

Night Prayer

September 23, 2026

[Thecla of Iconium](#) C.70

*From A New Zealand Prayer Book,
adapted to include elements of BCP Evening Prayer*

The offering of prayer late in the evening, by laity, religious orders or clergy, often called Compline, has sometimes been described as the ‘goodnight prayer of the Church’. It rounds off the day and prepares us for a quiet night. As the psalmist wrote:

*I lie down in peace and take my rest
for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.*

Night Prayer derives its content from the wisdom of the centuries in Scripture and above all in the psalms, but also from contemporary Christian experience of God. It celebrates the awareness that each of us who tries to pray is a part of the human whole. So we are taken over the threshold from daytime, not in a mood of self-centered spirituality, but as representatives of humanity, acknowledging our creaturehood before God.

APPROACH

The angels of God guard us through the night,
and quieten the powers of darkness.

The Spirit of God be our guide
to lead us to peace and to glory.

It is but lost labor that we haste to rise up early, and so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.

For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep. (psalm 127.3)

My brothers and sisters, our help is in the name of the eternal God,
who is making the heavens and the earth.

CONFESSION

**Dear God, thank you for all that is good,
for our creation and for our humanity,
for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,
for the gifts of life and of one another,
for your love which is unbounded and eternal.**

**O thou, most holy and beloved, our Companion,
our Guide upon the way, our bright evening star.**

We repent the wrongs we have done:

Silence

We have wounded your love.

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.

Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Leader: Eternal Spirit, living God, in whom we live and move and have our being, all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you, to the very secret of our hearts and all that rises to trouble us. Living flame burn into us, cleansing wind, blow through us, fountain of water, well up within us, that we may love and praise in deed and in truth. **Amen.**

INVOCATION

Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips,
that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Let us worship the God of love.

Thanks be to God!

Psalm 78:1-7 Part I Attendite, popule

1 Hear my teaching, O my people; *
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

**2 I will open my mouth in a parable; *
I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.**

3 That which we have heard and known,
and what our forefathers have told us, *
we will not hide from their children.

**4 We will recount to generations to come
the praiseworthy deeds and the power of the Lord, *
and the wonderful works he has done.**

5 He gave his decrees to Jacob
and established a law for Israel, *
which he commanded them to teach their children;

**6 That the generations to come might know,
and the children yet unborn; *
that they in their turn might tell it to their children;**

7 So that they might put their trust in God, *
and not forget the deeds of God,
but keep his commandments;

READINGS

First Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

Second Reading: Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus said, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

‘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’.

Hymn (spoken together)

**God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.**

Silence to prayerfully collect our thoughts

Thecla of Iconium

Thecla was a saint of the early Christian Church, and a reported follower of Paul the Apostle. The earliest record of her life comes from the ancient apocryphal [Acts of Paul and Thecla](#). As a young woman she dedicated her life to the demands of Paul that ‘one must fear only one God and live in chastity). With singleness of heart, she broke off relationship with her fiancé,” (unheard of in a patriarchal society), was chastised by Kings and sentenced to death by stake and later to be eaten to death by wild beasts. Fending off both, she gained a massive cult like following, and became the most prominent figure for female empowerment at the time. She traveled to preach the word of God and became an icon encouraging women to also live a life of chastity and follow the word of the Lord.

We share reflections on the day’s scripture.

What do you notice?

What is speaking to you?

What difference does it make?

With unwavering passion, Thecla railed against any/every threat to her devotion to God’s teachings.

How can her work inspire us to think and act on issues that are contrary to God’s teachings today?

PRAYERS

Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.

Keep me, O God, as the apple of your eye;
hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Preserve us, O God, while waking, and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep may rest in your peace.

Commemoration Prayer: Thecla of Iconium

God of liberating power, who called Thecla to proclaim the gospel and did not permit any obstacle or peril to inhibit her: Empower courageous evangelists among us, that men and women everywhere may know the freedom that you offer us in Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

*We offer intercessions and thanksgivings from our heart
either silently or aloud or in the chat function.*

We pray for healing for those on the parish prayer list, including: Andrew, Debbie and Evelyn Bourne, Peter Brown, Lydia Cedrone, John Claya, Jacob DeCarlen-Bumiller, John DeNatale, Donna, Peggy Downs, Erica, Kristen Goddard, Michelle Hager, CJ, Ginny Johnson, Jonathan, Chris Kelsey, Linda, Kevin MacKenzie, Mark Martino, Sara Murphy, Muriel Peters, Mo Pollman, Rebecca, Carolyn and Jeff Robinson, Cheryl Russo, Keith Santarelli, Sheila and Josh, Trudy, CV, Amy Walsh, Charlie Wisner, Kelly Wood, and Alan Wright.

The Lord's Prayer

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples
of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever. Amen.**

**I will lie down in peace and take my rest,
for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.
Let us bless the Earth-maker, the Pain-bearer, the Life-giver,
let us praise and exalt God above all for ever.
May God's name be praised beyond the furthest star,
glorified and exalted above all for ever.**

Night Prayer

**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.**

Sentences to keep us

Christ be within us to keep us,
beside us to guard,
before us to lead,
behind us to protect,
beneath us to support,
above us to bless.

The blessing of God, the eternal goodwill of God, the shalom of God, the wildness
and the warmth of God, be among us and between us, now and always.

Final Versicle

The divine Spirit dwells in us.
Thanks be to God.