order for the sacred triduum according to the monastic rite of saint bernard abbey lectionary

issued by order of the right reverend abbot

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ERE begin the Lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah. The Lord determined to lay in ruins the wall of the daughter of Sion; he marked it off by the line; he restrained not his hand from destroying; he caused rampart and wall to lament, they languish together. Teth. Her gates have sunk into the ground; he has ruined and broken her bars; her king and princes are among the nations; the law is no more,
and her prophets obtain no vision from the Lord. Iod. The elders of the daughter of Sion sit on the ground in silence; they have cast dust on their heads and put on sackcloth; the virgins of Jerusalem have bowed their heads to the ground.

Caph. My eyes are spent with weeping; my soul is in tumult; my heart is poured out in grief because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, because infants and babes faint in the streets of the city. La-med. They cry to their mothers, ‘Where is bread and wine?’ as they faint like wounded men.

R E-al-ize that you were delivered from the futile way of life your fathers handed on to you, not by any diminishable sum of silver or gold, but by Christ’s blood beyond all price: the blood of a spotless, unblemished lamb chosen before the world’s foundation and revealed for your sake in these last days. It is through him that you are believers in God, the God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory. Your faith and hope, then, are centered in God.
in the streets of the city, as their life is poured out on their mother’s bosom. Mem. What can I say for you, to what compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What can I liken to you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? for vast as the sea is your ruin; who can restore you? Nun.

Your prophets have seen for you false and deceptive visions; they have not exposed your iniquity to excite you to penance, but have seen for you oracles false and misleading. Samech.

All who pass by the way clap their hands at you; they hiss and
wag their heads at the daughter of Je-ru-sa-lem; 'Is this the cit-y
which was called the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the
earth?' A-leph. I am the man who has seen af-flic-tion
under the rod of his wrath. A-leph. He has driv-en and
brought me in-to darkness without an-y light. A-leph. Surely
against me he turns his hand again and again the whole day
long. Beth. He has made my flesh and my skin waste
a-way, and brok-en my bones. Beth. He has besieged and
en-vel-oped me with bitterness and tri-bu-la-tion. Beth. He

HUS says the Lord: In their affliction, they shall look
for me: 'Come, let us return to the Lord, for it is he who has
rent, but he will heal us; he has struck us, but he will bind
our wounds. He will revive us af-ter two days; on the third
day he will raise us up, to live in his pres-ence.
life I once breathed into you. See there the marks of the blows I received in order to refashion your warped nature in my image. On my back see the marks of the sourging I endured to remove the burden of sin that weighs upon your back. See my hands, nailed firmly to a tree, for you who once wickedly stretched out your hand to a tree.

I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side for you who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side has healed the pain in yours. My sleep will rouse you from your sleep in hell. The sword that pierced me has sheathed the sword that was turned against you.

Rise, let us leave this place. The enemy led you out of the earthly paradise. I will not restore you to that paradise, but I will enthrone you in heaven. I forbade you the tree that was only a symbol of life, but see, I who am life itself am now one with you. I appointed cherubim to guard you as slaves are guarded, but now I make them worship you as God. The throne formed by cherubim awaits you, its bearers swift and eager. The bridal chamber is adorned, the banquet ready, the eternal dwelling places are prepared, the treasure houses of all good things lie open. The kingdom of heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity.

In ill nocturn

Reading

Hebrews 4: 1-13

At Matins

has made me dwell in darkness like the dead of long ago. Ghimel. He has walled me about so that I cannot escape; he has put heavy chains on me. Ghimel. Though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer. Ghimel. He has blocked my way with hewn stones, he has made my paths crooked. Je-ru-sa-lem, Je-ru-sa-lem, turn back again to the Lord your God.
Good Friday

In il nocturn

Reading

From the Catecheses by Saint John Chrystostom, bishop
(Cat. 3: 13-19 ; SC 50: 174-177)

The power of Christ’s blood

If we wish to understand the power of Christ’s blood, we should go back to the ancient account of its prefiguration in Egypt. Sacrifice a lamb without blemish, commanded Moses, and sprinkle its blood on your doors. If we were to ask what he meant, and how the blood of an irrational beast could possibly save men endowed with reason, his answer would be that the saving power lies not in the blood itself, but in the fact that it is a sign of the Lord’s blood. In those days, when the destroying angel saw the blood on the doors he did not dare to enter, so how much less will the devil approach now when he sees, not that figurative blood on the doors, but the true blood on the lips of the believers, the doors of the temple of Christ.

If you desire further proof of the power of this blood, remember where it came from, how it ran down from the cross, flowing from the Master’s side. The gospel records that when Christ was dead, but still hung on the cross, a soldier came and pierced his side with a lance and immediately there poured out water and blood. Now the water was a symbol of baptism and the blood, of the holy eucharist. The soldier pierced the Lord’s side, he breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and made it my own. So also with the lamb : the Jews sacrificed the victim and I have been saved by it.

There flowed from his side water and blood. Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought ; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolized baptism and the holy eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born : from baptism, the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit, and from the holy eucharist. Since the symbols of baptism and the eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he fashioned Eve from the side of Adam. Moses gives a hint of this when he tells the story of the first man and makes him exclaim : Bone from my bone and flesh from my flesh! As God then took a rib from Adam’s

At Tenebrae

In il nocturn

Reading

From an ancient homily on Holy Saturday
(PG 43: 439.462-463)

The Lord descends into hell

Something strange is happening—there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and hell trembles with fear.

He has gone to search for our first parents, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, he who is both God and the son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the cross, the weapon that had won him the victory. At the sight of him Adam, the first man he had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone : ‘ My Lord be with you all. ’ Christ answered him : ‘ And with your spirit.’ He took him by the hand and raised him up, saying : ‘ Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.’

I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. Out of love for you and for your descendants I now by my own authority command all who are held in bondage to come forth, all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise. I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in me and I am in you ; together we form only one person and we cannot be separated.

For your sake I, your God, became your son ; I, the Lord, took the form of a slave ; I, whose home is above the heavens, descended to the earth and beneath the earth. For your sake, for the sake of man, I became like a man without help, free among the dead. For the sake of you, who left a garden, I was betrayed to the Jews in a garden, and I was crucified in a garden.

See on my face the spittle I received in order to restore to you the
side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and the water after his own death.

Do you understand, then, how Christ has united his bride to himself and what food he gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are both brought into being and nourished. As a woman nourishes her child with her own blood and milk, so does Christ unceasingly nourish with his own blood those to whom he himself has given life.

At Matins

In iII nocturn

Reading

Hebrews 9:11-28

At the peril of our lives we bring in our sustenance, in the face of the desert heat; our skin is shriveled up, as though by a furnace, with the searing blasts of famine. The wives of Sion were ravished by the enemy, the maidens in the cities of Judah. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn back again to the Lord your God.
Good Friday

AT LAUDS

Little Chapter | Isaiah 52:13-15

SE, my servant shall prosper, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted. Even as many were amazed at him—so marred was his look beyond that of man, and his appearance beyond that of mortals—So shall he startle many nations, because of him kings shall stand speechless; For those who have not been told shall see, those who have not heard shall ponder it.

At Tenebrae

ERE begins the prayer of the prophet Jeremiah.

Remember, O Lord, what has befallen us, look, and see our disgrace: our inherited lands have been turned over to strangers, our homes to foreigners. We have become orphans, fatherless; widowed are our mothers. The water we drink we must buy, for our own wood we must pay. On our necks is the yoke of those who drive us; we are worn out, but allowed no rest. To Egypt we submitted, and to Assyria, to fill our need of bread. Our fathers, who sinned, are no more; but we bear their guilt. Slaves
AT sext

Little Chapter

Isaiah 53:4-5

ET it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, while we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offences, crushed for our sins, upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed.
ERE conclude the lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah. Heth. The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent. Heth. They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness. Heth. My portion is the Lord, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him. Teth. Good is the Lord to the one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him.

Teth. It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord. Teth. It is good for a man to bear the yoke from his youth. Jod. Let him sit alone and in silence, when it is laid upon him. Jod. Let him put his mouth to the dust; there may yet be hope. Jod. Let him offer his cheek to be struck, let him be filled with disgrace. A-leph. How tarnished is the gold, how changed the noble metal; how the sacred stones lie strewn at every street corner! Beth. Si-on’s precious sons, fine gold their counterpart, now worth no more than earthen jars made by the hand of a potter! Ghi-mel. Even the
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