

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

The First Reading - Isaiah 52: 13 - 53: 12

This passage from the unknown poet-prophet of the Babylonian exile had great influence on the writers of the gospel narratives of the Passion of Christ. It was originally written, however, against the background of events several hundred years earlier. Modern scholars have suggested that Jesus himself may have chosen this as the model for his ministry .

The Psalm - Psalm 22

According to Mark 15:34, Jesus uttered the opening words of this psalm as he died on the cross. The question remains whether or not he actually did feel totally abandoned by God as this lament suggests. In the end, did he too, like the psalmist, give hopeful praise and thanks to God?

The Second Reading - Hebrews 10: 16-25

This passage makes reference to Hebrew scriptures and ritual customs which would have been familiar to all Jewish-Christians in the 1st century CE. The reference is to the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34. The author saw the death of Christ as having fulfilled the intent of atoning sacrifice offered by the high priest in the Holy of Holies of the temple on the Day of Atonement. Because of his sacrifice, Christians are now able to live the covenant prophesied by Jeremiah.

The Gospel Reading - John 18:1 - 19:42

Each of the authors of the four gospels had a different purpose in mind as they told the crucifixion story. Accordingly, the details of the actual event do not always agree. It is unwise to pick and choose various aspects from the four narratives to create a cohesive account of what may have happened. Yet many have tried to do so, at times thereby creating great art. The point of the passion story is not to give us a factual account of how it happened, but to tell us why and to move us to faith in the Christ who triumphed over sin and death. John's account is particularly forceful in its condemnation of "the Jews." This has been the source of considerable anti-Semitic propaganda, hatred and violence against Jews through the centuries.

Shorter version!

Isaiah 52:13-53:12: A song of the suffering servant, who is persecuted and dies for the sake of others ("us").

Psalm 22: A Psalm of lament, grieving the suffering and abandonment of the writer, but celebrating the inevitable rescue that will come, and praising the God who brings this salvation.

Hebrews 10:16-25: We have confidence to approach God, because of Christ's sacrifice for us, and can now live in hope, in intimacy with God, and in love-in-action.

John 18:1 – 19:42: Jesus is arrested, tried, crucified and buried – and through it all, reveals the brokenness and lack of integrity of those who face him, while revealing his own truth, integrity and divine character.

Click here to view the readings -

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http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Isaiah%2052:%2013%20-%2053:%2012%0Acw%20Psalm%2022%0AHebrews%2010:%2016-25%0AJohn%2018:1%20-%2019:42

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

Almighty God,
we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family,
for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed,
and given up into the hands of wicked men,
and to suffer death upon the cross,
who now liveth and reigneth with thee
and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.
and/or

Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
is governed and sanctified;
Receive our supplications and prayers,
which we offer before thee for all estates of men
in thy holy Church,
that every member of the same,
in his vocation and ministry,
may truly and godly serve thee;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Collect Two

Almighty Father,
Look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ
was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

The use of extended bidding-type prayers is traditional on this day. Silence follows the prayer bid. Then the prayer is made and closed with the congregation's Amen. At the conclusion of all the prayer bids is The Lord's Prayer.

A: Let us pray for the one holy, catholic, and apostolic church of Christ that there may be true unity, holiness by reason of Christ's holiness, a sense of the church's breadth and diversity, and the reality that the church has been set into the world with a message that is good news in Jesus the Christ. (Silence.)

P: We thank you for our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. Maintain in our hearts the truth that we are truly one family born of the Holy Spirit and spread abroad in the world with differences that enrich us and call us to a common mission.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for all who have oversight of the work of Christ's church in the world. (Silence.)

P: We call before you, God of heaven and earth, our bishop etc.... Endow these and others unnamed with equal responsibility in your church to honour vision granted by the Spirit and to serve with integrity and joy. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those to be baptized and those affirming their baptismal vows. (Silence.)

P: May each one for whom we now pray bring renewal to your church. Let their initiations and affirmations give witness to your enlivening presence among us. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those who promote the separation of the church catholic and foster dissension within its ranks. (Silence.)

P: Enable us by the Spirit to outdo would-be opponents by the exercise of love in Christ. Create by your Spirit such coping mechanisms that we may outrun unwarranted strategies that deny the oneness of the Gospel. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for the Jewish people. (Silence.)

P: Rightly has the Apostle Paul written that to them "belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever." (Romans (9:4-5 RSV). May these your people, so wonderfully endowed spiritually and historically, continue in the righteousness by faith that will conclude your gracious purpose with them as a people. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those yet unconvinced by the gospel of Christ. (Silence.)

P: Forgive us when we have been an obstruction to the acceptance of your word. Take from us such arrogance and pride that works against the love you have shown in Jesus the Christ. Let reason be sweetened by your Spirit. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those who live untouched by the word of God's power and global redemption in Christ. (Silence.)

P: Call forth faithful witnesses to the gospel. Have mercy on all who are out of range of human communication of your word. Teach, bless, and hold close those prevented from hearing the word of your redemption. You alone speak in ways that bring knowledge of your mercy, O God. We commend all to your care and healing. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for ----- our Prime Minister, and all who bear the burden of governing in the world. (Silence.)

P: Compassionate God, show our leaders the needs of their people. Turn away oppression and unjust ways. Direct all to the healing of the nations. Grant us to support whatever we can redeem. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those known in our world as "have-nots." (Silence.)

P: Stir our consciences to care, when there are any in our world who remain hungry and starving, disenfranchised and powerless, oppressed and afraid. Enable us to share hope, where despair prevails. Balance deep concern for those who are in want, with wisdom that acts graciously and quickly to bring aid. Permit us to do good as you have done good to us. C: Amen.

A: Let us pray with those petitions our Lord gave to his followers. (Silence.)

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

In this holy time,
as we remember the sacrifice of the cross,
we offer the prayers of our hearts,
that through them we may be transformed
to be servants of justice, love and peace.
Prayers of the People, concluding with:
Make us steadfast witnesses of our Saviour's reign,
that we may live in the pattern of Christ,
who was faithful in all things,
even death, and whose darkest hour gives light and hope. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 3

We are passing from night to day, from darkness to light, from death to life. We ask "O Christ, hear us," and respond,
Glory, all glory is yours.

That the church might be the unmistakable evidence that you live.
O Christ, hear us. **Glory, all glory is yours.**

That all nations may discover that the Resurrection proclaims the care of all that you have made. O Christ, hear us. **Glory, all glory is yours.**

That the downcast and downtrodden may know surely that your rising to life is the promise of their own release. O Christ, hear us. **Glory, all glory is yours.**

That neighbours far and neighbors near may see in us life beyond death, hope beyond sorrow. O Christ, hear us. **Glory, all glory is yours.**

That the Resurrection might be plainly spoken of and simply lived by us who believe. O Christ, hear us. **Glory, all glory is yours.**

That those who are buried with Christ and raised with him in baptism may share the joy of the new day of faith and life. O Christ, hear us. **Glory, all glory is yours.**

When we have neglected the simple discipline of caring and followed willful unconcern for all that you have made and redeemed, forgive and replenish us. O Christ, hear us. **Glory, all glory is yours.**

God of Grace, Noble Mentor, Careful Guide, bloom fully in us who journey in your way, your truth, your life. You alone remain worthy of our praise. **Amen.**

See also Intercessions below, some of which could be adapted.

POST COMMUNION

No Post Communion prayer is provided for Good Friday.

PRAYERS

1

We veil our faces before your glory,
O Holy and Immortal one,
and bow before the cross of your wounded Christ.
with angels and archangels,
we praise you, our Mercy,
and we bless you, our Compassion,
for in our brokenness
you have not abandoned us.
Hear us as we pray through Jesus, our high priest:
heal all division,
reconcile the estranged,
console the suffering,
and raise up to new life
all that is bound by death. Amen.

2

Grieving God,
on the cross
your Son embraced death
even as he had embraced life:
faithfully and with good courage.
Grant that we who have been
born out of his wounded side
may hold fast to our faith in him exalted
and may find mercy in all times of need. Amen.

3

Christ Jesus you hung upon a cross and died for us
so that we might live for you.
Your body was broken and your blood shed
so that we might be healed and made whole.
You were faithful unto death
so that we might be faithful unto life.
Your last command was that we might love one another:
one family together from every tribe and nation,
a new creation united through your sacrifice,
redeemed by your blood,

healed by your love,
united by your covenant of peace.
In your death may we find life
—*Christine Sine*

4

On this day, God of all tears,
you call us in the midst of our busy lives
to look at the suffering and death
of the One who came to carry
the pain of the world into your heart.
Give us eyes to see your love this day.

On this day, Grace of Calvary,
you would gather everyone
to your side,
but we leave you
to carry the cross alone.

You came simply as love incarnate,
but hate and bitterness
were the gifts we offered to you.

You poured out your love
so our emptiness might be filled.
Give us ears to hear your pain
this day.

On this day,
you would pray for us,
for we cannot find the words on our own,
Shattered Spirit.
Hear the cries of those in need.
Listen to the lament of the lonely.
Cradle the whispered hopes of children.
Set free the dreams of prisoners and captives.
Give us hearts to pray with you
this day.

God in Community, Holy in One,
we lift our prayers to you in the name of the One
who suffered and died for us this day
and who teaches us to pray, saying,
Our Father . . .

5

Prince of Peace, redeemer of us all, crucified God, we have gathered at the foot of the cross, and at the entrance to the tomb, and we have rolled the stone across it.

The world sometimes does its worst, even to those who don't deserve it. You know that, because you once lived as one of us, loved as one of us, and died as one of us.

Tonight we leave, as your disciples did centuries ago, knowing our friend is gone, and that a good man has died.

The ones who knew you and loved you could find no consolation that night. They mourned. Just as there have been nights when we have mourned. Just as there have been nights we have looked for mercy that didn't seem to come. And yet, some would dare to look for hope...

God, as you send us out into the world tonight, stay close to us. As we wrestle with the big questions; as we ask why there is pain, why there is suffering, why there is loss, do not leave us alone. Help us to find you in our hours of greatest doubt.

And at the right hour, draw us back together. To gather at the tomb. To look for the light. To look for you. For hope, for you, we will be waiting. Amen.

6

O God, you hold a mirror before us
and we see love and we see hate.

We see crucifiers and we see the crucified.

Forgive us where we have crucified love –
your love for ourselves, for others, for you.

Do not abandon us where we have abandoned ourselves,
where others have abandoned us,

where we know the pain of crucifixion and rejection and being forsaken.

Take us from the cross to hope and new beginning.

— *William Loader*

7

Almighty God,

Your name is glorified

even in the anguish of your Son's death.

Grant us the courage

to receive your anointed servant

who embodies a wisdom and love

that is foolishness to the world.

empower us in witness

so that all the world may recognize

in the scandal of the cross the mystery of reconciliation. Amen.

8

Faithful Midwife,

as you delivered the Hebrews safely

out of the long labour of slavery,

so, morning by morning,

you draw us forth into the new day.

Surround us with a cloud of witnesses,

and sustain us by your powerful word,

that, in the night of loneliness and fear,

we, being weary, may not lose heart

but push toward the joy that is to come,

laboring with Christ

to give birth to your promised kingdom. Amen.

9

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war, and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

10

Christ our God,
your love is poured out in death for our sakes.
Hold us in your embrace
as we wait for Easter's dawn.
Comfort us with the promise that no power on earth, not even death itself,
can separate us from your love;
and strengthen us to wait
until you are revealed to us
in all your risen glory. Amen.

11

O God, whose face shines upon us,
we offer the prayers we carry deep in our hearts
that those who need deliverance
may know your steadfast love and salvation...
...Merciful God,
release us from the time of trial and oppression,
that we may witness to the eternal hope
of grief becoming joy
and life rising from death. Amen.

12

Eternal God, rock and refuge:
with roots grown old in the earth,
river beds run dry,
and flowers withered in the field,
we wait for revival and release.
Abide with us
until we come alive
in the sunrise of your glory. Amen.

13

We veil our faces before your glory,
O Holy and Immortal one,
and bow before the cross of your wounded Christ.
with angels and archangels,
we praise you, our Mercy,
and we bless you, our Compassion,
for in our brokenness

you have not abandoned us.
Hear us as we pray through Jesus, our high priest:
heal all division,
reconcile the estranged,
console the suffering,
and raise up to new life
all that is bound by death. Amen.

In this holy time,
as we remember the sacrifice of the cross,
we offer the prayers of our hearts,
that through them we may be transformed
to be servants of justice, love and peace...

Petitions etc

...Make us steadfast witnesses of our Savior's reign,
that we may live in the pattern of Christ,
who was faithful in all things,
even death,
and whose darkest hour gives light and hope. Amen.

14

Grieving God,
on the cross
your Son embraced death
even as he had embraced life:
faithfully and with good courage.
Grant that we who have been
born out of his wounded side
may hold fast to our faith in him exalted
and may find mercy in all times of need. Amen.

15

This is the day when life is raw,
quivering, terrifying:
The day of numbed emotions,
the day of blunt nails
and splintered wood,
of bruised flesh
and red blood.
The day we loathe,
when hopes are crushed.
The day we long for,
when pretences fall away—
Because the worst that we can do
cannot kill the love of God.

Gracious God,
your love is a light in our darkness,
vulnerable, yet unquenchable.
We would stand with Christ,
in the midst of the horrors of this world
where betrayal and death

constantly threaten your love and peace.

- Nathan Nettleton LaughingBird.net

16

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

17

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers for Mission

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.

O God, you manifest in your servants the signs of your presence: Send forth upon us the Spirit of love, that in companionship with one another your abounding grace may increase among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer at the Arrest of Christ

(responding to the reading of John 18: 1-12)

Again and again
we have bound you
and taken you captive, O Lord,

***Because it's easier,
easier than facing the reality
of what you ask of us.***

Again and again
you have been taken captive
and your voice silenced.

***Again and again
you have been dragged out
whenever it seems
that quoting your name will justify
our attempts to gain what we want
at the expense of others.***

Prayer at the Death of Christ

(responding to the reading of John 19:25-30)

God, why did you let this happen,
why do our greatest hopes
seem to flicker out and die?

***We search for meaning in life
and before we find it, it is gone.
We search for meaning in death
but its horrible reality drives us back
and we are afraid to look.***

God, we shudder at the way this life ended:
surrounded by cold brutality,
rejected and betrayed by a friend,
deprived of justice,
and loved by only a frightened few
who watched in fear.

***Inside we are afraid that this is all there is,
a flickering light snuffed out, no meaning,
no future, no love.
Evil triumphs yet again.***

Evil triumphs so often.
Yours was one of thousands of deaths.
From those times to now
thousands die in loneliness and fear,
victims of the cruelty and oppression of this world.

***Remind us with every death,
that there is still so much to be done,
before love reigns
and fear is driven away.***

The Request for the Disposal of the Body

(responding to the reading of John 19:31-37)

Once again we don't want to face up
to what we have done.

***We quickly seek to clean up the mess,
to hide the evidence,
to get life normal again.***

We want it finished
and the body put out of sight.

And yet that broken body,

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*if we would only face it
is the evidence of the love we crave
and the source of
the healing we cry for.*

Give us courage
to see beyond the blood and the horror.

*Give us the hope that in this death
we may find our own life.*

INTERCESSIONS

1

On this holy day, as we remember God's generous self-giving, we come to worship the Lord our God. We remember with sorrow and pain, how vulnerable Jesus was to the taunts, the aggression, the blinkered vision, the wilful ignorance, and the apathy of people.

Gracious God, you created us to live together in relationships, but there are many people who know pain and sorrow with their relationships broken through selfishness or thoughtlessness.

Today we pray for vulnerable and suffering people: especially children who have been abandoned; for the victims of rejection and violence; for people in relationships that have turned sour by rumour or innuendo; for all parents, especially those whose children have failed to meet their expectations, hopes or dreams; and for the children who feel let down by their parents or their society. May your love heal their wounds.

Father God - may your kingdom come and your will be done on earth.

Generous God, you created your world to be a place where people could live in peace and harmony, but because of greed and the thirst for power, there are many people who suffer untold agonies. We pray for: nations whose leaders are corrupt; for people who are the victims of torture and violence; for nations where corrupt leaders have misused their people's resources; for people who have been deprived of life's necessities and for people; and families separated by exploitation.

Father God - may your kingdom come and your will be done on earth.

Compassionate God, you created us to live and grow in health and strength, and to enjoy the richness of your creation. However, many adults and children are deprived of these basic human needs, and so their life is diminished. We pray for people who lack strength due to inadequate food; for people who are neglected, forgotten or ignored; for people deprived of equal opportunities regardless of their age, gender or nationality; for people who want to die, and for people desperate to live.

Father God - may your kingdom come and your will be done on earth. Amen.

- Joan Stott

2

If the cross tells us anything, O Lord,
it is that You know and share our suffering:

You are with us, and all those who are victims of disease,
of the violence or abuse of others,
of our own ignorance, foolishness or sin.

Help us and restore us, O Lord, we pray.

You are with us, and all those who inflict pain on others and on our world,
through our selfishness or greed,
through our brokenness or anger,
through our rigidity or need to be right.

Help us and restore us, O Lord, we pray.

You are with us, and all those who are fearful of threats
to this world we call home,
to our safety and survival,
to our sense of community and togetherness as people.

Help us and restore us, O Lord, we pray.

Silent personal prayers may be offered here.

Christ of the Cross,
See our need of Your grace,
Hear our prayer for Your mercy,
**And come to us again, to help and restore,
because we cannot heal ourselves.
Amen.**

- John van de Laar, in A Communion Liturgy for Good Friday

3

This Good Friday we join our voices
to the words of Jesus on the cross,
and the cry of all who are abandoned,
“My God, why have you forsaken me?”
Before we race in quickly
with the triumphant answer,
or the desire to set things right,
we need to stand alongside
this ancient cry of dereliction.
So today we place ourselves
with all those who cry out
for food and justice, for work and healing,
for hope and love, for faith and for meaning:
we hear their pain and the pain of Jesus Christ.
And because we know that in two days we will be back
celebrating and singing,
do not let us deny the suffering
of Christ and of this world.
Today we cry out about:

(world and local situations may be named here)

O God, our God, we cry out to You
do not forsake us.

Amen.

- Ann Siddal

4

Lord, standing at the foot of your Cross on this Good Friday,
we look back to see all those things that led you to the Cross
and how you remained undeterred.

When you declared that you came to announce freedom
to the poor from their chains of poverty,
the affluent among the pious deeply resented it.

When you spoke about God's inclusive love
and reminded a worshipping congregation
about the widow of Zarithath and of Naaman the Syrian,
those who took pride in their election and Covenant
sought to kill you then and there.

Your attempt to point out the original meaning of the Sabbath
by indulging in forbidden acts of healing on the Sabbath
earned the wrath of fastidious religionists.

Your proclamation of the nearness of the Just Reign of God
and your criticism of all audacious and indulgent authority
incurred suspicion from the powers-that-be and their collaborators.

It became clear to you that those powers-that-be and their collaborators
would do away with you.

They would have you killed on a rugged cross.

You were deeply troubled. Yet you remained undeterred.
You retained your confidence in God:
that God would vindicate you
that God would turn this most hideous act of human rebellion
into a means of redemption for those very same rebels.
Lord, we are amazed.

2000 years hence, O Lord, our sin is to assume
that those powers and those religious and cultural values
which inspired the conspiracy to have you removed
were strange and unusual phenomena.

We say that if **we** had been there, we would not have done this to you.
But we too resent your bias towards the poor.
We find loving people of other faiths difficult.
We erect barriers of fear and suspicion.
We do not accept inclusivity and justice as Gospel values.
We continue to indulge in all that sent you to the Cross.

Forgive us Lord.

Our only solace is that you prayed for our forgiveness,
understanding that we are blinded through an ignorance
of which we are seldom aware.

May the acceptance of your forgiveness
lead us to follow the path you set before us.
Remember us in your Kingdom. Amen

5

Lament *based on Psalm 22:1-21a*

Leader: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far away?
I cry out to you by day, but you do not answer;
and at night, I find no rest.

I am scorned and despised, all who see me mock me and shake their heads.

People: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Our ancestors trusted in you, cried out to you, and you delivered them.
They enthroned you with praise.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Yet you took me from the womb, and from my birth you have been my God.
Do not be far from me, for trouble is near.

My troubles surround me like lions ready to pounce.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are dust; my heart is like wax, melting inside;
my

tongue is dry and I cannot speak; my limbs are nothing, and my ribs are bare.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

My enemies encircle me; they stare and gloat;
they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

But you, O Saviour, do not be far away!
O my Help, come quickly to deliver me!

6

Blessed are you, LORD God of all creation: Today we remember Jesus whom you sent to
be our Suffering Servant. In his Passion, he was marred beyond human semblance. He
was despised and rejected by others; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he has
borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down
by God, and afflicted.

Yet as the Suffering Servant for the whole human race, he was wounded for our
transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us
whole, and by his bruises we are healed.

His sacrifice on the cross has atoned for the sins of the world. Today we stumble on our words—for they fall far short of comprehending the enormity of our Crucified God's suffering; and the extent of his saving work accomplished on that first Good Friday, long ago.

Jesus, may we always remember your love for us on the cross:

Have mercy, and hear our prayer.

Blessed are you, LORD God of all creation: Long ago the psalmist cried out in an agonizing prayer: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" On the cross, Jesus in his suffering also cried out those same words; expressing his excruciating pain of mind, body, soul and spirit. Yet, in his aloneness, and feeling abandoned; it was to you he spoke those words. In our times of suffering; of feeling alone and abandoned; may we always remember that you are with us Jesus.

Today we especially remember those in our midst and around the world who are left alone and abandoned—give them the assurance that you are with them Jesus; and deliver them from their forsakenness.

Jesus, may we always remember your love for us on the cross:

Have mercy, and hear our prayer.

Blessed are you, LORD God of all creation: Today we praise and thank you for making a covenant with us through the suffering and death; the sacrificial body and shed blood of Jesus. He has forgiven our sins and opened the curtain to give us access to the sanctuary of your Holy Presence. In response to his abundant love for us; may we consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds as we meet together to worship and serve you and our neighbours.

Jesus, may we always remember your love for us on the cross:

Have mercy, and hear our prayer.

Blessed are you, LORD God of all creation: We are all participants in the Passion of your Son; we along with Judas, the soldiers, police and political and religious leaders betray you and arrest you. We, like Peter deny you. We, like Pilate place you on trial, judge and sentence you to death; when, in truth, you are our Judge. We, like the soldiers and the crowds mock and taunt you and yell "Crucify him!" Forgive us in our sinful exploitation and oppression of the world's poorest, weakest, and most forgotten of peoples—for you are present in them and their suffering.

Jesus, may we always remember your love for us on the cross:

Have mercy, and hear our prayer.

(Other thanksgivings and intercessions may be offered here, ending with:

Jesus, may we always remember your love for us on the cross:

Have mercy, and hear our prayer.)

Blessed are you, LORD God of all creation: Have mercy and hear our prayers that we pray in the

name of Jesus our Suffering Servant. ALL: **Amen.**

- *Garth Wehrfritz-Hanson*

7

Jesus, though crucified, is raised from the dead and now draws alongside us as we offer prayers to God for the world, the church and all for whom Jesus died on the cross.

We pray for the church of God on this Good Friday that all who are disciples of Jesus will be given the grace and strength they need to walk in the way of the cross speaking words of love and truth in places of hatred and lies.

We pray for God's world on this Good Friday that the dying Jesus on the cross and the living Jesus of resurrection will draw all people to himself, the source of eternal reconciliation and salvation. We pray for the communities in which we live, work and worship that bonds of love within families and between friends will be healed where they are broken and strengthened where they are weak.

We pray for all those who are experiencing their own Good Friday darkness that all who suffer pain of body or mind will be held by the hands of Jesus which bear the marks of his pain and the promise of restoration and resurrection.

Heavenly Father, at the foot of the cross on which Jesus died we offer you these prayers in hope, trusting in your promise to hear us and in your power which raised Jesus from the dead. Let your grace, mercy, love and peace surround us and all those for whom we have prayed in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

- Katharine Smith

8

Prayers of Confession and Intercession for the Affliction of the World

This prayer is meant to be customised for the community in which your congregation is situated. For example, the neighbourhood or street where your community's homeless population is most visible? Name that neighbourhood or street. If you have a particular relationship with a congregation in a developing country, name that congregation.

Between after each refrain of How have we forsaken you, O God?" insert an appropriate-length moment of silence.

How have we forsaken you, O God?
Where there is suffering, we turn our eyes.
Where there is exclusion, we turn our backs.
Where there is need, we turn our hearts.
And yet, we know that you are among the injured,
and the lonely, and the hungry, and the poor.

How have we forsaken you, O God? Silence

For the people of countries who have experienced distress, Holy One, we pray: *Haiti, Chile, Japan, etc.*

How have we forsaken you, O God? *Silence*
For those whose lives are torn apart by war, the civilians and the soldiers and the families who are waiting for loved ones to come home, Holy One, we pray:
people of Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and international military personnel, drug cartel victims, Sudanese and Congolese and Rwandan and Eritrean refugees, etc.

How have we forsaken you, O God? Silence

For those whose stomachs ache with hunger, Holy One, we pray:
refugee communities without food, children whose only meal is school lunch, etc.
How have we forsaken you, O God? Silence

For those whose bodies have no shelter from the elements, Holy One, we pray:
people living in tent cities in Haiti, the homeless sleeping under bridges, stray and abandoned animals, etc.
How have we forsaken you, O God? Silence

For those who are imprisoned, justly or unjustly, Holy One, we pray: *prisoners of war, inmates in the local prison, people awaiting sentencing, etc.*
How have we forsaken you, O God? Silence

For those whose minds or spirits seek comfort and cannot find it, Holy One, we pray: those who are grieving, in transition, mentally ill, jobless, etc.,
How have we forsaken you, O God? Silence

Leader: Now is the acceptable time!

Help us to be your hands, Holy One,
reaching out to heal the hurting of this world.

Help us to be your ears, Holy One,
hearing and understanding to the cries for justice and mercy.

Help us to be your arms, Holy One,
embracing the sorrow and offering comfort.

Help us to be your feet, Holy One,
walking with those who suffer and guiding the journey toward peace.

Let us not forsake you any longer, O God.
Now is the acceptable time!

A LITANY

Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by?
Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow. [Lamentations 1:12]

The Lord says:
My people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you? Answer me!
I led you from slavery to freedom,
but you led your Saviour to the cross.
I brought you out of Egypt,
but you handed me over to the high priests.
**Holy God,
holy and mighty, holy and immortal One,
have mercy on us.**

My people, what have I done to you?

How have I offended you? Answer me!
I led you on your way in a pillar of cloud,
but you led me to Pilate's court.
I bore you up with manna in the desert,
but you struck me down and scourged me.

**Holy God,
holy and mighty, holy and immortal One,
have mercy on us.**

My people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you? Answer me!
I gave you a royal scepter,
but you gave me a crown of thorns.
I raised you to the height of majesty,
but you have raised me high on a cross.

**Holy God,
holy and mighty, holy and immortal One,
have mercy on us.**

My people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you? Answer me!
I gave you saving water from the rock,
but you gave me gall and vinegar to drink.
For you I struck down the kings of Canaan,
but you pierced your Saviour with a lance.

**Holy God,
holy and mighty, holy and immortal One,
have mercy on us.**

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

If we have died with him, we shall also live with him.
If we endure, we shall also reign with him.

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

- A Litany for Good Friday' from Uniting in Worship, adapted from the Reproaches for Good Friday

POETRY

He leaves the bright heavens
comes again
condemned to hang
between heaven and earth.
And there he remains
he absolves the guards
lets the tortured forget
makes hatred subside
teaches the weary to breathe
the trembling to sleep
the dreamers to act

the doers to dream.

Dorothee Solle

FURTHER LITURGICAL RESOURCES

Easter Vigil readings

<http://in-formatio.com/?p=3171>

Prayers

<http://re-worship.blogspot.ca/2012/03/good-friday-resource-index.html>

<http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/>

Good Friday service

<http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/GoodFriday.htm>

The nails of the cross

www.spirit-net.ca/sermons/b-gdfr-su.php

It is a series of readings, responses, and silent reflection and *prayer* designed to help us enter more

deeply into the meaning of *Good Friday*. Everyone is ...

LECTIONARY NOTES 1

Isaiah 52:13-53:12:

- Here Isaiah describes the suffering servant, and no surprise, we easily see Jesus reflected in this image. Isaiah seems to focus on the theme of how this servant will be what no one is looking for, but what everyone will give attention to when revealed.
- "by a perversion of justice he was taken away." This sentence particularly strikes - if we apply this to Jesus, we read that it is an act of injustice that takes Jesus away to death. Do we remember to think of it that way? We get so caught up in his sacrifice, in God's plan laid out, that I think we forget that what happened to Jesus, even if it worked for our good, was *wrong!*
- "It was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain." Eek! I hope not. I'm not sure that this is ever God's will, exactly, or that way that God would hope and desire for things to turn out. I think God works through human deeds of pain and hurt, but I hope God doesn't will them on us.

Psalms 22:

- "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" These words, which open the Psalm, are found on Jesus' lips on the cross. Some say he was reciting the Psalm, to comfort others. People don't like to think about Jesus feeling forsaken by God. But I think it is ok to believe Jesus felt alone in that moment - because despite his feelings, he had faith enough to follow through with what he believed was God's call for him.

- Surely, we've all felt forsaken by God sometimes. Alone. Finding "no rest" as the Psalmist describes. The scene the Psalmist describes is one of fear and desperation to feel God's presence. Have you experienced this? When? How? Did you find God present there?

Hebrews 10:16-25:

- These first two verses are more or less quoted from Jeremiah 31:33-34. Notice, though, that the author of Hebrews has the laws in our hearts but also written on our minds. I like the imagery.
- "let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds" - Another good verse. We often provoke people around us, but usually when we do so, it is not in a good way! Here, we're encouraged to provoke each other in a positive way, a way that inspires serving God. Good advice!

John 18:1-19:42:

- from John we get part of the Passion from [Palm/Passion Sunday](#), only from John's perspective instead of Matthew. Double check for what is different in each text. As with that text from Matthew, I find this one hard to comment on - it's such a story, it is so big, literally and theologically.
- This text has several pieces, or vignettes. Judas betraying Jesus to the authorities. Peter denying Jesus. Jesus on trial before Pilate. Jesus beaten. Jesus crucified. And an "epilogue" of sorts. Any part could be an area of specific focus, though 'time' wise, Good Friday's focus is the crucifixion.
- To me, what jumps out as full of possibilities is Pilate's question: "what is truth?" John does not record Jesus giving an answer. How do you think he would have answered? What is your answer?

By Beth Quick

LECTIONARY NOTES 2

The power of suffering love - Our readings move from Friday to Sunday, from death to new life. Friday, in Christian reckoning, is a null-point wherein the power of God is defeated by the empire of force. But the church has found in that Friday shut-down the transformative work of God, because this God works in and through weakness and vulnerability as the door to new life. It is a Friday truth that suffering love has transformative power that the "executioners" never suspect.

Sunday follows Friday. Sunday—Easter Sunday and all of the Easter Sundays to follow—exhibits the transformative power of God's new life in the world. We cannot escape the particularity of that surprise in that ancient moment. It's important, nonetheless, that we do not hold that moment back there, because Easter is always again an immediately contemporary reality. God's power for life is always again being given in a world tempted to settle for deathliness. These texts exhibit Easter in its surging contemporaneity. It is the power of death that leads to hostility toward neighbour, that evokes greed and rage and violence toward others. These texts tell an alternative account of the world, where gifts of healing and forgiveness defy death. The church keeps these texts so that we now, in our culture of despair, may be recruited for a more excellent way. The Easter Lord, via Easter texts, invites an Easter people to be about that defiant civil disobedience of new life in a

weary, spent world.

Jesus was executed by Roman authorities because his teaching was a threat to the established order of the socio-political system of the empire. But of course the church has gone well beyond that to ponder the way in which the willing, painful self-sacrifice of Jesus at the hands of the empire has immediate theological and pastoral implications for us.

From the beginning, the church has found the poem in Isaiah 53 to be a clue to interpreting the self-giving of Jesus. The poem affirms that the suffering (“stripes”) of one can heal another (53:5). From that the church claims that in his death Jesus has done something decisive for us. It is in this conviction that a faith confession goes beyond historical analysis.

The readings from Hebrews show that one way to speak of self-giving love is through the rhetoric of sacrifice in the book of Leviticus. In Hebrews 4:14-16, Jesus is the priest who grants mercy. In 5:7-9, he is the high priest who is the source of abiding well-being (“eternal salvation”). The text says, “Hold fast to a confession,” to insist that new life is given peculiarly in Jesus’ Friday love. Jesus’ people look only here for well-being and not to the “empire” of money, power, sex, control, or whatever. The confession is to stay close to Jesus, and then to follow him in self-giving for the world.

By Walter Brueggemann - a Sojourners contributing editor, professor emeritus at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia.

LECTIONARY NOTES 3

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

Although the Good Friday readings are the same every year, this year (Year C) the Gospel of Luke adds a unique voice to the service – in spite of the fact that there is no reading from Luke. For Luke, Jesus is uniquely viewed as the "Saviour" who brings God's salvation to women and men. Also, salvation, for Luke, is a holistic gift that includes forgiveness, social restoration and reconciliation, justice and peace. With this in mind, the usual questions of Good Friday can challenge us in a new and transforming way. Did Jesus live to die, or did he die in order to live and bring life to all? This is more than semantics. It opens up our faith to the reality that what Jesus came to do was not about death so much as it is about life in all its forms and possibilities. Jesus died because he refused to allow a lesser life – evil, compromise, expediency – take him over. He died because he embraced a life of love fully and completely, and would not be moved from it. And in so doing, he lived fully, and gave an example for us to follow and a way for us to enter life. In addition, Luke's Gospel (and the Good Friday readings) calls for a response. What Jesus did was not simply to give us a ticket to bliss in heaven. Rather he opened the door for us to be forgiven – which requires us to face our darkness and brokenness – and to live fully, as he did, if we will also die to everything that keeps us from real, abundant life, and embrace a life of love. Good Friday, then, confronts us with what life is really meant to be, and with the price we must pay to find it – which, in the end, turns out to be much smaller than it may at first appear.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: In so many ways religion has come to be irrelevant to the big issues of our world. However, what Jesus did in his death goes to the heart of the crises we face. In a world of war, Jesus refuses to take up arms, and gives himself to death. In a world of corruption in the halls of power, Jesus exposes expediency and manipulation, and dies with his integrity intact. In a world of poverty, Jesus gives up everything in order to offer life to others. Jesus makes it clear, whatever the situation, practical, sacrificial, cross-bearing love, is the greatest confrontation and challenge to the broken systems of our world. And, while some view love as 'wimpy', the Sunday that is coming reveals it's true, death-defeating power. What does this say to us about being Easter people in our world today?

LOCAL APPLICATION: A Christianity that is about nothing more than a guarantee of personal forgiveness and a life of eternal bliss is the antithesis of what Christ came to do – it is selfish, escapist and unloving. It removes us from any cost, and deceives us into believing that all we have to do is agree to a set of ideas and sit back until we get to heaven. Good Friday does not leave us with this delusion, however. Jesus confronts selfishness and self-protectiveness at every turn. He challenges us with his willingness to give his life in order to practically love even his enemies. He disrupts our comfort by mirroring back to us the extent of our depravity and collusion in the evil systems of our world. But, he also opens a way for us to find a new life now. He leads us into the abundant life that comes when we embrace the cross, commit to love, and refuse to settle for less than true, authentic, generous living.

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

Good Friday: Being With Jesus at the Cross - By Diana Butler Bass

The following is a Good Friday sermon for St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia, a

town across the river from Washington, D.C., the seat of politics and power. (H McK notes - I have had the good fortune of worshipping at St Paul's periodically over the past three years and hearing Diane preach on occasion. A google of her writings will repay.)

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/dianabutlerbass/2012/04/good-friday-being-with-jesus-at-the-cross/>

[#sthash.5zyBLhiD.dpuf](https://twitter.com/sthash.5zyBLhiD.dpuf)

Good Friday sermon by Delmer Chilton

<https://lectionarylab.com/2012/03/28/year-b-good-friday/>

"God of the Mountain, A Reflection on the Meaning of the Cross," by William R.G. Loader.

<http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/mountain.htm>

The Seven Last Words Sermon Series, by Pastor Edward F. Markquart, *Sermons from Seattle*: [Golgotha](#), [Father Forgive Them For They Know Not What They Do](#), [Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise](#), [Here is Your Son - Here is Your Mother](#), [My God, My God](#),

Good Friday Year C, March 25, 2016

[Why Have You Forsaken Me? I Thirst, It Is Finished, Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit, The Seven Last Words.](http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/lenten_series_golgotha.htm)

http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/lenten_series_golgotha.htm

CHILDREN

Worshipping with Children, Good Friday, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown

<http://worshippingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/year-good-friday-april-19-2014.html>

Celebrating Holy Week with Kids, Christine Sine, Godspace

<http://godspace-msa.com/2015/03/25/celebrating-holy-week-with-kids-resources-for-2015/>

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

[When I Survey The Wondrous Cross](#)

[O Thou Who Camest From Above](#)

[Beneath The Cross Of Jesus](#)

[Alas! And Did My Saviour Bleed](#)

[Jesus Keep Me Near The Cross](#)

[O The Wonderful Cross \(Link to YouTube video\)](#)

[Amazing Love \(You Are My King\) \(Link to YouTube video\)](#)

[This Place](#)

[Amazing Love \(Link to YouTube video\)](#)

[Above All \(Link to YouTube video\)](#)

[Once Again \(Link to YouTube video\)](#)

Please commend this resource to colleagues - they simply send an email to churchnewsireland@gmail.com with the message Passwords in the title