

A Monastic Mass for the Lenten Season: In the Tradition of the Stations of the Cross

A Centering Prayer:

I am consumed with the desire for loving you
and of making you loved by all humanity . . .

-Teresa of Lisieux-

Musical Offering (Cantor)

Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?

(words: African-American spiritual; tune: *Were You There*)

*Our monastic mass will continue with the ancient divine prayer office of **Vespers** which is a time when the heavens fade from light to darkness and when we transition from day to night. We will use the ancient monastic practice of the antiphon for our Vesper prayers in order to accentuate the fundamental reflection of our prayers as we repeat it for emphasis.*

Celebrant: Let Us Stand and Pray

Psalm 139

Cantor: Surely the darkness shall / co- \ ver me,
and the light around me \ be- \ come / night (v.11)

All: Surely the darkness shall / co- \ ver me,
and the light around me \ be- \ come / night (v.11)

Cantor:
Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night,
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you. (v.11-12)

All: Surely the darkness shall / co- \ ver me,
and the light around me \ be- \ come / night (v.11)

Cantor:
For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.
My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth
your eyes saw my unformed body. (v.13-15)

All: Surely the darkness shall / co- \ ver me,
and the light around me \ be- \ come / night (v.11)

Cantor:

All the days ordained for me
were written in your book
before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand (v.16-18).

All: Surely the darkness shall / co- \ ver me,
and the light around me \ be- \ come / night (v.11)

Everyone sits and a period of reflective silence follows

(John 1)

Cantor: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

All (read): In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Cantor: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

All (read): ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Cantor: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

All (read): ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Cantor: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

A period of reflective silence follows

Narrator:

Tomorrow begins Holy Week which is the last week of Lent and the week before Easter. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday and culminates with the crucifixion on Good Friday and the resurrection on Easter Sunday. The biblical account of Palm Sunday reveals that when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds greeted him with waving palm branches and by covering his path with palms. Immediately following this time of celebration, Jesus began his journey to the cross. You are invited to read one of the passages of the biblical account of Palm Sunday.

The Triumphal Entry (*taken from the Gospels*)

Reader 1:

When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, saying, "Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'" So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?" And they said, "The Lord has need of him." Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. And as He went, many spread their clothes

on the road and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

Reader 2:

Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen and took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him saying:

Hosanna!
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!
Blessed is the kingdom of our father David
That comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.

A period of reflective silence follows

Psalm 118

Cantor: You are my God, and I will praise You;
You are my God, I will exalt You (v.28).

Celebrant (reads):

¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness;
I will go through them,
And I will praise the LORD.
²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD,
Through which the righteous shall enter.
²¹ I will praise You,
For You have answered me,
And have become my salvation.

Cantor: You are my God, and I will praise You;
You are my God, I will exalt You (v.28).

Celebrant (reads):

- ²² The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
²³ This was the LORD's doing;
It is marvelous in our eyes.
²⁴ This is the day the LORD has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.
²⁵ Save now, I pray, O LORD;
O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.
²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!
We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Cantor: You are my God, and I will praise You;
You are my God, I will exalt You (v.28).

Celebrant (reads):

- ²⁷ God is the LORD,
And He has given us light;
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.
²⁸ You are my God, and I will praise You;
You are my God, I will exalt You.
²⁹ Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!
For His mercy endures forever.

Cantor: You are my God, and I will praise You;
You are my God, I will exalt You (v.28).

A period of reflective silence follows

Narrator:

After Palm Sunday there were just days before the crucifixion. Though Jesus was troubled, he taught many more things during this time. You are invited to read what Jesus said and taught.

Reader 3:

"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."

Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." Jesus answered and said, "This

voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them. (John 12. 27-36)

Reader 4:

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12. 28-34)

Reader 5:

And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses." (Mark 11. 25-26)

A period of reflective silence follows

Narrator:

The day before the crucifixion Jesus had his last meal with his disciples. Let one of us read the biblical account of the Last Supper.

Reader 6:

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'" "So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?"

Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "Yes, it is you."

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Cantor: sings once before everyone joins in the meditation

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Trust in me and you will not thirst.

Narrator:

The Stations of the Cross is a centuries old spiritual practice that focuses on the final hours of Christ's life prior to the resurrection. Let us spend some time reflecting on these stations, or passages of scripture, that take us through the final hours that culminated in the crucifixion and the burial of Christ. Let some of us read the following stations of scripture.

Reader 7:***Gethsemane***

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"(Matt 26.36-46)

Cantor:

"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

"My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

Reader 8:***Jesus Arrested***

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns."(Luke 22. 47-53)

Cantor:

Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns."

Reader 9:

Before the Sanhedrin

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled. But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.

Finally two came forward and declared, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.' "Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent.

The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" "He is worthy of death," they answered. Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, "Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit you?" (Matt 26. 57-68)

Cantor:

"But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Reader 10:

Peter Disowns Jesus

Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said. But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth." He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!"

After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away." Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!"

Immediately a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. (Matt 26. 69-75)

Cantor:

Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

Reader 11:

Jesus Before Pilate

Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?" But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

Now it was the governor's custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you

want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him.

While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him." But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

"Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor. "Barabbas," they answered. "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!" "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"

All the people answered, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!" Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. (Matt 27. 11-26)

Cantor:

Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

Reader 12:

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said.

They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. (Matt 27. 27-31)

Cantor:

After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

Reader 13:***The Crucifixion***

As they led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then they will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One." The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself."

There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23.26-43)

Cantor: sings once before everyone joins in the meditation

Jesus remember me
When you come into your kingdom
Jesus remember me
When you come into your kingdom

Reader 14:**Mary at the Cross**

Standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

Cantor: At the Cross, Her Vigil Keeping
(words: Latin, 13th cent.; tune: *Stabat Mater dolorosa*, 1661)

Reader 15:**The Death of Jesus**

From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah." Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!" (Matt 27. 45, 47-54; Luke 23.46)

Cantor:

When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!"

Reader 16:***The Burial of Jesus***

As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb. (Matt 27. 57-61)

Cantor:

Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock.

Reader 17:***The Guard at the Tomb***

The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard. (Matt 27. 62-65)

Cantor:

"Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

The Lighting of the Incense

Acolyte: lights incense

Psalm 141

Cantor: Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God, the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation. (Ps 141.2)

All: Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God, the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation.

Cantor: O LORD, I call to you; come quickly to me.
Hear my voice when I call to you. (v.1)
Like incense, may my prayer rise before you O God, the lifting of
my hands like an evening oblation. (v. 2)
But my eyes are fixed on you, O Sovereign LORD;
in you I take refuge. (v.8)

All: Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God, the lifting
of our hands like an evening oblation.

Narrator:

The writings of church mystics are filled with prayers that passionately express a love of Jesus Christ that is born out of his suffering and death upon the cross. Such intense expressions of this passion can be found in the following prayers. You are invited to read one of these passionate prayers on behalf of all of us.

Reader 18:

O God, you are the object of my love, not for the hope of endless joys above, nor for the fear of endless pains below, which those who love you not must undergo. For me and such as me, you once did bear the humiliating cross, the nails, the spear; a thorny crown transpierced your sacred brow; what bloody sweats from every member flow. Such as then was and is your love for me, such is and shall be still my love for thee; Your love, O Jesus, will I ever sing—O God of love, sweet savior, dearest king.

(Francis Xavier, 16th century)

All: Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God,
the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation. (Ps 141.2)

Reader 19:

O Jesus, who in your cruel passion became the reproach of men and the man of sorrows, I worship your divine face. Once it shone with the beauty and sweetness of the Divinity; now for my sake it has become the face of a leper. Yet in that disfigured countenance I recognize your infinite love and I am consumed with the desire for loving you and of making you loved by all humanity. The tears that streamed in such abundance from your eyes are to me as precious pearls which I delight to gather, that with their infinite worth I may ransom the souls of poor sinners. O Jesus, whose face is the sole beauty that ravishes my heart, I may not behold here upon earth the

sweetness of your glance, nor feel the ineffable tenderness of your kiss. I consent to this, but I pray you to imprint in me your divine likeness, and I implore you so to inflame me with your love that it may quickly consume me, and soon I may reach the vision of your glorious face in heaven.

(Therese of Lisieux, 19th Century)

All: Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God,
the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation. (Ps 141.2)

Reader 20:

My God, because you are so good, I love you with all my heart, and for your sake I love my neighbor as myself. If I love you, it is not just because of heaven which you promised; if I fear to offend you, it is not because hell threatens me. What draws me to you, O Lord, is yourself alone, it is the sight of you, nailed to the cross for me, your body bruised in the pains of death. Your love so holds my heart that, if there were no heaven, I would love you still. If there were no hell I would even still fear to offend you. I do not need your gifts to make me love you, for even if I should have no help of hope at all the things I do hope for, I would still love you with that very same love.

(Teresa of Avila, 16th Century)

All: Like incense, may our prayers rise before you O God,
the lifting of our hands like an evening oblation. (Ps 141.2)

Celebrant:

"O LORD, God of heaven, who keeps your covenant of love with those who love you and obey your commands, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you. O Lord, let your ear be listening carefully to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayers of your servants who delight in revering your name.¹

Cantor: sings once before everyone joins in the meditation

-Psalm 143.1ff-

O Lord Hear My Prayer
O Lord Hear My Prayer
When I Call Answer Me
O Lord Hear My Prayer
O Lord Hear My Prayer
Come and Listen to Me.

¹ Nehemiah 1. 5-6, 11.

The Lighting of the Candles

Celebrant: (after the candles are lit)

Almighty God, we give you thanks for surrounding us,
as daylight fades, with the brightness of the vesper light;
and we implore you of your great mercy that,
as you enfold us with the radiance of this light,
so you would shine into our hearts
the brightness of your Holy Spirit;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Cantor: sings the Phos Hilaron

The **Phos Hilaron** is the earliest known Christian hymn recorded outside of the scriptures that is still being used today and is generally sung during the lighting of lamps or candles.

O Radiant Light,
O Holy Glory of God
the immortal blessed Father in heaven,
O Christ Jesus!
Now as the sunset comes upon us
and we see the evening lights,
we praise God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit!
It is right at all times to sing your praise
with all the universe,
O Son of God:
You are the life of the world.

Celebrant:

Let us be reminded that Jesus came "as a light into the world" and "that whoever believes in (Him) should not abide in darkness (John 12.46) and that we are the light of the world and we should "let (our) light shine before others" so that they may see (our) good deeds and praise (our) Father in heaven (Matt 5. 14-16).

A brief period of reflective silence follows

The Nicene Creed

Celebrant: Let us stand and profess our faith together

Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, light from light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Eucharist Begins

Lectio Divina: A Dialogue with God²

² The practice of Lectio Divina includes dialoguing with God in prayer by hearing scripture as God speaking and responding in similar thoughts and words to what God said.

Celebrant: Upon the conclusion of the Last Supper, Jesus prayed to the Father for his future disciples before going to the Garden of Gethsemane to continue to pray. Listen to his prayer (John 17. 20-26) and let us respond as his disciples.

Celebrant (Prayer of Jesus):

I pray for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

All: Dear Jesus, we believe in you and your message so that the world may believe that you have been sent by the Father.

Celebrant (Prayer of Jesus con't):

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

All: Dear Jesus, we will let the world know that the Father sent you and loves them as the Father loves you.

Celebrant (Prayer of Jesus con't):

"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

All: Dear Jesus, continue to make your love known to us so that the love that the Father has for you may be in us.

An Examination of Consciousness:

Celebrant:

The Examination of Consciousness is an ancient spiritual practice that was promoted by St. Ignatius of Loyola in order to help us reflect on God's activity in our life. Let us examine ourselves by silently asking, reflecting on, and waiting for an answer to the following questions:

Acolyte: Dear God, how will you uniquely reveal yourself to me during this holiest of weeks?

A brief period of reflective silence follows

Acolyte: Dear God, how will you uniquely reveal yourself through me to another during this holiest of weeks?

A brief period of reflective silence follows

Acolyte: Dear God, how can I express my intimate feelings of love towards you during this holiest of weeks?

A brief period of reflective silence follows

Psalm 86

Celebrant: Teach [us] your way, O LORD, that [we] may walk in your truth; give [us] an undivided heart to revere your name.

All (read):

Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you;
save your servant who trusts in you.

You are my God;
be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all day long.

(vv. 1-3)

Celebrant: Teach [us] your way, O LORD, that [we] may walk in your truth; give [us] an undivided heart to revere your name.

All (read):

Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.

Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;
listen to my cry of supplication.

(vv. 4-6)

Celebrant: Teach [us] your way, O LORD, that [we] may walk in your truth;
give [us] an undivided heart to revere your name.

All (read):

In the day of my trouble I call on you,
for you will answer me.
There is none like you, O Lord,
nor are there any works like yours.
All the nations you have made shall come
and bow down before you, O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.
(vv. 7-9)

Celebrant: Teach [us] your way, O LORD, that [we] may walk in your truth;
give [us] an undivided heart to revere your name.

All (read):

For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God.
Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.
I give thanks to you, O Lord my God,
with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.
(vv. 10-12)

Celebrant: Teach [us] your way, O LORD, that [we] may walk in your truth;
give [us] an undivided heart to revere your name.

Acolyte: sings once then everyone joins in the following meditative petition
Kyrie eleison/Christe eleison (Lord have mercy/Christ mercy)

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison
Christe eleison, Christe eleison, Christe eleison, Christe eleison
Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison.

Celebrant: On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our
Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body,
which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Celebrant:

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A brief period of silence is kept.

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

All: Therefore let us keep the feast

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

NOTE: Everyone is invited to take communion.

Cantor: sings once before everyone joins in the meditation

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Trust in me and you will not thirst.

A Meditation to be Read in Silence

(taken for the Way of Perfection by Teresa of Avila)

*When I approached the altar
to receive you in the blessed sacrament
my hair stood on end. Then my legs went weak,
and I felt as if I were about to collapse
under the weight of your majesty.
In the tiny piece of bread you revealed to me
your grandeur and your purity.
I should have felt terrified of your presence,
But instead I felt comforted and reassured
by the knowledge that you, the King of kings
were about to give yourself in love to me.*

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Celebrant: Let us stand and pray

All: Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Celebrant: Let us retreat each day during Holy Week into an inner desert to end our Lenten experience and emerge as our savior did on Easter morning, so that we may further minister to God and others unlike ever before.

Let us pray the following Psalm which was composed in the desert of Judah:

Psalm 63

¹O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you,
in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

² I have seen you in the sanctuary
and beheld your power and your glory.

³ Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.

- ⁴ I will praise you as long as I live,
and in your name I will lift up my hands.
⁵ My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods;
with singing lips my mouth will praise you.
⁶ On my bed I remember you;
I think of you through the watches of the night.
⁷ Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.
⁸ My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

Benediction

Celebrant:

As you end your Lenten experience this week may your soul thirst for your God and your body long for your Lord each night while on your bed during this Holiest of weeks. And on Easter morning may your soul rise and be satisfied with the richest of foods and may your lips sing glory while in the shadow of the wings of your Risen Savior. **All:** Amen

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

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Everyone is Invited for Light Refreshments Next Door
Afterwards Everyone is Invited to a No-host Dinner at a Local Restaurant
For more information visit www.urban-monk.org