

*The alternative to the Nunc Dimittis is Psalm 67, **Deus Misereatur.***

GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us :
and shew us the light of his countenance,
and be merciful unto us:

That thy way may be known upon earth :
thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God :
yea, let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations rejoice and be glad :
for thou shalt judge the folk righteously,
and govern the nations upon earth.

Let the people praise thee, O God :
yea, let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth bring forth her increase :
and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing.

God shall bless us :
and all the ends of the world shall fear him.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. **Amen.**

The Penitential Introduction, which is used when Evening Prayer is said or sung on a Sunday, invites all who are present to come before God in penitence and contains a reminder of the importance of corporate worship: meeting together to offer to God our thanks and our praise, to hear his Word and to respond to that Word in prayers for others as well as for ourselves.

Welcome and Notices

Introduction

The service begins with a seasonal sentence of scripture. The choir may sing an introit while the congregation remains seated.

Opening Hymn

The minister may use a penitential sentences before using one of the following introductions to the general confession

DEARLY beloved, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; [and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul.] Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying [after me]:

In the general confession we declare ourselves to be 'miserable offenders'. The use of the word 'miserable' comes from the Latin *miserere* and acknowledges that we are need of God's mercy.

Or

BELOVED, we are come together in the presence of almighty God and the whole company of heaven to offer unto him through out Lord Jesus Christ our worship and praise and thanksgiving to make confession of our sins; to pray, as well for others as for ourselves, that we may know more truly the grateness of God's love and shew forth in our lives the fruits of his grace; and to ask on behalf of all men such things as their well-being doth required. Wherefor let us kneel in silence, and remember God's presence with us now

All kneeling or sitting

All ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us: but thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders; spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults, restore thou them that are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord: and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer gives alternatives to the two Canticles. From time to time these may be used.

*The alternative to the Magnificat is Psalm 98, **Cantate Domine.***

O SING unto the Lord a new song :
for he hath done marvellous things.

With his own right hand, and with his holy arm :
hath he gotten himself the victory.

The Lord declared his salvation :
his righteousness hath he openly shewed
in the sight of the heathen.

He hath remembered his mercy and truth
toward the house of Israel :
and all the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God.

Shew yourselves joyful unto the Lord, all ye lands :
sing, rejoice, and give thanks.

Praise the Lord upon the harp :
sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving.

With trumpets also and shawms :
O shew yourselves joyful before the Lord the King.

Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is :
the round world, and they that dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands,
and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord :
for he cometh to judge the earth.

With righteousness shall he judge the world :
and the people with equity.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

Usually the theme of the service is reflected in an anthem or other music

The final prayer is taken from 2 Corinthians 13.13 and is commonly known as 'The Grace'

Anthem or Music

Address

Closing Hymn

The Grace

**All The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 and the love of God,
 and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,
 be with us all evermore. Amen.**

The choir may sing a 'vesper' during which the ministers leave

The service sometimes concludes with a piece of organ music allowing congregation members a moment or two for personal prayer

The minister stands and says

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live; and hath given power, and commandment, to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.

Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance, and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him, which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure, and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**All OUR Father, which art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy Name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 in earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive them that 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.**

God's forgiveness is given voice either in the absolution, declared by a priest, if there is one present, or the collect for the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity if a member of the laity is leading the service.

The whole congregation joins with the saying of the Lord's Prayer.

After the Lord's Prayer the service of Evensong formally starts with the first set of responses and virtually all material is directly translated from the Bible.

The Psalms are ancient prayer-poems. Saying or singing the words of a psalm together is a practice which helps us hold our lives before God

We listen to God's voice through the words that are read to us. The first reading is usually from the Old Testament, from the Book of Acts or from

Evening Prayer

O Lord, open thou our lips.

All and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.

All O Lord, make haste to help us.

All standing

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;

**All As it was in the beginning, is now, and
ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Praise ye the Lord.

All The Lord's name be praised.

The Psalm

*At the end of each Psalm these words are said
or sung*

**All Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.**

First Reading

The Collect of the Day

The Collect for Peace

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed: Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

The Collect for Aid against all Perils

LIGHTEN our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

As the prayers continue, the versicles and responses are followed by three Collects (written to collect the thoughts and prayers of the people.)

The first Collect is the one set for this particular Sunday. It will be said in traditional or contemporary form, in Anglican churches all over the world.

In between the Collects, the minister may suggest silent prayer, read a litany or say other prayers.

We sometimes say together the third Collect, for Aid against all Perils.

As Christian people, we pray with Christ who is constantly praying for us and for all creation. The prayers are, first of all, in the form of versicles – said or sung by the minister - and responses. Some are taken directly from the Psalms.

Prayers

The Lord be with you.

All And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

All kneeling or sitting

Lord, have mercy upon us.

All Christ, have mercy upon us

Lord, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

All And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the King.

All And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

All And make thy chosen people joyful.

O Lord, save thy people.

All And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

All Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us.

All And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

Magnificat

MY soul doth magnify the Lord :
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded :
the lowliness of his hand-maiden.

For behold, from henceforth :
all generations shall call me blessed

For he that is mighty hath magnified me :
and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him :
throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm :
he hath scattered the proud in the
imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat :
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things :
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant
Israel :
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his
seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

We respond to God's Word in Scripture by singing or saying the canticle. Canticles are ancient songs taken from the text of the Bible and said or sung in the Christian tradition for hundreds of years.

The Magnificat or Mary's song (Luke 1:46-55) is Mary's response to the news that she is to be the mother of God's Son, sent as the saviour of the world. 'Magnificat' is Latin for 'it magnifies' and would have been the first word when this was sung in Latin

The second reading is usually from the Gospels, or elsewhere in the New Testament.

The Nunc Dimittis is the canticle said or sung in response to the second reading. The Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2.29-32) is the song of Simeon, who on encountering the six-week old baby boy, Jesus, recognised in him the light of salvation. Simeon knew that God had kept his promise that he would not die before having seen the Messiah.

The title is taken from the Latin phrase for 'Now thou dost dismiss',

Second Reading

Nunc dimittis

LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace : according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen :
thy salvation;

Which thou hast prepared :
before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

All Standing

The Apostles' Creed

***All* I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth:
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge
the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy Catholick Church;
the Communion of Saints;
the Forgiveness of sins;
the Resurrection of the body,
and the Life everlasting. Amen.**

We further respond by declaring our faith in the words of the Apostles Creed and then coming to God in prayer.

The Apostles' Creed is an early statement of Christian belief based on the theological understanding of the Gospels and the letters of the New Testament. It is Trinitarian in structure with sections affirming belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is widely used by most Christian denominations. As we affirm our faith in these ancient words, we stand with Christians through the centuries and across the world.