

Marian Antiphons

Alma Redemptoris Mater

Saturday before Advent until feast of the Purification, inclusive

The Latin hexameters are attributed to Hermanus (circa 1054). It has been translated by several poets great and small, and is well known in Newman's translation, "Kindly Mother of the Redeemer." It was a popular hymn in Norman Ireland and in Catholic England.

V

A L-ma * Redemptó-ris Ma-ter, quæ pérvi-a cæ-li

porta manes, Et stella ma-ris, succúrre cadénti súrge-

re qui cu-rat pópu-lo: Tu quæ genu-ísti, na-tú-ra mi-

rante, tu-um sanctum Ge-ni-tó-rem: Virgo pri-us ac po-

sté-ri-us, Gabri-é-lis ab o-re sumens illud Ave, pecca-

tó-rum mi-se-ré-re.

Ave Regina Caelorum

Compline of February 2 until Holy Thursday, exclusive

Originally sung at None for the feast of the Assumption, this antiphon--thought to be from the 12th century--is now sung during Septuagesima and Lent. Despite its use during the solemn season of Lent, it repeatedly greets Mary in words that echo joy and confidence in her intercession. Mary is queen, lady, root, door! These words recall associated biblical allusions used in the ancient Eastern hymn, the *Akathistos*. She is greeted with words of increasing intensity, words which our English translation does not sufficiently render: *ave, salve, gaude, valde*.

6.

A -ve Regína caelórum, * Ave Dómina Ange-lórum :

Sálve rádix, sálve pórtá, Ex qua mundo lux est órta :

Gáude Vírgo glo-ri-ósa, Su-per ómnes spe-ci-ósa : Vále,

o valde decó-ra, Et pro nó-bis Chrístum exó-ra.

Regina Coeli

Compline of Holy Saturday until None of the Saturday after the feast of Pentecost

This is a very old composition, author unknown. Some authors attribute it to St. Gregory the Great (590-604). Others, following a venerable tradition, say that the three first lines were the composition of angels, and the fourth, *Ora pro nobis Deum*, was added by Pope Gregory.

VI

R E-gína cæ-li * lætá-re, alle-lú-ia: Qui- a quem me-

ru-ísti portá-re, alle-lú-ia: Re-surré-xit, sic-ut di-xit,

alle-lú-ia: O-ra pro no-bis De-um, alle-lú-ia.

Salve Regina

First Vespers of the feast of the Most Holy Trinity to the None of the Saturday before Advent

In 1220 the general chapter of Cluny ordered its daily chanting before the high altar, after the Capitulum. The use of the anthem at Compline was begun by the Dominicans about 1221 and the practice spread rapidly. It was introduced into the "modernised." Franciscan Breviary in the thirteenth century. The Carthusians sing it daily at Vespers; the Cistercians sing it after Compline, and the Carmelites say it after every Hour of the Office. It was especially obnoxious to Luther, who several times denounced it, as did the Jansenists also. It is recorded in the lives of several saints that the Blessed Virgin, to show her love for this beautiful prayer, showed to them her Son, at the moment they said "Et Jesum ... nobis post hoc exilium ostende."

5.

S Álve, Regína, * máter mi-se-ricórdi-ae : Ví-ta, dulcé-

do, et spes nó-stra, sálve. Ad te clamámus, éxsu-les, fí-

li-i Hévae. Ad te suspi-rámus, geméntes et fléntes in hac

lacrimárum välle. E-ia ergo, Advocáta nó-stra, fillos tú-os

mi-se-ricórdes ócu-los ad nos convérte. Et Jésum, benedí-

ctum frúctum véntris tú-i, nóbis post hoc exsíl-i-um ostén-

de. O clémens: O pí-a : O dúlcis * Vírgo Ma-rí-a.