



Seven Complines for Seven Days

Monday – The Aidan Compline

Aidan came to Lindisfarne from Iona in the year 635 at the request of King Oswald. He was a man of deep prayer who meditated on the words of Scripture, equipping himself in quiet for an active and highly effective apostolate. He remained at Lindisfarne for 16 years. In 651, Aidan was taken ill at Bamburgh and died. Cuthbert, who was at that moment looking after his flock of sheep on the Lammermuir hills, saw a vision of angels taking Aidan's soul to heaven.

* O Christ, Son of the living God,
may Your holy angels guard our sleep,
may they watch over us as we rest
and hover around our beds.

* Let them reveal to us in our dreams
visions of Your glorious truth,
O High Prince of the universe,
O High Priest of the mysteries.

* May no dreams disturb our rest
and no nightmares darken our dreams.
May no fears or worries delay
our willing, prompt repose.

* May the virtue of our daily work
hallow our nightly prayers.
May our sleep be deep and soft
so our work be fresh and hard.

**I will lie down and sleep in peace
for You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.**

*My dear ones, O God, bless Thou and keep,
in every place where they are.*

* Into Your hands I commit my spirit;
I give it to You with all the love of my heart.

* How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand.

When I awake, I am still with You.

**I make the cross of Christ upon my breast,
+ over the tablet of my hard heart,
and I beseech the Living God of the universe –
may the Light of Lights come
to my dark heart from Thy place;
may the Spirit's wisdom come to my heart's tablet
from my Saviour.**

* Christ without sin, Christ of wounds,
I am placing my soul and my body
under Thy guarding this night,
Christ of the poor, Christ of tears.
Thy cross be my shielding this night,
O Thou Son of tears, of the wounds, of the piercing.

**I am going now into the sleep:
O be it in Thy dear arm's keep,
O God of grace, that I shall awake.**

* My Christ! my Christ!
my shield, my encircler,
each day, each night,
each light, each dark.

* My Christ! my Christ!
my shield, my encircler,
each day, each night,
each light, each dark.
Be near me, uphold me,
my treasure, my triumph.

*Circle me, Lord,
keep protection near
and danger afar.*

* Circle me, Lord,
keep light near
and darkness afar.

* Circle me, Lord,
keep peace within;
keep evil out.

**The peace of all peace
be mine this night
+ in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Tuesday – The Cuthbert Compline

Cuthbert, a shepherd lad looking after his flock on the Lammermuir hills, had an angelic vision coinciding with the death of Aidan which convinced him that he was meant to follow Christ as surely as the beloved founder of Lindisfarne Abbey. He became a monk at Melrose Abbey, under the guidance of Boisil. Cuthbert later succeeded him as Prior. Later in his life Cuthbert became a dearly-loved bishop at Lindisfarne, from where, until his death in 687, he loved to retreat in solitude to pray and fast on the Farne Islands.

* I will lie down and sleep in peace
for You alone, Lord,
make me dwell in safety.

**O God, and Spirit, and Jesu, the Three,
from the crown of my head, O Trinity,
to the soles of my feet mine offering be.
Come I unto Thee, O Jesu, my King –
O Jesu, do Thou be my sheltering.**

*My dear ones, O God, bless Thou and keep,
in every place where they are.*

* Whoever has chosen to make
the shelter of the Most High their dwelling place
will stay in His over-shadowing.

* He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
He is my God, and I am trusting Him.

* He will rescue you from the traps laid for your feet,
and save you from the destroying curse.

* His faithful promises are your armour.
You need no longer be afraid of any terror by night,
or the death-arrow that flies by day.

* The Lord Himself is your refuge;
you have made the Most High your stronghold.

* Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for You are my crag and my stronghold.

* How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand.

When I awake, I am still with You.

*I will not lie down tonight with sin,
nor shall sin
nor sin's shadow
lie down with me.*

O God of life, this night,
O darken not to me Thy light.
O God of life, this night,
close not Thy gladness to my sight.
O God of life, this night,
Thy door to me, O shut not tight,
O God of life, this night.

* Be it on Thine own beloved arm,
O God of grace,
that I in peace shall waken.

* Jesu, Son of Mary!
my helper, my encircler.
Jesu, Son of David!
my strength everlasting.
Jesu, Son of Mary!
my helper, my encircler.

The peace of all peace
be mine this night
+ in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Wednesday – The Felgild Compline

Felgild lived in the late seventh century. After Cuthbert died, Ethilwald took his place as hermit on the Inner Farne. Twelve years later, having never left the island, he also died. Felgild was the next hermit to come there, but the rigours of his life in the cell aggravated a swelling on his face. The condition was suddenly healed, allowing him to continue the life of a solitary.

This Compline is dedicated to him because he represents so many whose names we never hear who faithfully follow the example of good men and women of old, continuing their battle against the powers of evil and in their devotion to prayer.

**Calm me, O Lord, as You stilled the storm.
Still me, O Lord, keep me from harm.
Let all the tumult within me cease.
Enfold me, Lord, in Your peace.**

* Father, bless the work that is done,
and the work that is to be.

* Father, bless the servant that I am,
and the servant that I will be.

*Thou Lord and God of power,
shield and sustain me this night.*

**I will lie down this night with God,
and God will lie down with me;
I will lie down this night with Christ,
and Christ will lie down with me;
I will lie down this night with the Spirit,
and the Spirit will lie down with me;
God and Christ and the Spirit,
be lying down with me.**

* The peace of God
be over me to shelter me,
under me to uphold me,
about me to protect me,
behind me to direct me,
ever with me to save me.

**The peace of all peace
be mine this night
+ in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Thursday – The Ebba Compline

Ebba was the sister of Oswald and Oswy, who were both kings of Northumbria. She was consecrated a nun by Aidan and founded the ‘double’ (i.e. there were both men and women there) monastery at Coldingham, situated on St Abbs’s Head (which was subsequently named after her). Ebba died in the year 683. Bede described her as a ‘pious woman and a handmaid of Christ.’

* Find rest, O my soul, in God alone:
my hope comes from Him.

**Come I this night to the Father,
come I this night to the Son,
come I to the Holy Spirit powerful:
come I this night to God.
Come I this night with Christ,
come I with the Spirit of kindness.
Come I to Thee, Jesus.
Jesus, shelter me.**

* I will lie down and sleep.
I wake again,
because the Lord sustains me.

* By day the Lord directs His love;
at night His song is with me –
a prayer to the God of my life.

* Be strong and take heart,
all you who hope in the Lord.

* This dwelling, O God, by Thee be blest;
and each one who here this night does rest.

* May God be in my sleep;
may Christ be in my dreams.
May the Spirit be in my repose,
in my thoughts, in my heart.
In my soul always
may the Sacred Three dwell.

*May the Father of heaven
have care of my soul,
His loving arm about my body,
through each slumber
and sleep of my life.*

**The Son of God be shielding me from harm,
the Son of God be shielding me from ill,
the Son of God be shielding me with power.
The Son of God be shielding me this night.**

* Sleep, O sleep in the calm of each calm.
Sleep, O sleep in the guidance of all guidance.
Sleep, O sleep in the love of all loves.
Sleep, O beloved, in the Lord of life.
Sleep, O beloved, in the God of life.

**The peace of all peace
be mine this night
+ in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Friday – The Boisil Compline

Boisil, Prior of Melrose Abbey, died in 661. Bede described him as a ‘priest of great virtue and prophetic spirit.’ Boisil, on his first meeting with Cuthbert, who was to be his pupil, exclaimed, ‘Behold, the servant of the Lord!’ – recognizing the call of God on the young man’s life.

* O Lord, You will keep us safe
and protect us forever.

**I am placing my soul and my body
in Thy safe keeping this night, O God,
in Thy safe keeping, O Jesus Christ,
in Thy safe keeping, O Spirit of perfect truth.
The Three who would defend my cause
be keeping me this night from harm.**

* I call on You, O God,
for You will answer me;
give ear to me and hear my prayer.

* Show the wonder of Your great love,
You who save by Your right hand
those who take refuge in You from their foes.

* Keep me as the apple of Your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings.

*Lighten my darkness, Lord.
Let the light of Your presence
dispel the shadows of night.*

* Christ with me sleeping,
Christ with me waking,
Christ with me watching,
each day and each night.

* Save us, Lord, while we are awake,
guard us while we are asleep;
that, awake, we may watch with Christ,
and, asleep, may rest in His peace.

**God with me protecting,
the Lord with me directing,
the Spirit with me strengthening
for ever and for evermore.**

* In the name of the Father precious,
and of the Spirit of healing balm.
In the name of the Lord Jesus,
I lay me down to rest.

**The peace of all peace
be mine this night
+ in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Saturday – The Patrick Compline

Patrick (389-461) was a Briton and a former slave in Ireland. He became the ‘Apostle to Ireland’, travelling widely, evangelizing tirelessly and organizing churches and monasteries. He established his episcopal seat in Armagh, which became the centre of Christianity in the whole of Ireland. Patrick was fearless in the pursuit of his aim: to destroy paganism and to exalt the name of the Triune God.

**In the name of the King of life;
in the name of the Christ of love;
in the name of the Holy Spirit:
the Triune of my strength.**

* I love you, O Lord my strength.

The Lord is my rock,
my fortress and my deliverer.
My God is my rock
in whom I take refuge.

* I will praise the Lord who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.

* I have set the Lord always before me.
Because He is at my right hand,
I shall not be shaken.

*I am placing my soul and my body
under Thy guarding this night, O Christ.
May Thy cross this night be shielding me.*

* Into Your hands I commit my spirit;
redeem me, O Lord, the God of Truth.

* The God of life with guarding hold you;
the loving Christ with guarding fold you;
the Holy Spirit, guarding, mould you;
each night of life to aid, enfold you;
each day and night of life uphold you.

**May God shield me;
may God fill me;
may God keep me;
may God watch me;
may God bring me this night
to the nearness of His love.**

**The peace of the Father of joy,
the peace of the Christ of hope,
the peace of the Spirit of grace,
the peace of all peace
be mine this night
+ in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Sunday – The Ita Compline

Ita, who died in about 570, was abbess of a women's community in Killeedy, County Limerick in Ireland. She ran a school for boys where she taught:

Faith in God with purity of heart; simplicity of life with religion; generosity with love.

Among those schooled by Ita was Brendan, who honoured her as his foster-mother and adviser. The Compline that follows is named after her because of its emphasis on examination of the heart, and the prayers of care and protection for each soul who crosses our path.

The Sacred Three

to save

to shield

to surround

the hearth

the home

this night

and every night.

* Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Test me and know my thoughts.

* See if there is any wicked way in me

and lead me in the way everlasting.

O Father, O Son, O Holy Spirit,

forgive me my sins.

O only-begotten Son of the heavenly Father,

forgive.

O God who is one,

O God who is true,

O God who is first,

O God who is one substance,

O God only mighty,

in three Persons, truly merciful,

forgive.

* O God of life, this night,

O darken not to me Thy light.

* O God of life, this night,

close not Thy gladness to my sight.

* Keep Your people, Lord,
in the arms of Your embrace.
Shelter them under Your wings.

* Be their light in darkness.
Be their hope in distress.
Be their calm in anxiety.

* Be strength in their weakness.

* Be their comfort in pain.

* Be their song in the night.

*In peace will I lie down, for it is You, O Lord,
You alone who makes me to rest secure.*

* Be it on Your own beloved arm,
O God of grace, that I in peace shall awake.

**Be the peace of the Spirit
mine this night.**

**Be the peace of the Son
mine this night.**

**Be the peace of the Father
mine this night.**

**The peace of all peace
be mine this night**
+ in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.