

Good Friday 2020

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because, by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Mark 15:1-5,11-15 Jesus was taken in chains to Pilate. The chief priests were accusing Jesus of many things, so Pilate questioned him. 'Aren't you going to answer?' he said. 'Listen to all their accusations.' Jesus refused to say a word and Pilate was amazed.

Pilate spoke to the crowd. 'What do you want me to do with this one you call King of the Jews?' They shouted back, '**Crucify him!**'

'But what crime has he committed?' Pilate asked. They shouted all the louder, '**Crucify him! Crucify him!**' Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he set Barabbas free for them. Then he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be crucified.

Meditation Pilate asked what crime Jesus had committed. It was a good question.

Jesus had annoyed the religious leaders, of that there was no doubt.

He had been critical of social and religious structures.

He had healed the villagers; he had told stories to the crowds; he was probably a threat to public law and order; but was that enough to condemn him, to end his life? But he would not defend himself.

The storyteller was silent now, the crowd was noisy, and Pilate handed him over to be crucified.

Prayer: We offer prayer for those on trial this week and for those appointed to judge them:

God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Read or sing

My song is love unknown,
my Saviour's love to me,
love to the loveless shown,
that they might lovely be.

O who am I,
that for my sake
my Lord should take
frail flesh and die ?

Mark 15:16-20 The soldiers took Jesus inside, to the courtyard of the governor's palace and called together the rest of the company. They put a purple robe on Jesus, made a crown out of thorn branches, and put it on his head. Then they began to salute him:

'Long live the King of the Jews.' They beat him over the head with stick, spat on him, fell on their knees and bowed to him.

When they had finished mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Meditation Soldiers taking the chance for a bit of fun. They had a heavy day ahead.

Soon they would have to put on their public face disciplined, controlled, efficient. But for now a bit of a lark with the lads with no risk of recrimination.

Dead men tell no stories, and Jesus was going to his death.

Prayer : King of love, we pray for those appointed to keep public order, and for those tempted to abuse their power: God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Isaiah 53:1 Who would have believed what we now tell? Who could have seen God's hand in this?

Meditation Jesus was exhausted. He was in pain. He was going to his death. The cross was heavy and he fell. He was flesh and blood like us, he was struggling.

Prayer : Lord, we pray for those who are tired or in pain: God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer**

Read or sing

He came from his blest throne,
salvation to bestow;
but they made strange, and none
the longed-for Christ would know.
But O my Friend,
my Friend indeed,
who at my need
his life did spend!

Luke 2:22,25,34,35 The time came for Joseph and Mary to perform the ceremony of purification as the Law of Moses commanded. So they took the child Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, This child is chosen by God for the destruction and salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart.

Meditation She was going to be there at his end she who had been there with God at his beginning. She was his mother. She had fed him and cradled him and watched over his growing. Whatever he had said and done, he was still her son and she would not desert him now. Whatever pain of his she could embrace she would. And in the meeting of their eyes there was love, suffering and aching.

Prayer : We pray for parents whose children are in pain or in trouble:
God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Mark 15:21 On their way through Jerusalem they met a man named Simon, who was coming into the city from the country, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross.

Meditation Simon from Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, what a tale you had to tell your children! You helped Jesus. You gave him your strength on the streets of Jerusalem. Willing or unwilling, you, Simon, have become part of his story, and he part of yours, for you helped him when he needed you. What would we give to be Simon?

Prayer : Living God we pray for a willingness to serve you, in friends and in strangers,
God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Matthew 25:35-36, 40 I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me. Whenever you did this - you did it for me.

Meditation Wiping faces, dirty faces; faces full of sweat and tears, faces covered in chocolate and jam. Wiping faces is something we try to do gently and lovingly, something that soothes and cleanses, something that brings healing. Wiping faces is something we do for those who are young,

or old, or in pain, or in trouble, wanting them to know that they are cherished and loved. And when we wipe the faces of God's little ones, we are wiping the face of God.

Prayer: For those whose faces we wipe and for those who wipe away our tears:
God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Read or sing

Sometimes they strew his way,
and his sweet praises sing;
resounding all the day
hosannas to their King.
Then 'Crucify!'
is all their breath,
and for his death
they thirst and cry.

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

Meditation I am finding it hard to watch you, Jesus, to see you struggling, to see you on the ground. Into your silence I want to shout: 'Why do they keep on hurting you? What have you done wrong?'

Prayer : We pray for those who today will struggle and fall: God in your mercy,
Hear Our Prayer.

Luke 23:27, 28 A large crowd of people followed Jesus; among them were some women who were weeping and wailing for him. Jesus turned to them and said, 'Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me, but for yourselves and for your children.'

Meditation Weep for the mothers and children of Jerusalem, for Israeli and Palestinian, for Jew and Moslem and Christian, for the strangers in their midst. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Pray that her people may live together in justice. Pray that all people may live together in peace.

Prayer: We pray for those who live in places of conflict and danger; for peacemakers and peacekeepers in every land: God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Isaiah 53:4-5 He endured the suffering that should have been ours, the pain we should have borne. All the while we thought that his suffering was punishment sent by God; but because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received.

Meditation I am not sure if I can watch this much longer. In his pain I see my pain, in his falling I feel myself falling, in his cross ... in his cross I am included. He carried it for me for me, and my enemies, and my friends.

Prayer: We pray for those whom we love, for those whom we struggle to love, for those who find me difficult: God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Mark 15:22-24 They took Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull. They tried to give him wine mixed with a drug called myrrh, but Jesus would not drink it. Then they

crucified him and divided his clothing among themselves, throwing dice to see who would get each piece of clothing.

Read or sing

Why, what has my Lord done ?
What makes this rage and spite ?
He made the lame to run,
he gave the blind their sight.
Sweet injuries !
Yet they at these
themselves displease,
and 'gainst him rise.

Meditation Stripped now of clothing of disciples of friends. Alone, naked and vulnerable, with nothing to protect you from the pain to come.

Prayer: Gracious God, we pray for those deserted by friends, for those who are alone and vulnerable: God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Luke 23:35, 49 It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him; the people stayed there watching him, the leaders jeered at him and the soldiers mocked him. Some women, his friends from Galilee, looked on at a distance.

Meditation Can we know, can we feel the pain of the nails? We look on from a distance: a distance of time and space and culture, a distance of a Friday morning in England in Lent. And for us it hurts to watch Jesus dying, even at a distance. It hurts to know that we are being rescued. It hurts to know how much we are valued and loved.

Prayer: Father we thank you for the depth of your love for us.
God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Read or sing

They rise, and needs will have
my dear Lord made away;
a murderer they save,
the Prince of Life they slay.
Yet cheerful he
to suffering goes,
that he his foes
from thence might free.

Luke 23:44-46 It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock. And the curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two. Jesus cried out in a loud voice,
'Father in your hands I place my spirit. He said this and died.

Meditation In your hands he placed himself: all that he was, all that he had ever been, all his beauty, all his obedience, all his loving. In God's hands he placed himself. He was returning to his father, he was going home.

Prayer: Lord, we pray for all who have died today, for all who love them and will miss them: God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Read or sing

In life no house, no home,
my Lord on earth might have;
in death, no friendly tomb
but what a stranger gave.
What may I say?
Heaven was his home;
but mine the tomb
wherein he lay.

Mark 15:42-46 And when evening came, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Joseph took the body down and wrapped it in a linen sheet.

Meditation Jesus is dead and lies in the arms of his mother. Death is hard and final and yet, whatever happens on this earth, children never die to their mothers. In the memory of those who loved them, loved ones remain. And for us, and for all God's people, our hope is safe in God. From swaddling bands to grave clothes, all the days of our living and dying, we are cradled

Prayer: We pray for our families and friends who have died, for ourselves as we carry their stories: God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Mark 15:46-47 Joseph placed the body in a tomb which had been dug out of solid rock. Then he rolled a large stone across the entrance. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching and saw where the body of Jesus was placed.

Meditation The door is shut now, and the world sighs and waits.
And we wait in night's darkness, longing for the morning, longing for the light.

Prayer: For all who are waiting. For all who are longing for light:
God in your mercy, **Hear Our Prayer.**

Read or sing

Here might I stay and sing,
no story so divine:
never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine!
This is my Friend,
in whose sweet praise
I all my days
could gladly spend.

Samuel Crossman (c. 1624–1683)
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Dismissal

As on Maundy Thursday, there is not Blessing.