

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ

According to Matthew

Matthew 26: 36—27: 66

The Text of the New Revised Standard Version

Set to Traditional Chant by

Bruce E. Ford

FOREWORD

Few specimens of fully-notated chant recitatives from the Middle Ages survive; but those that do indicate that medieval musicians applied the formulas to the texts somewhat more flexibly than the rules given in twentieth-century chant books permit.

Recitative formulas hold little interest except as vehicles for texts. Therefore, if a particular formula distorts a particular text, the formula ought to be modified.

In this setting of the English text I have sometimes placed two (normally-separate) notes over a single syllable to facilitate smooth rendering of the text where two accented syllables occur in succession, e.g.,

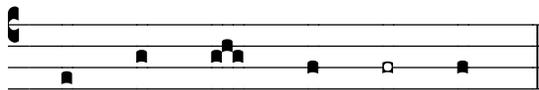


but they képt shóut-ing.

The formula by which the Chronista recitative leads into the Christus recitative and, the formula by which the Christus recitative returns to the Chronista recitative, both place a three-note group over an unstressed syllable:



re- spón-dit Jé- sus



sed tú- a ff- et.

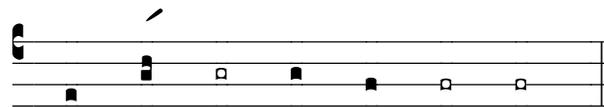
Unstressed Latin syllables can bear this musical weight because every Latin syllable includes a true vowel sound. Many unstressed English syllable do not. Consequently some English texts cannot be sung to this formula without distortion. Therefore, I have reconfigured these formulas so that musical and verbal accents will always coincide:



Jé- sus án- swered



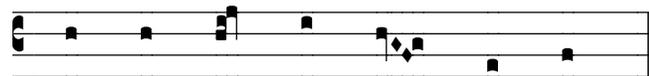
séc- ond tíme and práyed.



the tíme of trí- al.
the flésh is wéak

The final cadence of the special tone traditionally associated with the concluding verses of the Passion (the Planctus) is cursive—indifferent to textual accentuation:

5 4 3 2 1

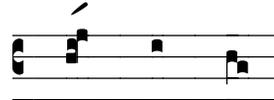


pó- si- tus fú- e- rat
sáb- ba- tum il- lu- scé- bat
é- rat cór- pus é- ius

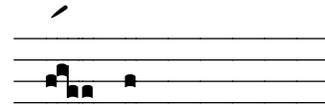
Since unstressed English syllables (for the reason previously cited) cannot bear the musical weight that this formula would sometimes place upon them, I have redesigned this formula, also, to align the musical and verbal accents.



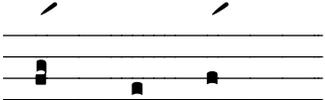
tóp to



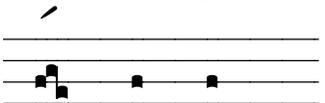
shóok and the



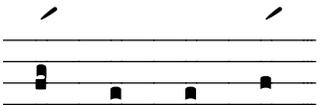
bót- tom



rócks were split



Zéb - e dee



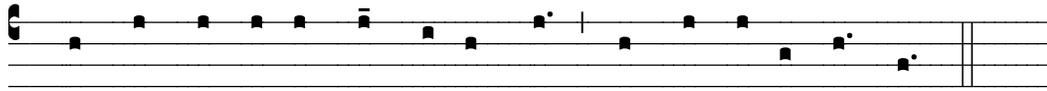
héwn in the rók



Gód's Són

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Matthew

N.R.S.V. Text Set to Traditional Chant
by Bruce E. Ford, 2005



C. The Pas-sion of our Lord Je-sus Christ ac-cord-ing to Mat-thew.



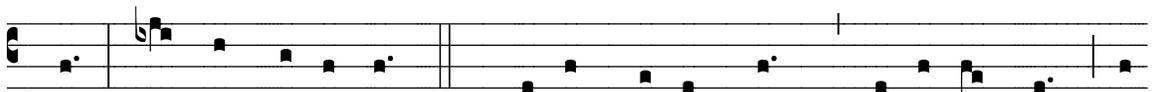
Then Je-sus went to a place called Geth-sem-a-ne, and he said to his dis-ci-



ples, **✠** “Sit here while I go o-ver there and pray. **C.** He took with him



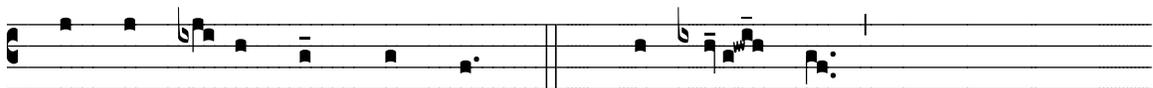
Pe-ter and the twó sóns of Zeb-e-dee, and be-gan to be grieved and ag-i-tat-



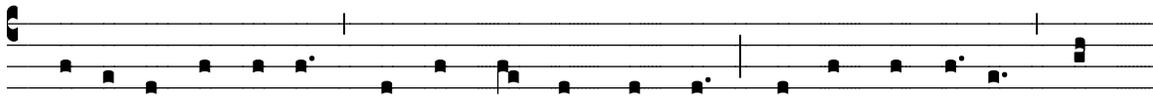
ed. Then he said to them, **✠** “I am deep-ly grieved, e-ven to death; re-



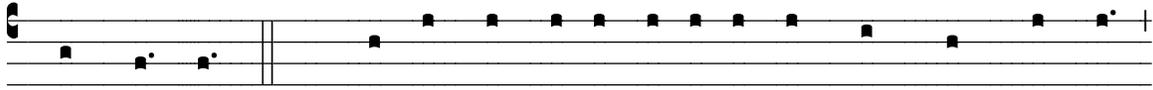
main here and stay a-wake with me.” **S.** And go-ing a lit-tle far-ther, he threw



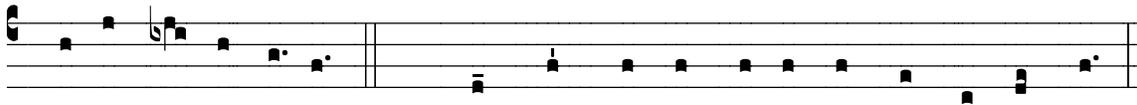
him-self on the ground and prayed, **✠** “My Fa-ther,



if it be pos-si-ble, let this cup pass from me yet not what I want, but



what you want.” **C.** Then he came to the dis-ci-ples and found them sleep-ing;



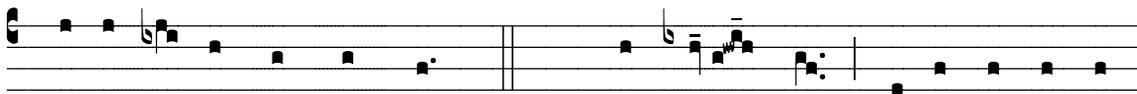
and he said to Pe-ter, ✠ “So, could you not stay a-wake with me one hour?



Stay a-wake and pray that you may not come in-to the time of tri-al; the



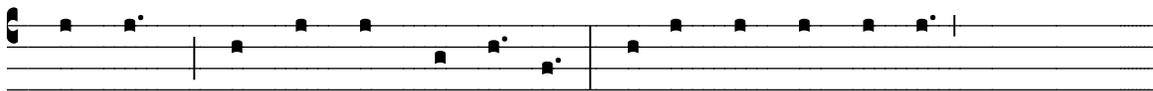
spir-it in-deed is will-ing, but the flesh is weak.” **C.** A-gain he went a-way



for the sec-ond time and prayed, ✠ “My Fa-ther, if this can-not pass



un-less I drink it, your will be done.” **C.** A-gain he came and found them



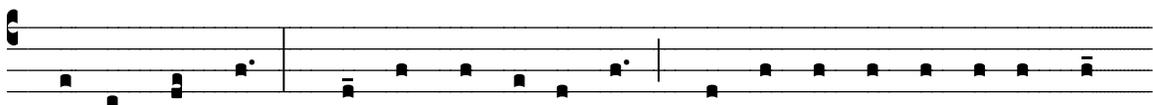
sleep-ing, for their eyes were hea-vy. So leav-ing them a- gain,



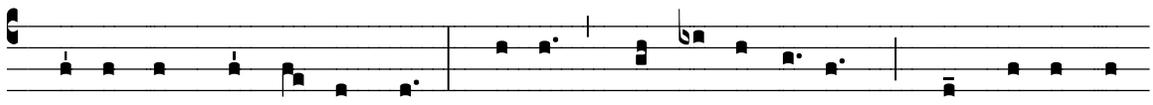
he went a-way and prayed for the third time, say-ing the same words. Then he



came to the dis- ci- ples and said to them, ✠ "Are you still sleep-ing and



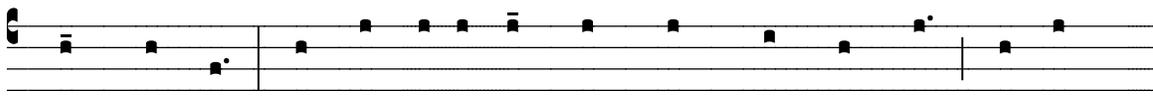
tak-ing your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is be-trayed



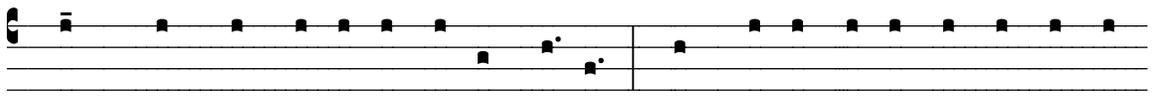
in- to the hánds of sin-ners. Get up, let us be go-ing. See, my be- tray-



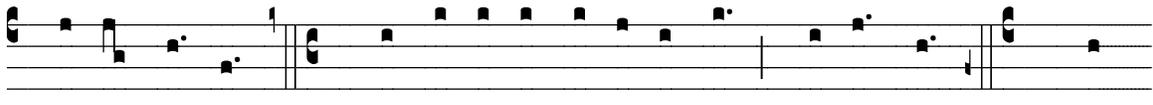
er is at hand." **C.** While he was still speak-ing, Ju-das, one of the



twelve, ar-rived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the



chief priests and the el-ders of the peo-ple. Now the be-tray-er had giv-en them



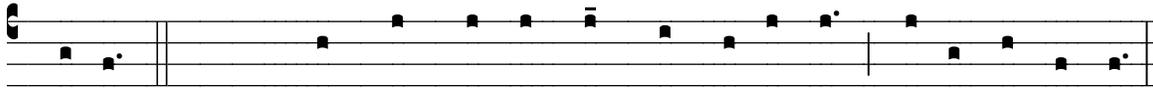
a s'ign, sáy-ing, **S.** "The one I will kiss is the man; ar-rest him." **C.** At



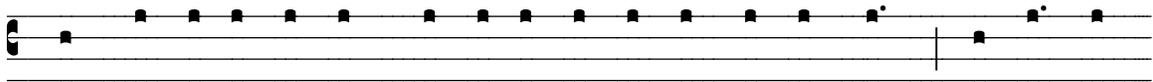
once he came up to Je-sus and said, **S.** "Greet-ings, Rab- bi!"



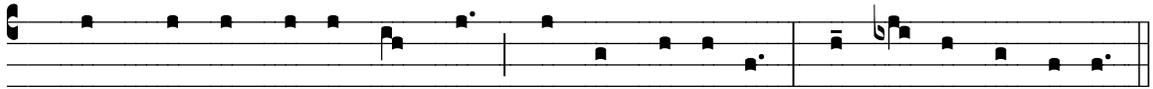
C. and kissed him. Je-sus said to him, ✠ "Friend, do what you are here



to do." C. Then they came and láid hánds on Je-sus and ar-rest-ed him.



Sud-den-ly, one of those with Je-sus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and



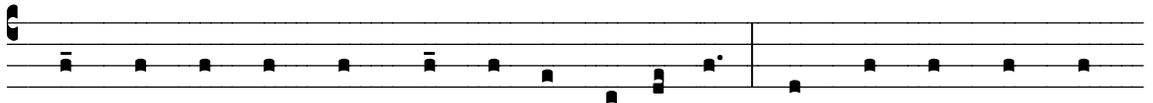
struck the slave of the high priest, cut-ting off his ear. Then Je-sus said to him,



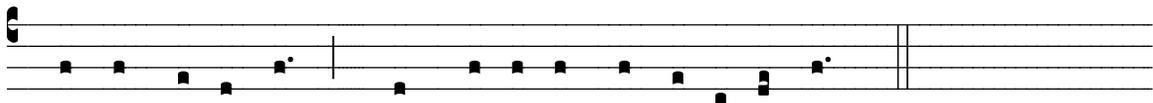
✠ "Put your swórd báck ín- to its place; for all who take the sword will per-ish



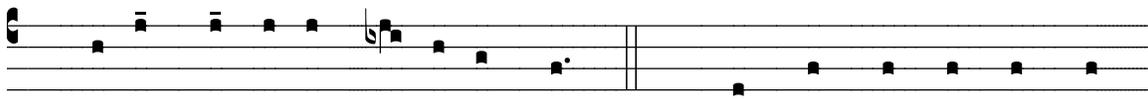
by the sword. Do you think that I can-not ap-peal to my Fa-ther, and he will at



ónce sénd me more than twelve le-gions of an-gels? But how then would the



scrip-tures be ful-filled, which say it must ha-pen in this wáy?"



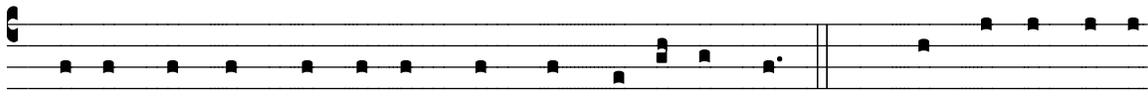
C. At that hour Je-sus said to the crowds, ✠ "Have you come out with swords



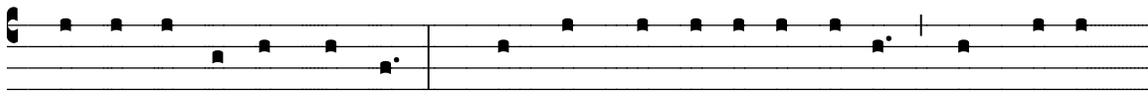
and clubs to ar-rest me as though I wére a ban-dit? Day af-ter day I sat in the



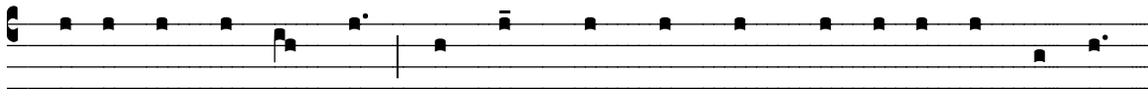
tem-ple teach-ing, and you did nót ar- rest me. But áll thís has tak-en place,



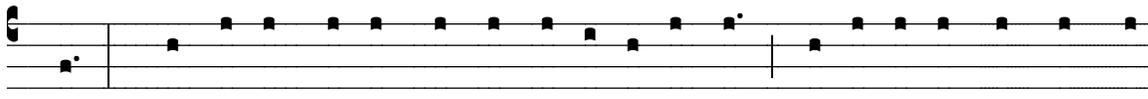
só that the scrip-tures of the proph-ets may be ful-filled." **C.** Then all the dis-ci-



ples de-sert-ed him and fled. Those who had ar-rest-ed Je-sus took him to



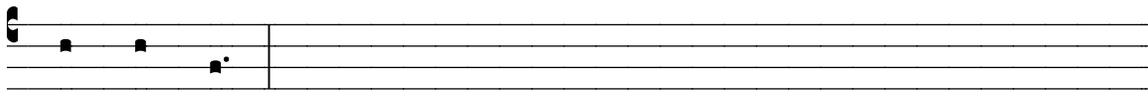
Cai-a-phas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the el-ders had gath-



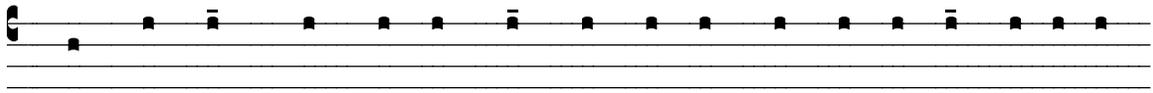
ered. But Pe-ter was fol-low-ing him at a dis-tance, as far as the court-yard of



the high priest; and go-ing in-side, he sat with the guards in or-der to sée how



this would end.



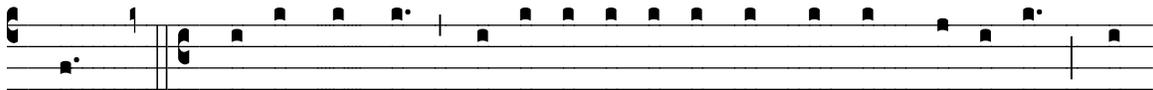
Now the chief priests and the whole coun-cil were look-ing for false tes-ti-mo-



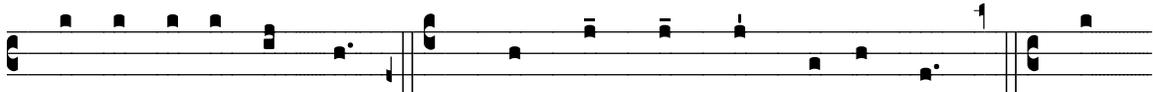
ny a-gainst Je-sus so that they míght pút him to death, but they found none,



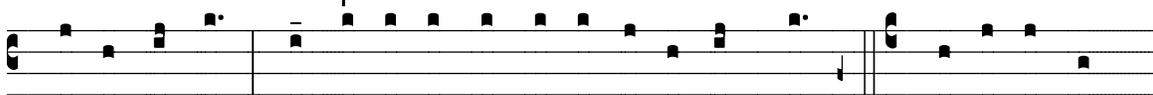
though ma-ny false wit-ness-es came for-ward. At last two came for-ward and



said, **S.** "This fel-low said, 'I am a-ble to de-destroy the tem-ple of God and



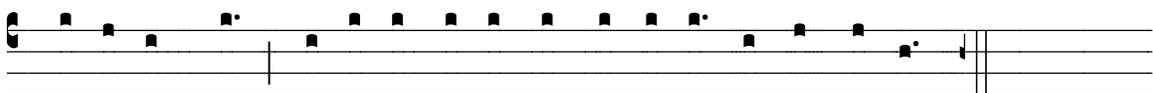
to build it in three days.'" **C.** The high priest stood up and said, **S.** "Have



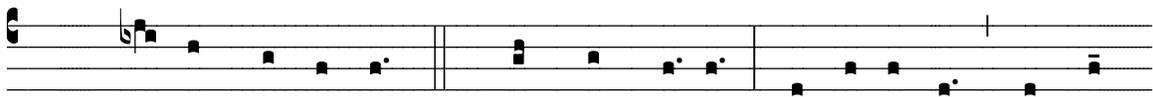
you no an-swer? Whát ís it that they te-sti-fy a-gainst you?" **C.** But Je-sus was



si-lent. Then the high priest said to him, **S.** "I put you un-der oath be-fore



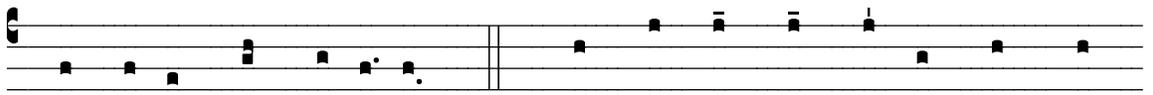
the liv-ing God, tell us if you are the Mes-si-ah, the Son of God."



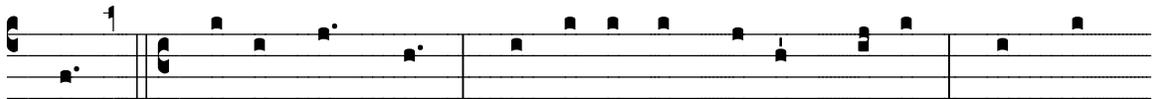
C Je- sus said to him, ✠ “You have said so. But I tell you, From now



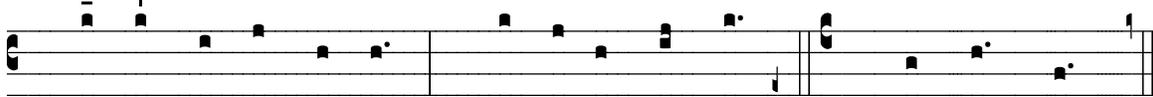
on you will see the Son of Man seat-ed at the right hand of Pow-er and com-



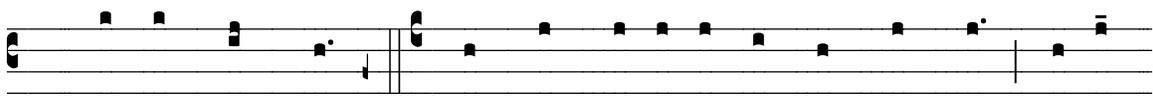
ing on the clouds of hea-ven.” **C.** Then the high priest tore his clothes and



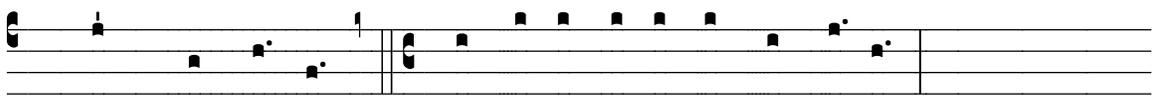
said, **S.** “He has blas-phemed! Why do we still need wit-ness-es? You have



now heard his blas-phe-my “What is your ver-dict?” **C.** They an-swered,



S. “He de-serves déath.” Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some



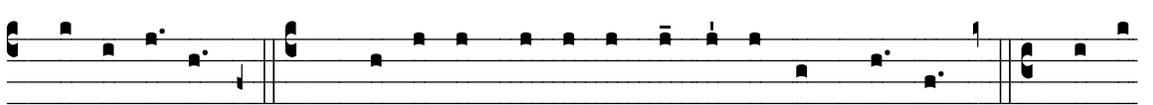
slapped him, say-ing, **S.** “Proph-e-sy to us, you Mes-si- ah!



Who is it that struck you?" **C.** Now Pe-ter was sit-ting óut-síde in the court-



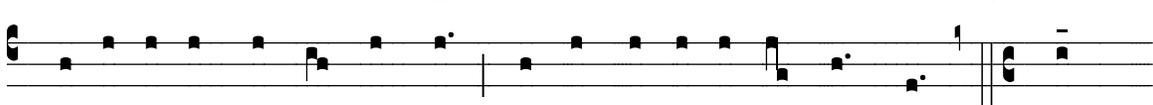
yard. A ser-vant gírl cáme to him and said, **S.** "You al-so were with Je-sus the



Gal-i-le-an." **C.** But he de-nied it be-fore all of them, say-ing, **S.** "I do



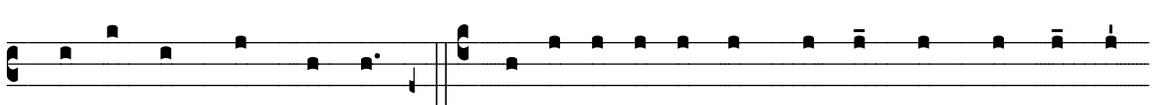
not know what you are talk-ing a-bout." **C.** When he went out to the porch,



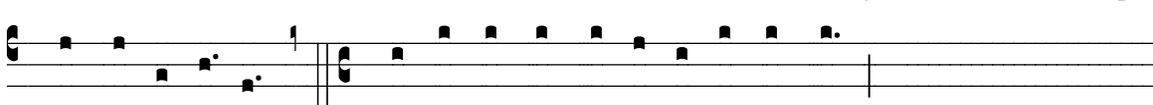
an-oth-er ser-vant-girl saw him, and she said to the by-stand-ers, **S.** "Thís



man was with Je-sus of Naz-a-reth." **C.** A- gain he de-nied it with an oath,



S. "I do not know the man." **C.** Af-ter a lit-tle while the by-stand-ers came up



and said to Pe-ter, **S.** "Cer-tain-ly you are al-so one of them,



for your ac-cent be-trays you.” **C.** Then he be-gan to curse, and he swore an



oath, **S.** “I do not know the man!” **C.** At that mo-ment the cóck crówed.



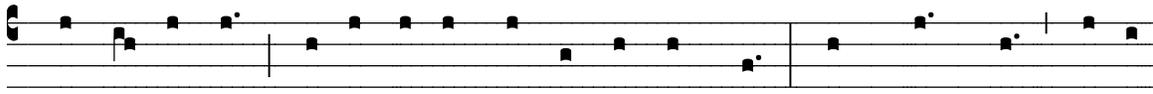
Then Pe-ter re-mem-bered what Je-sus had said: “Be-fore the cock crows, you



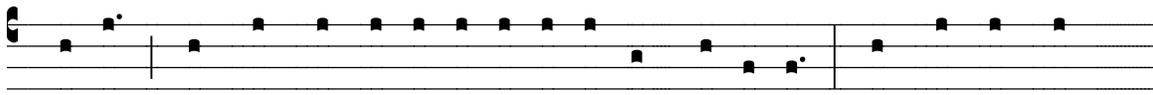
will de-ny me thrée tímes. And he went out and wept bit-ter-ly. When morn-



ing came, all the chief priests and the el-ders of the peo-ple con-ferred to-geth-er



a-gainst Je-sus in or-der to bring a-bout his death. They bound him, led him



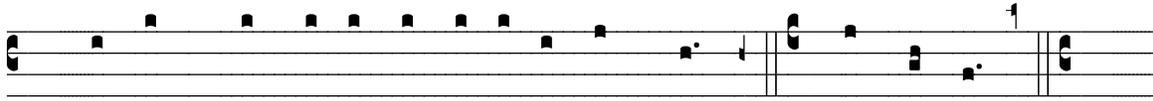
a- way, and hand-ed him o-ver to Pi-late the gov-er-nor. When Ju-das, his



be-tray-er, saw that Je-sus was con-demned, he re-pent-ed and brought back



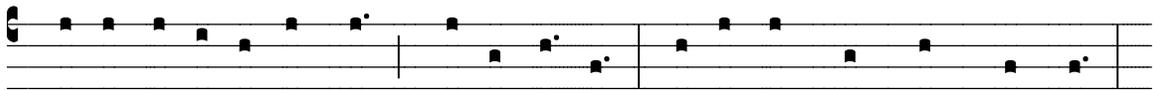
the thir-ty piec-es of sil-ver to the chief priests and the el-ders. He said,



S. “I have sinned by be-tray-ing in-no-cent blood.” **C.** But th^y said,



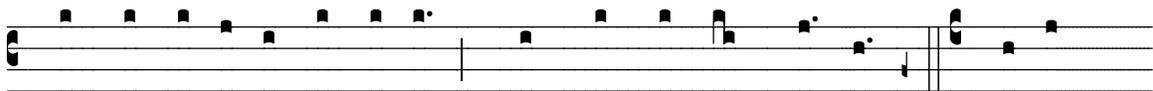
S. “What is that to us? See to it your-self.” **C.** Throw-ing down the piec-es



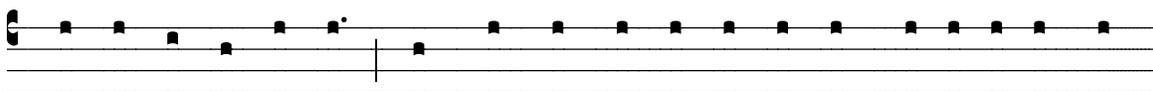
of sil-ver in the tem-ple, he de-part-ed; and he went and hanged him-self.



But the chief priests, tak-ing the piec-es of sil-ver, said, **S.** “It is not law-ful to



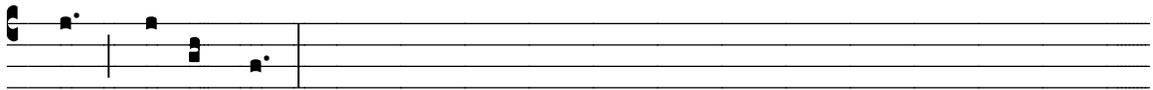
put them in-to the treas-u-ry, since they are blood mon-ey.” **C.** Af-ter



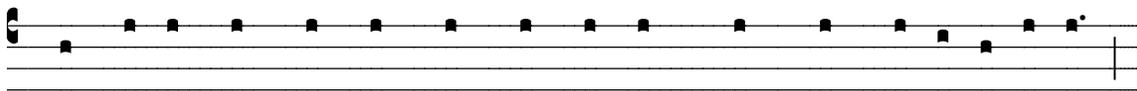
con-fer-ring to-geth-er, they used them to buy the pot-ter's field as a place to



bur-y for-eign-ers. For this rea-son that field has been called the Field of



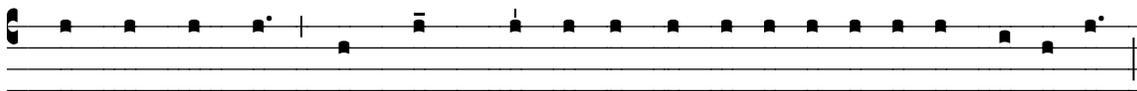
Blood to this day.



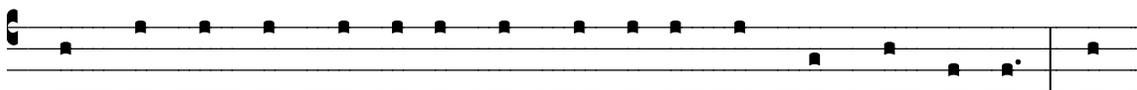
Then was ful-filled what had been spok-en through the proph- et Jer-e- mi- ah,



“And they took the thir-ty piec-es of sil-ver, the price of the one on whom a



price had been set, on whom some of the peo-ple of Is- ra- el had set a price,



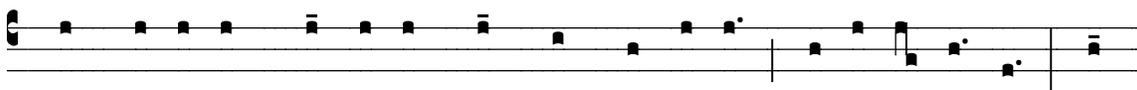
and they gave them for the pot-ter's field, as the Lord com-mand-ed me.” Now



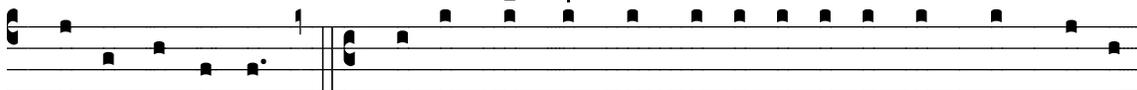
Je-sus stood be-fore the gov-ern-or; and the gov-ern-or asked him, **S.** “Are



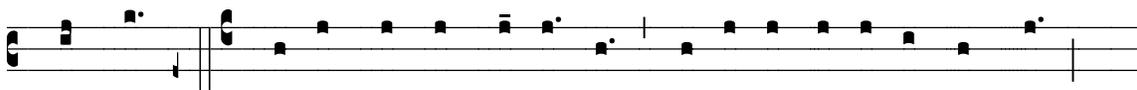
you the King of the Jews?” **C.** Je- sus said, **✠** “You say so.” **C.** But



when he was ac-cused by the chief priests and el-ders, he did not an-swer. Then



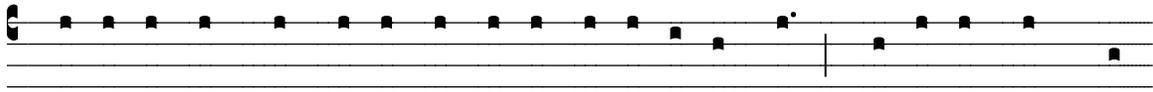
Pi-late said to him, **S.** “Do you not hear how ma-ny ac-cu-sa-tions they make a-



gainst you?” **C.** But he gave him no an-swer, not e-ven to a sin-gle charge,



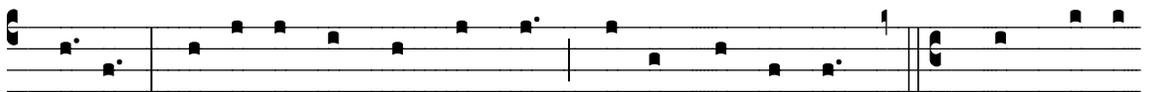
so that the gov-ern-or was great-ly a-mazed. Now at the fes-ti-val the gov-ern-



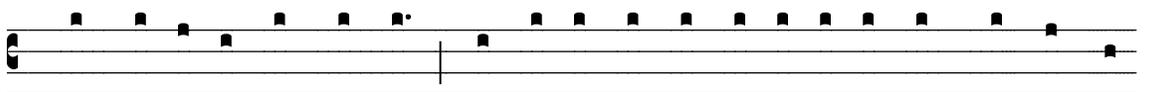
or was ac-cus-tomed to re-lease a pris-on-er for the crowd, an-y-one whom they



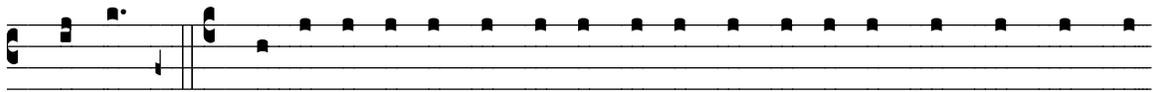
want-ed. At that time they had a no-to-ri-ous pris-on-er, called Je-sus Ba-



rab-bas. So af-ter they had gath-ered, Pi-late said to them, **S.** “Whom do you



want me to re-lease for you, Je-sus Ba-rab-bas or Je-sus who is called the Mes-



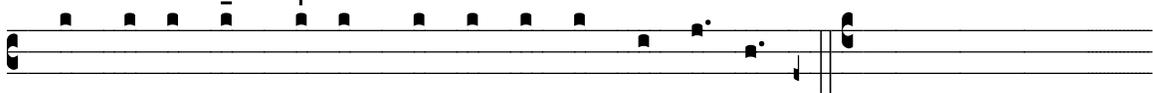
si- ah?” **C.** For he re-al-ized that it was out of jeal-ous-y that they had hand-ed



him o-ver. While he was sit-ting on the judg-ment seat, his wife sent word to



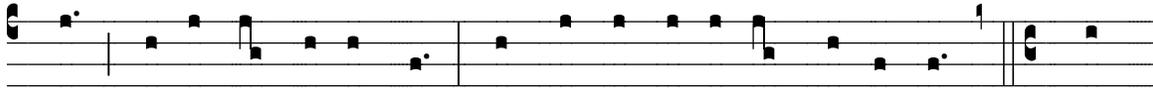
him, **S.** “Have noth-ing to do with that in-no-cent man, for to-day I have



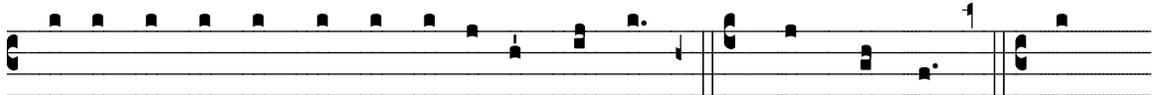
suf-fered a great deal be-cause of a dream a-bout him.”



C. Now the chief priests and the elders per-suad-ed the crowds to ask for Ba-rab-



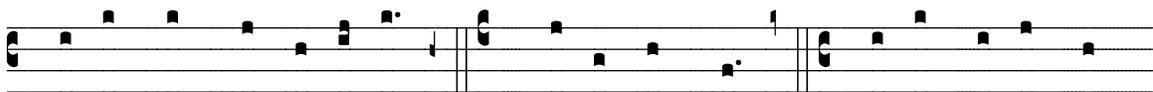
bas and to have Je-sus killed. The gov-ern-or a-gain said to them, **S.** “Which



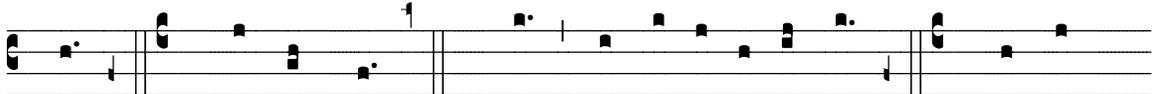
of the two do you want me to re-lease for you?” **C.** And they said, **S.** “Ba-



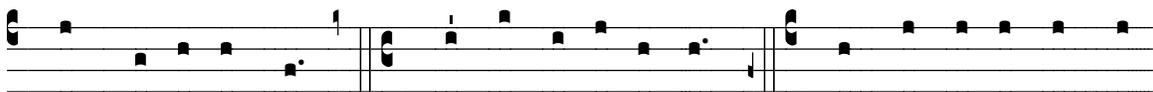
rab-bas.” **C.** Pi-late said to them, **S.** “Then what should I do with Je-sus



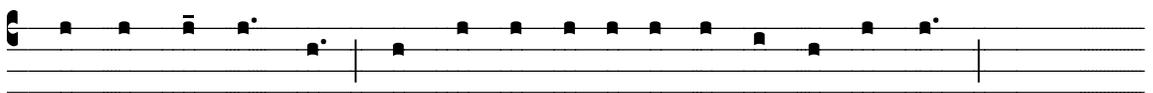
who is called the Mes-si-ah?” **C.** All of them said, **S.** “Let him be cru-ci-



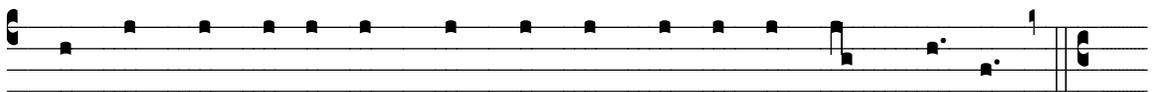
fied!” **C.** Then he asked, **S.** “Why, what e-vil has he done?” **C.** But they



shout-ed all the more, **S.** “Let him be cru-ci-fied!” **C.** So when Pi-late saw that



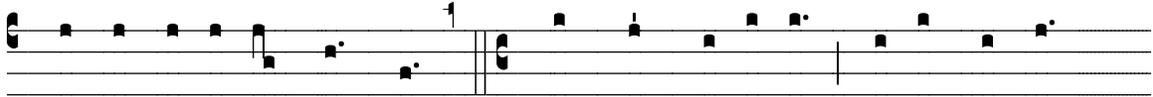
he could do noth-ing, but rath-er that a ri-ot was be-gin-ning,



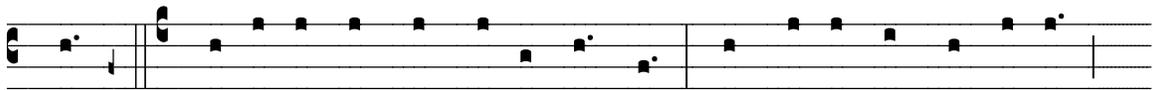
he took some wa-ter and washed his hands be-fore the crowd, say-ing, **S.**



"I am in-no-cent of this man's blood; see to it your-selves. **C.** Then the



peo-ple as a whole an-swered, **S.** "His blood be on us and on our chil-



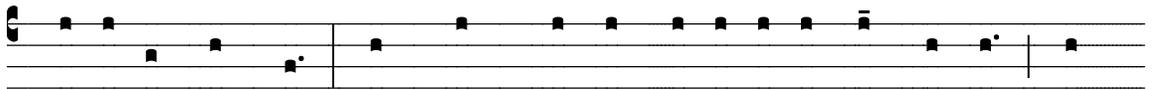
dren!" **C.** So he re-leased Ba-rab-bas for them; and af-ter flog-ging Je-sus,



he hand-ed him o-ver to be cru-ci-fied. Then the sol-diers of the gov-ern-or



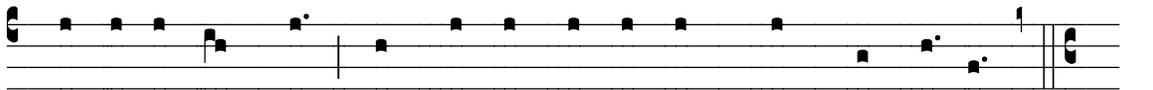
took Je-sus in-to the gov-ern-or's head-quar-ters, and they gath-ered the whole



co-hort a-round him. They stripped him and put a scar-let robe on him, and



af-ter twist-ing some thorns in- to a crown, they put it on his head. They put a



reed in his right hand and knelt be-fore him and mocked him, say-ing,



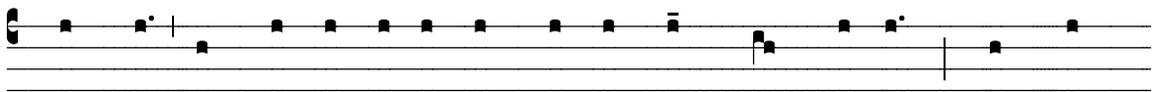
S. “Hail, King of the Jews!” **C.** They spat on him, and took the reed and struck



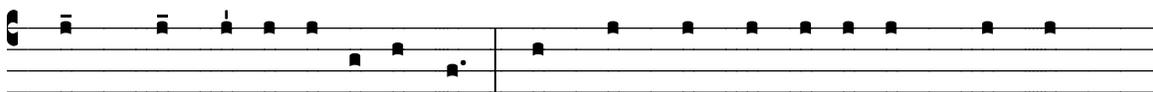
him on the head. Af-ter mock-ing him, they stripped him of the robe and



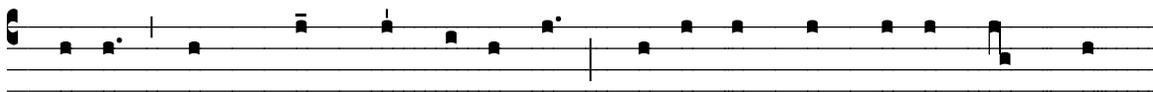
put his own clothes on him. Then they led him a-way to cru-ci- fy him. As they



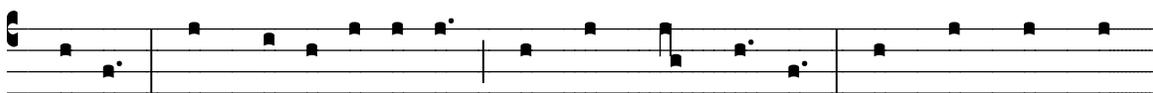
went out, they came up-on a man from Cy-rene named Si- mon; they com-



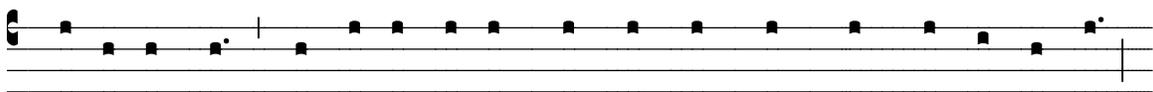
pelled this man to ca-ry his cross. And when they came to a place called Gol-



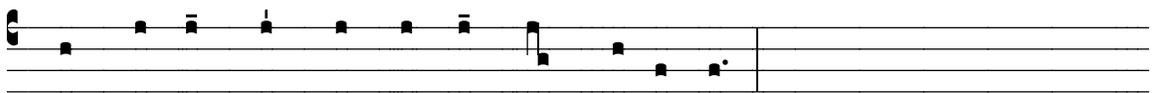
go-tha (which means Place of a Skull), they of-fered him wine to drínk, míxed



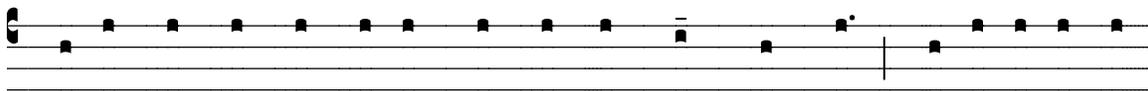
with gall; but when he tast-ed it, he would not drink it. And when they had



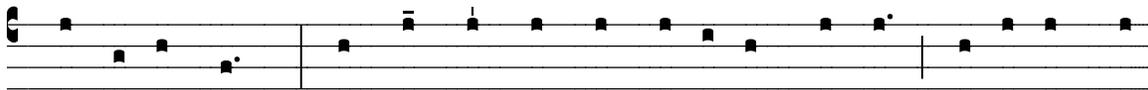
cru-ci-fied him, they di-vid-ed his clothes a-mong them-selves by cast-ing lots;



then they sat down there and képt wáтч ó-ver him.



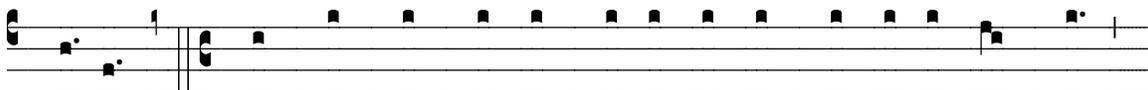
O-ver his head they put the charge a-gainst him, which read, "This is Je-sus, the



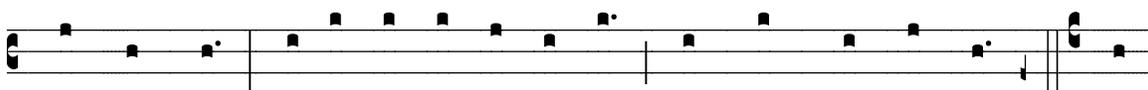
King of the Jews." Then two ban-dits were cru-ci-fied with him, one on his right



and one on his left. Those who passed by de-rid-ed him, shak-ing their heads and



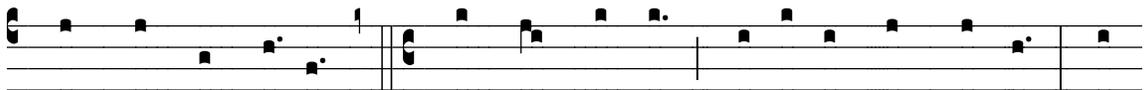
say-ing, **S.** "You who would de-stroy the tem-ple and build it in three days,



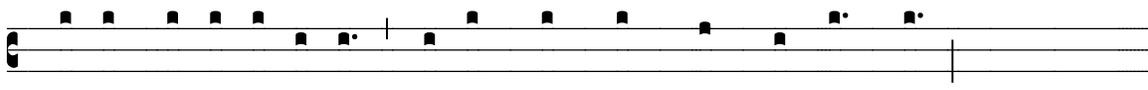
save your-self! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." **C.** In



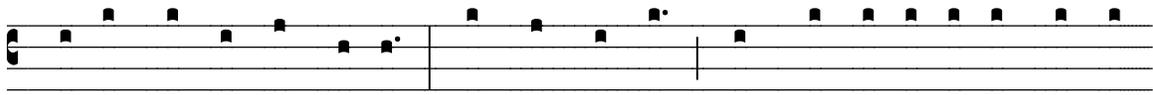
the same way the chief priests al- so, a- long with the scribes and el-ders, were



mock-ing him, say-ing, **S.** "He saved oth-ers; he can-not save him-self. He



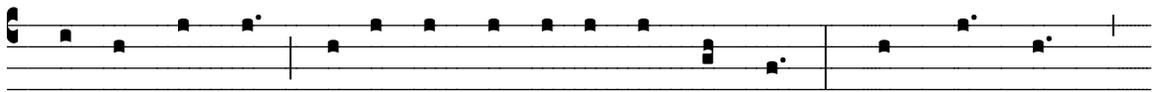
is the King of Is- ra- el; let him come down from the cross now,



and we will be-lieve in him. He trusts in God; let God de-liv-er him now, if



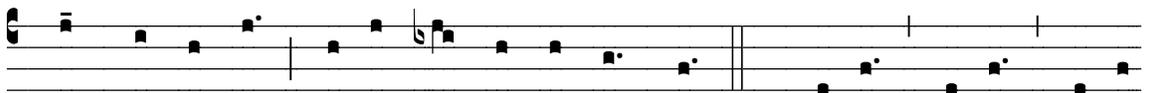
he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" **C.** The ban-dits who were cru-



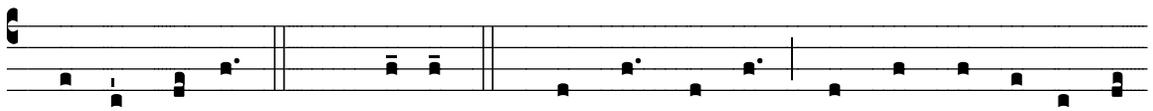
ci-fied with him al- so taunt-ed him in the same way. From noon on,



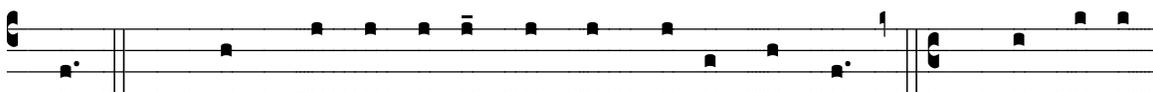
dark-ness came o-ver the whole land un-til three in the af-ter-noon. And a-



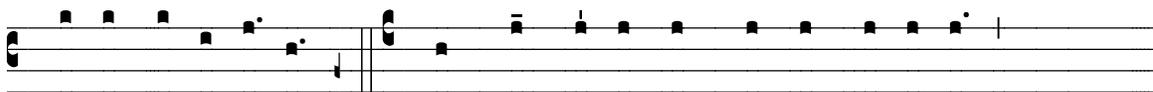
bout three o'clock Je-sus cried with a loud voice, ✠ "E- lí, E- lí, le-ma



sa-bach-tha-ní?" **C.** that is, ✠ "My God, my God, why have you for-sak-en



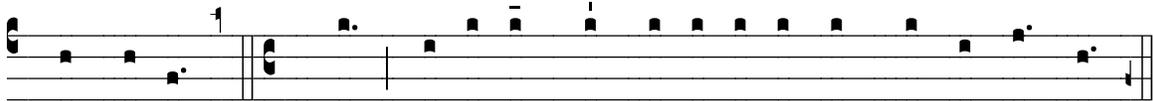
me?" **C.** When some of the by-stand-ers heard it, they said, **S.** "This man is



cal-ling for E- li-jah." **C.** At once one of them ran and got a sponge,



filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the

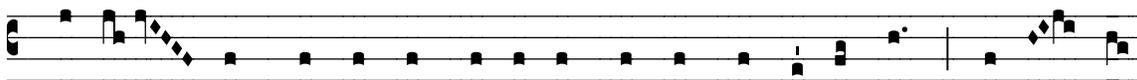


others said, **S.** “Wait, let us see whether E-li-jah will come to save him.”



C. Then Je-sus cried a-gain with a loud voice and breathed his last.

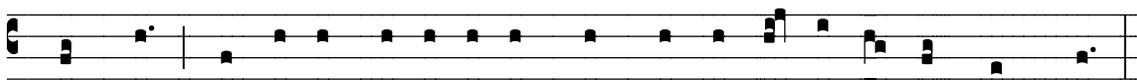
Here all kneel in silence for a time. Then the Chronista continues in the Planctus tone:



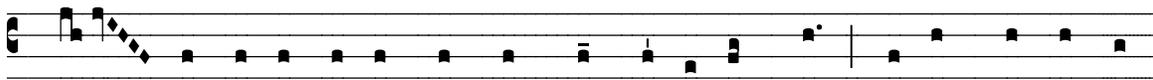
At that mo-ment the cur-tain of the tem-ple was torn in two, from top to



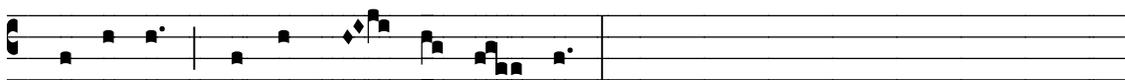
bot-tom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs al-so were



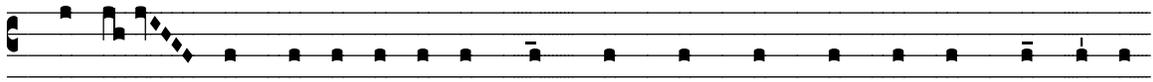
o-pened, and ma-ny bod-ies of the saints who had fal-len a- sleep were raised.



Af-ter his res-ur-rec-tion they came out of the tombs and en-tered the ho-



ly cit-y and ap-peared to ma-ny.



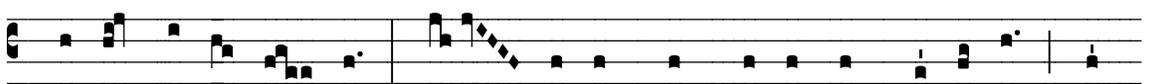
Now when the cen-tu-ri-on and those with him, who were keep-ing watch o-ver



Je-sus, saw the earth-quake and what took place, they were ter-ri-fied and said,



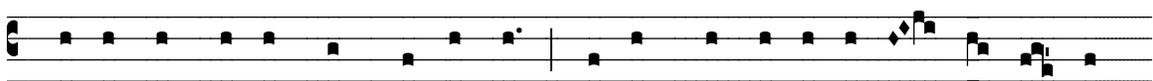
“Tru-ly this mán was Gód's Són!” Ma- ny wo-men were al-so there, look-



ing on from a dis- tance; they had fol-lowed Je-sus from Gal-i- lee and



had pro-vid- ed for him. A- mong them were Ma-ry Mag-da-lene, and Ma-



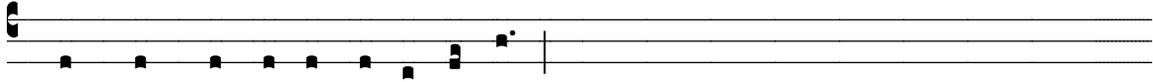
ry the moth-er of James and Jo-seph, and the moth-er of the sons of Zeb- e-



dee. When it was eve-ning, there came a rich man from Ár- i-ma-thé-a,



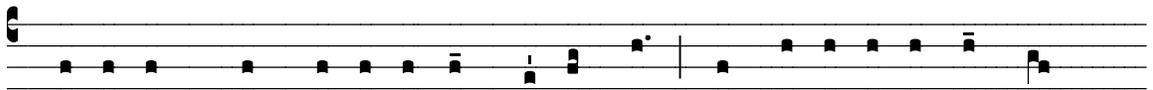
named Jo-seph, who was al-so a dis- ci- ple of Je- sus. He went to Pi-late



and asked for the bod- y of Je-sus;



then Pi-late or-dered it to be giv- en to him. So Jo- seph took the



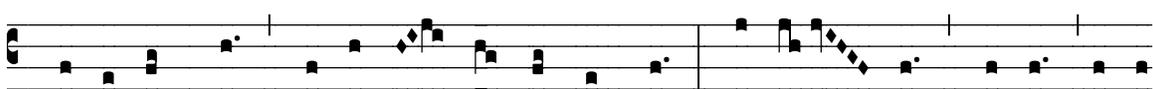
bod-y and wrapped it in a clean lin-en cloth and laid it in his own new



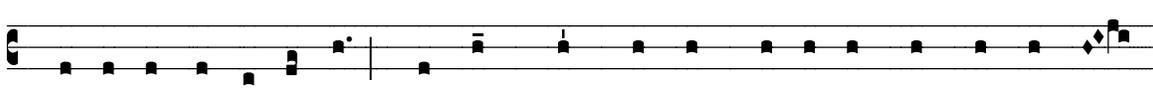
tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the



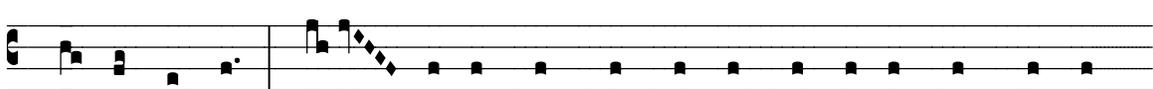
door of the tomb and went a- way. Ma- ry Mag-da-lene and the oth- er



Ma-ry were there, sit-ting op- po-site the tomb. The next day, that is, af-ter



the day of Prep-a-ra-tion, the chief priests and the Phar-i-sees gath-ered be- fore



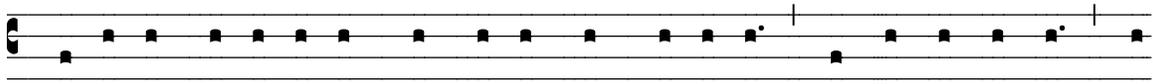
Pi- late and said, "Sir, we re-mem-ber what that im-pos-tor said while he



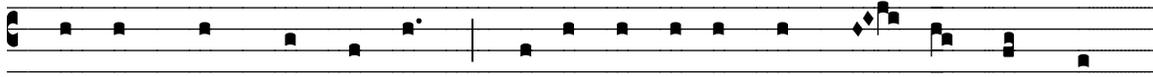
was still a- live, 'Af-ter thrée dáys Í will rise a- gain.' There- fore com-mand



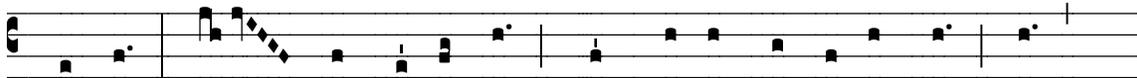
the tomb to be made se-cure un-til the third day;



oth-er-wise his dis-ci-ples may go and steal him a- way, and tell the peo-ple, ‘He



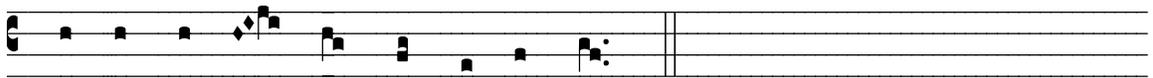
has been raised from the dead,’ and the last de-cep-tion would be worse than



the first.” Pi -late said to them, “You have a guard of sol-diers; go,



make it as se-cure as you can.” So they went with the guard and made



the tomb se- cure by seal- ing the stone.