SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT

VESPERS

BENEDICTINE COMMUNITIES
TURVEY BEDFORDSHIRE

3rd September

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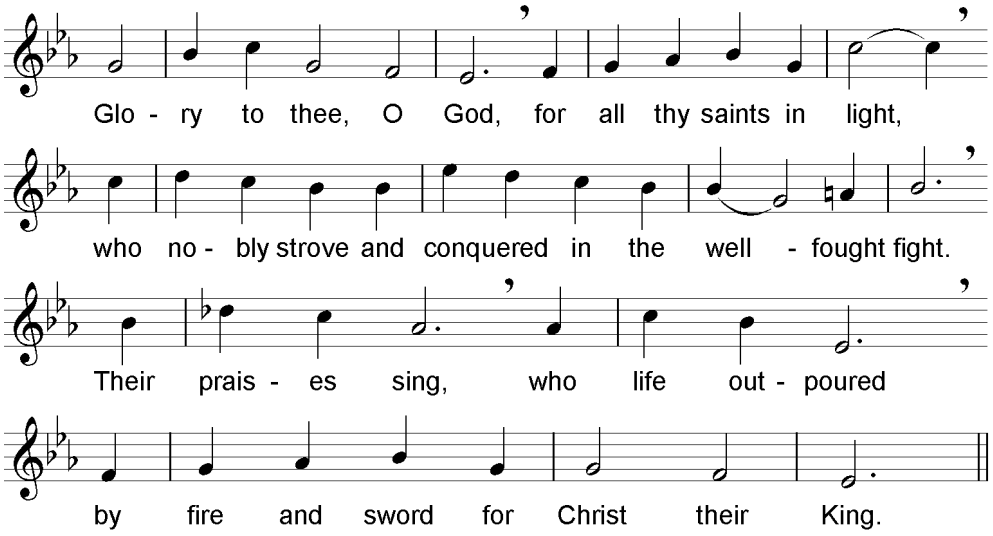
SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT **VESPERS**

O God, come to our aid,
O Lord, make haste to help us.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen. Alleluia!

HYMN

John Ireland 1879–1962



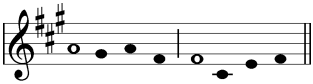
Thanks be to thee, O Lord,
for saints thy Spirit stirred
in humble paths to live thy life and speak thy word.
Unnumbered they,
whose candles shine
to lead our footsteps after thine.

Lord God of truth and love,
'thy kingdom come', we pray;
give us thy grace to know thy truth and walk thy way:
That here on earth
thy will be done,
till saints in earth and heaven are one.

H.C.A. Gaunt 1902–1983

ANTIPHON 1: Here is * a great priest, who in his life pleased God, and proved himself righteous.

Psalm 72



How good God is to Israel,
to those who are pure of heart.
Yet my feet came close to stumbling,
my steps had almost slipped
for I was filled with envy of the proud
when I saw how the wicked prosper.

For them there are no pains;
their bodies are sound and sleek.
They have no share in men's sorrows;
they are not stricken like others.

So they wear their pride like a necklace,
they clothe themselves with violence.
Their hearts overflow with malice,
their minds seethe with plots.

They scoff; they speak with malice;
from on high they plan oppression.
They have set their mouths in the heavens
and their tongues dictate to the earth.

So the people turn to follow them
and drink in all their words.
They say: 'How can God know?
Does the Most High take any notice?'
Look at them, such are the wicked,
but untroubled, they grow in wealth.

How useless to keep my heart pure
and wash my hands in innocence,
when I was stricken all day long,
suffered punishment day after day.

Then I said: 'If I should speak like that,
I should betray the race of your sons.'

I strove to fathom this problem,
too hard for my mind to understand,
until I pierced the mysteries of God
and understood what becomes of the wicked.

How slippery the paths on which you set them;
You make them slide to destruction.
How suddenly they come to their ruin,
wiped out, destroyed by terrors.
Like a dream one wakes from, O Lord,
when you wake you dismiss them as phantoms.

And so when my heart grew embittered
and when I was cut to the quick,
I was stupid and did not understand,
no better than a beast in your sight.

Yet I was always in your presence;
you were holding me by my right hand.
You will guide me by your counsel
and so you will lead me to glory.

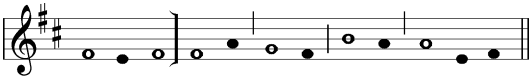
What else have I in heaven but you?
Apart from you I want nothing on earth.
My body and my heart faint for joy;
God is my possession for ever.

All those who abandon you shall perish;
you will destroy all those who are faithless.
To be near God is my happiness.
I have made the Lord God my refuge.
I will tell of all your works
at the gates of the city of Zion.

Glory be to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit**,**
both now and for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 1: Here is * a great priest, who in his life pleased God, and proved himself righteous.

ANTIPHON 2: None was found * to equal him in keeping the law of the Most High.



Psalm 138

O Lord, you search me and you know me,
you know my resting and my rising,
you discern my purpose from afar.
You mark when I walk or lie down,
all my ways lie open to you.

Before ever a word is on my tongue
you know it, O Lord, through and through.
Behind and before you besiege me,
your hand ever laid upon me.
Too wonderful for me, this knowledge,
too high, beyond my reach.

O where can I go from your spirit,
or where can I flee from your face?
If I climb the heavens, you are there.
If I lie in the grave, you are there.

If I take the wings of the dawn
and dwell at the sea's furthest end,
even there your hand would lead me,
your right hand would hold me fast.

If I say: 'Let the darkness hide me
and the light around me be night,'
even darkness is not dark for you
and the night is as clear as the day.

For it was you who created my being,
knit me together in my mother's womb.
I thank you for the wonder of my being,
for the wonders of all your creation.

Already you knew my soul,
my body held no secret from you
when I was being fashioned in secret
and moulded in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw all my actions,
they were all of them written in your book;
every one of my days was decreed
before one of them came into being.

To me, how mysterious your thoughts,
the sum of them not to be numbered!
If I count them, they are more than the sand;
to finish, I must be eternal, like you.

O God, that you would slay the wicked!
Men of blood, keep far away from me!
With deceit they rebel against you
and set your designs at naught.

Do I not hate those who hate you,
abhor those who rise against you?
I hate them with a perfect hate
and they are foes to me.

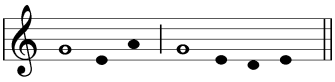
O search me, God, and know my heart.
O test me and know my thoughts.
See that I follow not the wrong path
and lead me in the path of life eternal.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 2: None was found * to equal him in keeping the law of the Most High.

ANTIPHON 3: The Lord * swore an oath to raise him high among his people.

NT Canticle 6 (Romans 8:14–17)



Everyone moved by the Spirit
is a son of God.

You received, not the spirit of slaves,
to bring back fear into your lives

but the spirit of sons
which makes us cry out, 'Abba, Father!'

The Spirit bears witness with our spirit
that we are truly children of God.

And if we are children, then we are heirs:
heirs of God, who share in Christ's inheritance.

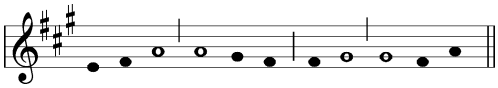
We share in his sufferings
that we may also come to share his glory.

Glory be to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit**,**
both now and for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 3: The Lord * swore an oath to raise him high among his people.

ANTIPHON 4: Come, * good and faithful servant, enter into your Master's joy!

Psalm 115



I trusted, even when I said:
'I am sorely afflicted,'
and when I said in my alarm:
'No man can be trusted.'

How can I repay the Lord
for his goodness to me?
The cup of salvation I will raise;
I will call on the Lord's name.

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people.
O precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds.
A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:
I will call on the Lord's name.

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people,
in the courts of the house of the Lord,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 4: Come, * good and faithful servant, enter into your Master's joy!

SCRIPTURE READING

RESPONSORY

This man became a teacher in the Church of God. *(repeat)*

The Lord filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding:

In the Church of God.

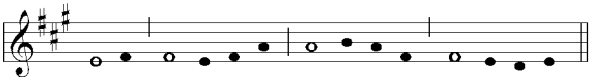
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

This man became a teacher in the Church of God.

MAGNIFICAT Canticle of Mary

(Luke 1:46–55)

ANTIPHON: Holy Doctor, * Saint Gregory, light of the Church, lover of God's law, pray for us to the Son of God.



My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.

He puts forth his arm in strength
and scatters the proud-hearted.
He casts the mighty from their thrones
and raises the lowly.

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.

He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy,
the mercy promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and his sons for ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON: Holy Doctor, * Saint Gregory, light of the Church, lover of God's law, pray for us to the Son of God.

INTERCESSIONS

OUR FATHER *(said by the Superior)*

CONCLUDING PRAYER

LET US BLESS THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

May the divine assistance remain always with us.
And with our absent brothers and sisters. Amen.