

Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross IV

13:30

A notable feature of the last year of lockdown and living restricted lives has been the strangeness of time: we lost our temporal landmarks. If you have not said it yourself, you will I am sure have heard someone else say “I can’t tell which day of the week it is!”

Mark’s Gospel is alone in telling us what happened every day of Holy Week. No other Gospel does this, but Mark’s narrative is carefully constructed around the days of that week. We will use the time of each of the half hours of the service to consider each of those days Jesus, his followers and others experienced, comparing the days of the week we traditionally have experienced, the more recent, more anonymous days of the virus, and, as we approach more relaxed times ahead, the days of the weeks we are expecting. We will reflect on this in parallel to the six hours of the crucifixion, the timings of which Mark is also careful to record.

Mark tells us nothing about the Saturday and some believers will not speak at all between the end of this service and the opening of worship on Sunday. Please use the time, especially the silences to reflect on moments when you recognised any of your own reality and self in the readings, poems, music or addresses, to speak quietly to the Christ of the Cross and to listen for his message to you today.

Wednesday Night Blues

“That dark old sun was sinking low. . .”

O Lord we beseech thee, absolve thy people from their offences; that through thy bountiful goodness we may all be delivered from the bands of those sins, which we, by our frailty we have committed. Grant this O heavenly Father for Jesus Christ’s sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Psalm 41 *Beatus qui intelligit*

Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy : the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. The Lord preserve him, and keep him alive, that he may be blessed upon earth : and deliver not thou him into the will of his enemies.

The Lord comfort him, when he lieth sick upon his bed : make thou all his bed in his sickness.

I said, Lord, be merciful unto me : heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.

Mine enemies speak evil of me : When shall he die, and his name perish?

And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity : and his heart conceiveth falsehood within himself, and when he cometh forth he telleth it.

All mine enemies whisper together against me : even against me do they imagine this evil.

Let the sentence of guiltiness proceed against him : and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more.

Yea, even mine own familiar friend, whom I trusted : who did also eat of my bread, hath laid great wait for me.

But be thou merciful unto me, O Lord : raise thou me up again, and I shall reward them.

By this I know thou favourest me : that mine enemy doth no triumph against me.

And when I am in my health, thou upholdest me : and shalt set me before thy face for ever.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel : world without end. Amen.

Reading: Mark 14. 1 - 11.

Indifference

G A Studdert Kennedy

When Jesus came to Golgotha, they hanged Him on a tree,
They drove great nails through hands and feet, and made a Calvary;
They crowned Him with a crown of thorns, red were His wounds and deep,
For those were crude and cruel days, and human flesh was cheap.

When Jesus came to Birmingham, they simply passed Him by.
They would not hurt a hair of Him, they only let Him die;
For men had grown more tender, and they would not give Him pain,
They only just passed down the street, and left Him in the rain.

Still Jesus cried, 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do,'
And still it rained the winter rain that drenched Him through and through;
The crowds went home and left the streets without a soul to see,
And Jesus crouched against a wall, and cried for Calvary.

Address

Music

Silence

[at 14:00] The Lord's Prayer.