

Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross V

14:00

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.

Thursday’s Child

“ . . . a whisper of hope that seemed to fail . . . ”

Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord, Amen.

Psalm 22. *Deus, Deus meus.*

My God, my God, look upon me; why hast thou forsaken me : and art so far from my health, and from the words of my complaint?

O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not : and in the night-season also I take no rest.

And thou continest holy : O thou worship of Israel.

Our fathers hoped in thee : they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them.

They called upon thee, and were holpen : they put their trust in thee, and were not confounded.

But as for me, I am a worm, and no man : a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

All they that see me laugh me to scorn : they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying,

He trusted in God, that he would deliver him : let him deliver him, if he will have him.

But thou art he that took me out of my mother's womb : thou wast my hope, when I hanged yet upon my mother's breasts.

I have been left unto thee ever since I was born : thou art my God, even from my mother's womb.

O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand : and there is none to help me.

Many oxen are come about me : fat bulls of Basan close me in on every side.

They gape upon me with their mouths : as it were a ramping and a roaring lion.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint : my heart also in the midst of my body is even like melting wax.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums : and thou shalt bring me into the dust of death.

For many dogs are come about me: and the conucil of the wicked layeth siege against me.
 They pierced my hands and my feet; I may tell all my bones : they stand staring and looking upon me.
 They part my garments among them : and cast lots upon my vesture.
 But be not thou far from me, O Lord : thou art my succour, haste thee to help me.
 Deliver my soul from the sword : my darling from the power of the dog.
 Save me from the lion's mouth : thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the unicorns.
 I will declare thy Name unto my brethren : in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.
 O praise the Lord, ye that fear him : magnify him, all ye seed of Jacob, and fear him, all ye seed of Israel;
 For he hath not despised, nor abhorred, the low estate of the poor : he hath not hid his face from him, but
 when he called unto him he heard him.
 My praise is of thee in the great congregation : my vows will I perform in the sight of them that fear him.
 The poor shall eat, and be satisfied : they that seek after the Lord shall praise him; your heart shall live for
 ever.
 All the ends of the world shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord : and all the kindreds of
 the nations shall worship before him.
 For the kingdom is the Lord's : and he is the Governor among the people.
 All such as be fat upon earth : have eaten, and worshipped.
 All they that go down into the dust shall kneel before him : and no man hath quickened his own soul.
 My seed shall serve him : they shall be counted unto the Lord for a generation.
 They shall come, and the heavens shall declare his righteousness : unto a people that shall be born, whom the
 Lord hath made.

Reading: Mark 14. 12 – 16, 22 – 26, 41 – 46.

Holy Cross

Sir Shane Leslie

It is the bare and leafless Tree our sins once sowed on Calvary,
 And mockers digged with trembling knee – Holy Cross.

It is the dead impitying Wood, that like a crimson pillar stood,
 Where none unmoved unweeping could — Holy Cross.

O fearful sight foretold to man, the cloven spar, the sacred span,
 Whence God's atoning Blood once ran — Holy Cross.

It is the Holy Gibbet Tree, all stained with Love's last agony
 And marked with awful mystery — Holy Cross.

What stains are these incarnadine, what scars are these more red than wine
 Of more than human Passion sign? Holy Cross.

It is the sunless stricken Tree, upon whose branches sore to see
 O mystery, died One of Three — Holy Cross.

What storm swept o'er its boughs that day, when God to God did sorely pray.
 And human guilt ebbed slow away — Holy Cross.

When earth shall smoke and sun shall flee, alone unmoved o'er sinking sea
 Shall stand one all-redeeming Tree — Holy Cross.

Address

Music

Silence

[at 14:30] The Lord's Prayer.