

Compline

An Order for Night Prayer

Compline is the seventh and last hour of divine service, and it is as much to say as a 'fulfilling': for, in the end thereof, the seven hours of divine service are fulfilled. And therewith also is ended, and fulfilled, speaking, eating, and drinking, and labouring, and all bodily businesses. So that after that time ought to be kept great stillness and strait silence, not only from words, but also from all noises and deeds save only privy and soft prayer, and holy thinking, and bodily sleep. For compline betokeneth the end of man's life, or the end of the world, when the chosen of our Lord shall be delivered from all travail and woe, and be brought to endless quiet and rest. And therefore each person ought to dispose him to bed-ward, as if his bed were his grave.

— Thomas Fishbourne [attrib.], *The Myrroure of Oure Lady*, 1420s
(ed. Richard Fawkes, 1530, fol. 89v)

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TEXT *The Book of Common Prayer with the Additions and Deviations Proposed in 1928* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928); rearranged with additions, *Common Worship: Night Prayer (Compline) in Traditional Language* (London: Church House, 2000)

MUSIC W.H. Frere and G.H. Palmer, *The Order of Compline Throughout the Year* (Wantage: St Mary's Convent, 1896)

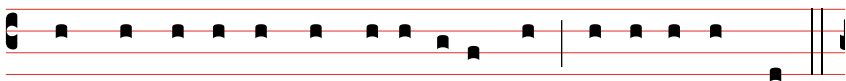
[J.H. Arnold], *An Order for Compline* (Burnham: Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society, 1929); rearranged, *Compline: An Order for Night Prayer in Traditional Language* (Salisbury: Royal School of Church Music, 2005)

Liber antiphonarius pro diurnis horis, vol. 2, *Psalterium* (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 2006)

William Renwick, *Sarum Compline: BCP English* (Hamilton, ON: Gregorian Institute of Canada, 2018), <http://sarum-chant.ca>

Compline

Preparation

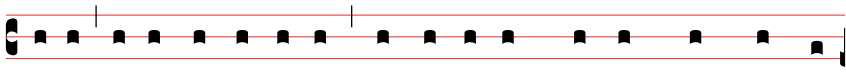


℣. The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

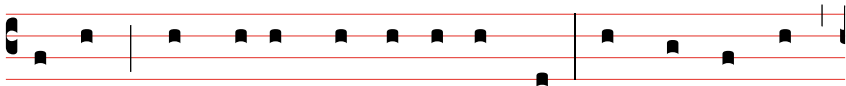


℟. Amen.

Brethren, be sober, be vig-ilant; because your adversary the



devil, as a roaring li-on, walketh about, seeking whom he may



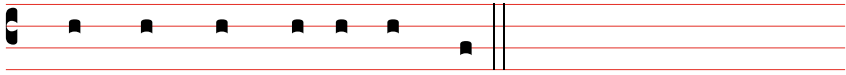
devour: Whom resist, steadfast in the faith. But thou, O Lord,



have mercy upon us. ℟. Thanks be to God.



℣. Our help is in the name of the Lord;



℟. Who hath made heaven and earth.

A period of silence for reflection on the past day may follow.

The following or other suitable words of penitence may be used

WE confess to God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, through our own grievous fault. Wherefore we pray God to have mercy upon us.

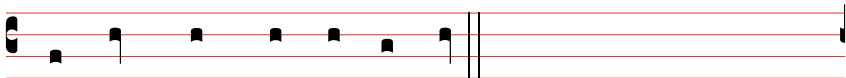
Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us all our sins and deliver us from all evil, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A priest may say

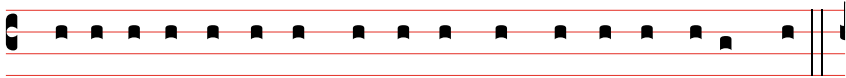
MAY the almighty and merciful Lord grant unto you pardon and remission of all your sins, time for amendment of life, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



O God, make speed to save us;



℟. O Lord, make haste to help us.



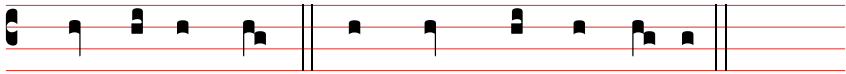
♯. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;



℞. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world



without end. Amen.



♯. Praise ye the Lord; ℞. The Lord's name be praised.

Hymn: *Te lucis ante terminum*

Here may follow this or some other hymn.

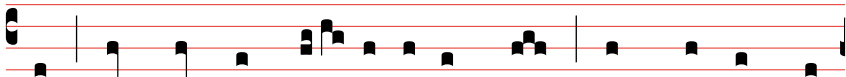
Festal melody, for Saturday, Sunday, and feast days

Hymn.
VIII

B



efore the ending of the day, Cre-a-tor of the world we



pray, That with thy wont-ed favour thou Wouldst be our guard



and keeper now.

Ferial melody, for ordinary weekdays

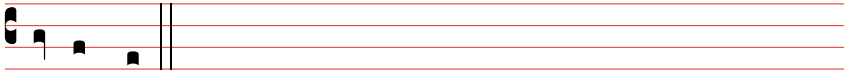
Hymn.
VIII

B

efore the ending of the day, Cre-a-tor of the world we

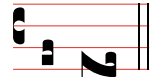


pray, That with thy wonted favour thou Wouldst be our guard and



keeper now.

- 2 From all ill dreams defend our eyes,
From nightly fears and fantasies;
Tread under foot our ghostly foe,
That no pollution we may know.



Amen.

- 3 O Father, that we ask be done,
Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son;
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,
Doth live and reign eternally.



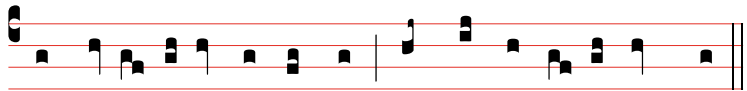
A-men.

Psalmody

Ant.
VIII.i

H


ave mercy upon me, O God, and hearken un-to my prayer.



Or, from Easter until Trinity Sunday

Ant.
viii.i

A

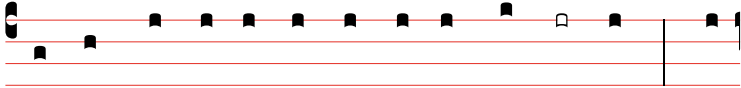


L-le-lu-ia, * al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.


One or more of the following psalms may be used

Psalm 4, *Cum inuocarem*

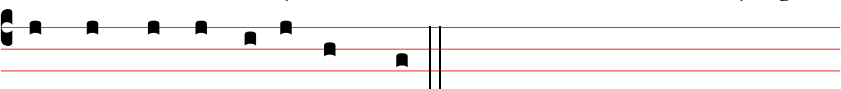
H



ear me when I call, O God of my *righteousness* * thou



hast set me at lib-er-ty when I was in trouble; have mercy upon



me, and hearken *un-*to my prayer.

- 2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye blaspheme mine *hon-*our : and have such pleasure in vanity, and seek *af-*ter leasing?
- 3 Know this also, that the Lord hath chosen to himself the man that is *god-*ly : when I call upon the Lord *he* will hear me.
- 4 Stand in awe, and *sin* not : commune with your own heart, and in your *cham-*ber, and be *still*.
- 5 Offer the sacrifice of *right-*eousness : and put your *trüst* in the Lord.

- 6 There be many that say : Who will *shew* us a-ny good?
- 7 Lord, *lift* thou up : the light of thy counten-*ance* upon us.
- 8 Thou hast put gladness in my *heart* : since the time that their corn and wine and *oil* in-creas-ed.
- 9 I will lay me down in peace, and *take* my rest : for it is thou, Lord, only, that makest me *dwell* in safety.

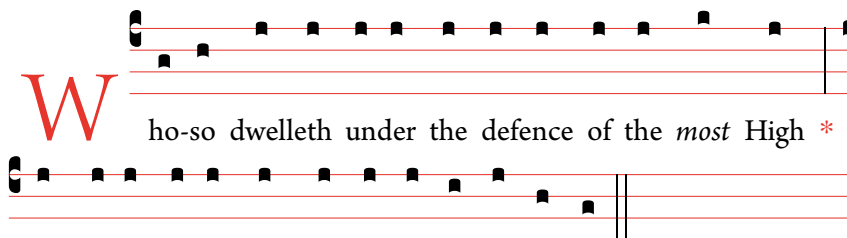
Psalm 31.1–6, In te Domine speravi

I n thee, O Lord, have I *put* my trust * let me never be put

to confusion, de-liv-er me *in* thy righteousness.

- 2 Bow down thine *ear* to me : make haste to de-liv-er me.
- 3 And be thou my strong rock, and house of de-*fence* : that thou *may*-est save me.
- 4 For thou art my strong rock, and my *cas*-tle : be thou also my guide, and lead me *for* thy name's sake.
- 5 Draw me out of the net that they have laid privily *for* me : *for* thou art my strength.
- 6 Into thy hands I commend my *spi*-rit : for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.

Psalm 91, *Qui habitat*



shall abide under the shadow of *the* Almighty.

- 2 I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope, and my *strong*-hold : my God, *in* him will I trust.
- 3 For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the *hunt*-er : and from the *noi*-some pes-ti_lence.
- 4 He shall defend thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his *fea*-thers : his faithfulness and truth shall be thy *shield* and buckler.
- 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by *nigh*t : nor for the arrow that *fli*-eth by day;
- 6 For the pestilence that walketh in *dark*-ness : nor for the sickness that destroyeth *in* the noonday.
- 7 A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy *right* hand : but it shall *not* come nigh thee.
- 8 Yea, with thine eyes shalt *thou* be_hold : and see the reward of *the* ungodly.
- 9 For thou, Lord, *art* my_hope : thou hast set thine house of de-fēnce ve-ry_high.

- 10 There shall no evil happen *un-to* thee : neither shall any plague come *nigh* thy dwelling.
- 11 For he shall give his angels charge *o-ver* thee : to keep thee in all thy ways.
- 12 They shall bear thee in their *hands* : that thou hurt not thy *foot* against a stone.
- 13 Thou shalt go upon the lion and *ad-der* : the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread *un-der* thy feet.
- 14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I *de-li-ver* him : I will set him up, because *he* hath known my name.
- 15 He shall call upon me, and I will *hear* him : yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and bring *him* to honour.
- 16 With long life will I satisfy *him* : and shew him *my* salvation.


Psalm 134, Ecce nunc

Behold now, *praise* the Lord * all ye *servants* of the Lord;

- 2 Ye that by night stand in the house of the *Lord* : even in the courts of the *house* of our God.
- 3 Lift up your hands in the sanctu-*ar-y* : — and praise the Lord.
- 4 The Lord that made heaven and *earth* : give thee blessing *out* of Sion.

At the end of the psalms

Glory be to the Father, and to the *Son* : and to the Ho-ly_Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever *shall* be : world with-out
end. Amen.

Ant. 

Have mercy upon me, O God, and hearken un-to my prayer.

Or, from Easter until Trinity Sunday


Ant. 

AL-le-lu-ia, * al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.

Scripture Reading

One of the following short lessons or another suitable passage is read

Jeremiah 14.9

Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by


thy name. Leave us not, O Lord our God.

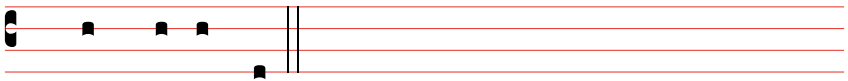
or

COME unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give
you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek

and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. *Matthew 11.28-30*

or

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. *Hebrews 13.20, 21*



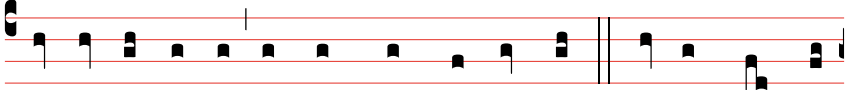
R. Thanks be to God.

The following responsory may be used

Resp.
VI

In-to thy hands, * O Lord, I commend my spirit.

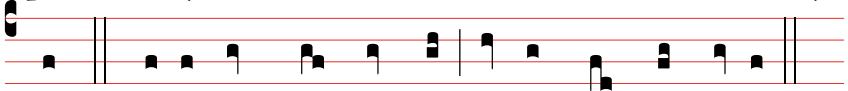
R. In-to thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. **Ps.** For thou



hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth. **R.** I commend my



spirit. **Ps.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy



Ghost. **R.** In-to thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Or, in Easter

Resp.
VI

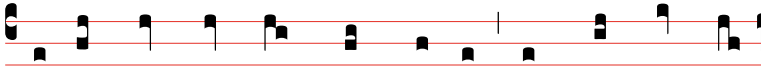
In-to thy hands, * O Lord, I commend my spirit. Al-le-
lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. **R.** In-to thy hands, O Lord, I commend my
spirit. Al-le- lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. **V.** For thou hast redeemed me, O
Lord, thou God of truth. **R.** Al-le- lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. **V.** Glory be to
the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. **R.** In-to thy
hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. Al-le- lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.

After the responsory

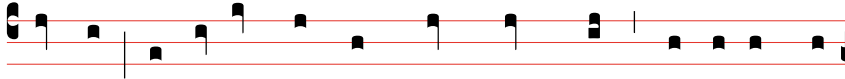
Keep me as the apple of an eye;
R. Hide me under the shadow of thy wings.

Luke 2.29–32, *Nunc dimittis*


Ant.
III.IV



Preserve us, * O Lord, while waking, and guard us while

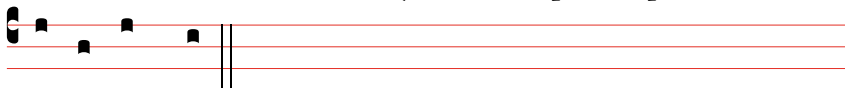


sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we



may rest in peace. *In Easter:* Al-le- lu-ia.

Lord, now lettest thou thy *servant* depart in peace * accord-



ing to thy word.

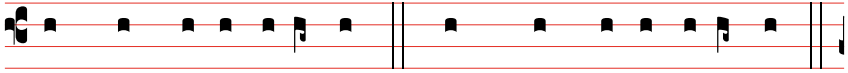
- 2 For mine *eyes* have *seen* : thy *sal*-va-tion,
- 3 Which thou *hast* pre-par-ed : before the face of *all* people;
- 4 To be a light to *light*-en the Gentiles : and to be the glory of thy *peo*-ple Is-ra-el.

Glory be to the *Fa*-ther, and to the Son : and to *the* Ho-ly Ghost;

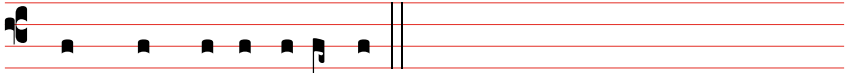
As it was in the beginning, is now, and *ev*-er shall be : world with-out *end*. Amen.

The antiphon is repeated

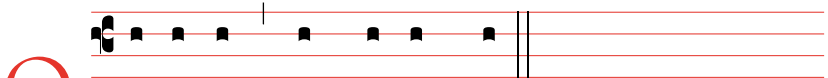
Prayers



Lord, have mercy upon us. **R.** Christ, have mercy upon us.



Ps. Lord, have mercy upon us.

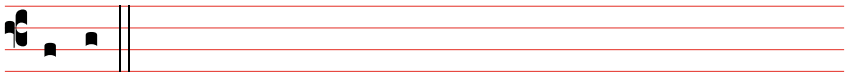


Our Father, which art in heaven,

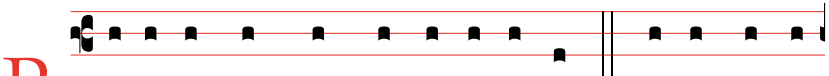
Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; In earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.



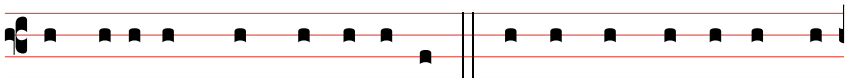
And lead us not in-to temptation; But deliv-er us from e-vil.



Amen.



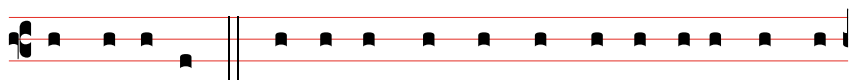
Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers; **R.** To be praised



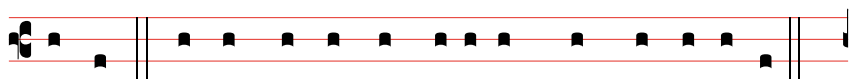
and glorified above all for e-ver. **Ps.** Let us bless the Father, the



Son, and the Holy Ghost; **R.** Let us praise him and magni-fy



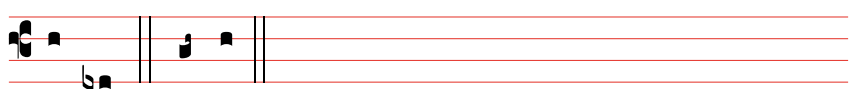
him for e-ver. **ψ.** Blessed art thou, O Lord, in the firmament of



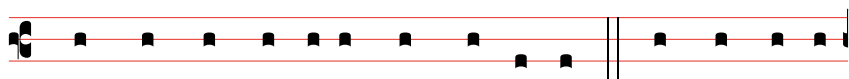
heaven; **R.** To be praised and glorified above all for e-ver.



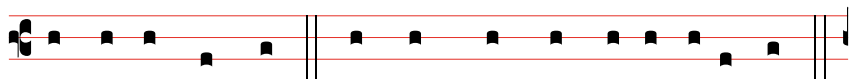
ψ. The almighty and most merci-ful Lord guard us and give us his



blessing. **R.** Amen.



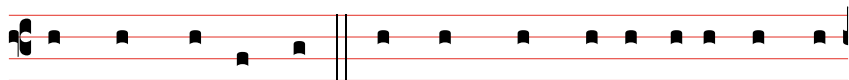
[**ψ.** Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us; **R.** That thy people



may rejoice in thee? **ψ.** O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us;



R. And grant us thy salvation. **ψ.** Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us



this night without sin; **R.** O Lord, have mercy upon us, have

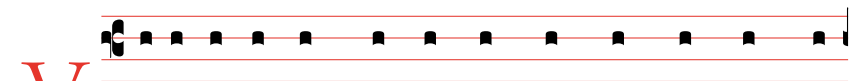


mercy upon us. **Ps.** O Lord, hear our prayer; **R.** And let our cry

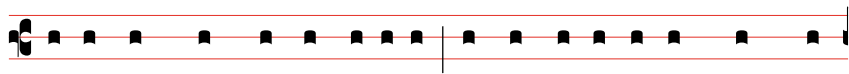


come un-to thee.] **Ps.** Let us pray.

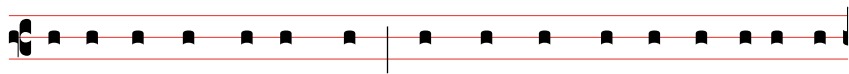
One or more of the following collects is used



V is-it, we beseech thee, O Lord, this place, and drive from



it all the snares of the en-emy; let thy ho-ly angels dwell here-



in to preserve us in peace; and may thy blessing be upon us



ev-ermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

L IGHTEEN our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

O LORD Jesus Christ, son of the living God, who at this evening hour didst rest in the sepulchre, and didst thereby sanctify the grave to be a bed of hope to thy people; Make us so to abound in sorrow for our sins, which were the cause of thy passion, that when our bodies lie in the dust, our souls may live with thee; who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God world without end. **Amen.**

LOOK down, O Lord, from thy heavenly throne, illuminate the darkness of this night with thy celestial brightness, and from the sons of light banish the deeds of darkness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BE present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may repose upon thy eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

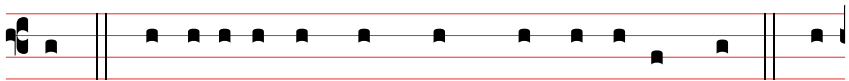
Conclusion



Ps. We will lay us down in peace and take our rest. **R.** For it is thou,



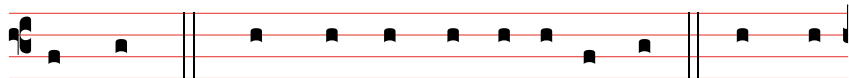
Lord, on-ly that makest us dwell in safety. **Ps.** Abide with us, O



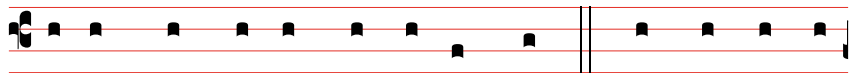
Lord, **R.** For it is toward evening and the day is far spent. **Ps.** As



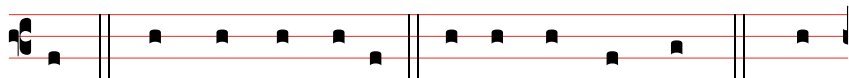
the watchmen look for the morning, **R.** So do we look for thee,



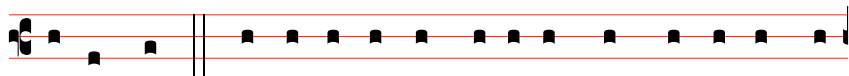
O Christ. [Ψ. Come with the dawning of the day, R̄. And make



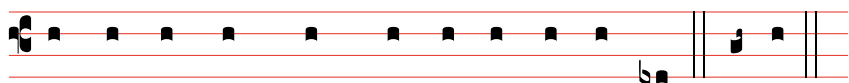
thyself known in the breaking of bread.] Ψ. The Lord be with



you; R̄. And with thy spirit. Ψ. Let us bless the Lord. R̄. Thanks

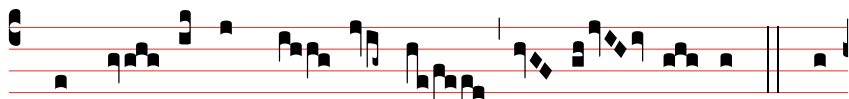


be to God. Ψ. The almighty and merci-ful Lord, the Father, the

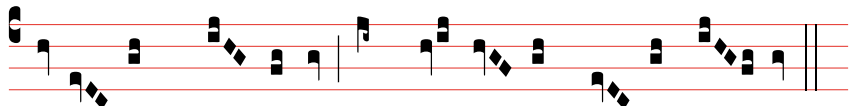


Son and the Holy Ghost, bless us and preserve us. R̄. Amen.

The conclusion alternatively begins



Ψ. We will lay us down in peace and take our rest. R̄. For



it is thou, Lord, on-ly that mak-est us dwell in safe- ty.