

*This 7th century Coptic icon eloquently presents Christ in a unique light: not as king, teacher, or even the beloved, but as our friend. Holding the book of the Gospels, Jesus rests His arm on the shoulder of Saint Mina, a Coptic ascetic and martyr of the third century, with the Saviour's words in the ornamental border below. The actual icon is in the Louvre in Paris.*



*An order for  
Compline  
or  
Night Prayer*

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

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
**who made heaven and earth.**

**Most merciful God, we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.**

**Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.**

O God, make speed to save us.

**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Alleluia.**

### [A hymn may be sung](#)

Before the ending of the day,  
Creator of the world, we pray  
That you, with steadfast love, would keep  
Your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,  
From fears and terrors of the night;  
Tread underfoot our deadly foe  
That we no sinful thought may know.

O Father, that we ask be done  
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son;  
And Holy Spirit, by whose breath  
Our souls are raised to life from death.

*Or*

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
**for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.**  
Abide with us, Lord Jesus,  
**for the night is at hand and the day is now past.**  
As the night watch looks for the morning,  
**so do we look for you, O Christ.**

[Come with the dawning of the day  
**and make yourself known in the breaking of the bread.]**

The Lord bless us and watch over us;  
the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us;  
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace.  
**Amen.**

Glory to thee, my God, this night  
For all the blessings of the light;  
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,  
Beneath thy own almighty wings.

Forgive me, Lord, for thy dear Son,  
The ill that I this day have done,  
That with the world, myself and thee,  
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

Teach me to live, that I may dread  
The grave as little as my bed;  
Teach me to die, that so I may  
Rise glorious at the awful day.

O may my soul on thee repose,  
And with sweet sleep my eyelids close,  
Sleep that may me more vigorous make  
To serve my God when I awake.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise him all creatures here below,  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*Or*

God, that madest earth and heaven,  
darkness and light;  
who the day for toil hast given,  
for rest the night;  
may thine angel guards defend us,  
slumber sweet thy mercy send us;  
holy dreams and hopes attend us,  
all through the night.

Guard us waking, guard us sleeping,  
and when we die,  
may we in thy mighty keeping  
all peaceful lie;  
when the last dread call shall wake us,  
do not thou, our God, forsake us,  
but to reign in glory take us  
with Thee on high.

*Or*

The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended,  
the darkness falls at thy behest;  
to thee our morning hymns ascended,  
thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

We thank thee that thy Church, unsleeping  
while earth rolls onward into light,  
through all the world her watch is keeping  
and rests not now by day nor night.

As o'er each continent and island  
the dawn leads on another day,  
the voice of prayer is never silent,  
nor dies the strain of praise away.

The sun that bids us rest is waking  
our brethren 'neath the western sky,  
and hour by hour fresh lips are making  
thy wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord; thy throne shall never,  
like earth's proud empires, pass away;  
thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,  
till all thy creatures own thy sway.

### Thursday

Keep watch, dear Lord,  
with those who wake, or watch, or weep this night,  
and give your angels charge over those who sleep.  
Tend the sick,  
give rest to the weary,  
sustain the dying,  
calm the suffering,  
and pity the distressed;  
all for your love's sake, O Christ our Redeemer.

### Friday

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,  
who at this evening hour lay in the tomb  
and so hallowed the grave  
to be a bed of hope for all who put their trust in you:  
give us such sorrow for our sins,  
which were the cause of your passion,  
that when our bodies lie in the dust,  
our souls may live with you for ever.

### Saturday

Stay with us, O God, this night,  
so that by your strength  
we may rise with the new day  
to rejoice in the resurrection of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Saviour.

## Sunday

Almighty God,  
by triumphing over the powers of darkness  
Christ has prepared a place for us in the new Jerusalem:  
may we, who have this day given thanks for his resurrection,  
praise him in the eternal city  
of which he is the light;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Monday

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 rest upon your eternal changelessness;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Tuesday

Look down, O God, from your heavenly throne,  
illuminate the darkness of this night with your celestial brightness,  
and from the children of light banish the deeds of darkness;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

## Wednesday

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;  
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,  
and may your blessing be always upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Sunday

*Psalms: 104:1,21-33*

- <sup>1</sup> Bless the Lord, O my soul. •  
O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!
- <sup>21</sup> You appointed the moon to mark the seasons, •  
and the sun knows the time for its setting.
- <sup>22</sup> You make darkness that it may be night, •  
in which all the beasts of the forest creep forth.
- <sup>23</sup> The lions roar for their prey •  
and seek their food from God.
- <sup>24</sup> The sun rises and they are gone •  
to lay themselves down in their dens.
- <sup>25</sup> People go forth to their work •  
and to their labour until the evening.
- <sup>26</sup> O Lord, how manifold are your works! •  
In wisdom you have made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.
- <sup>27</sup> There is the sea, spread far and wide, •  
and there move creatures beyond number, both small and great.
- <sup>28</sup> There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan •  
which you have made to play in the deep.
- <sup>29</sup> All of these look to you •  
to give them their food in due season.
- <sup>30</sup> When you give it them, they gather it; •  
you open your hand and they are filled with good.
- <sup>31</sup> When you hide your face they are troubled; •  
when you take away their breath,  
they die and return again to the dust.
- <sup>32</sup> When you send forth your spirit, they are created, •  
and you renew the face of the earth.
- <sup>33</sup> May the glory of the Lord endure for ever; •  
may the Lord rejoice in his works.

*Psalm 134*

<sup>1</sup> Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, •  
you that by night stand in the house of the Lord.

<sup>2</sup> Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary •  
and bless the Lord.

<sup>3</sup> The Lord who made heaven and earth •  
give you blessing out of Zion.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*Jeremiah 14:9*

You, O Lord, are in the midst of us and we are called by your name; leave us not, O Lord our God

**Monday**

*Psalm 4*

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness; •  
you set me at liberty when I was in trouble;  
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

<sup>2</sup> How long will you nobles dishonour my glory; •  
how long will you love vain things and seek after falsehood?

<sup>3</sup> But know that the Lord has shown me his marvellous kindness; •  
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

<sup>4</sup> Stand in awe, and sin not; •  
commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

<sup>5</sup> Offer the sacrifices of righteousness •  
and put your trust in the Lord.

<sup>6</sup> There are many that say, 'Who will show us any good?' •  
Lord, lift up the light of your countenance upon us.

<sup>7</sup> You have put gladness in my heart, •  
more than when their corn and wine and oil increase.

<sup>8</sup> In peace I will lie down and sleep, •  
for it is you Lord, only, who make me dwell in safety.

**Intercessions and thanksgivings may be offered here.**

*(These or other prayers may be used)*

Lord,  
it is night.

The night is for stillness.

Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.

What has been done has been done;  
what has not been done has not been done;  
let it be.

The night is dark.

Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives  
rest in you.

The night is quiet.

Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,  
all dear to us,  
and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.

Let us look expectantly to a new day,  
new joys,  
new possibilities.

In your name we pray.

**Amen.**

Lighten our darkness,

Lord, we pray,

and in your great mercy

defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,

for the love of your only Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**  
For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.  
**I commend my spirit.**

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.

**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.  
**Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

**Save us, O Lord, while waking,  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ  
and asleep may rest in peace.**

<sup>1</sup> Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:  
your word has been fulfilled.

<sup>2</sup> My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;

<sup>3</sup> A light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Save us, O Lord, while waking,  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ  
and asleep may rest in peace.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*Isaiah 30:15*

Thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.

**Tuesday**

*Psalms 143*

<sup>1</sup> Hear my prayer, O Lord,  
and in your faithfulness give ear to my supplications; •  
answer me in your righteousness.

<sup>2</sup> Enter not into judgement with your servant, •  
for in your sight shall no one living be justified.

<sup>3</sup> For the enemy has pursued me,  
crushing my life to the ground, •  
making me sit in darkness like those long dead.

<sup>4</sup> My spirit faints within me; •  
my heart within me is desolate.

<sup>5</sup> I remember the time past; I muse upon all your deeds; •  
I consider the works of your hands.

<sup>6</sup> I stretch out my hands to you; •  
my soul gasps for you like a thirsty land.

<sup>7</sup> O Lord, make haste to answer me; my spirit fails me; •  
hide not your face from me  
lest I be like those who go down to the Pit.

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear of your loving-kindness in the morning,  
for in you I put my trust; •  
show me the way I should walk in,  
for I lift up my soul to you.

<sup>9</sup> Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies, •  
for I flee to you for refuge.

<sup>10</sup> Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God; •  
let your kindly spirit lead me on a level path.



<sup>11</sup> Revive me, O Lord, for your name's sake; •  
for your righteousness' sake, bring me out of trouble.

<sup>12</sup> In your faithfulness, slay my enemies,  
and destroy all the adversaries of my soul, •  
for truly I am your servant.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*Matthew 11:28-end*

Jesus said, 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' *Matthew 11.28-end*

## Wednesday

*Psalms 31:1-5, 19-end*

<sup>1</sup> In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame; •  
deliver me in your righteousness.

<sup>2</sup> Incline your ear to me; •  
make haste to deliver me.

<sup>3</sup> Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me,  
for you are my rock and my stronghold; •  
guide me, and lead me for your name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Take me out of the net  
that they have laid secretly for me, •  
for you are my strength.

<sup>5</sup> Into your hands I commend my spirit, •  
for you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

<sup>19</sup> How abundant is your goodness, O Lord,  
which you have laid up for those who fear you; •  
which you have prepared in the sight of all  
for those who put their trust in you.

<sup>13</sup> You shall tread upon the lion and adder; •  
the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

<sup>14</sup> Because they have set their love upon me,  
therefore will I deliver them; •  
I will lift them up, because they know my name.

<sup>15</sup> They will call upon me and I will answer them; •  
I am with them in trouble,  
I will deliver them and bring them to honour.

<sup>16</sup> With long life will I satisfy them •  
and show them my salvation.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*Hebrews 4:9-11a*

A sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; for those who enter God's rest also cease from their labours as God did from his. Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest.



*1 Thessalonians 5:9,10*

God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.

## Saturday

*Psalm 91*

<sup>1</sup> Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High •  
and abides under the shadow of the Almighty,

<sup>2</sup> Shall say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my stronghold, •  
my God, in whom I put my trust.'

<sup>3</sup> For he shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler •  
and from the deadly pestilence.

<sup>4</sup> He shall cover you with his wings  
and you shall be safe under his feathers; •

his faithfulness shall be your shield and buckler.

<sup>5</sup> You shall not be afraid of any terror by night, •  
nor of the arrow that flies by day;

<sup>6</sup> Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, •  
nor of the sickness that destroys at noonday.

<sup>7</sup> Though a thousand fall at your side  
and ten thousand at your right hand, •  
yet it shall not come near you.

<sup>8</sup> Your eyes have only to behold •  
to see the reward of the wicked.

<sup>9</sup> Because you have made the Lord your refuge •  
and the Most High your stronghold,

<sup>10</sup> There shall no evil happen to you, •  
neither shall any plague come near your tent.

<sup>11</sup> For he shall give his angels charge over you, •  
to keep you in all your ways.

<sup>12</sup> They shall bear you in their hands, •  
lest you dash your foot against a stone.

<sup>20</sup> You hide them in the shelter of your presence  
from those who slander them; •  
you keep them safe in your refuge from the strife of tongues.

<sup>21</sup> Blessed be the Lord! •

For he has shown me his steadfast love  
when I was as a city besieged.

<sup>22</sup> I had said in my alarm,  
'I have been cut off from the sight of your eyes.' •  
Nevertheless, you heard the voice of my prayer  
when I cried out to you.

<sup>23</sup> Love the Lord, all you his servants; •  
for the Lord protects the faithful,  
but repays to the full the proud.

<sup>24</sup> Be strong and let your heart take courage, •  
all you who wait in hope for the Lord.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*1 Peter 5:6,7*

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

## Thursday

*Psalm 16*

<sup>1</sup> Preserve me, O God, for in you have I taken refuge; •  
I have said to the Lord, 'You are my lord,  
all my good depends on you.'

<sup>2</sup> All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, •  
upon those who are noble in heart.

<sup>3</sup> Though the idols are legion that many run after, •  
their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, •  
neither make mention of their names upon my lips.

<sup>4</sup> The Lord himself is my portion and my cup; •  
in your hands alone is my fortune.

<sup>5</sup> My share has fallen in a fair land; •  
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.

<sup>6</sup> I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel, •  
and in the night watches he instructs my heart.

<sup>7</sup> I have set the Lord always before me; •  
he is at my right hand; I shall not fall.

<sup>8</sup> Wherefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoices; •  
my flesh also shall rest secure.

<sup>9</sup> For you will not abandon my soul to Death, •  
nor suffer your faithful one to see the Pit.

<sup>10</sup> You will show me the path of life;  
in your presence is the fullness of joy •  
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*1 Peter 5:8,9*

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil is prowling round like a roaring lion, seeking for someone to devour. Resist him, strong in the faith.

## Friday

*Psalms 139:1-18*

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have searched me out and known me; •  
you know my sitting down and my rising up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.

<sup>2</sup> You mark out my journeys and my resting place •  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

<sup>3</sup> For there is not a word on my tongue, •  
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

<sup>4</sup> You encompass me behind and before •  
and lay your hand upon me.

<sup>5</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, •  
so high that I cannot attain it.

<sup>6</sup> Where can I go then from your spirit? •  
Or where can I flee from your presence?

<sup>7</sup> If I climb up to heaven, you are there; •  
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

<sup>8</sup> If I take the wings of the morning •  
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

<sup>9</sup> Even there your hand shall lead me, •  
your right hand hold me fast.

<sup>10</sup> If I say, 'Surely the darkness will cover me •  
and the light around me turn to night,'

<sup>11</sup> Even darkness is no darkness with you;  
the night is as clear as the day; •  
darkness and light to you are both alike.

<sup>12</sup> For you yourself created my inmost parts; •  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>13</sup> I thank you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; •  
marvellous are your works, my soul knows well.

<sup>14</sup> My frame was not hidden from you, •  
when I was made in secret  
and woven in the depths of the earth.

<sup>15</sup> Your eyes beheld my form, as yet unfinished; •  
already in your book were all my members written,

<sup>16</sup> As day by day they were fashioned •  
when as yet there was none of them.

<sup>17</sup> How deep are your counsels to me, O God! •  
How great is the sum of them!

<sup>18</sup> If I count them, they are more in number than the sand, •  
and at the end, I am still in your presence.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**