# *The script for the New Zealand 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 quiet the powers of darkness.**

The spirit of God be our Guide
**To lead us to peace and glory.**

It is but lost labour 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.

## *Silence*

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

Dear God,
Thank you for all that is good,
For our creation and 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.

Lord, have mercy
**Christ, have mercy**
Lord, have mercy

## *Alternate to 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 times of 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.**

O thou, most holy and beloved,
my Companion, my Guide upon the way
my 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.**

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.

*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

*Psalm 23:*

Dear God, you sustain me and feed me:
like a shepherd you guide me.
You lead me to an oasis of green
to lie down by restful waters.
You refresh my soul for the journey,
and guide me along trusted roads.
The God of justice is your name,
though I must enter the darkness of death,
I will fear no evil.
for you are with me,
your rod and staff comfort me.
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.

*A General Thanksgiving:*

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.**

You prepare a table before my very eyes,
In the presence of those who trouble me.
You anoint my head with oil,
And you fill my cup to the brim.
Your loving kindness and mercy will meet me
Every day of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of my God for ever.

## *Reading:* Matthew 6:31-34

Do not ask anxiously, What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What shall we wear? The whole world runs after such things. Set your heart and mind on God's commonwealth and justice first, and all the rest will come to you as well. So do not be anxious about tomorrow. Today has enough problems of its own; tomorrow can look after itself.

## *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 an 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**

## *Song of Simeon:* *Nunc Dimittis*

Praise be to God, I have lived to see this day.
God's promise is fulfilled, and my duty done.

At last you have given me peace,
For I have seen with my own eyes
The salvation that you have prepared for all nations -

A light to the world in its darkness,
And the glory of your people Israel.

**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**

## *Sentence of the Day*

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.

## *Final Versicle*

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

Evening Prayer from Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia (1989). *A New Zealand Prayer Book = He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa.* HarperCollins