



Tenebræ

7:30 PM • March 27, 2024

THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF TENEBRÆ

Tenebræ is a Latin word signifying “darkness,” “shadows,” and “obscurity.” It is a word that pointedly calls our attention to the scriptural accounts of our Lord’s crucifixion: The name of this service is taken from the opening words of the fifth responsory: “*Tenebræ factæ sunt*” — “darkness came over the whole land.” (Mark 15:33; also, Matthew 27:45; Luke 23:44). The word *tenebræ* is, therefore, appropriate to both the time and the ceremonies of the office it identifies. According to a well-ordered liturgical design, *Tenebræ*’s structure works together with its content to evoke the somber mood which will not be dispelled until Holy Week concludes in the Great Vigil of Easter.

Structurally, *Tenebræ* is characterized by the progressive extinguishing of all lights in the church except one candle. At the liturgy’s end, after a moment of silence a loud noise is heard symbolizing the harrowing of hell, the ministers and people depart silently through the shadows cast by this solitary flame.

Complementing and intensifying this liturgical descent into gloom, *Tenebræ*’s content informs and gives substance to the feelings of apprehension stirred by the ebbing light. Taking its form from the early morning offices of Matins and Lauds from monastic practice, the appointed psalms, lessons and prayers of *Tenebræ* form a prolonged contemplation of the events of Jesus’ last days, beginning with the Last Supper and ending with his burial. Betrayal, abandonment, judgment, death: these were the terrors through which Jesus moved during his last days. And, in the end, these dreadful realities are only slightly relieved by the still-obscure hint of resurrection symbolized by the one remaining candle.

WHY INCLUDE TENEBRÆ IN HOLY WEEK?

St. Paul reminds us that we are “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ — if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him” (Romans 8:17). During Holy Week the suffering our Lord endured as he moved toward the cross is happening again liturgically. We need opportunities to share in our Lord’s affliction. After the exhilaration of the Palm Sunday procession, we need to experience Jesus’ week-long descent through humiliation and pain into the lonely shadows of death. Waiting for a thing to happen — whether it be good or bad — is often agonizing. Anticipation is suffering indeed. Nevertheless, we must do precisely that. We must wait. We cannot skip heedlessly from Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday or Good Friday and still grasp the full significance of Easter. Spiritually, we need Holy Week to be intentionally “holy.” We need it to be set apart. We need the week to be exhausting. Only so may we truly know the Easter truth we sing: “The strife is o’er, the battle done, the victory of life is won.”

- Fred C. Elwood

THE OFFICE OF TENEBRÆ

MATINS: THE FIRST NOCTURN

Psalm 69:1-23

Salvum me fac (Tone III.4) Prayer Book, page 679

Psalm 70

Deus, in adiutorium (Tone VIII.1)..... Prayer Book, page 682

Psalm 74

Ut quid, Deus? (Tone IV.4) Prayer Book, page 689

Versicle/Response

V: Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked.

R: From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.

Lesson One: Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet (1:1-5)

How lonely sits the city
that once was full of people!
How like a widow she has become,
she that was great among the nations!
She that was a princess among the provinces
has become a vassal.

She weeps bitterly in the night,
with tears on her cheeks;
among all her lovers
she has no one to comfort her;
all her friends have dealt treacherously with her,
they have become her enemies.

Judah has gone into exile with suffering
and hard servitude;
she lives now among the nations,
and finds no resting-place;
her pursuers have all overtaken her
in the midst of her distress.

The roads to Zion mourn,
for no one comes to the festivals;
all her gates are desolate,
her priests groan;
her young girls grieve,
and her lot is bitter.

Her foes have become the masters,
her enemies prosper,
because the Lord has made her suffer
for the multitude of her transgressions;
her children have gone away,
captives before the foe.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

Responsory One..... setting by Healey Willan (1880-1968)

On the Mount of Olives he prayed to his Father: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. [Matthew 26]

Lesson Two: Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet (1:6-9)

From daughter Zion has departed
all her majesty.
Her princes have become like stags
that find no pasture;
they fled without strength
before the pursuer.

Jerusalem remembers,
in the days of her affliction and wandering,
all the precious things
that were hers in days of old.
When her people fell into the hand of the foe,
and there was no one to help her,
the foe looked on mocking over her downfall.

Jerusalem sinned grievously,
so she has become a mockery;
all who honoured her despise her,
for they have seen her nakedness;
she herself groans,
and turns her face away.

Her uncleanness was in her skirts;
she took no thought of her future;
her downfall was appalling,
with none to comfort her.
“O Lord, look at my affliction,
for the enemy has triumphed!”
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

Responsory Two setting by Healey Willan

My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me: now shall ye see the multitude come about me: Ye shall flee and I go to be sacrificed for you: Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Ye shall flee and I go to be sacrificed for you. [Matthew 26]

Lesson Three: Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet (1:10-14)

Enemies have stretched out their hands
over all her precious things;
she has even seen the nations
invade her sanctuary,
those whom you forbade
to enter your congregation.

All her people groan
as they search for bread;
they trade their treasures for food
to revive their strength.
Look, O Lord, and see
how worthless I have become.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?
Look and see
if there is any sorrow like my sorrow,
which was brought upon me,
which the Lord inflicted
on the day of his fierce anger.

From on high he sent fire;
it went deep into my bones;
he spread a net for my feet;
he turned me back;
he has left me stunned,
faint all day long.

My transgressions were bound into a yoke;
by his hand they were fastened together;
they weigh on my neck,
sapping my strength;
the Lord handed me over
to those whom I cannot withstand.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

Responsory Three setting by Healey Willan

Behold, we have seen him without form or comeliness: his form is gone from him: he hath borne our sins, and his sorrows are for us: he was wounded for our transgressions: and with his stripes we are healed. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. And with his stripes we are healed. [Isaiah 53]

LAUDS

Psalm 63

Deus, Deus meus (Tone II.1) Prayer Book, page 670

Psalm 143

Domine, exaudi (Tone VI) Prayer Book, page 798

Canticle: Isaiah 38:10-20 *Song of Hezekiah (Tone I.2)*

I said: In the noontide of my days
I must depart;
I am consigned to the gates of Sheol
for the rest of my years.
I said, I shall not see the Lord
in the land of the living;
I shall look upon mortals no more
among the inhabitants of the world.

My dwelling is plucked up and removed from me
like a shepherd's tent;
like a weaver I have rolled up my life;
he cuts me off from the loom;
from day to night you bring me to an end;
I cry for help until morning;
like a lion he breaks all my bones;
from day to night you bring me to an end.

Like a swallow or a crane I clamour,
I moan like a dove.

My eyes are weary with looking upward.
O Lord, I am oppressed; be my security!
But what can I say? For he has spoken to me,
and he himself has done it. All my sleep has fled
because of the bitterness of my soul.

O Lord, by these things people live,
and in all these is the life of my spirit.
O restore me to health and make me live!

Surely it was for my welfare
that I had great bitterness;
but you have held back my life
from the pit of destruction,
for you have cast all my sins
behind your back.

For Sheol cannot thank you,
death cannot praise you;
those who go down to the Pit cannot hope
for your faithfulness.

The living, the living, they thank you,
as I do this day;
fathers make known to children your faithfulness.

The Lord will save me,
and we will sing to stringed instruments
all the days of our lives,
at the house of the Lord.

Psalm 150

Laudate Dominum (Tonus Peregrinus) Prayer Book, page 807

Versicle/Response

V. My flesh also shall rest in hope.

R. You will not let your holy One see corruption.

Canticle: The Song of Zechariah

Benedictus Dominus Deus (Tone II.2) Prayer Book, page 92, no. 16

Anthem: *Christus Factus Est* Felice Anerio (c. 1560-1614)

Christ for us became obedient unto death, even death on a cross; therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the Name which is above every name. [Philippians 2:8-9]

Psalm 51

Miserere mei, Deus (recto tono) Prayer Book, page 656

Final Collect

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross.

Nothing further is said. After a period of silence a noise is made, and the burning Christ candle is brought from its hiding place and replaced on the stand.

By its light the ministers and people depart in silence.

LEADERS IN TODAY'S LITURGY

The St. Andrew's Tenebrae Choir

Deborah Friauff, Director

Soprano

Robin Berry
Celia Bridges
Aileen Gatten
Hannah Resnick

Alto

Ally Norris
Haley Olson
Donna Wessel Walker

Tenor

Chris Bickley
Jonathan Gardner
Alfred Hero

Bass

Stephen Bates
Parks Mason
Nathan Sten



Join us for

**Holy Week
and Easter**

at St. Andrew's

MARCH 24 - 31, 2024

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