

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

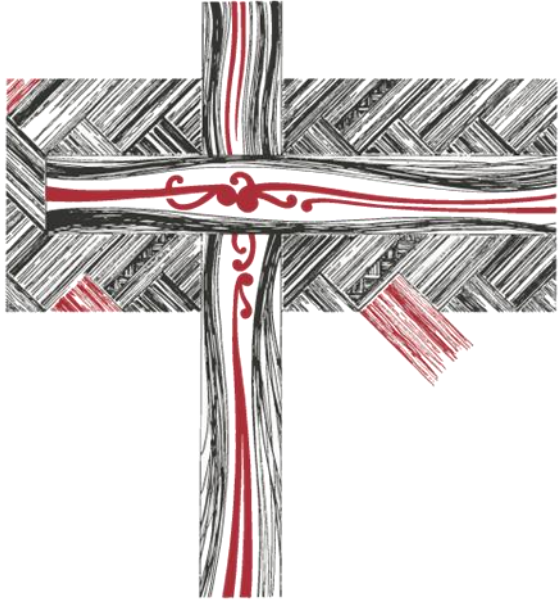
Wednesday of Holy Week

April 1, 2026 6:00PM

Night Prayer

Night Prayer

The offering of prayer late in the evening, by laity, religious orders or clergy, often called Compline, has sometimes been described as the 'goodnight prayer of the Church'. It rounds off the day and prepares us for a quiet night. As the psalmist wrote:



*I lie down in peace and take my rest
for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.*

Night Prayer derives its content from the wisdom of the centuries in Scripture and above all in the psalms, but also from contemporary Christian experience of God. It celebrates the awareness that each of us who tries to pray is a part of the human whole. So we are taken over the threshold from daytime, not in a mood of self-centred spirituality, but as representatives of humanity, acknowledging our creaturehood before God.

Approach

The angels of God guard us through the night,
and quieten the powers of darkness.

The Spirit of God be our guide
to lead us to peace and to glory.

It is but lost labour that we haste to rise up early,
and so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.
For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep.

Silence

My brothers and sisters,
our help is in the name of the eternal God,
who is making the heavens and the earth.

Dear God,
thank you for all that is good,
for our creation and for our humanity,
for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,
for the gifts of life and of one another,
for your love which is unbounded and eternal.

O thou, most holy and beloved,
my Companion, my Guide upon the way,
my bright evening star.

We repent the wrongs we have done:

Silence

We have wounded your love.
O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.
Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.
Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Eternal Spirit, living God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,
to the very secret of our hearts
and all that rises to trouble us.
Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth.

Invocation

Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips,
that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Let us worship the God of love.
Amen, amen.

The Readings

Psalm 31:9-16

Dixit injustus

- 9 Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; *
my eye is consumed with sorrow,
and also my throat and my belly.
- 10 For my life is wasted with grief,
and my years with sighing; *
my strength fails me because of affliction,
and my bones are consumed.
- 11 I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my
neighbors,
a dismay to those of my acquaintance; *
when they see me in the street they avoid me.

- 12 I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; *
I am as useless as a broken pot.
- 13 For I have heard the whispering of the crowd;
fear is all around; *
they put their heads together against me;
they plot to take my life.
- 14 But as for me, I have trusted in you, O Lord. *
I have said, "You are my God.
- 15 My times are in your hand; *
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.
- 16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, *
and in your loving-kindness save me."

Isaiah 50:4-9a

The Lord God has given me
the tongue of a teacher,

that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord God has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me;

therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.

It is the Lord God who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

Psalm 31

O God, I have come to you for shelter:
let me never be put to shame.

Deliver me in the justice of your ways:
incline your ear to me and be swift to save me.

Be for me a rock of refuge, a fortress to defend me:
for you are my rock and my stronghold.

Lead me and guide me for your name's sake:
deliver me out of the net that they have laid secretly for me, for you
are my strength.

Into your hands I commit my spirit,
for you will redeem me, eternal God of truth.

Hebrews 12:1-3

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart..

John 13:21-32

At supper with his friends, Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples-- the one whom Jesus loved-- was reclining next to him; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once."

Hymn

Be thou my vision, O Christ of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me save that thou art,
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Riches I heed not, nor folk's empty praise,
Be thou my inheritance now and always,
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart,
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Prayers

Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.

Keep me, O God, as the apple of an eye;
hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Antiphon

*Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.*

Song of Simeon

Nunc Dimittis

*Praise be to God, I have lived to see this day.
God's promise is fulfilled, and my duty done.*

*At last you have given me peace,
for I have seen with my own eyes
the salvation you have prepared for all nations -
a light to the world in its darkness,
and the glory of your people Israel.*

*Glory be God, sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,
as in the beginning, so now, and for ever.
Amen.*

Antiphon

*Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.*

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Say together the Kivi version of the Lord's Prayer

*Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:*

*The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples
of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.*

*With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.*

*For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever. Amen.*

The minister and people pray responsively.

*I will lie down in peace and take my rest,
for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.*

*Let us bless the Earth-maker, the Pain-bearer, the Life-giver,
let us praise and exalt God above all for ever.*

*May God's name be praised beyond the furthest star,
glorified and exalted above all for ever.*

The Collect

*Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.*

O living God, in Jesus Christ you were laid in the tomb at this evening hour, and so sanctified the grave to be a bed of hope to your people. Give us courage and faith to die daily to our sin and pride, that even as this flesh and blood decays, our lives still may grow in you, that at our last day our dying may be done so well that we live in you for ever. *Amen.*

General Thanksgiving

Eternal God, compassionate and merciful,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness
and loving kindness

to us and to all people.

We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;

but above all for your boundless love

in the redemption of the world by our Saviour Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us that due sense of all your mercies,
that our hearts may be truly thankful,

and that we praise you, not only with our lips but in our lives,
by giving ourselves to your service

and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,

to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory,
now and for ever. *Amen.*

Sentence of the Day

O God, strengthen your servants with your heavenly grace,
that we may continue yours for ever,
and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more,
until we come to your everlasting kingdom.

Final Versicle

The divine Spirit dwells in us.

Thanks be to God.

A New Zealand Prayer Book

First HarperCollins Edition published in 1997

If you would like to support the ministries of St. Mark's, please go to the "Donate" page of our website (<https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/give-to-support-st-marks-and-its-ministries/>) to see the many ways that you can contribute and make your donation by Paypal or credit card. Pledge payments also can be made online through the "Donate" page.

*Sharing Christ's love unconditionally through
transformational worship and service*