



Dreaming of the Holy Rood

a liturgy of the Incarnation
based on the Ruthwell Cross

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The Vision of a Jeweled Cross

The Dreamer

Lo! I will tell of the best of dreams,
what I dreamed in the middle of the night,
after the speech-bearers were in bed.
It seemed to me that I saw a very wondrous tree
lifted into the air, enveloped by light,
the brightest of trees. That beacon was all
covered with gold. Gems stood
beautiful at the surface of the earth, there were five also
up on the central joint of the cross.
All those fair through eternal decree gazed
[on] the angel of the Lord.
[It] was certainly not a wicked person's gallows there,
but holy spirits, men over the earth,
and all this famous creation gazed on him.
Wondrous was that tree of victory, and I stained with sins
wounded sorely with defects, I saw the tree of glory,
honored with garments, shining joyously,
adorned with gold. Gems had splendidly covered the Lord's tree.
I was able, however, to perceive through the gold,
the ancient hostility of wretched ones, [that] it first began
to bleed on the right side. I was all troubled with grief,
I was afraid in the presence of that beautiful sight. I saw that noble beacon
change its coverings and color; sometimes it was drenched with moisture,
soaked with the flow of blood, sometimes adorned with treasure.
Nevertheless, I, lying a long time there,
gazed troubled at the Saviour's tree.

Choir

"Faithful Cross"

Faithful Cross, above all other,
one and only noble Tree,
none in foliage, none in blossom,
none in fruit thy peer may be;
sweet the wood, and sweet the iron,
and thy load, most sweet is he.

Bend, O lofty Tree, thy branches,
thy too rigid sinews bend;
and awhile the stubborn hardness,
which thy birth bestowed, suspend;
and the limbs of heaven's high Monarch
gently on thine arms extend.

Thou alone wast counted worthy
this world's Ransom to sustain,
that a shipwrecked race for ever
might a port of refuge gain,
with the sacred Blood anointed
of the Lamb for sinners slain.

I. Mary, the God-Bearer

Convener

Praise and honor to the Father,
praise and honor to the Son,
praise and honor to the Spirit,

All

Ever three and ever One;
One in might, and one in glory,
While eternal ages run. Amen.

Convener

Both wonderful and mysterious, the history of this bejeweled cross began when the divine persons of the holy Trinity looked upon the breadth and length of our world – the whole circuit of the earth – with love:

seeing it inhabited by so many nations,
seeing the diversity of peoples living in it,
seeing some in peace and others in war,
seeing some weeping and others laughing,
seeing some healthy and others sick,
seeing some being born and others dying.

All

We are humbled and ask for mercy.

Convener

This Divine Majesty in Heaven looked at the diverse humans upon the earth and their many different manners, gestures, and actions in our world:
swearing and blaspheming against God,
wounding and killing one another,

despoiling and polluting the beauty of nature,
hoarding the bounty of creation and allowing others to suffer in need,
sinning in so many other ways and descending into hell through this blindness.

All

We are sinners and ask for mercy.

Convener

Moved by compassion and love, the divine persons of the holy Trinity decided the Son should enter this world and bring about the redemption of this human race. To achieve this goal, the Divine Majesty in Heaven looked upon a young woman barely entering adulthood:

seeing her humility and faith,
seeing her expectation and openness,
and they sent to her an angel.

Reader 1

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Reader 2

Mary [then] set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And [then] Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

The Dreamer

O Glorious, Heavenly Trinity, high and holy,
full of honor, blessed throughout the spacious lands!
Rightfully all people gifted with speech,
all of us hapless dwellers of earth,
with all our might must glorify you on high,
for now the Faithful Saviour has shown us God,
that we might know Him.
Lo! How wondrous the changes brought forth in our lives
since the mild Creator of mankind
received flesh undefiled from a mortal maid;
By means greater than all the dwellers of earth might comprehend,
came the Lord of triumph upon the earth.
How wondrously the Glory of the skies, High Lord of heaven,
through His mother's womb worked to help us all.
And so the Saviour of the nations, the Lord of hosts,
now offers us each day and forever His forgiveness.

II. The Nativity of Jesus

Convener

In mercy and love, God chose to become human, transforming our lives and liberating us from the power of sin.

Reader 1

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. [So] Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Choir

“Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth”

Come, Thou Redeemer of the earth,
And manifest Thy virgin birth:
Let every age adoring fall;
Such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will,
But of the Spirit, Thou art still
The Word of God in flesh arrayed,
The promised Fruit to man displayed.

The virgin womb that burden gained
With virgin honour all unstained;
The banners there of virtue glow;
God in His temple dwells below.
Forth from His chamber goeth He,
That royal home of purity,
A giant in twofold substance one,
Rejoicing now His course to run.

Reader 2

In that region [around Bethlehem] there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Choir

“From God the Father He Proceeds”

From God the Father He proceeds,
To God the Father back He speeds;
His course He runs to death and hell,
Returning on God’s throne to dwell.

O equal to the Father, Thou!
Gird on Thy fleshly mantle now;
The weakness of our mortal state
With deathless might invigorate.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
And darkness breathe a newer light,
Where endless faith shall shine serene,
And twilight never intervene.

All laud to God the Father be,
All praise, eternal Son, to Thee;
All glory, as is ever meet,
To God the Holy Paraclete.

Reader 1

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the time of King Herod, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

' And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Reader 2

After (the wise men) had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.

Choir

“Why, Impious Herod”

Why, impious Herod, vainly fear
that Christ the Saviour cometh here?
He takes no earthly realms away
Who gives the crown that lasts for aye.

To greet His birth the Wise Men went,
led by the star before them sent;
called on by light, towards Light they pressed,
and by their gifts their God confessed.

In holy Jordan's purest wave
the heavenly Lamb vouchsafed to lave;
That He, to whom was sin unknown,
might cleanse His people from their own.

New miracle of power divine!
The water reddens into wine:
He spake the word: and poured the wave
in other streams than nature gave.

All glory, Lord, to Thee we pay
for Thine Epiphany today;
all glory as is ever meet,
to Father and to Paraclete. Amen.

Reader 1

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee.

The Dreamer

You are the wall-stone that the builders of old rejected.
Well it seems that you become the keystone of the spacious hall,
binding in firm embrace wide-running walls and flint unbroken;
that every eye throughout the world may marvel evermore, O Lord of glory!
Through your skilful craft, show the beauty of your handiwork –
truth-firm and triumphant – leaving firm wall upon firm wall.
The work needs the Craftsman to return, the King himself,
and repair that house which now lies decayed under its roof.
For He shaped the body and the limbs of humankind from the clay;

and now the Lord of life shall free that wretched throng from their enemies,
liberate the all-forlorn from fear, as He often did in the past.

III. The Public Ministry of Jesus

Convener

When Jesus began his public life and ministry, he humbly went to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

Reader 1

John [called the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."

Convener

Eternal Lord, help us in our need as we seek resolution of heart,

All

Following you with courage and excitement.

Convener

Give us the understanding of mind to know and embrace the costs of following you,

All

Accepting the insults and abuse that you also bore on our behalf.

Convener

Give us the determination of spirit to take risks in your service,

All

So we may be worthy to be called your disciples.

Convener

These we ask in your name.

All

Amen.

Convener

The Gospel of Saint John tells us of Jesus' first miracle.

Reader 2

There was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." [But] his mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Convener

The Gospel of Saint John also tells us how Jesus miraculously fed 5000 people with five barley loaves and two small fish.

Reader 1

Jesus went to Sea of Galilee], also called the Sea of Tiberias. [And a] large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. [So] Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

[But when Jesus] realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, [so] he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

Choir

"Creator of the Starry Height"

Creator of the starry height,
Thy people's everlasting Light,
Jesu, Redeemer of us all,
Hear thou thy servants when they call.

Thou, sorrowing at the helpless cry
Of all creation doomed to die,
Didst come to save our fallen race
By healing gifts of heavenly grace.

When earth was near its evening hour,
Thou didst, in love's redeeming power,
Like bridegroom from his chamber, come
Forth from a Virgin-mother's womb.

At thy great name, exalted now,
All knees in lowly homage bow;
All things in heaven and earth adore,
and own thee King for evermore.

To thee, O Holy One, we pray,
Our Judge in that tremendous day,
Ward off, while yet we dwell below,
The weapons of our crafty foe.

To God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, Three in One,
laud, honor, might and glory be
from age to age eternally.

Convener

In the Gospel of Saint Luke, we are told of Jesus' compassion and forgiveness when he responds to a woman's remorse while visiting the home of Simon, a pharisee.

Reader 2

[When} one of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, [he] went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner." Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "speak." "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you

see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." [Those] who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" [But Jesus] said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Convener

In Saint John's Gospel, we hear of Jesus healing a blind man and of the man's community to this miracle.

Reader 1

[One day, Jesus] saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

(When) Jesus heard that they had (taken him to the Pharisees and) driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe."

The Dreamer

He who shaped the world, the Spirit-Son of God,
shows us honour and grants us grace,
eternal habitations with the angels.
And He sows varied wisdom of mind
and sets it them the hearts of all people.
Unto one He sends wise abilities of tongue
through the spirit of his mouth and noble insight in his heart,
so richly may one sing and utter all things,
who has might of wisdom hidden in his heart.
And with skillful fingers another may fairly sound the harp before the hosts;
yet another may read aright all godly law,
or tell the mysteries of the stars and the wide universe,
or write skilfully the spoken word.
So toward all humanity the Lord, the Son of God,
directs His gifts and offers honor and power

and bounteous blessings upon the children of earth.
But to no one person does He give all wisdom of heart,
wary that in giving strength beyond others to one
that pride may take hold upon them to their own harm.

Choir

“O Word of Might”

O Word of Might, that springing forth
From out the Father's heart, wast born
To raise our fallen state on earth,
Bring help, and leave us not forlorn.

Illume our breasts with heavenly light,
And set our souls aflame with love,
That we, forsaking things of night,
Shall lift our hopes to joys above.

When from the awful judgment throne
Dread doom unto his foes the Lord
Shall send, and call in tender tone
The just unto their sweet reward;

Let not our souls on that dread day
Be rolled in seething pools of fire;
Let mercy melt thine ire away,
And be thy love our sole desire.

Then to the Father and the Son
And Holy Spirit, one in three,
From first to last, as ages run,
Eternal praise and glory be.

Convener

In Saint John's Gospel, we also hear of the resistance to Jesus by those in authority:

Reader 2

[Shortly after this,] the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs . "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish." Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.

The Dreamer

Lo! We have heard how the Christ-child by His advent
brought again salvation;
how He, the Creator's noble Son,
freed and kept men beneath the clouds,
so that now each mortal, while he dwells here in life,
may choose either the shame of hell or the fame of heaven,
the shining day or the loathsome night,
the power of glory or the pain of darkness,
joy with the Lord or wailing with demons,
bliss with angels or torment with fiends,
either life or death,
whichever the person prefers to achieve
while body and soul abide in the world.
Therefore let blessing and eternal thanks
be unto the glory of the Trinity!

IV. The Crucifixion of Jesus

Convener

Saint Paul, in his Letter to the Philippians, reminds us of the profound sacrifice Jesus Christ made on our behalf.

Reader 1

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Convener

Eternal Lord, help us in our unbelief and failings, to feel the depths of grief and confusion that your
cross should evoke in us,
Reminding us that you suffered so cruelly for our sake,

All

To understand the infinite love and humility that led you to the cross,

Convener

To desire the courage and humbleness of heart to share in your sacrifice upon the cross,

All

Hoping to accept a portion of the suffering you endured for us.

Convener

May we honestly recognize that in our own sinfulness,

All

When we also reject you and place you yet again upon the cross.

Convener

These we ask in your name.

All

Amen.

The Dreamer

With humility and remorse, I hear the words of the Savior's tree echo in my memory.

The Cross

It was years ago (that, I still remember),
that I was cut down from the edge of the forest,
removed from my foundation. Strong enemies seized me there,
they made me into a spectacle for themselves,
commanded me to lift up their criminals.
Men carried me there on their shoulders, until they set me on a hill,

many enemies secured me there. Then I saw mankind's Lord
hasten with great zeal, that he wished to climb upon me.
There, I did not dare break to pieces or bow down
against the Lord's words, when I saw the surface
of the earth tremble. I was able to destroy
all the enemies, nevertheless, I stood firmly.
The young hero stripped himself then (that was God Almighty),
strong and resolute. He ascended onto the high gallows,
brave in the sight of many, there,
[since] he wished to release mankind.
I trembled when the man embraced me.
However, I dared not bow down to the earth,
fall to the surface of the earth, but I had to stand fast.
I was raised [as a] cross. I lifted up the mighty king,
the lord of the heavens; I dared not bend down.
They pierced me with dark nails. On me, the scars are visible,
open malicious wounds. I did not dare injure any of them.
They mocked both of us, together. I was all drenched with blood,
covered from the man's side, after he had sent forth his spirit.
I endured many cruel events on that hill.
I saw the Lord of Hosts severely stretched out.
Darkness had covered the bright radiance
of the Lord's corpse with clouds, a shadow went forth,
dark under the sky. All of creation wept,
they lamented the king's death. Christ was on the cross.

A bell tolls slowly, followed by a period of silence.

Choir

"Much Have Sinned in Deed and Word"

Much have we sinned in deed and word,
We bare our hearts before thee, Lord;
Thy tender clemency we seek,
Oh heal our wounded souls and weak.

Grant that we may the body cleanse
Of sinful stain through abstinence,
May lift our fasting hearts to thee,
From all defiling evils free.

O tender Godhead, three in one!
Be ours the will all crime to shun.
To know and keep thy laws divine,
And be the fruits of fasting thine.

V. The Resurrection of the Lord

Convener

In his Gospel, Saint Luke tells us how the first disciples were confused by Jesus' empty tomb.

Reader 1

[Some women disciples of Jesus] came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Convener

In The Acts of the Apostles, Saint Luke tells us how the Risen Jesus stayed with his disciples for a short time before ascending into heaven, promising his followers that they would be sustained by the Holy Spirit as they gave witness to him "to the ends of the earth".

Reader 2

After his suffering [Jesus] presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.' So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

The Dreamer

With joy and gratitude, I hear again the words of the bejeweled cross of Christ.

The Cross

The time is now come
that men over the earth and all this illustrious creation
far and wide honour me,
they pray to this sign. On me, God's son

suffered a time. Therefore, now I rise up
glorious under the heavens, and I am able to heal
each one of those who hold me in awe.
Formerly, I was the most fierce of torments,
most hateful to people, before I opened the right
path of life to them, the speech-bearers.
Lo, the prince of glory, the guardian of the kingdom of the heavens,
honoured me over all the trees of the forest!
Just as he, Almighty God, before all men,
honoured his mother also, Mary herself,
over all womankind.
Now I command you, my beloved warrior,
that you tell this vision to men,
reveal in words that it is the tree of glory,
on which Almighty God suffered
for mankind's many sins
and Adam's deeds of old,
He tasted death there. However, the Lord arose again
to help men with his great power.
None needs to be afraid [of]
of [he] who already bears on his breast the best of signs,
but through the cross, each soul must seek
the kingdom from the earthly way,
those who intend to dwell with the Lord.

Convener

Eternal Lord, touch our minds and hearts so that we may feel the deep gladness and joy that should
come with your victory, allowing ourselves to be consoled,

All

Accepting and proclaiming your continuing presence and love,

Convener

Helping us to see and announce your true nature,
Now revealed in its fullness after being hidden upon the cross, sustaining us as we seek to walk
with you as true companions,

All

Aware of the many changes and graces received through your death and resurrection and
ascension.

The Dreamer

It is therefore fitting that the tribes of men give thanks
unto the Lord for every good which late and early He has given us,

through mystery of wonders manifold.
He gives us food and fulness of possession,
wealth over the spacious earthy and gentle weather
beneath the protecting heavens; the sun and moon, noblest of constellations, heavens candles, shine
forth for all mankind on earth alike;
dew falls and rain; they call abundance forth
to nourish life for all the race of man; earth's riches they increase.
For all these gifts must we give thanks and praise unto our Lord,
yet first for our salvation, the hope vouchsafed,
when He at His ascension turned away the miseries which we had suffered long.

Choir

“O Thou Who Seek'st the Christ to Find”

O thou who seek'st the Christ to find,
Uplift thine eyes on high;
For lo! to every humble mind
His glory fills the sky.

His mighty wonders there behold,
In boundless fields of light,
Sublime, eternal, and as old
As heaven and ancient night.

Here is the nation's King indeed,
Here Israel's mighty Lord,
To Abraham promised and his seed,
Forevermore adored.

To him each prophet witnesseth,
By word and sign sincere;
Acknowledged by the Sire, who saith,
"Behold, believe and hear!"

To Jesus, who his light displays
To babes, all glory be,
To Sire and Spirit equal praise
For all eternity.

Convener

We stand before the Lord, the Angels, and all the Saints, with openness and love, as they look with favor upon us.

In their presence and inspired by their example, may we receive a deep inner knowledge of all the good we have received, so that acknowledging this with deep and abiding gratitude, we may love and serve the Divine Majesty in everything.

In that hope, let us recall the many benefits we have received from God and the love with which we were created,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering the gifts and attributes by which God shaped us,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering the many things God has done for us or given to us in deep affection,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering how much God has given us of what he possesses, including the Godhead's very self in Christ.

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Let us recall the ways in which God dwells within each creature,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

In all plants and animals, giving them sensation and life,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

In each person upon the earth, giving understanding of creation and compassion toward others,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Let us recall the ways in which God works and labors on our behalf with deep love and affection,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering that God works to sustain all of creation, guiding its ways,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering that the Spirit shapes each of us, fulfilling our unique purposes.

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Let us recall that every gift descends from God,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

That our limited powers descend from God's supreme and infinite power,

Convener

That every virtue descends from God's supreme and infinite virtue,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Just as the rays of light descend from the sun,

All

And as the waters flow from their fountains. Amen.

Choir

“Sing, My Tongue”

Sing, my tongue, how glorious battle
Glorious victory became
And above the cross, his trophy
Tell the triumph and the fame
Tell how he, the Earth's Redeemer
By his death, for us o'ercame.

When at length the appointed fulness
of the sacred time was come,
he was sent, the world's Creator,
from the Father's heavenly home,
and was found in human fashion,
offspring of the virgin's womb.

Now the thirty years are ended
which on earth he willed to see,
willingly he meets his passion,
born to set his people free;
on the cross the Lamb is lifted,
there the sacrifice to be.

His the nails, the spear, the spitting
Reed and vinegar and gall:
From his patient body pierced
Blood and water streaming fall;
Earth and sea and stars and mankind
By that blood are cleansed all.

The Dreamer

Now this is my life's joyous expectation
that I may seek the tree of victory
and honour [it] well
most often of all men. The desire for that is
great in my heart, and my patronage is
directed to the cross. I do not have many
powerful friends on earth, since they departed away hence

from the joys of the world, they sought the King of Glory;
now they live in the heavens with God the Father.
They dwell in glory, and each day
I look forward to the time when the cross of the Lord
that I previously saw here on the earth,
in this temporary life, will fetch me,
and will then bring me to where great bliss is,
joy in the heavens, where the Lord's people are
seated at the feast, where perpetual joy is;
then it may set me, where afterwards I might
dwell in glory, with the saints
to enjoy bliss well. May the Lord be a friend to me,
who suffered here on earth before
on the gallows-tree for men's sins;
he redeemed us and gave us life,
a heavenly home. Joy was restored
with blessings and with bliss, for those who endured the fire there.
The Son was triumphant on that expedition,
mighty and successful, when he came with the multitude,
the host of souls, into God's kingdom.

Convener

From the depths of our longings, may our lives' joyous expectation be that we may seek the tree of victory and honor it.

May this desire be great in our hearts and may we look forward to the time when the cross of the Lord we previously saw here on the earth, in this temporary life, will fetch us, and will then bring us to where great bliss is, joy in the heavens, where the Lord's people are seated at the feast, where perpetual joy is; then it may set us, where afterwards we might dwell in glory, with the saints to enjoy bliss well.

May the Lord be a friend to us, he who suffered here on earth before on the gallows-tree for men's sins; he who redeemed us and gave us life, a heavenly home. Through his suffering on this cross, joy was restored.

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Praise and honor to the Father,
praise and honor to the Son,
praise and honor to the Spirit,

All

Ever three and ever One;
One in might, and one in glory. Amen.

Choir

"Faithful Cross" (reprise)

Faithful Cross, above all other,
one and only noble Tree,
none in foliage, none in blossom,
none in fruit thy peer may be;
sweet the wood, and sweet the iron,
and thy load, most sweet is he.

Bend, O lofty Tree, thy branches,
thy too rigid sinews bend;
and awhile the stubborn hardness,
which thy birth bestowed, suspend;
and the limbs of heaven's high Monarch
gently on thine arms extend.

Thou alone wast counted worthy
this world's Ransom to sustain,
that a shipwrecked race for ever
might a port of refuge gain,
with the sacred Blood anointed
of the Lamb for sinners slain.

Praise and honor to the Father,
praise and honor to the Son,
praise and honor to the Spirit,
ever Three and ever One:
one in might, and One in glory,
while eternal ages run.