blessed be Jesus in the most holy Sacrament of the Altar.* Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
INTERCESSIONS

Celebrant: All praise to God the Father / who brought his chosen people to rebirth from imperishable seed / through his eternal Word. / Let us ask him as his children:

All: Lord, / be gracious to your people.

Cantor: God of mercy, / hear the prayers we offer for all your people,

All: may they hunger for your word / more than for bodily food.

Cantor: Give us a sincere and active love / for our nation and for all mankind,

All: may we work always / to build a world of peace and goodness.

Cantor: Look with love on all to be reborn in baptism,

All: that they may be living stones / in your temple of the Spirit.

Cantor: You moved Nineveh to repentance by the preaching of Jonah,

All: in your mercy touch the hearts of sinners / by the preaching of your word.

Cantor: May the dying go in hope to meet Christ their judge,

All: may they rejoice for ever in the vision of your glory.

Celebrant: Our Father . . .

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness, / who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving have shown us a remedy for sin, look graciously on this confession of our lowliness, * that we, who are bowed down by our conscience, may always be lifted up by your mercy. 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.

Vespers concludes with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

ANTIPHON I

Celebrant: All praise to God the Father / who brought his chosen people to rebirth from imperishable seed / through his eternal Word. / Let us ask him as his children:

All: Lord, / be gracious to your people.

Cantor: God of mercy, / hear the prayers we offer for all your people,

All: may they hunger for your word / more than for bodily food.

Cantor: Give us a sincere and active love / for our nation and for all mankind,

All: may we work always / to build a world of peace and goodness.

Cantor: Look with love on all to be reborn in baptism,

All: that they may be living stones / in your temple of the Spirit.

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All: Amen.

Vespers concludes with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

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All: may we work always / to build a world of peace and goodness.

Cantor: Look with love on all to be reborn in baptism,

All: that they may be living stones / in your temple of the Spirit.

Cantor: You moved Nineveh to repentance by the preaching of Jonah,

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Cantor: May the dying go in hope to meet Christ their judge,

All: may they rejoice for ever in the vision of your glory.

Celebrant: Our Father . . .

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness, / who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving have shown us a remedy for sin, look graciously on this confession of our lowliness, * that we, who are bowed down by our conscience, may always be lifted up by your mercy. 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.

Vespers concludes with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.
ANTIPHON 2

Cantor: We have been redeemed by the precious Blood of Christ, *
the lamb without blemish.

Psalms 110

Thanksgiving and deliverance out of Egypt

This Psalm is a hymn of thanksgiving for God’s care over his chosen people, especially in delivering them out of Egypt (a type of our redemption). We pray it as the thanksgiving prayer of the Church (and of souls) journeying through the world, away from the bondage of the devil and into the promised land of heaven.

We are lost in wonder at all that you have done for us,
our Lord and mighty God (Apocalypse 15:3)

Statement of theme

Cantor: I will thank the Lord with all my heart *
in the meeting of the just and their assembly.

Divine Providence in the history of his people

All: Great are the works of the Lord ; *
to be pondered by all who love them.

Cantor: Majestic and glorious his work, *
his justice stands firm for ever.

All: He makes us remember his wonders. *
The Lord is compassion and love.

Cantor: He gives food to those who fear him ; *
keeps his covenant ever in mind.

All: He has shown his might to his people * 
by giving them the lands of the nations.

In the holy covenant

Cantor: His works are justice and truth ; *
his precepts are all of them sure.

All: standing firm for ever and ever : *
they are made in uprightness and truth.

Cantor: He has sent deliverance to his people /
and established his covenant for ever. *
Holy his Name, to be feared.

All: His children for ev- er.

HO- ev- er drinks the wa- ter that I shall give will
never be thirs- ty a- gain, says the Lord.

10. Glo- ry to the Father, 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.
Finale

All: To fear the Lord is the first stage of wisdom; / all who do so prove themselves wise. *
His praise shall last for ever.

Doxology

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

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

Cantor: We have been redeemed by the precious Blood of Christ, * the lamb without blemish.

IV E

ANTIPHON 3

Cantor: Ours were the sufferings he bore; * ours the torments he endured.

CANTICLE

1 Peter 2:21-24

Cantor: Christ suffered for you, and left you an example * to have you follow in his footsteps.

All: He did no wrong; * no deceit was found in his mouth.

Cantor: When he was insulted * he returned no insult.

All: When he was made to suffer, * he did not counter with threats.

Cantor: Instead he delivered himself up * to the one who judges justly.

All: In his own body * he brought our sins to the Cross,

Cantor: so that all of us, dead to sin, / could live in accord with God’s will. * By his wounds you were healed.

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

1 Corinthians 9:24-25

While all the runners in the stadium take part in the race, the award goes to one man. In that case, run so as to win! Athletes deny themselves all sorts of things. They do this to win a crown of leaves that withers, but we a crown that is imperishable.

**Responsory**

Cantor: Listen to us, O Lord, and have mercy, * for we have sinned against you.

All: Listen to us, O Lord, and have mercy, * for we have sinned against you.

Cantor: Christ Jesus, hear our humble petitions, *

All: for we have sinned against you.

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

All: Listen to us, O Lord, and have mercy, * for we have sinned against you.

**Canticle of Mary**

The antiphon is sung by the Cantor.

VIII G

HO-ev-er drinks the water that I shall give * will never be thirsty again, says the Lord.

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

The soul rejoices in the Lord Luke 1:46-55

VIII G

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

All: 2. for he has looked with favor 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.
III

 responds

so to us, O Lord, and have mercy, * for we have

et the world that I shall give will never be thirsty again, says the Lord.
God the Father sent Jesus to quench our thirst for eternal life.

This third Sunday of Lent is characterized by the Jesus’ famous conversation with the Samaritan woman, recounted by the Evangelist John. The woman went every day to draw water from an ancient well that dated back to the Patriarch Jacob and on that day she found Jesus sitting beside the well, “wearied from his journey” (Jn 4:6). St Augustine comments: “Not for nothing was Jesus tried…. The strength of Christ created you, the weakness of Christ recreated you…. With his strength he created us, with his weakness he came to seek us out.”

Jesus’ weariness, a sign of his true humanity, can be seen as a prelude to the Passion with which he brought to fulfilment the work of our redemption. In the encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well, the topic of Christ’s “thirst” stands out in particular. It culminated in his cry on the Cross “I thirst” (Jn 19:28). This thirst, like his weariness, had a physical basis. Yet Jesus, as St Augustine says further, “thirsted for the faith of that woman”, as he thirsted for the faith of us all.

God the Father sent him to quench our thirst for eternal life, giving us his love, but to give us this gift Jesus asks for our faith. The omnipotence of Love always respects human freedom; it knocks at the door of man’s heart and waits patiently for his answer.

In the encounter with the Samaritan woman the symbol of water stands out in the foreground, alluding clearly to the sacrament of Baptism, the source of new life for faith in God’s Grace. This Gospel, in fact — as I recalled in my Catechesis on Ash Wednesday — is part of the ancient journey of the catechumen’s preparation for Christian Initiation, which took place at the great Easter Vigil. “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him”, Jesus said, “will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (Jn 4:14).

This water represents the Holy Spirit, the “gift” par excellence that Jesus came to bring on the part of God the Father. Whoever is reborn by water and by the Holy Spirit, that is, in Baptism, enters into a real relationship with God, a filial relationship, and can worship him “in spirit and in truth” (Jn 4:23, 24), as Jesus went on to reveal to the Samaritan woman. Thanks to the meeting with Jesus Christ and to the gift of the Holy Spirit, the human being’s faith attains fulfilment, as a response to the fullness of God’s revelation.

Each one of us can identify himself with the Samaritan woman: Jesus is waiting for us, especially in this Season of Lent, to speak to our hearts, to my heart. Let us pause a moment in silence, in our room or in a church or in a separate place. Let us listen to his voice which tells us “If you knew the gift of God . . . .” May the Virgin Mary help us not to miss this appointment, on which our true happiness depends.

— Pope Benedict XVI

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT. AT SECOND VESPERS

Psalter: Week III

Antiphons In Cantu

for cantor, schola or choir

1 Ant. VIII G

ORD, all-pow-er-ful King, * free us for the sake of your

name. Give us time to turn from our sins. Psalm 109

2 Ant. VI F

E have been redeemed * by the precious Blood of

Christ, the Lamb without blemish. Psalm 110

3 Ant. IV E

ORS were the suf-fer-ings he bore; * ours the torments

he endured. Canticle, 1 Peter 2:21-24

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