

# A Liturgy for Matins

*The word "matins" is derived from Latin 'matutinus,' which is morning. It was at first applied to the psalms recited at dawn, but later became attached to the prayer offered, according to the Rule of Saint Benedict, at the eighth hour of the night (that is, about 2 a.m.) Between the vigil office and the dawn office there was in the long winter nights an interval which "should be spent in study by those who need a better knowledge of the Psalter or the lessons."*

## *Opening Verses*

O Lord, open my lips,  
**and my mouth shall declare your praise.**

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

## *Psalmody*

### *Psalm 95*

Give glory to God, our light and our life.  
Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;  
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.  
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving  
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.  
For the Lord is a great God  
and a great king above all gods.  
In his hand are the caverns of the earth;  
the heights of the hills are also his.  
The sea is his for he made it;  
and his hands have molded the dry land.  
Oh, come, let us bow down and bend the knee,  
and kneel before the Lord, our maker.  
For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture  
and the sheep of his hand.

### *Psalm 3*

O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me;  
many are saying to me, 'There is no help for you in God.'  
But you, O Lord, are a shield around me,  
my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.  
I cry aloud to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy hill.  
I lie down and sleep;  
I wake again, for the Lord sustains me.

I am not afraid of tens of thousands of people  
who have set themselves against me all around.

Rise up, O Lord! Deliver me, O my God!  
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;  
you break the teeth of the wicked.

Deliverance belongs to the Lord;  
may your blessing be on your people!

*Psalm 94*

O Lord, you God of vengeance,  
you God of vengeance, shine forth!  
Rise up, O judge of the earth;  
give to the proud what they deserve!  
O Lord, how long shall the wicked,  
how long shall the wicked exult?

They pour out their arrogant words;  
all the evildoers boast.  
They crush your people, O Lord,  
and afflict your heritage.  
They kill the widow and the stranger,  
they murder the orphan,  
and they say, 'The Lord does not see;  
the God of Jacob does not perceive.'

Understand, O dullest of the people;  
fools, when will you be wise?  
He who planted the ear, does he not hear?  
He who formed the eye, does he not see?  
He who disciplines the nations,  
he who teaches knowledge to humankind,  
does he not chastise?  
The Lord knows our thoughts,  
that they are but an empty breath.

Happy are those whom you discipline, O Lord,  
and whom you teach out of your law,  
giving them respite from days of trouble,  
until a pit is dug for the wicked.  
For the Lord will not forsake his people;  
he will not abandon his heritage;

for justice will return to the righteous,  
and all the upright in heart will follow it.

Who rises up for me against the wicked?  
Who stands up for me against evildoers?  
If the Lord had not been my help,  
my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence.  
When I thought, 'My foot is slipping',  
your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up.  
When the cares of my heart are many,  
your consolations cheer my soul.  
Can wicked rulers be allied with you,  
those who contrive mischief by statute?  
They band together against the life of the righteous,  
and condemn the innocent to death.  
But the Lord has become my stronghold,  
and my God the rock of my refuge.  
He will repay them for their iniquity  
and wipe them out for their wickedness;  
the Lord our God will wipe them out.

*Silence for meditation*

*Poem*

"Spring Mysteries" by Christine Volters Painter

Could it be that trees are sung into blooming  
Each spring as birds gather open-throated  
On their long dark branches?  
Or perhaps it is the birds who only sing  
Since they feel the branches humming beneath their tiny feet?  
And what of me? Do I sing because the world is impossibly in blossom?  
Or do I flower because I hear the ancient song?

*The Lord's Prayer*

*Benediction*

The Lord almighty bless us and direct our days and our deeds in his peace.  
**Amen**