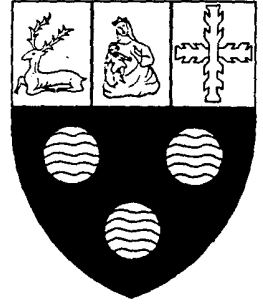


Southwell
Minster

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



NIGHT OFFICE
(MEDIEVAL YORK USE)

LECTIONARY

Eve of All Saints

Thursday 31 October 2024

8.00pm

FIRST NOCTURN

During the final psalm the server lights the candles at the lectern

VERSICLE sung by the choir, all facing the High Altar

Exsultent iusti in conspectu Dei:	<i>Let the righteous rejoice before God:</i>
(silently) Et delectentur in laetitia.	<i>And be delighted with gladness.</i>

LORD'S PRAYER said silently until the concluding petition

And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.

The congregation turn inwards and remain standing until after the Blessing of the Reader

FIRST READING read by the Canon Precentor

<i>Reader</i>	Pray my Lord, a blessing
<i>Priest</i>	Give us the gift of pardon, O King, the Three and One.
<i>All</i>	Amen <i>(Wait for the congregation to sit)</i>

We read in [Bede's] *Ecclesiastical History* that St Boniface, who was the fourth after the blessed Gregory to hold the bishopric of the city of Rome, by his prayers obtained from the Caesar Phocas that the temple at Rome which the ancients previously called the Pantheon (because it seemed to represent all the gods) be given to the Church of Christ. After eliminating all the defilement therein, he made it a church of the holy mother of God and of all Christ's martyrs, so that, having expelled the multitude of demons, a multitude of the saints might have a memorial there, and that all the people on 1st November, as on Christmas Day, should gather at the church which was consecrated in honour of all the saints, and that after the solemn mass had been celebrated there by the

apostolic see's bishop and everything had been carried out correctly, each should joyfully go home.

From this custom of the holy Roman church, then, as the Christian religion grew, it was decreed that, on the aforementioned day, all the saints' honour and memory should be kept in churches of God built throughout the length and breadth of the world, so that whatever through ignorance and negligence or through obligation of worldly affairs human fragility had not completely carried out might be acquitted in this holy observation, in order that we, protected by their patronage, might be able to come to the supernal joys of the starry heavens.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

FIRST RESPONSORY *sung by the choir*

Benedicat nos Deus, Deus noster, benedicat nos Deus, * Et metuant eum omnes fines terrae.	<i>God, our God, shall bless us; our God shall bless us, * And all the ends of the Earth shall fear him.</i>
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V. Deus misereatur nostri et benedicat nos Deus, Et metuant...	<i>V. God shall have mercy upon us and God shall bless us, And all...</i>
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SECOND READING *read by a representative of Chapter*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest May Jesse's flourishing branch bring us to the true
Essence.

All **Amen**

The blessed mother of God and ever-virgin Mary is, after her son, rightly venerable and glorious on today's solemnity. She is our lord Jesus Christ's mother according to the flesh, from the seed of Abraham, from the tribe of Judah. The rod of Jesse, the North Star, handmaiden of God, queen of the nations, mistress of kings, betrothed of the Lord, mother of Christ, created a temple, a temple of the Creator, a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit, like a beautiful dove; 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun', a reproach to Eve, renewal of life, the gate of heaven, glory of women, head of the virgins, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up, a well of living waters. She shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon, flourishing like a palm tree, like a green olive tree in the house of God. Holy virgin, prudent virgin, and one of the number of the prudent. Most beautiful virgin, chaste virgin, beautiful in appearance, shining in soul, clear in faith, brilliant in mind, devoted in love of virginity, prepared to be obedient. Prudent in the mystery

entrusted to her, pacific under persecution, suffering inwardly with Christ's suffering.

Predicted by God's prophets, announced in advance by the wisdom-loving saints, hailed by the archangel, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit and defended by the same, not knowing a man's seed, made fertile with offspring. Virgin in marriage, made joyful by a son, conceiving in faith, begetting joy. Virgin before birth, virgin during birth, virgin after birth. This virgin held in her sacred womb him whom the world could not contain. This virgin swaddled in blankets he who holds the world in his hand. He who made the whole world from nothing, the virgin Mary beheld on the Cross as if being weighed in the balance. He who lacked nothing by way of heavenly majesty, the virgin Mary is believed to have seen with her own eyes ascending to heaven.

May we therefore deserve to be helped by the prayers of she who deserved to be the mother of our Creator, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND RESPONSORY *sung by the choir*

Felix namque es, sacra Virgo Maria,
et omni laude dignissima:

* Quia ex te ortus est sol iustitiae,
Christus Deus noster.

*Blessed indeed art thou, holy Virgin
Mary, and most worthy of all praise:*

** For from thee has arisen the Sun of
Righteousness, Christ our God.*

V. Ora pro populo, interveni pro
clero, intercede pro devoto femineo
sexu; sentiant omnes tuum levamen
quicumque celebrant tuam
commemorationem, Quia ex te...

*V. Pray for the people, intervene for the
clergy, intercede for the female devoted;
may all those who celebrate thy
commemoration know thy help, For
from thee...*

THIRD READING *read by a Priest Vicar*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest May the Creator of the world unite us with the angelic
bands.

All **Amen**

Through the angelic spirits, for the praise and glory and honour of His name and majesty forever, He put in wonderful order the celestial kingdom of heaven. We should fear speaking more of this, because it is for God alone to know how and in what way their nature, invisible to us, remains in His purity alone, without contagion or diminution. But we know that there are nine orders of angels to carry out God's judgements and offices, as sacred eloquence witnesses. Their spheres of influence and power are distinguished subtly and miraculously by the will of the Almighty.

Some of them come to us in the world as messengers to preach of future events; others are established for this purpose, that through them signs and miracles might be done more frequently.

Others preside over the angelic spirits who are subject to them, and by their dispositions rule them in carrying out the divine mysteries. Others are preeminent over the others in marvellous power, because of which the other troops of angels are subject to their obedience. Yet others are so replete with divine grace that the Lord makes his seat within them and through them decrees His judgments. Still others contemplate God's glory more closely and are filled with proportionally more perfect knowledge. Finally, other troops of angels are joined to God such that no others can be between them and God, their love burning all the more for how exquisitely they behold the glory of His divinity. As we said, it is by such distinctions that the celestial kingdom of heaven, put in order wonderfully by God the Creator, has existed from the first beginnings of the life of the blessed spirits.

We believe, O dearest brethren, that this day's solemnity is consecrated by all these troops of angels, so honourable and beloved to God. But behold, while we are probing the secrets of heaven's citizens, we have digressed beyond the limits of our frailty. For now let us keep silent about heavenly secrets, and may we cleanse the stains of our sins before the Creator's eyes, so that we might be able to come to them of whom we speak.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

*** The reader extinguishes the candles at the lectern
before returning to their stall. ***

SECOND NOCTURN

VERSICLE *sung by the choir, all facing the High Altar*

Laetamini in domino
et exsultate justi:
(silently) Et gloriamini
omnes recti corde.

*Be glad in the Lord
and rejoice, O ye just:
And glory in Him in your heart,
all ye righteous.*

LORD'S PRAYER *said silently until the concluding petition*

And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.

The congregation turn inwards and remain standing until after the Blessing of the Reader

FOURTH READING *read by a Churchwarden*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest May the order of prophets lessen the punishments of
our souls.

All **Amen** (*Wait for the congregation to sit*)

Let us begin to say something about that same feast, so beautiful and splendid, which is honourably dedicated not only to the spirits of the angels we spoke of before, but also to all the saints who from the beginning of the world were born on Earth.

The first of them were the patriarchs, men religious and glorious in their lifetimes, fathers of the prophets and apostles, whose memory will not be abandoned and whose name endures in eternity, for they were found worthy before God; splendid in faith, preeminent in hospitality, astute in understanding, wise in works, rich in worldly goods, restorers and remakers of the world, famous for justice, long-suffering in hope, obedient to commandments, believers in promises, made hosts of angelic guests, seeing the Lord face-to-face, prudent in counsel,

victorious in battle, ruling the world's condition, obtaining the realm's sceptre. The posterity of their empire did not cease until Christ, born from their seed through the womb of an untouched virgin, who is the hope of all the nations, appeared shining in the world, and took back and kept the primacy and monarchy of the whole world.

The election of the prophets follows them, with whom God spoke and showed them His secrets so that they might be able to know and tell of those things which were to come as if they were present, having been illuminated by the Holy Spirit. By the preaching of prophecies they were made leaders of the people.

Now, however, let us return to those whom the waves of baptism and the spilling of Christ's blood purged and cleansed, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, from the error of hereditary sin, from the ancient squalor of paganism, under a new covenant. Blessed are the eyes of those who deserved to see Christ coming in flesh! John the Baptist, who was conceived at the annunciation of the same angel as Christ, who at the beginning held the first place in preaching and baptism, who recognised Jesus by sight as him who had come to take away the sins of the world and by a finger pointed him out, saw this splendid sight. As Christ witnessed, 'among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater man than he.' He, worthily, was named the precursor of the Lord, herald of the Judge, a prophet of the Most High, because when he was not yet born he prophesied Christ's coming to the world and anticipated his descending to Hell to redeem the souls there with his glorious passion.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

FOURTH RESPONSORY *sung by the choir*

Inter natos mulierum,
non surrexit maior Johanne Baptista,
* Qui viam Domino praeparavit in
eremo.

*Among them that are born of women,
there hath not risen greater than John
the Baptist, * Who prepared the way of
the Lord in the wilderness.*

V. Fuit homo missus a Deo
cui nomen Johannes erat. Qui viam...

*V. There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John, Who prepared...*

FIFTH READING *read by a Representative of the Friends of Southwell Cathedral*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest May the company of the apostles always be our ally.

All **Amen**

With this chosen athlete of God, [John the Baptist,] accords the number of the twelve apostles, whom divine providence chose out of everyone in the world, by the first virtues of miracles, to build the foundations of the new faith and also to build up the state of the tender Church, so that their preaching might sound across the whole Earth and their words might cross to the ends of their whole world.

They were like young vines, clinging to the true vine that is Christ, whose fruit endures forever and does not wither, to whom the Lord spoke and said: 'Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven'. And again: 'Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I

have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you'.

And he promised that whatsoever they bound on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever they shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. And again, he predicted that when he shall have come to judge the world they shall sit on twelve thrones and judge the orb of the world with him. As we believe, this day is declared to be subject to such patrons.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

FIFTH RESPONSORY *sung by the choir*

Qui sunt isti qui ut nubes volant,	<i>Who are these that fly along like clouds,</i>
* Et quasi columbae ad fenestras suas?	<i>* And are like doves to their nest?</i>

V. Candidiores nive, nitidiores lacte,	<i>V. They are purer than snow, whiter</i>
rubicundiores ebore antiquo,	<i>than milk, ruddier than the old ivory,</i>
Et quasi...	<i>And are like...</i>

SIXTH READING *read by an Organist*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest May Christ's grace cause us to be placed with the
 martyrs.

All **Amen**

The triumphal name of 'martyrs' is applied to those who through divers kinds of torments imitated Christ's passion, not wearying of their hearts' desires. Some were killed by the sword, others burned in fire, others beaten with scourges, others pierced by spikes, others hung on a gallows, others in the peril of the open sea, others skinned alive, others given to chains. Some had their tongues cut out, some crushed by stones, some afflicted with cold, some tortured by hunger. Others had their hands or other limbs hacked off by blows and, naked, endured the spectacle of public abuse for sake of the Lord's name.

These individuals are triumphant and friends of God, who, spurning the commands of the leaders of the sinners, are now crowned and receive the palms of their labours. For they were founded on the firm rock that is Christ. Of such people, the apostle [Paul], saddened in his mind and crying with sorrow, said: 'Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they

were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy,' and so on.

Now, therefore, we have heard of the struggles and victories of Christ's martyrs. We believe that this day has been sanctified by them, in proportion to their unceasing, tormentuous labour that it might be sanctified in them.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.
All **Thanks be to God.**

*** The reader extinguishes the candles at the lectern
before returning to their stall. ***

THIRD NOCTURN

VERSICLE *sung by the choir, all facing the High Altar*

Justorum animae
in manu Dei sunt:
(silently) **Et non tanget illos
tormentum malitiae.**

*The souls of the righteous
are in the hand of God:
And there shall no torment of
wickedness touch them.*

LORD'S PRAYER *said silently until the concluding petition*

And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.

The congregation turn inwards and remain standing until after the Gospel verse

GOSPEL VERSE AND SEVENTH READING *read by a Lay Clerk*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest May the flock of the confessors purge the sins of the guilty.

All **Amen**

In those days, seeing the multitudes, Jesus went up into a mountain. And so on. (Matthew 5.1–12, opening)

(Wait for the congregation to sit)

We believe the festivity of this day is not unknown to the priests and teachers and confessors of Christ. They water the hearts of the faithful spiritually like heavenly rain, for to bring forward the unwithering fruit of good works. They took care to not only return the talents entrusted to them but in fact to increase them with interest without fraud, for they endeavoured to sow the

good which they learned and understood through the grace of the Holy Spirit not only in their own, but also in others' minds, those of their subjects, in accordance with the apostle's command, through reproving, rebuking, exhorting, and bearing their cure.

Their minds were most lucid, their hands were clean and pure, because they celebrated the sacrosanct mysteries of Christ's body and blood on the altar table and did not cease to offer in the depths of their hearts a living Host pleasing to God: that is, they themselves, without blemish or the immixture of ill deeds. And although they did not know the swords of the persecutors, nonetheless they were not deprived of martyrdom through the merit of their life, worthy to God. Because martyrdom is accomplished not only in the shedding of blood, but also in abstinence from sin and the practice of God's commandments.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

SEVENTH RESPONSORY *sung by the choir*

Sint lumbi vestri praecincti,
et lucernae ardentes in manibus vestris;
* Et vos similes hominibus
expectantibus dominum suum,
quando revertatur a nuptiis.

*Let your loins be girded about and
lamps burning in your hands: and ye
yourselves like unto men that wait for
their lord, when he will return from the
wedding.*

V. Vigilate ergo quia nescitis
qua hora Dominus vester venturus sit.
Et vos...

*V. Watch ye therefore, for ye know not
when your master cometh; and be ye
yourselves...*

EIGHTH READING *read by a Child*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest O flowery virgins, expunge our sorrows.

All **Amen**

The company of virgins and holy women and married women devoted to God and matrons should in no way be believed *not* to be part of the solemnity of the present day. Leaving behind the embraces of marriage and spurning the bearing of children, they preferred to devote themselves to the everlasting Bridegroom who is in heaven, in mind, act, habit and deed.

Pursuing prayers, maintaining fasts, rejoicing in tribulation, longsuffering in the face of verbal insults, courageously struggling under oppression and persecution, not objecting to death because of their chastity in the faith and love of purity, they earned the right to come rejoicing to a marriage with the immaculate Lamb. They unceasingly and freely set about all this, and things similar to this, out of desire for the kingdom of heaven and out of hope of eternal repayment, with the most ardent love;

and thus persevering in the love of God and neighbour, they rejoiced to end their life with God alone.

Thus we are confident that the unique way of life of anchorites is not separate from this day. Through all the places of wilderness, in caves and in little cells, are they who are content with a little food, associate with wild animals, are ministered to by birds, spurn delicacies of food, despise the luxuries of the world, love not worldly praise, flee the sight of man, are accustomed to the speech of angels, shine with many signs of virtues. They renew sight for the blind, firm the steps of the lame, give hearing to the deaf. They overcome demons, restore hands to the crippled, revive the dead.

Verily, because the solemnity of this day is for all of them, not to a degree but completely, most sacredly and excellently, with the greatest unceasing honour, let us, dearest brethren, seek the protections of such intercessors as those of whom we speak, with total intention of mind, so that through the worldly feasts that we perform, through intercession by their merits, we might be able to come to the eternal feasts.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

EIGHTH RESPONSORY *sung by the choir*

Audivi vocem de caelo venientem:	<i>I heard a voice coming from heaven:</i>
Venite omnes virgines sapientissimae, *	<i>Come all ye wisest of virgins, * Take ye</i>
Oleum recondite in vasis vestris dum	<i>oil in your lamps, for the Bridegroom</i>
Sponsus advenerit.	<i>cometh.</i>

V. Media nocte clamor factus est: ecce	<i>V. A cry went up in the middle of the</i>
Sponsus venit. Oleum ...	<i>night: Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!</i>
	<i>Take ye...</i>

NINTH READING *read by a Clerk in Holy Orders*

Reader **Pray my Lord, a blessing**

Priest Rule us, defend us, O God: unite us with all the saints.

All **Amen**

Today, dearly beloved, we celebrate in one joyful solemnity a feast for all the saints, in whose society heaven exalts, in whose patronage Earth rejoices, by whose triumphs the holy Church is crowned, whose confession of faith shines brighter in honour the fiercer the suffering they endured, for while the fighting intensified so too did the glory of the fights. A martyr's triumphs are adorned with many types of suffering, and through graver torments came more important prizes too, since the catholic mother Church, which is spread throughout the length and breadth of the whole globe, was taught by its head Christ Jesus not to fear indignities, crosses, and death, and to be strengthened not by resistance but by endurance. On the other hand, the triumphant glory inspired all those whom the jail enclosed, in a famous throng, to carry on the fight with the same and equal heat of virtue.

O truly blessed mother Church, which the honour of divine dignity illuminates, which the glorious blood of conquering martyrs adorns, which the snow-white virginity of inviolate confession clothes! Neither roses nor lilies are lacking from its flowers. Now, most beloved, let each endeavour to receive the amplest dignity of each honour: crowns either snow-white for virginity or purple for suffering. In the camps of heaven, peace and war have their own flowers by which Christ's soldiers are crowned.

These are the footsteps which the saints left for us when they left for their homeland, so that by following their path we too might follow and take in with them the joys of Paradise, obeying the patriarchs we have already begun to consider. Why would we not hurry and hasten to be able to see our homeland and greet our parents? The numbers of dear ones awaiting us there, parents, brothers, sons – a thronged and copious crowd – wants us too. Already secure in their safety, they are yet solicitous for our salvation. How great is their and our common joy to come to their embrace and gaze! How excellent the wish of those awaiting the fellowship of their companions in heaven! There is the glorious choir of the apostles! There is the number of the prophets, exalting in portents! There is the innumerable population of martyrs, crowned for their victories in combat! And there the most brilliant crowd of virgins rejoices. There too the fortitude of the confessors is praised, and also is determined the repayment of those who kept the Lord's commandments and exchanged their worldly patrimony for treasures in heaven.

Dearly beloved, let us hurry to them with ardent desire, so that we might deserve to be with them always and to rejoice with

them, and presently to come to Christ. We have as our guide on this journey He who is the author of salvation, the prince of light, the bestower of joy, who liveth and reigneth with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reader But You alone have mercy upon us.

All **Thanks be to God.**

*** The reader extinguishes the candles at the lectern
before returning to their stall. ***