

COMPLINE FOR THE FERIAS IN THE PASSION WEEK

According to the Sarum Rite

EMIL SALIM

March 22, 2012

1 The Event

We will pray the compline for the Ferials in the Passion Week in the Chapel of the Nativity at St. Philip's Episcopal Church. The service will start at 6 pm on Tuesday, April 3, 2012. I will be there at 5.30 to arrange chairs, light candles, etc., as well as to answer questions that you might have about the service.

2 Structure

The structure of the Sarum compline can be seen on p. 33. Other than the psalms, there are five main parts in the compline: (1) Introductory Sentences, (2) Chapter, (3) Hymn, (4) The Gospel Canticle, and (5) Prayers.

3 The Beginning (P. 1)

1. There is no clear instruction about the use of candles and bells. The rubric about the bell seems to be optional. For our service, two candles will be lit and we will hear the 6 pm bell from the Church clock as a sign to commence the service.
2. It isn't clear either who should say the Our Father and Hail Mary before the beginning of the service, whether the Officiant alone or everyone. In our service, everyone shall say the prayers in silence.
3. Those who are not in the Anglo-Catholic tradition and are uncomfortable in saying the Hail Mary and with any other references to Mary (such as during the confession of sins) may simply skip them.
4. The Choir stand facing each other. Assuming that the altar is facing to the East side, one side of the Choir will be on the North side (the cantor's side, Cantoris), and the other side will be on the South side (the dean's side, Decani).
5. Whenever there is a phrase "begun by one side", it would mean "begun by one side which is currently leading". In our service, the Officiant's side will be the leader. If the number of attendance is small, the Officiant alone may take the role of the North side, and the people the South side.

4 Symbols and Abbreviations

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Notes</i>
∨	Versicle	Sung or said by the Officiant
R	Response	Sung or said by the people
■	Capitulum (Chapter)	Rubric/Instruction
Ant.	Antiphon	Sung by everyone
Ora.	Oratio (Prayer)	Sung by everyone

5 How to Read the Gregorian Chant

A couple of useful resources:

<http://lphrc.org/Chant/>

<http://ceciliaschola.org/pdf/squarenotes.pdf>

6 Note on P. 4

After the response “O Lord, make haste to help me!”, the “Glory be to the Father etc.” is sung together. The instruction for bowing isn’t clear. We’ll follow the Benedictine tradition to bow during the Glory be to the Father.

7 The Psalms (P. 6–11)

1. The antiphon (Be gracious) is sung by everyone.
2. On p. 6, above the letter A that begins Psalm iij, there is the number VIII.i. This number indicates the Psalm tone and the tone ending.
3. All the Psalms in the compline use the same Psalm tone.
4. The Psalm will be sung alternately, to be begun by the Officiant’s side.
5. Each verse of the Psalm is separated by an asterisk (*). The immediate part before the asterisk is called the mediation. The word that is in boldface/italics in the mediation falls on the D note. In the ending part of the verse (after the asterisk), the word that is in boldface/italics falls on the B note, and the underlined word falls on the A note.
6. The two introductory notes (the so-called *initial*) for “Answer”, namely, the G and A notes are only sung once immediately after the antiphon. In the next verses, the chant begin directly on the C note. Hence, when singing the second verse (“Be gracious to me”), instead of singing G A C C D, we sing C C C D.
7. Sometimes in chanting the psalms in English, we need to observe what is called “the abrupt mediation” when the accented word is in the last syllable in the mediation. For example, look again at “Answer me ... right”. The word “right” falls on the D note. There are a couple of C notes left, and these are not sung. This sort of adjustment needs to be made because the English language has different accentuation rules from Latin.
8. Please note that there is no “Glory to the Father” in the end of Psalm xci. That is not a typo.

8 Hymn (P. 12–18)

The hymn is sung together in all eight verses.

9 The Gospel Canticle (P. 18–20)

The antiphon on p. 18 is sung together. For the *Nunc Dimittis*, in the mediation, the word in boldface/italics falls on the D note (the accented note), and the underlined word falls on the B note. In the ending, the word in boldface/italics falls on the A note (the non-accented note), and the underlined word falls on the C note (the accented note).

10 Kyrie (P. 21)

1. From here onward, the traditional practice was to kneel.
2. Notice the numbers in the chant: iij, iij, ij, i. These numbers indicate the number of repetitions. Hence “Lord, have mercy” is sung three times, etc.
3. The Officiant’s side (traditionally the North side) will sing the first “Lord, have mercy”; then it will alternate on each “Lord, have mercy.” Then, the opposite side will begin the “Christ, have mercy”, and so on.

11 Note on P. 31

A note from Prof. William Renwick: “Where [Hail Mary] appears, it is interesting to note that the practice was to say the whole Our Father and the whole Hail Mary in silence (without even beginning “Our Father” aloud); after the end of Hail Mary (which was most likely the short form, omitting ‘Holy Mary, Mother of God etc.’) then would come aloud the Ψ . Save us etc.”

12 The Ending

The last instruction in the compline is to kiss the form. Again, from Prof. William Renwick: “The ‘form’ is the floor or the choir stalls, or the wooden rack in front of one. Kissing the form is just that, lean forward (and down as needed) and kiss the form (stall) in front of you. It is analogous to the priest kissing the altar, or a book on a lectern or altar. Note that kissing may mean literally touching with the lips, or it may be interpreted in its more poetic form as ‘a light touch or impact’ (OED).”