

“Prayer is not introspection. It is not a scrupulous, inward-looking analysis of our own thoughts and feelings but is an attentiveness to the Presence of Love personified inviting us to an encounter. Prayer is the presentation of our thoughts – reflective, as well as daydreams, and night dreams – to the One who receives them, sees them in the light of unconditional love, and responds to them with divine compassion.” -- Henri Nouwen, *A Book of Hours*

This is Holy Saturday, a time that lies between the shame and pain of Jesus’ death and the celebration and glory of Jesus’ resurrection. These prayers follow the traditional Holy Hours of the church, times when the faithful would take out of their days to pray and read Holy Scripture. Use this to help guide you into prayer and meditation on God, who brought you to this point, who died that you might live, and who leads you into community and new life.

Vigil (3 am):

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

God of suffering, who suffered upon the cross of shame and grace, teach us to mourn this day as we rest between the cross and the tomb, the coming of Christ and his return, that we might suffer with those around us, offering the comfort and love of your Son, Jesus the Christ. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

Lauds/Prime (6 am):

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you as the day rises to meet the sun.
Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Read: Psalm 88

Pause for silent prayer.

Lord's Prayer

Terce (9 am):

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Almighty God, whose beloved Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace, through the same, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (from *The Book of Prayers Compiled for Protestant Worship* edited by Leon and Elfrieda McCauley)

Sext (Noon):

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Read: Psalm 23

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (from *The Book of Common Prayer*)

None (3 pm):

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Lord Jesus, at the ninth hour you gave yourself into the hands of the Father
May we welcome his will with love, and fulfill it to the end, as you have taught us for ever and ever. Amen. (from *The Glenstal Book of Prayer*)

Vespers (6 pm):

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

“What is happening? Today there is a great silence over the earth, a great silence, and stillness, a great silence because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages. God has died in the flesh, and the underworld has trembled.” (from St. Thomas Aquinas’ homily on Holy Saturday)

Read: Psalm 27

Pause for silent prayer.

Lord's Prayer

Compline (9 pm):

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Read: Psalm 4

We confess to you, O God, that we have not been as faithful to you and to one another as we could have. We have sinned in word and deed, against you, O God, and against one another. Forgive us, that we might forgive one another, remembering that even as your Son, our Lord, shattered death by death and dwelled among the dead in Sheol, our sin was forgiven, the ransom paid, that we might see your face in one another's once again. May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen. (from the *United Methodist Book of Worship*)

Matins (Midnight):

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

O Creator, in the depth of your wisdom you lovingly govern all men and distribute what is good for each one. Now give rest to the souls of your servants, for they have placed their hope in you, our Creator, our Maker, and our God. Amen. (from *Byzantine Book of Prayer*)