

A LITURGY FOR GOOD FRIDAY

LITURGICAL NOTES

In the first centuries of the church, the Christian Passover (*Pasch*) was not divided into separate ‘packages’, independent services spread from Thursday to Sunday. Rather, it was seen as a unity, commemorating of Christ’s triumph over death, celebrating both his passage from death to life and the Christian’s own share in that victory through baptism.

In this context, as part of the larger celebration of the Paschal Mystery, it is appropriate that the liturgy of Good Friday provide an opportunity for meditation on the passion and cross of Jesus, as well as solemn prayer for the church and the world for which he died. But the service should not give the impression of being ‘Jesus’ funeral’, complete with gloomy hymns. Moreover, the austerity of the liturgy should not preclude a note of triumph and joy, for the community gathers on Good Friday to *celebrate* the Lord’s triumph on the cross – an event that can only be understood from the viewpoint of Easter.

Australian Anglican communities have had a wide variety of Good Friday services and customs, from Mattins and Ante-Communion to three-hour services and processions of witness. We encourage parishes to look back into their own history, describe the services and customs that have prevailed at different times, and consider what aspects of Christian belief were thus being expressed on Good Friday. This may help some communities make another transition to the use of the service we are proposing here. It represents an emerging ecumenical consensus based on the Ministry of the Word, the Prayers, the Proclamation of the Cross, and possibly the Ministry of the Eucharist.

It is a form of this three or four part liturgy that we offer here.

Setting

The liturgical colour for this day is passion red. In many places most of the hangings, frontals, pictures and other decorations will have been removed or veiled before this service (or at the conclusion of Maundy Thursday). It is appropriate for all crosses to be removed to enhance the impact of the proclamation of the cross in the course of the service.

Time

The Liturgy for Good Friday may take place at any time of the day and is not limited to the hours between 12 noon and 3.00 pm – the hours when Jesus was on the cross. The primary focus is on commemorating his passion and death. The time will be governed by local custom.

Music

It is appropriate for all music to be accompanied at a minimum level.

The psalm might be sung to a simple chant / tone without accompaniment.

NB: Music resource suggestions will be added at a later date.

The shape of the service

Because this liturgy is a continuation of the Maundy Thursday commemoration, there is no music before the beginning, and no opening hymn. The ministers should enter in silence. After a suitable pause the Collect for the Day is sung/said.

The Ministry of the Word

The readings do not vary from year to year. The Passion reading is the climax of the Ministry of the Word. The *Liturgical Notes for Passion Sunday* for proclamation of the Passion should be consulted: it may be appropriate to present the Passion reading on this day in a different manner.

Care should be taken that the Passion reading and the preaching on this day do not foster anti-Semitism.

The Solemn Prayers

The Prayers, in the sequence provided have been part of the Good Friday liturgy since earliest times. In these prayers the church holds up before God all for whom Christ died.

The Prayers are set for three different leaders, but may be arranged for fewer or more voices. Silence is an important element of the Prayers.

The Solemn Prayers may be placed after the Proclamation of the Cross, a bringing to the foot of the cross the needs of the whole world.

Proclamation of the Cross

A wooden cross may be carried into the church for this part of the Liturgy. A set of optional versicles and responses is provided. It is recommended that the cross should be large enough to be the dominant symbol in the church on this day, and be placed where it is accessible to the people.

All may be invited to come to the cross, to make appropriate acts of devotion to the Crucified One. This may be done in silence, or suitable hymns or anthems, including the Reproaches may be sung. (A suitable version of the Reproaches may be found in the Church of England's *Lent, Holy Week and Easter* page 207, #15.)

When the devotions are completed the cross should remain in a prominent position.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

To receive Holy Communion or not is an important question for each community to answer for itself. If the Eucharist is celebrated it is done so in a 'low-key' manner, perhaps with the acclamations etc said instead of sung.

A linen cloth is placed on the Table for this part of the service. It is removed after the administration of Communion, and the consumption of any left-over elements.

There is no blessing or dismissal, and all depart in silence.

A LITURGY FOR GOOD FRIDAY

SOLEMN LITURGY OF THE PASSION AND DEATH OF THE LORD

The people gather in silence.

The ministers enter in silence.

After a time of silence, the presider says or sings this or another Prayer for the Day (as provided in APBA pages 494-499).

Almighty God,
look with mercy on this your family,
for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed
and to be 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.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 52.13 – 53.12

Psalm 31.9-16 or 22

*New Testament Reading: Hebrews 10.16 – 25
or Hebrews 4.4 – 16; 5: 7 - 9*

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

John 18.1 – 19.42

The Sermon

Silence is kept.

A minister may say

God shows great love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

Let us confess our sins.

**O Christ, we are stripped bare by your suffering.
You see our dreams, our demons,
and the secrets we keep even from ourselves.
Forgive all that needs to be forgiven,
healed all that needs to be healed,
awaken all the good that sleeps in us,
banish all the fears that paralyse us.
Put the power of your cross into our lives for ever,
and clothe us with hope and love.**

The presider says this or another absolution

We have turned our hearts to God in repentance
and our sins are laid bare before the cross of Jesus Christ.
In the name of the living God,
your sins are forgiven. **Amen.**

A hymn may be sung.

THE SOLEMN PRAYERS

The Solemn Prayers may follow the Proclamation of the Cross.

The presider says

God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world,
but so that the world might be saved through him.
So let us bring the needs of the whole world
to the foot of the cross of Christ.

*The biddings and collects should be led by different people: the collects by a minister,
the biddings by one or more members of the community.*

- 1 I ask you to pray for the Church of God throughout the world,
that God the almighty, eternal One will guide it,
and gather it in unity and peace.

(pause for silent prayer)

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Holy God,
you have shown your glory to all nations
in Christ your Son:
guide the work of your Church,
help it to keep the faith,
proclaim your Name,
and bring your salvation to all people.

- 2 I ask you to pray for all God's people in their vocation and ministry,
for all bishops, priests and deacons,
for N our bishop and N our Primate,
and for [N and] all who are preparing for baptism and confirmation.

(pause for silent prayer)

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Holy God,
by your Spirit you teach your Church
and make us holy:
help each of us to do your work more faithfully.

- 3 I ask you to pray for all who confess Christ crucified,
that God will heal our divisions.

(pause for silent prayer)

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Holy God,
in baptism you make us one in Christ:
help us to persevere in faith,
and make us one in love and service.

- 4 I ask you to pray for the peace of Jerusalem,
and for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God.

(pause for silent prayer)

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Holy God,
long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and Sarah.
Bless the people you first made your own:
keep them in the love of your Name,
and in faithfulness to your covenant.

- 5 I ask you to pray for all who do not look to Christ as Saviour,
and all who do not believe in God.

(pause for silent prayer)

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Holy God,
you created man and woman in your image:
draw all people to yourself,
that they may acknowledge you as the maker and redeemer of all,
and know Christ's mercy and grace.

- 6 I ask you to pray for the peace of the world,
for those in authority,
and for all who shape our common life.

(pause for silent prayer)

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Holy God,
you desire justice for all the earth:
guide our leaders and guard all peoples
in the way of righteousness, freedom and peace.

- 7 I ask you to pray for the sick, the dying and all in need;
for the homeless, the hungry and the oppressed;
for those in darkness and despair.

(pause for silent prayer)

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Holy God,
all tenderness and healing flow from you:
give strength to the weary
and courage to the downhearted,
and show mercy to all who are in trouble.

The presider says,

Most merciful God,
we commit ourselves to you
and pray for the grace of a holy life,
that, with all who have died

and are alive in Christ,
we may come to the fullness of eternal life,
and the joy of the resurrection
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A hymn may be sung.

[PROCLAMATION OF THE CROSS]

*This section may be used here, before the Solemn Prayers, or be omitted.
Where included, its elements may be arranged in any appropriate form or sequence,
according to local custom.*

A cross may be brought into the church, the bearer may stop three times, and say

We adore you, O Christ and we bless you,
**because, by your holy Cross
you have redeemed the world.**

or

Behold the wood of the cross
on which the Saviour of the world was hung.
Come, let us worship him.

After the third stop the cross is placed so as to be accessible to the people.

The people are invited to come forward and spend a moment of prayer before the cross.

*During this time, psalms, canticles, scripture sentences, hymns or anthems or other
suitable material (e.g. the Reproaches) may be said or sung.*

At the conclusion, a minister says

O Saviour of the world,
By your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us.
**Save us, and help us,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord.**

A hymn may be sung.

*If the Liturgy of the Eucharist is to be omitted, then the Lord's Prayer is said,
together with this final prayer.*

Lord Jesus Christ,
**the story of your suffering is written on our hearts,
and the salvation of the world is in your outstretched hands.
Keep your victory always before our eyes,
your praise on our lips,
your peace in our lives. Amen.**

The people then depart in silence.

If the Eucharist is to be celebrated, the gifts of bread and wine are placed on the Table.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Any authorized Great Thanksgiving may be used.

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

The presider breaks the bread.

This may take place in silence, or the following words may be used.

Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies,
it remains just a single grain;
but if it dies it bears much fruit.

If we have died with him, we shall live with him.

When the administration of Communion is completed, silence is kept for a time.

*The elements are consumed (at the Lord's Table or some other convenient place);
the linens are removed and any candles extinguished.*

A hymn may be sung.

This final prayer is said.

Lord Jesus Christ,

**the story of your suffering is written on our hearts,
and the salvation of the world is in your outstretched hands.
Keep your victory always before our eyes,
your praise on our lips,
your peace in our lives. Amen.**

The ministers and people depart in silence.