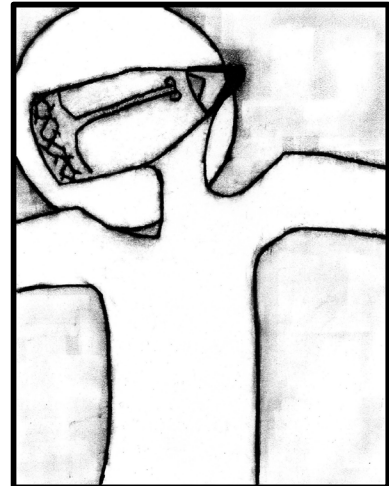


Good Friday

A Meditation on the Seven Prayers
Christ Spoke from the Cross

March 29th, 2024

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Wheat Ridge, CO



Gather

Prelude

"Adagio for Strings"

(Barber)

Introduction

This day, Friday, is called Good Friday by Christians around the world. Even though this day is a day of darkness marking Jesus' suffering and death on the cross, Christians call this day "Good." It is GOOD because we believe Jesus is the Messiah, God's son, the Savior of the world and his selfless act on the cross is for redemption of the world. This is the GOOD News. Join me now in the "Call to Worship" as we recall the Passion of our Lord on this Good Friday.

Call to Worship

Let us remember how the sky went dark.

Let us remember how his mother was there.

Let us remember how people mocked him.

Let us remember how his friends fled.

Let us remember, how in the midst of all that, Jesus still chose love.

Let us worship holy God.

Psalm 22: 1-8, 23-24, 29-31 (sung responsively)

My God, my God, why have you for-^l saken me?

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

My God, I cry out by day, but you^l do not answer;

by night, but I^l find no rest.

Yet you are the^l Holy One,

enthroned on the prais-^l es of Israel.

Our ancestors put their^l trust in you,

they trusted, and you ¹ rescued them.
They cried out to you and ¹ were delivered;
they trusted in you and were not ¹ put to shame.
But as for me, I am a worm ¹ and not human,
scorned by all and despised ¹ by the people.
All who see me laugh ¹ me to scorn;
they curl their lips; they ¹ shake their heads.
"Trust in the LORD; let the ¹ LORD deliver;
let God rescue him if God so de- ¹ lights in him."
You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's ¹ line, give glory.
Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off- ¹ spring of Israel.
For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;
neither is the LORD's face hid- ¹ den from them;
but when they cry out, ¹ the LORD hears them.
Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow ¹ down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel be- ¹ fore the LORD.
Their descendants shall ¹ serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to genera- ¹ tions to come.
They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people ¹ yet unborn,
saying to them, "The ¹ LORD has acted!"

Prayer of the Day

Please pray with me:

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

A Meditation on the Seven Prayers Christ Spoke from the Cross

First Word

"Father, forgive them.

They do not know what they are doing."

Prophecy: Isaiah 53: 3

He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Passion: Luke 23: 32-38

³² Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus^[a] there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah^[c] of God, his chosen one!' ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷ and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

Prayer

On this day, dear Jesus, when I remember how you hung on a cross - beaten, torn, despised, mocked, betrayed - I am reminded of your unconditional love to forgive me. Father, forgive me. Forgive me for doubting you. Forgive me for believing I could go it alone. Forgive me for turning my back on you. Forgive me for not trusting you to show me the way. Forgive me for not knowing what I am doing.

Lead me, Lord, to follow you to forgive others. Lead me to look beyond the sin and welcome the sinner. Lead me to paths of right-ness. Where there is brokenness, lead me to mend. Where there is hurt and hate, lead me to reconcile.

By your holy cross, I am redeemed.

Bless you, O Lord, for redeeming me.

Hymn: Jesus, in thy Dying Woes – Part I

Jesus, in thy dying woes,
even while thy lifeblood flows,
craving pardon for thy foes:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Savior, for our pardon sue
when our sins thy pangs renew,
for we know not what we do:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Second Word

"Today you will be with me in paradise."

Prophecy: Isaiah 53: 12

Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
because he poured out himself to death,

and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Passion: Luke 23: 39-43

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

Prayer

On this day, dear Jesus, when I remember how you hung on a cross - beaten, torn, despised, mocked, betrayed - I am reminded that you made me a promise. You promised that I would live with you forever in paradise. You promised that no matter what I have done or left undone in this world, that nothing can separate me from you. For your love is unfailing.

Thank you for not giving up on me. Thank you for giving me hope. Thank you for the promise.

By your holy cross, I am redeemed.
Bless you, O Lord, for redeeming me.

Hymn: Jesus, in thy Dying Woes – Part II

Jesus, pitying the sighs
of the thief, who near thee dies,
promising him paradise:
hear us, holy Jesus.

May we in our guilt and shame
still thy love and mercy claim,
calling humbly on thy name:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Third Word

"Mother, there is your son..."

Prophecy: Isaiah 53: 10-11

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain.^[e]
When you make his life an offering for sin,
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;

through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.

¹¹ Out of his anguish he shall see light;
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.

The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

Passion: John 19: 23-27

²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. ²⁴ So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfil what the scripture says,

'They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.'

²⁵ And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Prayer

On this day, dear Jesus, when I remember how you hung on a cross - beaten, torn, despised, mocked, betrayed - I am reminded that you did not think about yourself and the suffering you endured. Rather, you made sure that your children would share the same love that you have first loved us. You take care of me and command me to take care of another. Your outstretched arms nailed to the cross have bound me to my brother, my sister, my mother, my father, my neighbor, and the stranger.

Let me love as you have loved me. Teach me how to reach out my arms to connect with the other. Show me how to embrace the one left behind.

By your holy cross, I am redeemed.

Bless you, O Lord, for redeeming me.

Hymn: Jesus, in thy Dying Woes – Part III

Jesus, loving to the end
her whose heart thy sorrows rend,
and thy dearest human friend:
hear us, holy Jesus.

May we all thy loved ones be,
all one holy family,
loving for the love of thee:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Fourth Word

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

Prophecy: Isaiah 53: 6

All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

Passion: Matthew 27: 45-49

⁴⁵ From noon on, darkness came over the whole land^[a] until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶ And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' ⁴⁷ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' ⁴⁸ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.'

Prayer

On this day, dear Jesus, when I remember how you hung on a cross - beaten, torn, despised, mocked, betrayed - I am reminded that in your humanness and your divinity, you cried out to the Source of all life. In this moment of utter despair, you remained faithful to your calling, as you acknowledged the One who sent you to redeem the world. Thank you for remaining strong, firm, and unyielding; able to endure the pains of this world, that I might have life.

When I cry out in anguish, help me to know that I am never alone. Help me to remember that your suffering and pain and anguish was for me, so that I don't need to bear the weight of my own sins. Thank you for suffering for me.

By your holy cross, I am redeemed.

Bless you, O Lord, for redeeming me.

Hymn: Jesus, in thy Dying Woes – Part IV

Jesus, whelmed in fears unknown,
with our evil left alone,
while no light from heav'n is shown:
hear us, holy Jesus.

When we seem in vain to pray
and our hope seems far away,
in the darkness be our stay:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Fifth Word

"I am thirsty"

Prophecy: Isaiah 53: 7

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

Passion: John 19: 28-29

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

Prayer

On this day, dear Jesus, when I remember how you hung on a cross - beaten, torn, despised, mocked, betrayed - I am reminded of your unyielding willingness to suffer and die for me. I am reminded how physically debilitating to the point of death this selfless act endured. So you cried out in thirst. Thirsty not only to replenish a physical need, but thirsty, I believe, for me. Thirsty for me and all creation to be drawn back to you to be made whole again.

Like waters that cascade over rocks and come crashing down into a pool of water, let me not forget of your abundant grace and mercy for me and all creation. Let me live a "watered" life, blessed by you to be a blessing to those who thirst for your love.

By your holy cross, I am redeemed.
Bless you, O Lord, for redeeming me.

Hymn: Jesus, in thy Dying Woes – Part V

Jesus, in thy thirst and pain,
while thy wounds thy lifeblood drain,
thirsting more our love to gain:
hear us, holy Jesus.

May we thirst thy love to know;
Lead us in our sin and woe;
Where the healing waters flow:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Sixth Word

"It is finished"

Prophecy: Isaiah 53: 4-5

Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But 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.

Passion: John 19: 30-37

³⁰ When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

³¹ Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. ³⁵ (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) ³⁶ These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' ³⁷ And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'

Prayer

On this day, dear Jesus, when I remember how you hung on a cross - beaten, torn, despised, mocked, betrayed - I am reminded of your determination to complete the work that the Father had given you. A saving work for the whole of the world. From the very beginning, your purpose was to die and rise that I might live. There is no greater love than freely giving of one's life for another.

Shape me and mold me for your service in this world. Instill in me a spirit willing to lay my life down for the sake of another.

By your holy cross, I am redeemed.
Bless you, O Lord, for redeeming me.

Hymn: Jesus, in thy Dying Woes – Part VI

Jesus, all our ransom paid,
all thy Father's will obeyed;
by thy suff'rings perfect made:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Save us in our soul's distress;
be our help to cheer and bless,
while we grow in holiness:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Seventh and Final Word

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

Prophecy: Isaiah 53: 8-9

By a perversion of justice he was taken away.
Who could have imagined his future?
For he was cut off from the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people.
⁹ They made his grave with the wicked
and his tomb^[c] with the rich,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Passion: Luke 23: 44-49

⁴⁴ It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.' ⁴⁸ And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Prayer

On this day, dear Jesus, when I remember how you hung on a cross - beaten, torn, despised, mocked, betrayed - I am reminded of your ultimate sacrifice - your life for mine. It was there on the cross that you gave yourself up - trusting in the sovereignty of God, the Father, as you completely giving up your spirit into the hands of the Father.

How can I thank you for what you have done for me but to also give my life over to you in complete trust - trusting in your unfailing love and mercy to be the redeemer of my life and of the whole world.

By your holy cross, I am redeemed.

Bless you, O Lord, for redeeming me

Hymn: Jesus, in thy Dying Woes – Part VII

Jesus, all thy labor vast,
all thy woe and conflict past;
yielding up thy soul at last:
hear us, holy Jesus.

When the death shades round us low'r,
guard us from the tempter's pow'r,
keep us in that trial hour:
hear us, holy Jesus.

Text: Thomas B. Pollock, 1836-1896

A Reading from John 19: 31-42

The Burial of Jesus

³¹ Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. ³⁵ (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) ³⁶ These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' ³⁷ And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'

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

Silence

Musical Offering

**"Ah, Holy Jesus"
(Althouse)**

Choir

Bidding Prayers

Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy church throughout the world.

Silent prayer.

Let us pray for the one holy catholic and apostolic Church of Christ throughout the world:
for its unity in witness and service,
for all bishops and other ministers
and the people whom they serve,
for our bishops Elizabeth Eaton and Jim Gonia, and all the people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,
for all Christians in this community,
for those about to be baptized,
that God will confirm the Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

Silence

God of love.... **grant our prayer.**

Faithful and compassionate God,
your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy;
hear the prayers we offer,
that in the particular ministry
to which you have called us,
we may serve you faithfully,
through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them:
for leaders of other nations
and for the government of this country,
our state and city
for all who serve the common good,
that by God's help they may seek justice and truth,
that all might live in peace and harmony.

Silence

God of love... **grant our prayer.**

Faithful and compassionate God,
kindle, we pray, in every heart

the true love of peace,
and guide with your wisdom those in authority,
that justice, peace, and freedom may increase,
until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Let us pray for all who suffer:
for the hungry and the homeless,
the deprived and the oppressed,
for the sick, the wounded, and the handicapped,
for those in loneliness and in fear,
for those in confusion, doubt, and despair,
for the sorrowful and bereaved,
for prisoners,
and all at the point of death,
that God's love will comfort and sustain them, and that we may be stirred up to minister to them.

Silence

God of love... **grant our prayer.**

Faithful and compassionate God,
the comfort of all who sorrow,
the strength of all who suffer,
hear the cry of all who call on you in any trouble,
grant them the joy
of receiving your help in their need,
and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them,
through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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.**

Invitation to the Cross

During the song, please come forward and place your nail in the cross.

Song

"Were You There?"

ELW #353

Adoration of the Cross

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and we praise your holy resurrection,
for by your cross... **joy has come into the world.**

May God be merciful and bless us;
may the light of God's face shine upon us.
Let your way be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and we praise your holy resurrection,
for by your cross... **joy has come into the world.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God give us blessing,
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe.

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and we praise your holy resurrection,
for by your cross... **joy has come into the world. Amen.**