

GOOD FRIDAY - APRIL 9, 2020
SERVICE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS
SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

GATHERING

The liturgy begins in silence.
Seven candles are lit and offer focus to this time of scripture and prayer.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray,

Merciful God, your Son was lifted up on the cross to draw all people to himself. Grant that we who have been born out of his wounded side may at all times find mercy in him, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

PSALM 22

¹My God, my God, why have you for- | saken me?

Why so far from saving me, so far from the words | of my groaning?

²**My God, I cry out by day, but you | do not answer;**
by night, but I | find no rest.

³Yet you are the | Holy One, enthroned on the prais- | es of Israel.

⁴**Our ancestors put their | trust in you, they trusted, and you | rescued them. R**

⁵They cried out to you and | were delivered; they trusted in you and were not | put to shame.

⁶**But as for me, I am a worm | and not human,**
scorned by all and despised | by the people.

⁷All who see me laugh | me to scorn; they curl their lips; they | shake their heads.

⁸**"Trust in the LORD; let the | LORD deliver;**
let God rescue him if God so de- | lights in him." R

⁹Yet you are the one who drew me forth | from the womb,
and kept me safe on my | mother's breast.

¹⁰**I have been entrusted to you ever since | I was born;**
you were my God when I was still in my | mother's womb.

¹¹Be not far from me, for trou- | ble is near, and there is no | one to help.

¹⁴**I am poured out like water; all my bones are | out of joint;**
my heart within my breast is | melting wax.

¹⁵My strength is dried up like a potsherd; my tongue sticks to the roof | of my mouth;
and you have laid me in the | dust of death.

¹⁸**They divide my gar- | ments among them; for my clothing, | they cast lots.**

¹⁹But you, O LORD, be not | far away; O my help, hasten | to my aid.

²²**I will declare your name | to my people;
in the midst of the assembly | I will praise you. R**

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's | line, give glory.
Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off- | spring of Israel.

²⁶**The poor shall eat | and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts | live forever!**

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn | to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow | before God.

³⁰**Their descendants shall | serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to genera- | tions to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people | yet unborn,
saying to them, "The | LORD has acted!" R

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross verse 1

Jesus, keep me near the cross,
there's a precious fountain;
free to all, a healing stream
flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

Refrain

In the cross, in the cross
be my glory ever;
till my ransomed soul shall find
rest beyond the river.

Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
bring its scenes before me;
help me walk from day to day
with its shadow o'er me.

Refrain

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST*:

Today we walk with Jesus to Golgotha. We remember the pain that he suffered. We remember the triumph of his death – that didn't look much like triumph to anyone. And today we remember what it really means to say we are “taking up our cross” and “following Jesus.”

We are going to move together through the words Jesus spoke as he hung on the cross – and we are going to move together through the last hours of Jesus, and with him into the tomb. As we move through each phrase that Jesus spoke from the cross, we will blow out one of our Lenten candles – and we will have a short time of silence. After the seventh word, we will share a longer moment of silence in relative darkness.

THE FIRST WORD

Reader 1: Jesus we come – to walk the road with you – to follow you to the cross. We prepare ourselves now to follow your footprints in the dust. To understand how you died. To understand how we die. To understand how you lived. To understand how we should live.

Reader 2: John 18:28-19:18

Reader 3: Luke 23:32-34

32 Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.

33 When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[34 Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

Reader 1: You forgave even those who took your hands and feet and drove nails into solid wood. Who, straining, lifted up the cross that held you and dropped it into place. You have forgiven them. When we ask for mercy, we are amazed to find that it has already been extended. You have forgiven us.

First candle(s) may be extinguished as we ponder.



THE SECOND WORD

Reader 2: Luke 23:35-43

³⁵And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, ‘He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!’ ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷and saying, ‘If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!’ ³⁸There was also an inscription over him, ‘This is the King of the Jews.’

39 One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, ‘Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!’ 40But the other rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?’ 41And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.’ 42Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ 43He replied, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’

Reader 1: In your darkest hour, you turned to reassure the man beside you – a stranger. You extended eternity to him, even as you died. When we suffer, we find your hand extended to us – we find strength in the life you give us.

Second candle(s) may be extinguished as we ponder.

THE THIRD WORD

Reader 2: John 19:19-27

Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.’ Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, ‘Do not write, “The King of the Jews”, but, “This man said, I am King of the Jews.”’ Pilate answered, ‘What I have written I have written.’ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.’ This was to fulfil what the scripture says, ‘They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.’ And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, here is your son.’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Reader 1: You turned, in your suffering, to care for those who cared for you. You turned those you loved toward each other, and asked them to give each other the status of family. You have called us your sisters, your brothers.

Third candle(s) may be extinguished as we ponder.

THE FOURTH WORD

Reader 2: John 19:28-29

28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), ‘I am thirsty.’²⁹A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

Reader 1: You were fully human – thirsty as you hung there, in the hot sun. You felt the urgent need of a parched throat and a dry tongue. You have quenched our thirst with your living water.

Fourth candle(s) may be extinguished.

THE FIFTH WORD

Reader 2: Mark 15:33-34

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?’ which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’

Reader 1: You were abandoned by God, alone in your suffering. You withstood what we could not, and promised to never leave or forsake us.

Fifth candle(s) may be extinguished.

***Congregational Response:** *My song is love unknown (stanza 1 & 2)*

1 My song is love unknown,
my Savior's love to me,
love to the loveless shown
that they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I that for my sake
my Lord should take frail flesh and
die?
my Lord should take frail flesh and
die?

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

THE SIXTH WORD

Reader 2: John 19:30

³⁰When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' ...

Reader 1: You finished the work you came into the world to complete, at great cost to yourself. At great cost to yourself, you completed, and will complete, the world in which you came to work. At great cost you have completed and will complete your work in us.

Sixth candle(s) may be extinguished.

THE SEVENTH WORD

Reader 2: Luke 23: 44-46

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last.

Reader 1: After all. After everything. After the pain, the rejection, the sorrow – you entrusted your spirit to your heavenly father. Although you felt the forsakenness of sin in its fullest, you trusted your father. Now you entrust us to your heavenly Father – sitting at his right hand, and interceding for us. The curtain was torn, our separation from God is ended – in this moment. May we trust. May we learn, in the darkness, the extent of your faithfulness. May we entrust ourselves to you.

In a moment, as I blow out the seventh candle. As we sit in silence, and as we sit in the dark, we will also fill our hearts with stillness, as we seek to understand the cross – and as we seek to take up our own cross.

Lord Jesus, we ask that you would teach us to understand this great and terrible mystery. Please accept now our silent worship.

Seventh candle(s) may be extinguished. Silence

Ah, Holy Jesus

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou
offended
that we to judge thee have in hate
pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own
rejected,
O most afflicted. | 4 For me, kind Jesus, was thine
incarnation,
thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's
oblation;
thy death of anguish and thy
bitter passion,
for my salvation. |
| 2 Who was the guilty? Who
brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath
undone thee.
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was
denied thee;
I crucified thee. | 5 Therefore, kind Jesus, since I
cannot pay thee,
I do adore thee, and will ever
pray thee;
think on thy pity and thy love
unswerving,
not my deserving. |

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585-1647; tr. Robert Bridges, 1844-1930, alt.

Reader 2: John 19:31-42

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. ³²Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. ³⁵(He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) ³⁶These things occurred so that

the scripture might be fulfilled, ‘None of his bones shall be broken.’³⁷ And again another passage of scripture says, ‘They will look on the one whom they have pierced.’

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.³⁹ Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.⁴⁰ They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.⁴¹ Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.⁴² And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Reader 1: And so we wait. Through the night, through the long, silent Saturday in the tomb. The battle is already won. Jesus has already declared his work finished – but we wait. We wait for the glimmer of dawn in the darkness. For the sliver of hope that lightens despair. We wait for the empty tomb. We wait for Christ to return.

Bidding Prayer

*Each petition begins with an invitation to prayer, then is followed by silence. Prayers conclude the silence and each petition ends with “through Christ our Lord.” The assembly responds **Amen.***

The assembly prays for the following:

The church throughout the world

Leaders in the church

Christians in other churches

The Jewish people, first to hear the word of God

Those who do not believe in God

God’s creation

those who serve in public office

those in need

The prayers conclude:

Finally, let us pray for all those things for which our Lord would have us ask.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Behold, the life-giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world.
Oh, come, let us worship him.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.
By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

The congregation departs in silence.

Worship Notes:

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*Seven Last Words Liturgy by Stacey Gleddiesmith: <http://thinkingworship.com/2012/04/04/good-friday-from-light-to-darkness-a-liturgy/>

Image : James Tissot (French, 1836-1902). *What Our Lord Saw from the Cross (Ce que voyait Notre-Seigneur sur la Croix)*, 1886-1894. Opaque watercolor over graphite on gray-green wove paper, Image: 9 3/4 x 9 1/16 in. (24.8 x 23 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Purchased by public subscription, 00.159.299 (Photo: Brooklyn Museum, 00.159.299_PS2.jpg)