

“These Truths We Hold” (Part XI)

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Compline.

Compline, most often served in monasteries, is the Service of Prayer before retiring to bed and thus it is sung after Supper (Greek — Apodeipnon — after supper). As sleep is the image of death, Compline is filled with the thought of death and repentance. On Great Feasts and Saturday evenings, if All-Night Vigil is served, Compline is omitted. There are two types of Compline: Great Compline and its shorter form, Small Compline.

Great Compline consists of three parts, each of which begins with the introductory “Come, let us worship...” and ending with a concluding prayer and the Priest’s blessing. The first part begins with a special set of six Psalms and then the special hymn, “God is with us...,” taken from the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the Savior Who was to come into the world. Then follows prayers addressed to the Holy Trinity, the Creed, the Invocation of the Theotokos and all the Saints and the Prayer of St. Basil the Great. Thus, in this first part of Compline, we give thanks to God for

the day that has just passed and we express the hope that He will grant us a restful sleep during the coming night, as well as a peaceful repose after death with all the Saints.

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