

Good Friday

Friday, April 18, 2025

Introduction to the day

Life and death stand side by side as we enter into Good Friday. In John's passion account, Jesus reveals the power and glory of God, even as he is put on trial and sentenced to death. Standing with the disciples at the foot of the cross, we pray for the whole world in the ancient bidding prayer, as Christ's death offers life to all. We gather in solemn devotion, but always with the promise that the tree around which we assemble is indeed a tree of life. We depart silently, and we anticipate the culmination of the Three Days in the Easter Vigil.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, we ask you to look with mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and to be given over to the hands of sinners and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

FIRST READING: Isaiah 52:13—53:12

The First Lesson is from the _____ chapter of _____.

The fourth servant poem promises ultimate vindication for the servant, who made his life an offering for sin. The servant pours himself out to death and is numbered with the transgressors, images that the early church saw as important keys for understanding the death of Jesus.

GOSPEL: John 18:1—19:42 (the Passion Story)

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

On Good Friday, the story of Jesus' passion—from his arrest to his burial—is read in its entirety from the

GOOD FRIDAY - Our Ending

John 13:1, which we read yesterday on Maundy Thursday, proclaims, "Having loved his own who were in the world, [Jesus] loved them to the end." Today, on Good Friday, Jesus speaks his last word from the cross before his death: "It is finished" (19:30). This is the end, or completion, of Jesus' love for "his own." On the cross, God's love for the world (3:16-17) is shown in Jesus' life laid down for his friends (15:13). You have been claimed as Jesus' friend, and the completion of Jesus' love is yours. This Friday, made good through Easter hope, is the day to be grounded in the end.

The truth of Jesus' claim upon you—indeed, upon the world—is a puzzle to the principalities and powers set against him. In John's passion reading appointed to be read on Good Friday, Pilate embodies the principalities and powers as he presides over Jesus' trial. Throughout his exchanges with Jesus, Pilate fails to discern, "What is truth?" (18:38). Ironically, the truth stands before Pilate—the Word made flesh in Jesus, "full of grace and truth" (1:14)—and Pilate is unable or unwilling to receive it.

Emphasizing the destabilization of the powers of this world that rebel against God and God's ways, the narrator shows us, through Pilate's physical movements, that he is floundering. Seven times throughout this passage, Pilate moves from inside his headquarters to outside and back again. Back and forth he ping-pongs as the story's setting reveals the unsure footing of Pilate; that is, we see that the principalities and powers of the world are unhinged. Jesus is the stabilizing force, the Word that conquers the world (16:33) through the completion of God's love for all. This is the truth that, by way of the cross, is ours. This is the final and finished gift in Christ Jesus, "grace upon grace" (1:16)—our ultimate ending.

BIDDING PRAYER

Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy Church of God throughout the world, that God the almighty Father guide it and gather it together, so that we may worship him in peace and tranquility.

Almighty and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all nations in Jesus Christ. Guide the work of the Church. Help it to persevere in faith, proclaim your name, and bring salvation to people everywhere. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us pray for Pastor Ralph and Bishop Clara, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people of God.

Almighty and eternal God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy. Strengthen and uphold our pastors and our leaders; keep them in health and safety for the good of the Church, and help each of us to do faithfully the work to which you have called us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us pray for all our brothers and sisters who share our faith in Jesus Christ, that God may gather and keep together in one Church all those who know Christ as Lord.

Almighty and eternal God, you give your Church its unity. Look with favor on all who follow Jesus your Son. We are all consecrated to you by our Baptism; make us one in the fullness of faith, and keep us one in the fellowship of love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us pray for the Jewish people, the first to hear the Word of God, that they may receive the fulfillment of the covenant's promises.

Almighty and eternal God, long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and his posterity. Hear the prayers of your Church that the people you first made your own may arrive with us at the fullness of redemption. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us pray for those who do not believe in Christ, that the light of the Holy Spirit may show them the way of salvation.

Almighty and eternal God, enable those who do not acknowledge Christ to receive the truth of the Gospel. Help us, your people, to grow in love for one another, to grasp more fully the mystery of your Godhead, and so to become more perfect witnesses of your love in the sight of all people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us pray for those who do not believe in God, that they may find him who is the author and goal of our existence.

Almighty and eternal God, you created humanity so that all might long to know you and have peace in you. Grant that, in spite of the hurtful things that stand in their way, they may all recognize in the lives of Christians the tokens of your love and mercy, and gladly acknowledge you as the one true God and Father of us all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us pray for those who serve in public office, that God may guide their minds and hearts, so that all of us may live in true peace and freedom.

Almighty and eternal God, you are the champion of the poor and oppressed. In your goodness, watch over those in authority, so that people everywhere may enjoy justice, peace, freedom, and a share in the goodness of your creation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us pray that God, the almighty and merciful Father, may heal the sick, comfort the dying, give safety to travelers, free those unjustly deprived of liberty, and rid the world of falsehood, hunger, and disease.

Almighty and eternal God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. Hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble, that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Finally, let us pray for all those things for which our Lord would have us ask. Lord's Prayer

PROCESSION OF THE CROSS

Behold, the life-giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

Behold, the life-giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

Behold, the life-giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

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