The Office of Tenebrae

Wednesday of Holy Week
March 31, 2021 • 7:30 PM

The Cathedral Basilica of Saint Peter in Chains
In the City and Archdiocese of Cincinnati
The word *Tenebrae* comes from the Latin word for "darkness" or "shadows." In another age, monks chanted the ancient psalms and lamentations in the darkness of the night or the very early morning. These early offices (Matins and Lauds) of the Sacred Triduum began to be anticipated the evenings before Thursday and Friday of Holy Week. In modern liturgical practice, Tenebrae is sung only on Wednesday evening and is restricted, at least officially, to the Cathedral Church.

A singular feature of this service is the fact that as the chants and readings progress, candles are gradually extinguished. Here, in the darkened church, we will extinguish all the lights until only one candle remains.

For a brief time – for the length of the Lord's Prayer – we remain in darkness, meditating on the mystery of Christ's death and the apparent victory of darkness and evil in our lives, only to be startled by a loud noise (strepitus) symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the resurrection. The candle then reappears and by its light we pray and leave quietly, anticipating the events to unfold in the Sacred Triduum (*Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil*).

The atmosphere of this service is monastic and it invites your participation and quiet reflection. Music and text are designed to speak symbolically of our lives identified in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**PLEASE NOTE:**
Please respect the solemn nature of this service and those assembled in prayer and worship: kindly silence all mobile telephones and electronic devices while in the cathedral.
ORDER OF SERVICE

The assembly stands as the ministers enter in procession

**Procesional**  *Turn Us Again, O Lord God of Hosts*  
Peter Hallock

> Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts;  
> show us the light of Thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

> O Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou be angry with Thy people that prayeth? Thou feed-  
> est them with the bread of tears and givest them plenteousness of tears to drink. Thou  
> hast made us a very strife unto our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

> Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts;  
> show us the light of your countenance and we shall be whole!

> Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.  
> Thou madest room for it; and when it had taken root, it filled the land. The hills were  
> covered with the shadow of it, and its boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar trees.  
> Turn us again, O God of hosts; show us the light of your countenance and we shall be  
> whole!

> Turn Thee again, Thou God of hosts; look down from heaven, behold, and visit this vine.  
> And the place of the vineyard that Thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that Thou  
> madest so strong for Thyself. It is burnt with fire, and cut down; and they shall perish at  
> the rebuke of Thy countenance. Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, and  
> upon the Son of Man, whom you have made so strong for Thine own self. And so we will  
> not go back from Thee: O let us live, and we shall call upon Thy Name.

> Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts;  
> show us the light of Thy countenance, and we shall be whole.  
> (Psalm 80:3-10, 14-19)

**Call to Prayer**

> Following the prayer, all are seated.

**Motet**  *Civitas sancti tui*  
William Byrd

> Civitatis sancti tui, facta est deserta. Sion deserta facta est. Jerusalem desolata est.

> Thy holy city has become a desert. Sion lies wasted and forlorn. Jerusalem now is desolate.
I.

Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah  
Gregorian Chant

Cantor:  Lamentation 1: 1-14.

Here begins the Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah

Aleph. How lonely she is now, the once crowded city! Widowed is she who was mistress over nations; the princess among the provinces has made a toiling slave.

Beth. Bitterly she weeps at night, tears upon her cheeks, with not one to console her of all her dear ones; her friends have all betrayed her and become her enemies.

Ghimel. Judah has fled into exile from oppression and cruel slavery; yet where she lives among the nations she finds no place to rest: all her persecutors come upon her where she is narrowly confined.

Daleth. The roads to Sion mourn for lack of pilgrims going to her feast; all her gateways are deserted, her priests groan, her virgins sigh; she is in bitter grief.

He. Her foes are uppermost, her enemies are at ease; the Lord has punished her for her many sins. Her little ones have gone away, captive before the foe.

Psalm 69: 30 - 37.

Antiphon
Presider  I am worn out with crying, with longing for my God.
All

Men  This is my prayer to you, my prayer for your favor. In your great love, answer me, O God; with your help that never fails:

Women  Rescue me from sinking in the mud; save me from my foes. Save me from the waters of the deep lest the waves overwhelm me.

Men  Do not let the deep engulf me nor death close its mouth on me. Lord, answer, for your love is kind; in your compassion, turn towards me.

Women  Do not hide your face from your servant; answer quickly for I am in distress. Come close to my soul and redeem me; ransom me pressed by my foes.

Men  You know they taunt and deride me; my oppressors are all before you. Taunts have broken my heart; I have reached the end of my strength.
Psalm prayer

Hebrews 10:19-25, 32-36

II.

Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah

Gregorian Chant

Cantor: Lamentation 4:1-6

Responsory Eram Quasi Agnus

Tomás Luis de Victoria

I was like an innocent lamb: I was led to be sacrificed and I knew it not: my enemies conspired against me, saying: Come, let us put wood into his bread, and root him out of the land of the living. All my enemies contrived mischief against me, they uttered evil speech against me, saying: Come, let us put wood into his bread, and root him out of the land of the living.

II.

Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah

Gregorian Chant

Cantor: Lamentation 4:1-6

Aleph. How tarnished is the gold, how changed the noble metal; how the sacred stones lie strewn at every street corner!

Beth. Sion's precious sons, fine gold their counterpart, now worth no more than earthen jars made by the hands of a potter!

Ghimel. Even jackals bare their breasts and suckle their young; the daughter of my people has become as cruel as the ostrich in the desert.

Daleth. The tongue of the suckling cleaves to the roof of its mouth in thirst; the babes cry for food, but there is no one to give it to them.

He. Those accustomed to dainty food perish in the streets; those brought up in purple now cling to the ash heaps.

Women I looked in vain for compassion, for consolers; not one could I find. For food they gave me poison; in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Men As for me in my poverty and pain let your help, O God, lift me up. I will praise God’s name with a song; I will glorify him with thanksgiving, a gift pleasing God more than oxen, more than beasts prepared for sacrifice.

Women The poor when they see it will be glad and God-seeking hearts will revive; for the Lord listens to the needy and does not spurn his servants in their chains.

Men Let the heavens and earth give him praise, the sea and all its living creatures. For God will bring help to Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah.

Women People shall dwell there in possession. The sons of his servants shall inherit it; those who love his name shall dwell there.

All I am worn out with crying, with longing for my God.

Psalm prayer

Reading

Hebrews 10:19-25, 32-36

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He. Those accustomed to dainty food perish in the streets; those brought up in purple now cling to the ash heaps.
Psalm 22

Yeah. The punishment of the daughter of my people is greater than the penalty of Sodom, which was overthrown in an instant without the turning of a hand.

Antiphon

Presider  They divided my garments among them:
All  They cast lots for my clothing.

Men  My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress.
O my God, I call by day and you give no reply
I call by night and I find no peace.

Women  Yet you, O God, are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our fathers put their trust;
they trusted and you set them free.
When they cried to you, they escaped.
In you they trusted and never in vain.

Men  But I am a worm and no man,
skorned by men, despised by the people.
All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
"He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend."

Women  Yes, it was you who took me from the womb,
entrusted me to my mother’s breast.
To you I was committed from my birth,
from my mother’s womb you have been my God.

Men  Do not leave me alone in my distress;
come close, there is none else to help.
Many bulls have surrounded me,
fierce bulls of Bashan close me in.

Women  Against me they open wide their jaws,
like lions, rending and roaring.
Like water I am poured out,
disjointed are all my bones.

Men  My heart has become like wax,
it is melted within my breast.
Parched as burnt clay is my throat,
my tongue cleaves to my jaws.

Women  Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet
and lay me in the dust of death.
Men
I can count every one of my bones.
These people stare at me and gloat;
they divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.

Women
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me!
Rescue my soul from the sword,
my life from the grip of these dogs.

Men
Save my life from the jaws of these lions,
my poor soul from the horns of these oxen.
I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.

All
They divided my garments among them:
they cast lots for my clothing.

Psalm-prayer

Reading Romans 5:6-15, 18-19

Responsory O Vos Omnes Pablo Casals

O all you who pass along this way, behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow.

Hymn Stand

1. O Sacred Head surrounded
   By crown of piercing thorn!
   O bleeding head so wounded,
   Re-viled and put to scorn!

2. I see your strength and vigor
   All fading in the strife,
   And death with cruel rigor,
   Believing you of life:

3. In this your bitter passion,
   Good Shepherd, think of me
   With your most sweet compassion,
   Un-worthy though I be:

The pow'r of death comes o'er you,
The glow of life decays,
O agony and dying! O love to sinner's free!

Be underneath your cross a-bidding
For ever would I rest,
Yet angels adore you,
And tremble as they gaze.

Jesus, all grace supplying,
O turn your face on me.
In your dear love confiding,
And with your presence blest.

Following the singing of the hymn, all are seated.
III.

Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah


Here begins the prayer of the Prophet Jeremiah

Remember, O Lord, what has befallen us; behold and see our disgrace! Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, our homes to aliens. We have become orphans, fatherless; our mothers are like widows. We must pay for the water we drink, the wood we get must be bought. With a yoke on our necks we are hard driven; we are weary, we are given no rest. We have given the hand to Egypt and to Assyria to get enough bread.

Our fathers sinned and are no more; and we bear their iniquities. Slaves rule over us; there is none to deliver us from their hand. We get our bread at the peril of our lives, because of the sword in the wilderness. Princes are hung up by their hands; no respect is shown to the elders. The old men have quit the city gate, the young men their music. The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to mourning.

But you, O Lord, reign forever; your throne endures to all generations. Why do you forget us forever, why do you so long forsake us? Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old.

Cantor, then all

Je-ru-sa-lem, Je-ru-sa-lem, re-turn to the Lord, your God.

Psalm 4

Antiphon

Presider In peace,
All I will lie down and sleep.

Men When I call, answer me, O God of justice;
from anguish you released me;
have mercy and hear me!

Women My people, how long will your hearts be closed,
will you love what is futile and seek what is false?

Men It is the Lord who grants favors to those whom he loves;
the Lord hears me whenever I call him.

Women Fear him; do not sin: ponder on your bed and be still,
Make justice your sacrifice and trust in the Lord.

Men What can bring us happiness? as many say:
Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord.

Women You have put into my heart a greater joy
than they have from abundance of corn and new wine.

Men I will lie down in peace and sleep comes at once
for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

All In peace, I will lie down and sleep.

Psalm-prayer
Reading
Mark 8:27-38

Responsory  Miserere Mei, Deus  Gregorio Allegri

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great loving kindness. And according to the multitude of your mercies, blot out my iniquity. (Ps. 51)

IV.

Canticle
Philippians 2: 6-11.

Stand

Following the hymn, all are seated
Silent Reflection

**Reading**  
John 3:14-21

**Silent Reflection**

**Responsory**  
*Tenebrae Factae Sunt*  
Marc Antonio Ingegneri

*There was darkness over all the land, when Jesus had been crucified: and about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.*

**Invitation to Prayer**

**Motet**  
*Christus Factus Est*  
Anton Bruckner

*Christ was made obedient for us even unto death,  
even the death of the cross.  
Therefore God also has exalted him,  
and given him a name which is above every name.*

**Lord's Prayer**  
(prayed softly)

**Streitus**

**Concluding Prayer**  
Stand

*Procession of the Choir and Ministers*

*The congregation is asked to remain in their seats at the end of the service until the side aisle lights have come fully on and the procession of the choir and ministers has departed the sanctuary. A free-willing offering will be accepted as you leave.*

**Departure in Silence**
We welcome you to the cathedral for the celebration of our Holy Week liturgies. We hope that you might consider joining us on a regular basis. For information about parish membership, return to active participation or becoming a Catholic, call the cathedral office at 421-5354.
The Sacred Triduum and Easter Day Liturgies at the Cathedral Basilica

Holy Thursday

5:00 PM Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr, celebrant
Music: Cathedral Basilica Choir

Good Friday

12:00 noon Liturgy of the Lord's Passion
Very Rev. Jan Schmidt, celebrant
Music: Cathedral Basilica Choir

5:15 PM Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday

8:45 PM Easter Vigil in the Holy Night
Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr, celebrant
Music: Cathedral Basilica Choir

Easter Sunday

9:00 AM Easter Mass
Reverend Raymond Larger, celebrant
Music: Organ, trumpet and Cantor

11:00 AM Solemn Easter Mass
Very Rev. Jan Schmidt, celebrant
Music: Cathedral Basilica Choir
with brass & tympani