

A service for Good Friday – 7th April, 2023

Call and Welcome: John 3:16 & 17

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever 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. Amen.

Our Good Friday service will consist of hymns with a series of eight readings from St. John. No address is necessary: the readings say it all.

Reading 1: John chapter 18 verses 1 to 11

When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it. Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them,

"Who is it you want?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

"I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them,

"Who is it you want?"

And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

"I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) Jesus commanded Peter,

"Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Hymn: 'Jesus in the olive grove,'

1. Jesus in the olive grove

**Waiting for a traitor's kiss,
Rises free from bitterness.**

2. As he wakes his comrades up,

**Torches flicker in the glen;
Shadows turn to marching men.**

3. In that dawn of blows and lies

**Church and State conspire to kill,
Hang three rebels on a hill.**

4. Innocent and guilty drown

**In a flood of blood and sweat.
How much darker can it get?**

5. How much darker must it be

**For a God to see and care
That we perish in despair?**

6. It is God himself who dies!

**God in man shall set us free:
God as Man – and only he.**

7. Let him claim us as his own;

**We will serve as best we can
Such a God and such a Man!**

Reading 2: John chapter 18 verses 12 to 24

Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the girl on duty there and brought Peter in.

"You are not one of his disciples, are you?" the girl at the door asked Peter. He replied, "I am not." It was cold, and the servants and officials stood round a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said." When Jesus said this, one of the officials near by struck him in the face.

"Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded.

"If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

Hymn: 'There is a green hill far away,'

- 1. There is a green hill far away,
Outside a city wall,
Where our dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.**
- 2. We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains he had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.**
- 3. He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by his precious blood.**
- 4. There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven, and let us in.**
- 5. O dearly, dearly has he loved!
And we must love him too,
And trust in his redeeming blood,
And try his works to do.**

Reading 3: John chapter 18 verses 25 to 27

As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it, saying,

"I am not."

One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him,

"Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a cock began to crow.

Hymn: 'My song is love unknown,' 2 parts: Part 1

**1. My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love for 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?**

**2. He came from his blest throne,
Salvation to bestow;
But men 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.**

**3. 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.**

Reading 4: John chapter 18 verses 28 to 40

Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate came out to them and asked,

"What charges are you bringing against this man?"

"If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."

Pilate said,

"Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

"But we have no right to execute anyone," the Jews objected. This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled. Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him,

"Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?" "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

Jesus said,

"My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered,

"You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

"What is truth?" Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him. But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?" They shouted back,

"No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion.

Hymn: 'My song is love unknown,' 2 parts: Part 2

4. Why, what hath 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

Reading 5: John chapter 19 verses 1 to 16

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying,

"Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face.

Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews,
"Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered,
"You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." The Jews insisted,
"We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer.

"Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realise I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting,

"If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar." When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour.

"Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. But they shouted,

"Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. Finally, Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father and Lord of life, we come to worship you on this solemn day in reverence and penitence, for we know the dreadful price Christ Jesus was willing to pay for not only our sins but the sins of the whole world. Our readings remind us of your amazing grace to a broken, selfish world, for instead of punishing us as we deserve, you allowed your beloved Son to bear our punishment, though he was sinless. Merciful Lord, we acknowledge our failure to live as you call us to, of our responsibility for Christ's passion and death. Pardon and restore us, heavenly Father and as you forgive us, so we become instruments of your peace.

When our Lord Jesus hung on that cross, he looked outwards at the world with all its needs and suffering and despite his agony, he not only pleaded with you to forgive those who were killing him, but arranged for John to take care of Mary, our Saviour's mother. Help us, also, to look out at the world in all its beauty and brokenness, so we may do whatever we can to help and care for others, for by doing so we are building up your kingdom.

We know that we are only a small part of your Church, but we pray that all our brothers and sisters in Christ will unite to bear the gospel light to a world that desperately needs good news. Strengthen our faith in these trying times, so we may encourage and help our neighbours. Teach us to be bold in proclaiming Christ crucified and raised to life again, to celebrate his victory over sin and death for our sakes, for his is the glory.

Finally, Lord, we pray for our world, that you will come to rule the hearts and minds of all nations, that justice and loving kindness will triumph over wrongdoing and

cruelty and that the beauty of your peace will be established in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

We shall say the Prayer Jesus taught his followers.

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, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading 6: John chapter 19 verses 17 to 24

Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle. ¹⁹ Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate,

"Do not write 'The King of the Jews', but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews." Pilate answered,

"What I have written, I have written." When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

"Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, "They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." So this is what the soldiers did.

Hymn: 'The Servant King'

**1. From heaven You came,
Helpless babe, entered our world,
Your glory veiled; not to be served
But to serve and give Your life
That we might live. *Chorus:***

***This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow Him,
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King.***

**2. There in the garden of tears,
My heavy load he chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not My will but Yours,' He said. *Chorus:***

**3. Come see His hands and His feet,
The scars that speak of sacrifice ;
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered. *Chorus:***

**4. So let us learn how to serve,
And in our lives enthrone Him;
Each other's needs to prefer,
For it is Christ we're serving. *Chorus:***

Reading 7: John chapter 19 verses 25 to 37

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said,

"I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

When he had received the drink, Jesus said,

"It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.

These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

Hymn: 'Come and see, come and see,'

1. Come and see, come and see,

Come and see the King of love;

See the purple robe and crown of thorns he wears.

Soldiers mock, rulers sneer

As he lifts the cruel cross;

Lone and friendless now, he climbs towards the hill. *Chorus:*

We worship at your feet,

Where wrath and mercy meet,

And a guilty world is washed by love's pure stream.

For us he was made sin –

Oh, help me take it in.

Deep wounds of love cry out, 'Father, forgive.'

I worship, I worship

The Lamb who was slain.

2. Come and weep, come and mourn

For your sin that pierced him there;

So much deeper than the wounds of thorn and nail.

All our pride, all our greed,

All our fallenness and shame;

And the Lord has laid the punishment on him. *Chorus:*

3. Man of heaven, born to earth

To restore us to your heaven.

Here we bow in awe beneath your searching eyes.

**From your tears comes our joy,
From your death our life shall spring;
By your resurrection power we shall rise. *Chorus:***

Reading 8: John chapter 19 verses 38 to 42

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no-one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Hymn: 'When I survey the wondrous cross'

- 1. When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.**
- 2. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.**
- 3. See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?**
- 4. His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;
Then am I dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.**
- 5. Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

Benediction

As we have shared in the passion and death of Jesus, may we also share in the power and joy of new life in Christ, where we have the privilege and responsibility of taking good news of your love to those we meet. May we go from this place in peace and the love of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit remain with us and those we love now and forevermore. Amen.