

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, BERKELEY, CA

The Great Three Days: Good Friday

Stations of the Cross

April 10th, 2020; 12:00 p.m.

Welcome to Saint Mark's Church!

The Great Three Days. Known traditionally as the Triduum, the days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday comprise a single extended Liturgy, as the Church observes Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection. The shape of these services dates all the way back to the earliest centuries of the Church; by keeping them in the ancient manner we join with generations past in celebrating the Paschal Mystery: Christ's resurrection from the dead, whereby heaven and earth are joined, the grave is emptied of its prisoners, and humankind partakes of eternal life with God. This Mystery is the heart of Christian faith and life, and reorders both our lives and our cosmos, introducing new hope not only for a better future but also for a reconciled past. We warmly invite you to share this treasure with us and pray that together we might be incorporated further into the abiding mystery of Divine Love.

Though there is widespread agreement on the number and title of each of the stations, the devotion in which the Christian makes a spiritual pilgrimage with Jesus on his Via Dolorosa (Way of Suffering) has never been standardized. There is much room here for personal mediation as well as endless opportunity for variation in the words, direction, and tone of the prayers we offer. This form comes largely from a book of devotion called "The Habit of Holiness," compiled by Martin Warner in 2004, and the text of the 13th c. hymn 'Stabat Mater' is the translation by Edward Caswell (1814-78). You will note how personal and private many of the prayers are. Let this be an invitation for you to spend some time in prayer with Jesus today, offering him your compassion, your heart, your penitence, as well as your own pain and suffering -- in addition to the way it is also a virtual, parish-wide devotion marking Good Friday.

Introduction

Officiant: +In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

People: **The Lord be with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

Jesus our Savior, the path that we intend to follow was marked by your sweat and blood; it saw you despised and rejected. Give all who walk this road the spirit of true penitence, and help us to bear with courage and patience all the crosses and humiliations in the pilgrimage of life, knowing that we are following you. **Amen.**

An act of contrition

All: **O God, I love you with my whole heart, and above all things, and am heartily sorry that I have grieved you. May I never grieve you any more. May I love you without ceasing, and make it my delight to do in all things your most holy will. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

I. Jesus is condemned to death

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: Pilate said to Jesus, "Do you hear how many charges they have brought against you?" But to the governor's amazement, he offered no reply.

Reflection

Pilate sits in judgement: Jesus stands condemned. He stands with all who throughout history suffer persecution, destruction, injustice, calumny, war, the pride of others, and abuse. At this moment, the Word by whom the heavens and the earth were made embraces the silence known to every victim. From the cross there will be one last exultant cry: It is accomplished. The victim slain will rise again as the Lamb triumphant who gives voice in judgement for those who have stood with him.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, help us not to judge others. Be merciful when you judge us who are sinners. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus at the last;**



II. Jesus receives his cross.

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: Then they took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull or, as it was called in Hebrew, Golgotha.

Reflection

"Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you . . ."

Jesus identifies the blessedness of the abused and persecuted with prophecy. Persecution can be the response of the un-free towards those who are no longer bound within restrictions that limit the ability to speak the word of God, particularly when that word is a hard one to hear and accept. Truth in the person of the Word was disconcerting to Pilate and he had it silenced for the sake of a quiet life. Are we not similarly tempted sometimes?

All (*pray*): **Jesus, help us not to impose burdens on others through fear and selfishness. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
All his bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed.**



III. Jesus falls for the first time

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly, he never opened his mouth, like a lamb that is led to the slaughter-house, like a sheep that is dumb before it shearers.

Reflection

. . . and speak all kinds of calumny against you.

A fall in public is embarrassing, but people generally come forward to offer help. Not in this case. Jesus is alone. The force and extent of his humiliation are as relentless as the ground that rises up to hit him. Calumny, for all that it is a spoken thing, is no less real in its effect. A single word can destroy trust, dignity, hope, and life itself. Think of the word that betrayed Anne Frank to the Nazis. And once spoken, we cannot take that word back. It is our judgement.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, give us the strength to protect those who are weak and oppressed. Give us grace to keep from adding to their burden with careless words. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Oh, how sad and sore distress'd
Was that Mother highly blest
Of the sole-begotten one.**



IV. Jesus meets his mother

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: All you who pass this way, look and see: is there any sorrow like the sorrow that afflicts me? How can I describe you, to what compare you, daughter of Jerusalem?

Reflection

"Blessed are the peacemakers."

As Jesus meets his mother the recollection of peace is a refreshment that evokes the safety of home. Peace is not the absence of physical exertion or the elimination of difficult emotions, but a deeper sense of connectedness that mutually enhances dignity, trust, and love. Here we might paraphrase: blessed are the homemakers, the people who offer from what they have an environment in which others find a welcome that betokens the generosity of the Holy Spirit, so evident in Mary's life.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, enfold our homes and families with the joy and peace of your home in Nazareth. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Christ above in torment hangs;
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious son.**



V. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: As they were leading him away they seized on a man, Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and made him shoulder the cross and carry it behind Jesus.

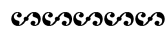
Reflection

"Blessed are those persecuted in the cause of right."

The consolation for them is simply stated: 'for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' The subsequent parables in Jesus' teaching indicate that there are many surprising ways to participate in the life of the kingdom; prostitutes make their way in before Pharisees, for example. The perception that justice is the kernel of righteousness permits the inclusion in the kingdom of many whose heroic living out of its values might call our own priorities into question. Would I risk being a Simon of Cyrene?

All (*pray*): **Jesus, let us see you in the face of every human being made in the image of God. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Is there one who would not weep,
Whelm'd in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?**



VI. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.

Reflection

"Blessed are those who show mercy."

The consolation of this beatitude is a mirror image: 'mercy will be shown them.' For Veronica, as has fascinated religious artists throughout the centuries, the consolation is the imprint of the face of Jesus. In our photographic age the notion of a 'true likeness' (the meaning of the name, Veronica) has become a technical matter of little merit or significance. But for the person seeking blessedness it is a moral, spiritual matter in which there can be discerned a deeper resemblance -- the image of God.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, let us seek pardon where there is injury. Let us bring hope where there is despair. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?**



VII. Jesus falls the second time

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult or spittle.

Reflection

"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it."

In Christian devotion the cross is viewed as a tool or instrument: of death, but more significantly in the creation of new life. The image of the cultivation of the earth suggests itself, with the cross as a plough with which Jesus has first cleared the debris of our neglected and overgrown lives, making us ready to keep, or plant, the seed of the gospel. When the cross presses heavily upon you, the footprint of the master gardener is close by, preparing you with skill and loving care for tender new growth.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, give us the courage to face what is painful and unattractive; may your love cast out our fear. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender child,
All with bloody scourges rent;**



VIII. Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children.'

Reflection

"Weep for yourselves and for your children."

The capacity to weep is one that we often regard with suspicion. Tears can be produced in synthetic emotion, and we probably know when we are indulging in that or being willingly manipulated by media use of this power. The danger with such misuse of our tears is that we might damage an important capacity and gift: the physical manifestation of deep compassion, an expression and symbol that is more eloquent than words. True tears are a gift to lavish on others and ourselves with great care.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, guard our emotions from being wielded by others, and help us to make of them a gift of truth and of love. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **For the sins of all the nations,
Saw him hang in desolation,
Till his spirit forth he sent.**



IX. Jesus falls the third time

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: Here are we preaching a crucified Christ; to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Gentiles folly, but to those who have been called, whether they are Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Reflection

"Blessed are the poor in spirit."

The description 'poor in spirit' is not an excuse for disregarding material poverty. But the identification of poverty in spirit points us to those who are so easily overlooked or whom we impoverish by a thoughtless word or gesture. What we describe as self-esteem is that measure by which worth is recognized. Only when we perceive the reality of this worth in the sight of God do we learn the importance of raising the fallen, embracing the lost, and giving thanks for our own rescue in Christ.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, deepen our faith in God's love. Help us to understand that the everlasting arms will never drop us, no matter how many times we fall. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **O thou Mother! Fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord;**



X. Jesus is stripped of his garments

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: The soldiers took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem; so they said to one another, 'Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to have it.'

Reflection

"Blessed are the lowly."

We see the process of stripping differently according to need and context. With a picture or piece of furniture in need of repair, it is an essential part of the process of restoration. With a person, as a public spectacle, it is a sign of degradation. But perhaps blessedness comes at the cost of being stripped; for us, too, it's part of the process of restoration. The recovery of 'true lowliness of heart' lies in the stripping away of pride, fear, and the defensiveness that makes us other than we really are.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, teach us to value in this life the things which last to eternity. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord.**



XI. Jesus is nailed to the cross

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: They crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left. Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.' One of the criminals spoke up, 'Jesus,' he said, 'remember me when you come into your kingdom.' 'Indeed, I promise you,' he replied, 'today you will be with me in paradise.'

Reflection

"Blessed are the poor in heart."

In a group discussion about the beatitudes, this one about the poor in heart often emerges as the favorite. Why? Perhaps because vision is the sense by which our curiosity is most immediately satisfied, and the consolation of the poor in heart is that 'they shall see God.' To want to see God is the obvious expression of our longing to know God. But if the promise to the repentant thief is our guide, purity of heart as the condition for the vision of God depends first on seeing ourselves as we really are. Only a contrite, loving heart can sustain the intensity of paradise.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, take from us all bitterness and envy of others; let us give thanks for all we have received from you. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Holy Mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior crucified.**



XII. Jesus dies on the cross

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

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: From the sixth hour there was darkness all over the land until the ninth hour. And at about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

Reflection

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right."

Hunger and thirst are very physical sensations that point to a need for material satisfaction. So 'what is right' also pertains to this sphere, as the ordering of creation in the way God intended. Blessedness is exposed on the cross in Jesus' act of re-ordering a disoriented world. The action is material, as it is spiritual and eternal, and within it emerges the source of our satisfaction. The torn curtain gives access to the holy of holies -- eternity, while blood and water satisfy us now in sacramental signs.

All (*pray*): **Jesus, help us to live no longer for ourselves, but for you who died for us. Amen.**

All (*sing*): **Let me share with thee his pain
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.**



XIII. Jesus is taken down from the cross

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

People: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Officiant: After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission.

Reflection

"Blessed are you who are poor."

Being and having are linked. We can dismantle people's dignity by the way in which we take their possessions. Even the redistribution of misappropriated or improper wealth must be characterized by transparency and justice, or new injustices will surely follow. But when the body of Jesus is taken down from the cross, the justice of God's mercy begins to be revealed, as properties are redistributed. What we had and he had not is now his: our death, taken lovingly, and from which we derive new life.

All (pray): Jesus, even in adversity give us joy, for joy is the mark of our confidence in God's love. Amen.

**All (sing): Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live;**



XIV. Jesus is laid in the sepulchre

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

People: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Officiant: Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean shroud and put it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away.

Reflection

"Blessed are those who mourn."

Grief is human, as death is. The reality of the incarnation is thus profoundly expressed at the tomb of Lazarus: 'Jesus wept.' Though it can turn us in on ourselves, grief is not essentially selfish; it is the expression of love for one another, and the registering that, capable of loving and being loved, we experience a new, painful limitation when the receiver and giver of our love dies. Blessedness is found in having loved; consolation in living the eternally reciprocated love of God, in which all our loves are recapitulated in fullness.

All (pray): Jesus, teach us to know you, to love you, to follow you; and call us on the last day to share in your resurrection. Amen.

**All (sing): By the cross with thee to stay,
There with thee to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of thee to give.**

Conclusion

Officiant: For us Christ became obedient, even to accepting death on the cross.

All: Lord Jesus Christ, let your passion be my strength whereby I am fenced, protected, and defended. Let your wounds be my nurture whereby I am fed, inebriated, and refreshed. Let the sprinkling of your blood be the cleansing of my sins. Let your death be my gateway to eternal glory. In these let me find health, longing, desire, and joy, in body and in soul, now and for ever. Amen.

Officiant: Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

May the divine assistance remain with us always.

+May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**