

Vespers

You may wish to light a candle and have some quiet music playing in the background.
Spend a few moments in silence.

Make the Sign of the Cross and say

O God, make speed to save us; O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory 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.

Pause to reflect on the past day, to give thanks, to express joy and concern.

Bible Readings

Prayerfully pray this Psalm, for additional psalms, see p.14.

Psalm 130

- ¹ Out of the depths have I called to you,
 O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.
- ² O let your ears consider well:
 the voice of my supplication.
- ³ If you, Lord, should note what we do wrong:
 who then, O Lord, could stand?
- ⁴ But there is forgiveness with you:
 so that you shall be feared.
- ⁵ I wait for the Lord, my soul waits for him:
 and in his word is my hope.
- ⁶ My soul looks for the Lord:
 more than watchmen for the morning,
 more, I say, than watchmen for the morning.
- ⁷ O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy:
 and with him is ample redemption.
- ⁸ He will redeem Israel:
 from the multitude of his sins.

Glory 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.

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:37-39

Magnificat – We join with Mary in celebration

- ¹ My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord:
 my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
- ² for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant:
 from this day all generations will call me blessed;
- ³ the Almighty has done great things for me:
 and holy is his name.
- ⁴ He has mercy on those who fear him:
 in every generation.
- ⁵ He has shown the strength of his arm:
 he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
- ⁶ He has cast down the mighty from their thrones:
 and has lifted up the lowly.
- ⁷ He has filled the hungry with good things:
 and the rich he has sent away empty.
- ⁸ He has come to the help of his servant Israel:
 for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
- ⁹ the promise he made to our fathers:
 to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory 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

In silence offer your own prayers or simply be still

Lord have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord have mercy upon us.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Collect

Lord, God almighty, come and dispel the darkness from our hearts,
that in the radiance of your brightness we may know you, the only
unfading light, glorious in all eternity.

Amen.

The Conclusion

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

Alternative Psalms for Vespers

14

The fool says in his heart,

“There is no God.”

They are corrupt, their deeds are vile;

there is no one who does good.

² The LORD looks down from heaven

on all mankind

to see if there are any who understand,

any who seek God.

³ All have turned away, all have become corrupt;

there is no one who does good,

not even one.

⁴ Do all these evildoers know nothing?

They devour my people as though eating bread;

they never call on the LORD.

⁵ But there they are, overwhelmed with dread,

for God is present in the company of the righteous.

⁶ You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor,

but the LORD is their refuge.

⁷ Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!

When the LORD restores his people,

let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!

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¹ You, God, are my God,

earnestly I seek you;

I thirst for you,

my whole being longs for you,

in a dry and parched 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.

⁵I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods;
with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

⁶On my bed I remember you;
I think of you through the watches of the night.

⁷Because you are my help,
I sing in the shadow of your wings.

⁸I cling to you;
your right hand upholds me.

⁹Those who want to kill me will be destroyed;
they will go down to the depths of the earth.

¹⁰They will be given over to the sword
and become food for jackals.

¹¹But the king will rejoice in God;
all who swear by God will glory in him,
while the mouths of liars will be silenced.

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¹I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?

²My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

³He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;

⁴indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵The LORD watches over you—
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

⁶the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.

⁷The LORD will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;

⁸the LORD will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.

139:1-14

- ¹You have searched me, LORD,
and you know me.
- ²You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- ³You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
- ⁴Before a word is on my tongue
you, LORD, know it completely.
- ⁵You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
- ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
- ⁷Where can I go from your Spirit?
 Where can I flee from your presence?
- ⁸If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
 if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
- ⁹If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
 if I settle on the far side of the sea,
- ¹⁰even there your hand will guide me,
 your right hand will hold me fast.
- ¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
 and the light become night around me,"
- ¹²even the darkness will not be dark to you;
 the night will shine like the day,
 for darkness is as light to you.
- ¹³For you created my inmost being;
 you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- ¹⁴I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
 your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

Alternative Bible Passages for Vespers

Matthew 5:3-12

“Jesus said “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Romans 8:35-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love

Revelation 3:20

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Revelation 21:1-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children