

## Hymn of Invocation

752 *Be Still, My Soul*

- 1 Be still, my soul; the Lord is on your side;  
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;  
Leave to your God to order and provide;  
In ev'ry change He faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul; your best, your heav'nly Friend  
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.
  
- 2 Be still, my soul; your God will undertake  
To guide the future as He has the past.  
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;  
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul; the waves and winds still know  
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.
  
- 3 Be still, my soul; though dearest friends depart  
And all is darkened in this vale of tears;  
Then you will better know His love, His heart,  
Who comes to soothe your sorrows and your fears.  
Be still, my soul; your Jesus can repay  
From His own fullness all He takes away.
  
- 4 Be still, my soul; the hour is hast'ning on  
When we shall be forever with the Lord,  
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,  
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.  
Be still, my soul; when change and tears are past,  
All safe and blessèd we shall meet at last.

*Text: Catharina Amalia Dorothea von Schlegel, 1697–1752; tr. Jane L. Borthwick, 1813–97, alt.*  
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## Opening Responsory

*Jesus Christ, You are the Light of the World*

Sung by Cantors

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Cantor: Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world,  
The light no darkness can overcome.  
Stay with us now, for it is evening,  
And the day is almost over.  
Let your light scatter the darkness,  
And shine within your people

# Evening Hymn

# Joyous Light

All Sing

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1.) Joy-ous light of heav'n-ly glo - ry, lov - ing  
2.) In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the  
3.) You who made the heav-en's splen - dor, ev - 'ry

4  
glow of God's own face, you who sing cre - a - tion's  
blaz - ing sun of dawn, in the light of peace and  
7 danc - ing star of night, make us shine with gen - tle

10  
sto - ry, shine on ev - 'ry land and race. Now as  
wis - dom, we can hear your qui - et song. Love that  
jus - tice, let us each re - flect your light. Might - y

13  
eve - ing falls a - round us, we shall raise our songs to  
fills the night with won - der, love that warms the wea - ry  
God of all cre - a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our

16  
you. God of day - break, God of shad - ows, come and  
soul, love that bursts all chains a - sun - der, set us  
way, lov - ing Spir - it of sal - va - tion, lead us

light our hearts a - new.  
free and make us whole.  
on to end - less day.

## Evening Thanksgiving

Sung Responsively

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Cantor: May God be with you all.

All Sing: Musical notation for the phrase "And al - so with you." It is written on a single staff in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody consists of a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note G4.

And al - so with you.

Cantor: Let us sing our thanks to God.

All Sing: Musical notation for the phrase "It is right to give God thanks and praise." It is written on a single staff in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody consists of a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note G4.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Cantor: Blessed are you, Creator of the universe,  
From old you have led your people by night and day.  
May the light of your Christ make our darkness bright,  
For your Word and your presence are the light of our pathways,  
And you are the light and life of all creation. Amen.

## Psalmody

*Psalm 20 (spoken)*

P Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

C I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

P As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble,

C in whom is all my delight.

P Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;

C their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

P The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

C The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

P I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

C I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

P Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

C For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.

P You show me the path of life.

C In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Gloria Patri

*sung to Gethsemane 77 77 77 (Chief of Sinners)*

Glory to the Father be,  
And to Christ, eternally.  
Glory to the Spirit raise.  
Join all nature in her praise:  
From creation's ancient shore  
Unto life forevermore.

Stand

Reading

*John 19:23–42*

<sup>23</sup>When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, <sup>24</sup>so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things, <sup>25</sup>but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup>When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, **“Woman, behold, your son!”** <sup>27</sup>Then he said to the disciple, **“Behold, your mother!”** And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

<sup>28</sup>After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), **“I thirst.”** <sup>29</sup>A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup>When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, **“It is finished,”** and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

<sup>31</sup>Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. <sup>32</sup>So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup>But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup>But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. <sup>35</sup>He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. <sup>36</sup>For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” <sup>37</sup>And again another Scripture says, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”

<sup>38</sup>After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. <sup>39</sup>Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. <sup>40</sup>So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup>Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. <sup>42</sup>So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

Sit

## Theme Hymn

(sung to LSB 449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded)

The voices of the Passion,  
Those words from ancient days—  
What message do they fashion  
As on your cross I gaze?  
In words that once were spoken,  
In speech now overheard,  
Grant me, O Lord, this token:  
To hear your living Word!

## Sermonic Introduction

P *"LOVE bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things," St. Paul once wrote (1 Corinthians 13:7). The love we celebrate this Lent, of course, is our Lord's love for us, love which led him, as St. Paul said so aptly, to "bear ... believe ... hope ... and endure" for us.*

*But does our Lord intend his love to end there, once it has reached us? Or is it not the nature of love that it is to be shared? Our Lord indicated as much from the cross, even as he was dying for the sins of the whole world, when out of the whole world he looked in love on his mother and his closest disciple ... and then gave them to one another in love ... his love to be shared.*

*We read that in response to that love, "from that hour" John took Mary "to his own home." What do you suppose they said to one another when they got there? Scripture does not choose to tell us what we might have overheard in those early moments of their grief. But we do have our own moments of grief from which to surmise. Of this at least we may be sure, because like John and Mary we have come to know the Lord: "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."*

## Conversations by the Cross

Mary and John

Mary (*upset, near tears*) Oh, John, what are we going to do?

John (*confused, almost angry*) I don't know. I just don't know. I don't believe all this has really happened. It wasn't supposed to *be* this way.

Mary John, why did God let this happen?

John I can't answer that.

Mary Why couldn't God have done something to change it all, to spare him? He was such a good person, so kind, so loving. He was so ... so ... so *there* where people needed him. He touched them; he cared for them; he healed them; he spoke to them ... he loved them with that great, wonderful love of his.

John And *this* is what he got in return.

Mary Why did they hate him, when all he did was love them? Why did they oppose him so? Why did they do this to him, John? Why did my son have to die?

John Maybe it was our fault. (*getting angry*) We should have asserted ourselves. We should have *fought*. We should have taken swords or spears or clubs ... or even stones ... and our bare fists. We should have *defended* him!

Mary Do you think that's the way he would have wanted it?

John (*pause, then softly*) No. (*pause*) Peter tried it ... last night, in the garden. (*chuckles*) Good old Peter. He tried at least. He was the only one who drew a sword and tried to defend him.

Mary And what happened?

John Jesus told him to put his sword away, that this wasn't the time for swords.

Mary (*reflectively*) "A sword will pierce through your soul."

John Pardon?

Mary Oh, nothing. I was just remembering ... a long time ago ... an old man in the temple spoke to me about a sword, when Jesus was just a baby. "A sword will pierce through your *soul*," he said.

John Maybe we could have prevented that. (*angry again*) We should have fought! All of us. Any of us. What did we do when he needed us? We all ran away.

Mary (*trying to calm him down*) You didn't, John. You were there to the very end.

John (*frustrated*) But what good did *that* do? All I did was stand and watch ... just watch it happen ... the agony, the suffering, the indignity. All I could do was witness his death.

Mary (*softly*) Perhaps that was important, John.

John Important? How? That I'm able to tell the rest of them, "He died. He really died. I saw him and he's really dead"?

Mary I think it was important to *him* that you were there, John. (*pause*) I know it was important to *me*.

John I'm sorry. Here I go carrying on again, getting upset and wanting things my own way, as though I were the important one. "Sons of Thunder" he used to call us, my brother and me. We used to laugh when he said it, because he was so right.

Mary He seemed to *like* that in you and James, I think. Your energy, your impulsiveness.

John When he wasn't correcting us for it. (*mocking himself*) "Lord, grant that we may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, when you come into your kingdom." (*suddenly glum*) Little did we know then that it would come to this.

Mary And if you *had* known, would you have done anything differently?

John No, I don't suppose so. (*almost as if defending himself*) I was truly his disciple, there's no question about that. There was such *love* about him, such power, such authority, such promise. Mary, do you have any idea what it was like to have been that close to him? (*pause, realizing with a chuckle*) Of course you do. What am I saying?

Mary (*remembering*) My son. My baby. My firstborn. I suppose every mother thinks her child is the most special of all ... but he really *was*. Somehow I felt I could always rely on him, that he wouldn't ever let me down. (*pause, then brightly*) Do you remember the day I went up to him and said, "They have no wine"?

John (*smiling*) Yes. I remember.

Mary In my way, I guess *I* was impulsive, too. I don't know what I expected of him that day at the wedding.

John Certainly not what happened!

Mary I'm not sure I can believe what *did* happen, even yet.

John Well, I'll tell you one thing: It made a believer out of *me* ... out of all of us. I know that when I first met him, there at the seaside by my dad's boat, I knew I wanted to follow him. I'm not sure I knew *why* at the time. There was *life* in him, Mary, like a light shining in the darkness. It was so good to be with him ... to be together like that.

Mary John, do you remember what happened after the wedding?

John No ... well, yes. We all went home, didn't we?

Mary Yes, we all went home *together*, to Capernaum. We were almost like a family already, even then ... so close ... so happy ... so expectant.

John Yes, we *were* almost like a family, weren't we? There was a love there that drew us to one another ... and *he* was the source of it.

Mary (*after a pause*) John, did you really know how much he loved you? All of you? He would have done anything for you; did you know that, John?

John Yes, I knew it. We all knew it. Last night, in fact, at supper, we saw it again, in a way I'll never forget. It was when we had just gotten together. There was a kind of awkward pause before things began, and then ... he washed our feet!

Mary I wouldn't doubt it.

John He washed our feet! And he said that by that act we were to learn a lesson in serving one another as he had served us, in loving one another as he had loved us. And later he prayed ... he prayed that all of us would be ... well, like a family, I guess ... united in love, his love.

Mary And then today he gave you to me. "Woman, behold your son."

John "Behold your mother."

Mary (*after a pause*) John, have I thanked you for bringing me here, to your home?

John There's no need to thank me. This is your home, now, for as long as you want it to be ... Mother.

Mary (*reflective*) My home. (*pause*) Home has always been a rather temporary thing with me. Did you know that, John? I wasn't even able to be at home when he was born.

John Yes, I'd heard that.

Mary "Don't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"

John Pardon?

Mary He was just a boy then, the first time we brought him with us to Jerusalem for Passover. We lost him in the crowd when the feast was over, you know. For three days we couldn't find him anywhere. And then, when we did find him, he was in the temple, talking with the scholars as if he belonged there. "Don't you know that I must be in my Father's house," he said to me.

John (*also quoting*) "You shall not make my Father's house a house of trade." I know what you're talking about, Mary. That's one of the few times I can ever remember him getting really angry.

Mary I was angry too, I'm afraid. No, maybe worried. It was so good to find him again that day, after those three horrible days when we had lost him. (*pause, sobering, realizing*) And now we have lost him again.

John Mary, please.

Mary (*earnestly*) I held him so close that day when I found him again. I hugged him so tight. He was so warm, so alive, so real. (*pause*) And today he was so cold ... so white ... Oh, John, I keep wishing that it would be like when he was a boy all over again: Three days and I'd find him safe, and everything would be right again.

John (*changing the subject after an awkward pause*) Some friends are seeing to it that he is given a proper burial.

Mary (*trying to comprehend*) Friends. Who? Peter? Andrew?

John No, others, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus from the Sanhedrin.

Mary (*almost angry*) Why *them*? What was *he* to *them*?

John I'm not sure. All I know is that they came forward and offered to take responsibility for the burial.

Mary (*calming*) I suppose I shouldn't be upset. But why didn't they ask you to be present, too? You were the closest to him. You would have seen that things are done right.

John I felt my place was here, Mother, and so did they. Jesus said you were to be my mother now, and I am to be your son.

Mary (*after a pause, as if determined to carry on normally, although in a somewhat mechanical manner*) Well then, my son. If we are to be family, I suppose it is only right that the mother gets a meal on the table.

John Mary, that's not necessary.

Mary But the sun is setting and it is now the Sabbath, John. And on the Sabbath it is a mother's duty to set the table, to light the lamps, to see my loved ones gathered around for rest ... (*losing control*) ... for rest ... from their labors. (*after a pause, recovering*) Besides, this is the Sabbath of Passover, a most holy evening. It is appropriate at Passover for the youngest son to ask the question, my son.

John The question?

Mary (*quoting, as if prompting*) "Why is this night so different from all other nights?"

John (*after a long pause, resigned to going through with the ritual*) Why is this night so different from all other nights?

Mary (*as if reciting*) This is the night when God acted to save his people from their bondage.

John (*continuing the recitation*) The night when the angel of death passed over the homes of those whose doors were spread with the blood of the lamb.

Mary The night of the death of the firstborn son.

John (*after a significant pause, in a different tone*) "How anxious I have been to celebrate this Passover with you," he said last night. Last night? Was it really only last night? It seems as if an eternity has gone by since then, as if the whole world were moving in a different direction.

Mary (*businesslike*) John, will you please say the prayer?

John The prayer?

Mary The table blessing. *(almost like the teacher)* You know, the man of the house says the prayer so that the observance may begin.

John Mary, are you sure you want to go through with this?

Mary *(quoting)* "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word." How long ago I said that, not really knowing what it would mean to me then ... or now. *(pause)* John, please? The prayer.

John "Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, for you ... *(losing control)* ... for you ..." Oh, Mary! I can't!

Mary *(calmly)* Please ... my son. He would have wanted it that way.

John *(quite loud)* "... for ... YOU BRING FORTH FROM THE EARTH!"

## Sermonic Conclusion

P *At this moment, of course, Mary and John would probably have had no way of knowing how quickly that prayer would be answered, in our Lord's Resurrection ... or how literally, that he would be "brought forth from the earth," as God's people have prayed for centuries. The sorrow of Mary and John would turn to joy, as Jesus had promised ... their faith to fruition, their hope to fulfillment ... with the dawning of Easter, barely three days hence. In the midst of our own sorrows, whatever they may be, we share that with Mary and John: the FAITH and HOPE that look forward, even beyond the tragedy of death, to being united again in love.*

*In LOVE. That always goes with the others, doesn't it? "So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13).*

*In the case of Mary and John, it was love that gave substance to their faith and their hope--the Savior's dying love, wide enough to include the world--yet specific enough to focus on each of them, Mary and John, in their specific needs. And the Lord's prescription for those specific needs was ... LOVE. It is a love that shared the faith and hope we have in Jesus Christ, because in Jesus Christ we have been given to one another.*

*If YOU were to stand beneath the cross of Christ today and know his great love there, to whom do you suppose would he give YOU?*

## Theme Hymn

(sung to LSB 449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded)

When hearts are bruised and broken  
With sorrow, grief, or pain,  
What words of love, then spoken,  
Can offer hope again?  
Oh, send me, Lord, believing,  
Your word and love to share;  
Make me, where hearts are grieving,  
Your instrument of care.

## Offering

*Stand*

## Prayers

P O Lord, what shall we do?

C When hearts are heavy, days are dreary, eyes brimful of tears ... when backs and wills are bent and bowed beneath a load of care and grief that seems, almost, too great for words, too heavy to be borne—

P O Lord, what shall we do?

C We turn to you!

P For in his life and death for us, your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, has borne our burdens, sins, and cares.

C And in the living strength of his forgiving, power-giving love we are refreshed, renewed, restored, and set again upon the daily tasks of life.

P And when we see the grief and care of others there:

C When hearts are heavy, days are dreary, eyes brimful of tears ... when backs and wills are bent and bowed beneath a load of care and grief that seems, almost, too great for words, too heavy to be borne,

P and in their darkness they cry out, "O Lord, what shall we do?"—

C send us, O Lord, to turn their hearts to you!

P Send us in the name of him by whom your children always pray:

## 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  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

Sit

## Final Blessing

Sung Responsively

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Cantor: Let us bless our God:  
Praise and thanks to you.  
May God, Creator, bless us and keep us,  
May Christ be ever light for our lives,  
May the Spirit of Love be our guide and path for all of our days.

All  Sing:

## Closing Hymn

## 434 Lamb of God, Pure and Holy

- 1 Lamb of God, pure and holy,  
Who on the cross didst suffer,  
Ever patient and lowly,  
Thyself to scorn didst offer.  
All sins Thou borest for us,  
Else had despair reigned o'er us:  
Have mercy on us, O Jesus! O Jesus!
  
- 2 Lamb of God, pure and holy,  
Who on the cross didst suffer,  
Ever patient and lowly,  
Thyself to scorn didst offer.  
All sins Thou borest for us,  
Else had despair reigned o'er us:  
Have mercy on us, O Jesus! O Jesus!
  
- 3 Lamb of God, pure and holy,  
Who on the cross didst suffer,  
Ever patient and lowly,  
Thyself to scorn didst offer.  
All sins Thou borest for us,  
Else had despair reigned o'er us:  
Thy peace be with us, O Jesus! O Jesus!

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