

St. Andrew's Online Good Friday

Prelude

"O sacred head, now wounded"

Opening Words

gather round
I have a story to tell
of one who reached inside himself
and took a handful of love
like a pile of stardust
and said: this is for you
it is all you need
it is all you will ever need
there is enough here
to change the whole world
take it

many laughed at him
mocked him
and ignored the invitation

but some dared to take it
and those who did
noticed something about this love
they found they could do what the gift-giver could do
they could stand with the lost
welcome the traveler
eat with the hungry
they found themselves doing what the man first did to them
give something of themselves to others
they became like the man
offering themselves
and as they offered themselves
others took the invitation
and many still do

and many still trust
it is enough to change the whole world

Prayer of Adoration

King of Glory,
we adore you, our Savior and Lord.
You suffered on the cross
and gave your life as a gift for many.
We bless and thank you for this outpouring of your love
and offer our worship today out of unspeakable gratitude.

O Christ, who forsook no one
but was forsaken by the closest of friends;
who committed no crime, yet was sentenced to a criminal's death,
we enter your presence in awe and adoration.
On this day, centuries ago, you could have saved your life,
but you refused to betray the purpose for which you had been born.
You had come into the world to love God and neighbor as yourself,
and when that love required you to shoulder a cross,
you summoned the strength to bear it.
Today, O Christ, as we sing and pray about the cross,
teach us its meaning once again
and help us to take up our cross and follow you.
Amen.

Psalms 51:1-12

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight,

so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless when you pass judgment.
Indeed, I was born guilty,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.
You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Prayer of Confession

Loving God, we know that you love us,
so we confess that we have let you down.
Every day we betray you, deny you, misunderstand you, crucify you.
We betray you when we are selfish or unkind.
We deny you when we do not speak out for justice and truth.
We misunderstand you when we justify our actions and our inactions
by misquoting your teaching.
We crucify you when we do not love one another as you love us.
Forgive us for our cruel indifference to the cross.
We wait for your word of love.
Through Christ, our Lord, we pray; amen.

[“Jesus paid it all”](#)

John 18:12-32

Then the Roman soldiers with their commanding officer and the Jewish guards arrested Jesus, tied him up, and took him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jewish authorities that it was better that one man should die for all the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That other disciple was well known to the High Priest, so he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the High Priest's house, while Peter stayed outside by the gate. Then the other disciple went back out, spoke to the girl at the gate, and brought Peter inside. The girl at the gate said to Peter, "Aren't you also one of the disciples of that man?"

"No, I am not," answered Peter.

It was cold, so the servants and guards had built a charcoal fire and were standing around it, warming themselves. So Peter went over and stood with them, warming himself.

The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have always spoken publicly to everyone; all my teaching was done in the synagogues and in the Temple, where all the people come together. I have never said anything in secret. Why, then, do you question me? Question the people who heard me. Ask them what I told them—they know what I said."

When Jesus said this, one of the guards there slapped him and said, "How dare you talk like that to the High Priest!"

Jesus answered him, "If I have said anything wrong, tell everyone here what it was. But if I am right in what I have said, why do you hit me?"

Then Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas the High Priest.

Peter was still standing there keeping himself warm. So the others said to him, "Aren't you also one of the disciples of that man?"

But Peter denied it. "No, I am not," he said.

One of the High Priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, spoke up. "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" he asked.

Again Peter said "No"—and at once a rooster crowed.

Early in the morning Jesus was taken from Caiaphas' house to the governor's palace. The Jewish authorities did not go inside the palace, for they wanted to keep themselves ritually clean, in order to be able to eat the Passover meal. So Pilate went outside to them and asked, "What do you accuse this man of?"

Their answer was, "We would not have brought him to you if he had not committed a crime."

Pilate said to them, "Then you yourselves take him and try him according to your own law."

They replied, "We are not allowed to put anyone to death." (This happened in order to make come true what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he would die.)

["My song is love unknown"](#)

John 19:1-11, 16b-30

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. The soldiers made a crown out of thorny branches and put it on his head; then they put a purple robe on him and came to him and said, "Long live the King of the Jews!" And they went up and slapped him.

Pilate went back out once more and said to the crowd, "Look, I will bring him out here to you to let you see that I cannot find any reason to condemn him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look! Here is the man!"

When the chief priests and the Temple guards saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, "You take him, then, and crucify him. I find no reason to condemn him."

The crowd answered back, "We have a law that says he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid. He went back into the palace and asked Jesus, "Where do you come from?"

But Jesus did not answer. Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Remember, I have the authority to set you free and also to have you crucified."

Jesus answered, "You have authority over me only because it was given to you by God. So the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a worse sin."

Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

So they took charge of Jesus. He went out, carrying his cross, and came to "The Place of the Skull," as it is called. (In Hebrew it is called "Golgotha.") There they crucified him; and they also crucified two other men, one on each side, with Jesus between them. Pilate wrote a notice and had it put on the cross. "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," is what he wrote. Many people read it, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city. The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. The chief priests said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am the King of the Jews.'"

Pilate answered, "What I have written stays written."

After the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took the robe, which was made of one piece of woven cloth without any seams in it. The soldiers said to one another, "Let's not tear it; let's throw dice to see who will get it." This happened in order to make the scripture come true:

"They divided my clothes among themselves
and gambled for my robe."

And this is what the soldiers did.

Standing close to Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, "He is your son."

Then he said to the disciple, "She is your mother." From that time the disciple took her to live in his home.

Jesus knew that by now everything had been completed; and in order to make the scripture come true, he said, "I am thirsty."

A bowl was there, full of cheap wine; so a sponge was soaked in the wine, put on a stalk of hyssop, and lifted up to his lips. Jesus drank the wine and said, "It is finished!"

Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

"Were You There When They Crucified my Lord?"

Prayer: "The Hosannas have died away..."

O Holy God,
the hosannas have died away,
the palm branches have turned brittle.

Now, today, there is only this –
each of us,
all of us,
sitting in the darkness,
the hymns of lament in the air,
the mumblings of our own feeble confession,
on this Friday
which we tremble to call Good.

What is good about Good Friday?

What is good about the innocent one nailed to a cross?
What is good about the darkness of war that persists today?
What is good about our devastation of the planet?
... about people living in poverty?
... about the fog of addiction, depression, disease and despair?
What is good about the crushing weight of hunger, racism, scapegoating, apathy?
What is good about fear, uncertainty, illness, and the death of thousands?

No, there is nothing good and desirable in these things.

Yet you, O God, are Good.

When suffering reigns, yours is the first heart to break.

When despair lurks about, we remember that you were there first,
peering into the abyss and crying out, incredibly:
"Father, forgive them."

When we feel forsaken, we remember that in your last moments,
you cared for your mother and your beloved disciple,
binding them to one another as a new family.

When we feel overcome by guilt, we remember that you spoke grace to a thief:
“Today you will be with me in paradise.”

Here is love;
boundless, ever-present, good,
and poured out, for us.

Thank you.
What else can we say here, in the dimness,
in the darkness,
but thank you, Jesus.

Amen.

John 19:31-42

Then the Jewish authorities asked Pilate to allow them to break the legs of the men who had been crucified, and to take the bodies down from the crosses. They requested this because it was Friday, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses on the Sabbath, since the coming Sabbath was especially holy. So the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and water poured out. (The one who saw this happen has spoken of it, so that you also may believe. What he said is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth.) This was done to make the scripture come true: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” And there is another scripture that says, “People will look at him whom they pierced.”

After this, Joseph, who was from the town of Arimathea, asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body. (Joseph was a follower of Jesus, but in secret, because he was afraid of the Jewish authorities.) Pilate told him he could have the body, so Joseph went and took it away. Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night, went with Joseph, taking with him about one hundred pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes. The two men took

Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial. There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb where no one had ever been buried. Since it was the day before the Sabbath and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus' body there.

“It is finished”

Those whom [Jesus] left behind saw nothing but his corpse. He was not a teacher anymore. He had become a teaching instead—a window into the depths of God that some could see through and some could not. Those who held out hope for a strong God, a fierce God, a God who would brook no injustice—they looked upon a scene where God was not, while those whose feet Jesus had washed, whose faces he had touched, whose open mouths he had fed—they looked upon a scene in which God had died for love of them.

[“When I survey the wondrous cross”](#)

Sending Words

The story has been told,
and now we return to the world where we live and wait.
But the worship is not over.
It continues while we wait and watch.
Our worship will close after the stone has been rolled back
and the flame of hope has been re-lit.

So we wait;
we watch for the hope that defies despair,
the life that defies death,
the beginning that defies the end,
the grace and love that save all creation.

While we wait,
while darkness obscures light, and fear overshadows faith,

remember that no matter how abandoned you may feel
you are not alone.

God has not and will not abandon us.
Thanks be to God. Amen.