

Good Friday Service
April 10th, 2020



Opening Hymn: Where You There - 192

Opening Prayer

Jesus, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.
Therefore, let us keep the feast.

Jesus spent his life modeling the kingdom of God –
Healing the sick and the broken, feeding the hungry, giving in-sight to the blind.

Jesus gave his life for the Kingdom of God –
Suffering with the misunderstood, eating with the untouchables and dying with the rejected.

Always remember, the final word belongs, not to the wealthy, not to the influential, not to the powerful, but to God. And God's word to Jesus, and all those with whom Jesus stands is, "Rise! The kingdom belongs to you!"

Amen.

First Reading: St. Mark 14:1-11

It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him; for they said, 'Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.'

While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. But some were there who said to one another in anger, 'Why was the ointment wasted in this way? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.' And they scolded her. But Jesus said, 'Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.'

Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

Silence

Hymn # 402 (repeat 5 times)

Come and fill our hearts with your peace

You alone, O Lord, are holy.

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Alleluia

Second ReadingSt. Mark 14:12-25

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?' So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.' So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he came with the twelve. And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.' They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, 'Surely, not I?' He said to them, 'It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.'

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'

Silence

Hymn # 63 (repeat 5 times)

*Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Trust in me and you will not thirst.*

Third Reading St, Mark 14:26-52

26 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷And Jesus said to them, 'You will all become deserters; for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered."

²⁸But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.' ²⁹Peter said to him, 'Even though all become deserters, I will not.' ³⁰Jesus said to him, 'Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.' ³¹But he said vehemently, 'Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.' And all of them said the same.

32 They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' ³³He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. ³⁴And he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.' ³⁵And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶He said, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.' ³⁷He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? ³⁸Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' ³⁹And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. ⁴¹He came a third time and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

43 Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. ⁴⁴Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.' ⁴⁵So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, 'Rabbi!' and kissed him. ⁴⁶Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁴⁷But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸Then Jesus said to them, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? ⁴⁹Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.' ⁵⁰All of them deserted him and fled.

51 A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, ⁵²but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

Silence

Hymn #549 (repeat 5 times)

*Our darkness is never darkness in your sight;
the deepest night is clear as the day-light.*

Fourth Reading..... St. Mark 14:53-72

They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, 'We heard him say, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands."' But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, 'Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?' But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?' Jesus said, 'I am; and "you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power", and "coming with the clouds of heaven."'

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?' All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, 'Prophecy!' The guards also took him over and beat him.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, 'You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.' But he denied it, saying, 'I do not know or understand what you are talking about.' And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, 'This man is one of them.' But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, 'Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.' But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know this man you are talking about.' At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.' And he broke down and wept.

Silence

Hymn..... # 568 (repeat 5 times)

*Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten,
Those who seek God shall never go wanting.
Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten,
God alone fills us.*

Fifth Reading St. Mark 15:1-20

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' He answered him, 'You say so.' Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, 'Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.' But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, 'Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?' For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, 'Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?' They shouted back, 'Crucify him!' Pilate asked them, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!' So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Silence

Hymn # 634 (repeat 5 times)

*Jesus remember me,
when you come into your kingdom,
Jesus remember me,
when you come into your kingdom.*

Sixth ReadingSt. Mark 15:21-47

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, 'The King of the Jews.' And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, 'Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!' In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.' Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

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?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'Listen, he is calling for Elijah.' And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.' Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'

There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where the body was laid.

Silence

Hymn # 94 (repeat 5 times)

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord; be strong, take heart.

MEDITATION ON THE CROSS

The cross is a sign of power and death
to rulers of this world

The empty cross, for Jesus' followers, is a sign of victory, despite all appearances to the contrary.

This cross is a sign of meaningless loss to the wise of this world.

**To us, whose wisdom is not simply of this world,
it is a sign of hope and possibilities,
despite all appearances to the contrary.**

The cross, to those of us who have the eyes to see,
is the sign of God-with-us – even when everyone and everything else says the
opposite.

Amen.



(A time of silence is kept for reflection and quiet prayer)

This is the wood of the cross,
on which hung the Healer of the world.
Come let us worship.

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on which hung the Healer of the world.
Come let us worship.

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Come let us worship.

CONFESSING OUR SIN

Most merciful God,

**We confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us,
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

ABSOLUTION

Almighty God have mercy on us,
pardon and deliver us all your sins,
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,
and keep us in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The cross is an inescapable part of our lives.
We experience misunderstanding, we experience criticism,
we experience the complicit silence of those who know better.

**In the times of pain and unfairness,
we will search diligently for the presence of God.**

By the way we face our own pain and suffering
we will offer hope to those around us.
**We will face our struggles with the trust
that God is with us, and God's presence will strengthen us.**

**Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.**

Hymn 360 – Bless the Lord, My Soul (repeat 5 times)

For Further reflection on Good Friday

As we enter Good Friday, I think it is imperative to ask what or where is the good news here.

Let me begin by looking at when Jesus 1st enters the 1st gospel (Mark). John the baptizer was baptizing in the river Jordan and Jesus comes to be baptized by John. What was John doing and why?

John was on the wilderness side of the Jordan. People had to go into the wilderness to be baptized by John, after which they were sent, through the river, back to Galilee. John is re-enacting the exodus (from the wilderness, through the water to the promised land). He's trying to get God to initiate a new exodus. Why? Because John sees life under roman rule as life was for Israel under the Pharaoh in Egypt and he's asking God to rescue Israel again. Jesus comes to John to participate in John's plan.

Does Jesus see Roman rule as oppressive? Let me give you one instance that would indicate Jesus' perspective. Again, in Mark (12:14), the earliest gospel, Jesus is asked if it's lawful to pay taxes to the emperor. Jesus' response (which is rarely understood even today) is to ask for a coin of the realm. "Whose image is on the coin?" he asks. 'The Emperor's' is the response. Jesus then says, "Give to the emperor what belongs to the emperor and to God what belongs to God." Lest we miss the point Jesus is trying to make, (and most do) let me ask you, what belongs to God? (or more simply put, What does not belong to God?) So if everything belongs to God, What belongs to the emperor? (As an aside, you should know that on that coin is stamped 'Divi filius' Son of God'. That was a title of the emperor and for anybody else to use that title was a crime punishable by death).

Again, let me ask a question. What is one of the most basic of human needs? Food! The lack of sufficient food will kill you. Now remember one of the most documented of Jesus' miracles - feeding the poor (and make no mistake, over 90% of the Jewish population in lower Galilee were subsistence poor).

One final critical point to understand was the political make up of Israel in the 1st century of the common era. Israel is ruled by the Romans. Rome had learned early in its history of conquests, you need taxes to run the government. The local population will already resent a foreign ruler, so if you can get local citizens to collect the taxes things will go a whole lot smoother. Before the conquest of Israel by the Romans, the Jewish population already had a system of government and taxation (no where near as oppressive as that of Rome). The ruling class in Israel was the Sadducees (the aristocracy). Rome entered into an agreement with Israel that the taxes would be administered by the Sadducees. So what you have in 1st century Galilee is an oppressive foreign government ruling through the local aristocracy.

Now keep in mind that the one who had truly ruled Israel (God) had established the most egalitarian system imaginable – the sabbatical laws. Every 7th day was a day of rest for everyone (Jew, servant slave, animal), every 7 years all debts were cancelled, every 50 years all ancestral land (land lost through debt or what ever reason) was returned to its ancestral owner. (Just think what that would be like for us if that was our system!) And Jesus knew all this like he knew the back of his hand.

Jesus understood all of this! “Render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God!” The Sadducees also understood that Jesus was rocking their very comfortable boat. So it should be no surprise to anyone who understands the values that were in play in 1st century Galilee (and dare I say even today) that things turned out as they did.

So what is the good news of Good Friday now? So many of the same values are really still in play in the 21st century. God stills hears our needs and our struggles. Those needs and struggles are as real to God today as they were 2000 years ago.

God still understands and still calls us to a much higher set of values that takes the needs of our ‘neighbours’ seriously. And never forget: Good Friday does not stand by itself. It stands in the middle, between the foot washing of Maundy Thursday and the Resurrection of Easter Sunday!

May the God of the Passover be behind you and before, on your right hand and on your left, and may God grant you the Peace of Easter!

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