

## Good Friday 2020

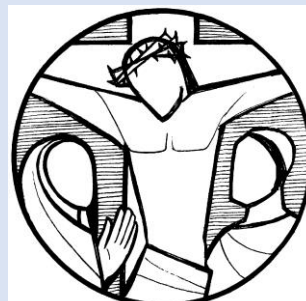
It is very sad that we cannot come together to worship on this the most important day of the year.

We will read through the passion narrative taking selected passages for each of the Gospels. The passages are all from the Contemporary English Version of the Bible. Adjacent to each passage is a short commentary and / or question, poem or similar, for reflection

**To be able to access the links, go to the bottom of this page and left click on the date. This will download the pdf in a new window, then simply click on the links as indicated.**

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*Jesus said; "just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." [John 3:14-15]*



Song [Come and see, come and see](#) [Click on the link](#)

### Prayer - based on Isaiah 53:4-7 and John 10:11-18

Lord Jesus, we remember today that you suffered a brutal death upon the cross. You were despised and rejected. No one would even look at you. You were ignored as if you were nothing. You endured suffering and pain that we should have borne. You were beaten because of the evil we did. You were wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities. Like sheep, we have all gone astray; each and every one of us has turned to his own way; and God laid on you the iniquity of us all. You lay down your life for your sheep, like a good shepherd. No one took your life from you but lay it down of your own accord. Praise and thanksgiving and glory, honour and power be to you our Lord and Redeemer for enduring the punishment that made us whole. Amen.



## Thursday evening in the Garden of Gethsemane

### Jesus is arrested Mark 14:43-52

Jesus was still speaking, when Judas the betrayer came up. He was one of the twelve disciples, and a mob of men armed with swords and clubs were with him. They had been sent by the chief priests, the nation's leaders, and the teachers of the Law of Moses. <sup>44</sup>Judas had told them ahead of time, "Arrest the man I greet with a kiss. Tie him up tight and lead him away."

<sup>45</sup>Judas walked right up to Jesus and said, "Teacher!" Then Judas kissed him, <sup>46</sup>and the men grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

<sup>47</sup>Someone standing there pulled out a sword. He struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.

<sup>48</sup>Jesus said to the mob, "Why do you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like a criminal? <sup>49</sup>Day after day I was with you and taught in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. But what the Scriptures say must come true."

<sup>50</sup>All of Jesus' disciples ran off and left him. <sup>51</sup>One of them was a young man who was wearing only a linen cloth. And when the men grabbed him, <sup>52</sup>he left the cloth behind and ran away naked.

*Jesus had eaten his last supper with his friends. Around the table he had taught them many things. Judas had left early. They concluded their meal with a hymn and then Jesus took the disciples to Gethsemane where he prayed, knowing what was to follow over the next thirty-six hours or so. It must have been a good meal for the disciples couldn't stay awake, much to Jesus' annoyance. Then, just as they were about to leave, Judas turns up with men armed with clubs, and Jesus is arrested.*

*John tells us it was Peter who had the sword. But Jesus would tolerate no violence and healed the High Priest's servant.*

*What do you think these events in the Garden tells us about violence and love in the world today?*

*Notice the disciples run off before they are also arrested. What would you have done if you had been there? Do we run away when our association with Jesus is socially threatening today?*

## Thursday night at Ananias' house

### Jesus is questioned by the Sanhedrin Mark 14:53-64

<sup>53</sup> Jesus was led off to the high priest. Then the chief priests, the nation's leaders, and the teachers of the Law of Moses all met together. <sup>54</sup> Peter had followed at a distance. And when he reached the courtyard of the high priest's house, he sat down with the guards to warm himself beside a fire.

<sup>55</sup> The chief priests and the whole council tried to find someone to accuse Jesus of a crime, so they could put him to death. But they could not find anyone to accuse him.

<sup>56</sup> Many people did tell lies against Jesus, but they did not agree on what they said.

<sup>57</sup> Finally, some men stood up and lied about him. They said, <sup>58</sup> "We heard him say he would tear down this temple that we built. He also claimed that in three days he would build another one without any help." <sup>59</sup> But even then they did not agree on what they said.

<sup>60</sup> The high priest stood up in the council and asked Jesus, "Why don't you say something in your own defence? Don't you hear the charges they are making against you?" <sup>61</sup> But Jesus kept quiet and did not say a word. The high priest asked him another question, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the glorious God?"

<sup>62</sup> "Yes, I am!" Jesus answered. "Soon you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of God All-Powerful, and coming with the clouds of heaven."                      Contd/

*Ananias was the High Priest. It is the Jews to whom Judas betrayed Jesus.*

*Notice all the chief priests and teachers of the Law couldn't find one accusation with any truth in it that would condemn Jesus, so they got people to lie. However, the liars contradicted one another. They couldn't pin anything on Jesus.*

*Jesus is silent through the whole sordid affair. Indeed, it was illegal to try a man for a capital offence at night, although this was hardly a trial, simply people throwing accusations at Jesus.*

*Finally, they find something which might enable them to have Jesus executed. Roman law required that in any cases where there was a charge of treason, civil disobedience, incitement to revolution, or attacks against Caesar, it was for the Roman governor to decide, not the local administration. So, Jesus was sent to Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea.*

*There were no defence witnesses. How easy is it today to speak in defence of Jesus when false claims are made against him?*

<sup>63</sup> At once the high priest ripped his robe apart and shouted, "Why do we need more witnesses? <sup>64</sup> You heard him claim to be God! What is your decision?" They all agreed that he should be put to death.

## *Thursday night in the courtyard of the house of the High Priest*

### **Peter denies Jesus Mark 14: 66-72**

<sup>66</sup> While Peter was still in the courtyard, a servant girl of the high priest came up <sup>67</sup> and saw Peter warming himself by the fire. She stared at him and said, "You were with Jesus from Nazareth!"

<sup>68</sup> Peter replied, "That isn't true! I don't know what you're talking about. I don't have any idea what you mean." He went out to the gate, and a cock crowed.<sup>(a)</sup>

<sup>69</sup> The servant girl saw Peter again and said to the people standing there, "This man is one of them!"

<sup>70</sup> "No, I'm not!" Peter replied.

A little while later some of the people said to Peter, "You certainly are one of them. You're a Galilean!"

<sup>71</sup> This time Peter began to curse and swear, "I don't even know the man you're talking about!"

<sup>72</sup> Right away the cock crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had told him, "Before a cock crows twice, you will say three times that you don't know me." So, Peter started crying.

*When sat around the Last Supper table, Jesus had predicted Peters' denial of him. (Mark 14:22-31). Then Peter explicitly said to Jesus, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." Now, it seems, they were empty words.*

*Can you recall a time when you have made a commitment to Jesus and yet failed him?*

### ***A prayer of confession:***

*Loving forgiving Jesus,  
nothing is hidden from  
your eyes, your light shines  
into the darkness of this  
world and into the shadows of our hearts.*



*You see our thoughts,  
our motives,  
our words,  
our actions,  
and we confess that we must cause you  
sadness in our response to all that you have  
given us.*

*Forgive us, we pray  
and by your grace and mercy  
bring us to that place  
where your light might shine from us  
and reveal nothing but your eternal love.  
Amen*

## Thursday night with the soldiers

### Soldiers Mock Jesus Luke 22: 63-65

<sup>63</sup> The men who were guarding Jesus made fun of him and beat him. <sup>64</sup> They put a blindfold on him and said, "Tell us who struck you!" <sup>65</sup> They kept on insulting Jesus in many other ways.

### Prayer

*Forgiving God, what would I have done? Would I have been judgmental, cruel and heartless; just doing my job, acting the role? Forgive me when I behave blindly and thoughtlessly without considering the effect I have on others. Amen.*

## Very early on Friday morning in Pilate's Palace

### Jesus is sent to Pilate Luke 23: 1-7

Everyone in the council got up and led Jesus off to Pilate. <sup>2</sup> They started accusing him and said, "We caught this man trying to get our people to riot and to stop paying taxes to the Emperor. He also claims that he is the Messiah, our king."

<sup>3</sup> Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Those are your words," Jesus answered.

<sup>4</sup> Pilate told the chief priests and the crowd, "I don't find him guilty of anything."

<sup>5</sup> But they all kept on saying, "He has been teaching and causing trouble all over Judea. He started in Galilee and has now come all the way here."

<sup>6</sup> When Pilate heard this, he asked, "Is this man from Galilee?" <sup>7</sup> After Pilate learned that Jesus came from the region ruled by Herod, he sent him to Herod, who was in Jerusalem at that time.

*Notice how Jesus' words are being twisted.*

*Pilate seems unwilling to condemn Jesus. He thinks he'd found a way out by sending Jesus off to Herod. Herod had power to punish Jesus, but not to execute him.*

*Pilate tried to grasp exactly who Jesus was, asking him "are you the King of the Jews?" It reminds us of Jesus' question to Peter, "Who do you say I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Christ." (Mark 8: 29)*

*Who Jesus is, is a question for each of us. What is your answer?*

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## Friday morning in Herod's palace

### Jesus is sent to Herod Luke 23: 13-25

<sup>9</sup> Herod asked him a lot of questions, but Jesus did not answer. <sup>10</sup> Then the chief priests and the teachers of the Law of Moses stood up and accused him of all kinds of bad things.

<sup>11</sup> Herod and his soldiers made fun of Jesus and insulted him. They put a fine robe on him and sent him back to Pilate.

<sup>12</sup> That same day Herod and Pilate became friends, even though they had been enemies before this.

*Like Pilate, Herod can find nothing to condemn Jesus; so, he passes responsibility for Jesus back to Pilate.*

*It is interesting to note that even in these darkest hours Jesus is able to bring people together.*

## Friday mid-morning in Pilate's palace

### Jesus is returned to Pilate Luke 23:13-23

<sup>13</sup> Pilate called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people. <sup>14</sup> He told them, "You brought Jesus to me and said he was a troublemaker. But I have questioned him here in front of you, and I have not found him guilty of anything that you say he has done. <sup>15</sup> Herod didn't find him guilty either and sent him back. This man doesn't deserve to be put to death! <sup>16-17</sup> I will just have him beaten with a whip and set free."

<sup>18</sup> But the whole crowd shouted, "Kill Jesus! Give us Barabbas!" <sup>19</sup> Now Barabbas was in jail because he had started a riot in the city and had murdered someone.

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*Neither Pilate nor Herod can find Jesus guilty of any crime. Pilate even says, Jesus hasn't done anything to deserve death. He seems quite keen to release Jesus.*

*As a means of resolving the matter, Pilate turns to a custom, that at Passover the Governor of Judea would release a prisoner of the Jews' own choosing.*

*Matthew adds that; "When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!" (Matthew 27:24) That might not have been an easy way out, but it was certainly expedient.*

*Can you recall a time when you have publicly washed your hands of Jesus because it was expedient to do so?*

<sup>20</sup> Pilate wanted to set Jesus free, so he spoke again to the crowds. <sup>21</sup> But they kept shouting, "Nail him to a cross! Nail him to a cross!"

<sup>22</sup> Pilate spoke to them a third time, "But what crime has he done? I have not found him guilty of anything for which he should be put to death. I will have him beaten with a whip and set free."

<sup>23</sup> The people kept on shouting as loud as they could for Jesus to be put to death.

<sup>24</sup> Finally, Pilate gave in. <sup>25</sup> He freed the man who was in jail for rioting and murder, because he was the one the crowd wanted to be set free. Then Pilate handed Jesus over for them to do what they wanted with him.

### *Mid-morning in the guardroom*

#### **Soldiers mock Jesus Mark 15:16-20**

The soldiers led Jesus inside the courtyard of the fortress<sup>(b)</sup> and called together the rest of the troops. <sup>17</sup> They put a purple robe on him, and on his head, they placed a crown that they had made out of thorn branches. <sup>18</sup> They made fun of Jesus and shouted, "Hey, you king of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> Then they beat him on the head with a stick. They spit on him and knelt down and pretended to worship him.

<sup>20</sup> When the soldiers had finished making fun of Jesus, they took off the purple robe. They put his own clothes back on him and led him off to be nailed to a cross.

*Why, what has my Lord done?  
What makes this rage and spite?  
He gave the lame to run,  
he gave the blind their sight.  
Sweet injuries!  
Yet they at these  
themselves displease,  
and 'gainst him rise.*

*Samuel Crossman 1624-84*



## Late Friday morning

### Jesus is crucified Luke 23: 26-43

<sup>26</sup> As Jesus was being led away, some soldiers grabbed hold of a man from Cyrene named Simon. He was coming in from the fields, but they put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

<sup>27</sup> A large crowd was following Jesus, and in the crowd a lot of women were crying and weeping for him. <sup>28</sup> Jesus turned to the women and said:

Women of Jerusalem don't cry for me! Cry for yourselves and for your children.

<sup>29</sup> Someday people will say, "Women who never had children are really fortunate!"

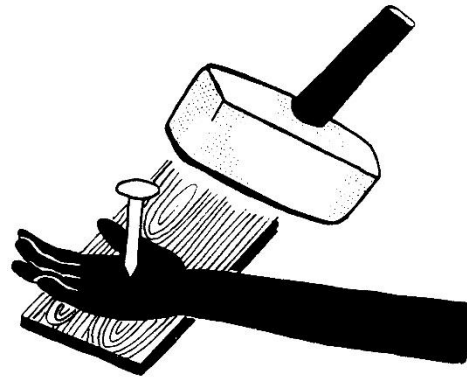
<sup>30</sup> At that time everyone will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" They will say to the hills, "Hide us!" <sup>31</sup> If this can happen when the wood is green, what do you think will happen when it is dry?

<sup>32</sup> Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. <sup>33</sup> When the soldiers came to the place called "The Skull," they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.

<sup>34-35</sup> Jesus said, "Father, forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing."

While the crowd stood there watching Jesus, the soldiers gambled for his clothes. The leaders insulted him by saying, "He saved others. Now he should save himself, if he really is God's chosen Messiah!"

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*Below are some reflections on Jesus' death from the Apostle John, the writer to the Hebrews, the Apostle Paul, and Jesus himself.*

*Jesus Christ "is the atoning sacrifice for our sins." 1 John 2:2*

*"Jesus is the high priest we need. He is holy and innocent and faultless, and not at all like us sinners. Jesus is honoured above all beings in heaven, and he is better than any other high priest. Jesus doesn't need to offer sacrifices each day for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. He offered a sacrifice once for all, when he gave himself." Hebrews 7:26-27*

*"All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. But God treats us much better than we deserve, and because of Christ Jesus, he freely accepts us and sets us free from our sins. God sent Christ to be our sacrifice. Christ offered his life's blood, so that by faith in him we could come to God." Romans 3:23-26*

*The words of Jesus; "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:28*

*What does Jesus' death mean to you?*



<sup>36</sup> The soldiers made fun of Jesus and brought him some wine. <sup>37</sup> They said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!"

<sup>38</sup> Above him was a sign that said, "This is the King of the Jews."

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!"

<sup>40</sup> But the other criminal told the first one off, "Don't you fear God? Aren't you getting the same punishment as this man? <sup>41</sup> We got what was coming to us, but he didn't do anything wrong." <sup>42</sup> Then he said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into power!"

<sup>43</sup> Jesus replied, "I promise that today you will be with me in paradise."

### **Jesus cares for his mother John 19: 25-27**

<sup>25</sup> Jesus' mother stood beside his cross with her sister and Mary the wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene was standing there too. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and his favourite disciple with her, he said to his mother, "This man is now your son." <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, "She is now your mother." From then on, that disciple took her into his own home.

### **Prayer**

*Each time we reject you, Lord, each time we resist you, another nail is forged; and each time we fail to love you and demonstrate that love by loving others, another nail is driven home.*

*Forgive us, Lord, whose beauty we disfigure. Open wide your arms and embrace us once again that we may know we are welcomed, accepted, forgiven, healed and restored. Amen.*

**Song** [How deep the Father's love for us](#)  
**Click on the link**

## Friday, early afternoon

### Jesus dies Mark 15:33-41

<sup>33</sup>About noon the sky turned dark and stayed that way until around three o'clock. <sup>34</sup>Then about that time Jesus shouted, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?"

<sup>35</sup>Some of the people standing there heard Jesus and said, "He is calling for Elijah." <sup>36</sup>One of them ran and grabbed a sponge. After he had soaked it in wine, he put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus. He said, "Let's wait and see if Elijah will come<sup>Ⓜ</sup> and take him down!" <sup>37</sup>Jesus shouted and then died.

<sup>38</sup>At once the curtain in the temple tore in two from top to bottom.

<sup>39</sup>A Roman army officer was standing in front of Jesus. When the officer saw how Jesus died, he said, "This man really was the Son of God!"

<sup>40-41</sup>Some women were looking on from a distance. They had come with Jesus to Jerusalem. But even before this they had been his followers and had helped him while he was in Galilee. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joseph were two of these women. Salome was also one of them.

*Jesus cried to God, "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?". These are the opening words of Psalm 22. It's a Psalm that ends in praise:*

*<sup>23</sup> "Praise him, you servants of the Lord! ...*

*<sup>24</sup> He does not neglect the poor or ignore their suffering; he does not turn away from them, but answers when they call for help."*

*<sup>25</sup> In the full assembly I will praise you for what you have done. ...*

*<sup>27</sup> All nations will remember the Lord. From every part of the world they will turn to him; all races will worship him. <sup>28</sup> The Lord is king, and he rules the nations.*

*The curtain in the temple separated the Holy Place from the most Holy Place in the Temple. It separated the people from the place God was thought to dwell. Its tearing down is symbolic of all that separates people from God, particularly the barrier of sin, being removed by Jesus' death so that anyone and everyone may enter God's presence.*

**Song: [What Love is this](#) [Click on the link](#)**

## Late Friday afternoon

### Jesus body is pierced John 19: 31-37

<sup>31</sup> The next day would be both a Sabbath and the Passover. It was a special day for the Jewish people, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses during that day. So they asked Pilate to break the men's legs and take their bodies down. <sup>32</sup> The soldiers first broke the legs of the other two men who were nailed there. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, and they did not break his legs.

<sup>34</sup> One of the soldiers stuck his spear into Jesus' side, and blood and water came out. <sup>35</sup> We know this is true, because it was told by someone who saw it happen. Now you can have faith too. <sup>36</sup> All this happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say, "No bone of his body will be broken" <sup>37</sup> and, "They will see the one in whose side they stuck a spear."

*There can be no doubt, Jesus died. The soldiers testify to it. Indeed, sticking a spear into Jesus' side would have finished him off had he still been alive.*

*The final verses of this passage refer to the Old Testament. The first, verse 36, refers to the Passover Lamb, "you shall not break any of its bones." (Exodus 12:46) It was John who, at the start of Jesus ministry, declared him as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 21:29)*

*The second Old Testament reference is to Zechariah 12: 10, "I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn."*

## Friday evening

### Jesus body is buried Mark 15:42-47

<sup>42</sup> It was now the evening before the Sabbath, and the Jewish people were getting ready for that sacred day. <sup>43</sup> A man named Joseph from Arimathea was brave enough to ask Pilate for the body of Jesus. Joseph was a highly respected member of the Jewish council, and he was also waiting for God's kingdom to come.

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### *Dead and Buried by Elizabeth Rooney*

*And so we took him down  
(or thought we did),  
wiped off the sweat and spittle  
from his face,  
washed the dried blood,  
threw out the crown of thorns,  
and wrapped him once again  
in swaddling clothes.*

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<sup>44</sup> Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead, and he called in the army officer to find out if Jesus had been dead very long. <sup>45</sup> After the officer told him, Pilate let Joseph have Jesus' body.

<sup>46</sup> Joseph bought a linen cloth and took the body down from the cross. He had it wrapped in the cloth, and he put it in a tomb that had been cut into solid rock. Then he rolled a big stone against the entrance to the tomb.

<sup>47</sup> Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching and saw where the body was placed.

*A tomb can be a cramped,  
confining place,  
far smaller than a stable.  
We laid him there  
(or thought we did).  
We were not able  
to comprehend  
The infinite contained.  
For us it was the end.  
Only the harsh realities  
of death and stone  
remained.*

## *Saturday morning*

**The tomb is sealed and guarded**  
**Matthew 27:62-65**

<sup>62</sup> On the next day, which was a Sabbath, the chief priests and the Pharisees went together to Pilate. <sup>63</sup> They said, "Sir, we remember what that liar said while he was still alive. He claimed that in three days he would come back from death.

<sup>64</sup> So please order the tomb to be carefully guarded for three days. If you don't, his disciples may come and steal his body. They will tell the people that he has been raised to life, and this last lie will be worse than the first one."<sup>[m]</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Pilate said to them, "All right, take some of your soldiers and guard the tomb as well as you know how." <sup>66</sup> So they sealed it tight and placed soldiers there to guard it.

**Song: [In Christ alone](#) [Click on the link](#)**

## **Prayer**

Lord Jesus we thank you for your obedience even to death and that you took upon you the sin of humankind. We thank you that by faith in you our sin is forgiven and dealt with.

As we look to Christ raised above the world on a cross, crucified to save the world, confirm your people in faith, strengthen us in love and preserve us in peace. Give us the courage to look beyond ourselves to proclaim the Gospel of Salvation through faith in your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ that all may know your love and be made one with you through him. Amen.

## **Benediction - from A New Zealand prayer book (adapted)**

Jesus our true and only Saviour,  
you died like a criminal on the cross;  
but you are God, the one who forgives.  
You were broken, helpless and in pain;  
but you are God, in whom there is hope.  
You have shown us a love beyond words:  
give us your forgiveness, hope and love;  
and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us now and forever more. Amen.

