

GOOD FRIDAY

Prelude

For God so loved the world
that he gave his one and only son
that whosoever believes in him
shall not perish but have eternal life.
For God did not send his Son into the world
to condemn the world,
but to save the world through him.
(John 3.16-17)

God demonstrates his own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners,
Christ died for us.
(Romans 5.8)

PRAY:

Gracious God, it is hard to concentrate our thoughts for very long on what happened nearly two thousand years ago. Somehow the cross on the hill seems so remote from us, living in this place, at this time in the 21st century. Yet the sins of those who crucified Jesus are also our sins. Our needs are the needs of all people at all times and everywhere. Help us today to see the cross, eternally present, not only in the heart of God but also present in our hearts. May we receive your forgiveness and your peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn *"Man of Sorrows" – what a name*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHpIymqJ_OQ

Meditation: Could you not watch with me one hour?

Lord, what could it have meant to You if the disciples had stayed awake and kept You company in your agony that night?

What did you hope for from their company? Was it simply the knowledge of not being completely alone?

Or was there something else, something deeper, something which to us would be unexpected, but something which, in prayer and watching, they could have supplied to You?

Whatever it was, it was denied to You, and you drank the cup of your desolation alone, while the disciples slept.

And what about today? What about now? Do You ask me the same question? Can I not watch with You one hour? Are you asking me, Lord, to look at the world from the vantage point of Gethsemane: inviting me to explore the human element of that perfect faith which kept You steady in Your great resolve?

Are you suggesting that I too look into the face of God while the issues of life and death take shape and all that is against the truth assembles nearby and angels come close to give their help? Shall I not watch with You one hour? Now?

TRIAL

READ: John 18. 1-11

Hymn 140. *Praise to the holiest in the height* J

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAAz_iWp6vE

READ: John 18. 12-40

Meditation: Under Pontius Pilate.

As I read of Jesus being brought into the Praetorium, I think of Paul and of all the occasions on which he was hauled before the “powers that be” Often his trials became his opportunity to preach the Gospel.

Not so with Jesus. For Him there was only one trial, only one appearance before a head of state.

READ: John 19. 1-16a

Hymn 136. *My song is love unknown*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMart4wXsI0>

CRUCIFIXION

READ: John 19. 16b-37

PRAY:

It was for us, Lord Jesus, that you endured all this: the hatred, the treachery, the rejection by a crowd of men and women: the scourging, the mockery, the crown of thorns: the agony and shame and dereliction of the cross. Give us faith to behold him in the mystery of his Passion, and to enter into the fellowship of his sufferings. Let his wounds be our healing, his death our life, his shame our glory, that we may also partake of the victory of his resurrection, to the honour of your name.

Hymn 147. *When I survey the wondrous cross*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPdmmzRHIMA>

READ: John 19 38-42

Meditation: Crucified, dead and buried.

Three words which fall like hammer blows upon the heart. They speak of the reality of evil. They speak of the reality of love. They define the dimensions of my sin. They reveal my value to God.

The scourge, the thorns, the nails, the spear; the thirst, the taunts, the agony, the oblivion. All this because of what I am, day by day. All this the repercussion upon the divine of our attitude to life. I, and all mankind.

Here at the cross I meet myself. Here I can come to myself. Here - in his death - I can awake.

He died for me. So that's what I am worth to you Lord. This much. The value placed upon my head-upon the head of each person - is measureable only in terms of what Christ suffered on the cross.

These two shafts of light intersect within my heart, like a cross: My failure. My value.

Instead of remorse comes repentance. Instead of despair comes hope.

CONFESSION AND PETITION

Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have failed you as did your first disciples. We ask for your help and mercy.

Our selfishness betrays you.

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy

We fail to share the pain of your suffering.

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy

We run away from those who abuse you.

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy

We are afraid of being known to belong to you.

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy

May the Father forgive us by the death of his Son,
and strengthen us to live in the power of the Spirit all our days.

Amen

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,**

your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn 139 *O sacred head surrounded.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwuW8QfLukM>

After a pause for reflection, we proclaim - **It is finished.**