

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion



The Year of Hope and Abundance

A Year of Rebuilding into a
Community of Change
for the World



**Saint Miriam
Parish & School**

Welcome to Saint Miriam



In a particularly Catholic way, an abstraction such as “suffering” is translated to tangible, visible word and gesture in the liturgy. It links our individual stories and struggles concretely, not just verbally, to the overarching story of Christ’s redemptive suffering. This is never more true than today as Christ’s holy Church gathers in wonder, awe, and recounts the suffering and loneliness that was brought to earth at the death of the King.

My rule of thumb for today’s Good Friday liturgy is this: when we do something only once a year, pay great attention. So I tend focus on three parts of the service that move me especially. Because, after all, liturgy, at its best, speaks through symbol or gesture, not needing many words to convey meaning. For instance, submersion in the waters of Baptism, lighting the Easter candle, or offering a cup of consecrated wine all speak eloquently without verbiage.

The Good Friday service begins with a silent procession as the presider and fellow priests prostrate before the altar of God. We see this action only once a year: What does it say? Different people probably have different interpretations at different times of their lives. To me, it says starkly, “We killed God.” Not to become morbid, but to some extent we are all guilty. We have killed that divine spark in one another, through a callous word, a harsh condemnation, a heavy hand.

The presider speaks for all of us as he lies facedown on the floor. “This, my friends, is what we’ve done to the finest human/divine being who ever lived.”

No, words cannot touch the tragedy: so, symbolically, we all lie flat on our faces.

We then hear and act out the great lessons of Scripture. The tone is somber, as it should be. Scripture scholar Kathy McGovern presents a positive interpretation in her blog, “The Story and You.” After Jesus, in agony, calls out the beginning verse: “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” Some women “standing at a distance” respond “in synagogue style to his introduction by reciting the rest of it, all 31 verses, including the triumphant end, when the suffering one proclaims that ‘all will proclaim the Lord to generations still to come, his righteousness to a people yet unborn.’

“Jesus relies on ‘those standing at a distance’—and that’s us, too, isn’t it?— to finish the psalm for him,” writes McGovern, “including lines that in the context of the crucifixion are a tribute to prayer under the worst conditions: ‘you who fear the Lord, praise him.’” At some unspoken depth, Jesus knows that, ultimately, it all ends well, as God had planned.

Yes, The Light of the world was plunged into terrible darkness and chained there. But it must bring tremendous consolation for people trapped in various addictions, imprisoned, or victimized in the countless ways humans torture one another to know that Jesus endured what they do. He, who was beauty, grace, freedom, and compassion, was chained to a filthy wall. He, who had never hurt anyone, felt the raw bite of metal into his skin. He, who had such clarity about his mission, did not know what horror the morning might bring. He entered deeply into the worst of being human. He did so and he lived into His Father’s plan and lives today. So shall we all.

Let us go now into the suffering and death of the One we follow. The Light will shine again...just wait and see...

Father Liam

Monsignor +Jim

ON GOOD FRIDAY...

Good Friday (also called “Great Friday” or “Holy Friday”) is the most somber day of the entire Christian year. A silence pervades, socializing is kept to a minimum, things are done quietly; it is a day of mourning; it is a funeral. The Temple of the Body of Christ is destroyed, capping the penitential seasons begun on Septuagesima Sunday and becoming more intense throughout Lent. Traditional Catholics wear black, cover their mirrors, extinguish candles and any lamps burning before icons, keep amusements and distractions down, and go about the day in great solemnity. Jesus was put on the Cross at the very end of the third hour and almost the sixth hour. He died at the ninth hour.

Because Jesus was on the Cross between the hours of Noon and 3:00pm, these three hours today are considered the most sacred of all. A devotion called “Tre Ore” or “Three Hours’ Agony” may be held at this time; one can do it by meditating on His Passion -- reading the Gospel narratives of the Passion, making the Stations of the Cross, praying the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, or praying the Litany of the Passion. Draw the curtains, take the phone off the hook, turn off televisions, quiet Your environment and Yourself and meditate on what Christ has done. Though a somber atmosphere will last until the Easter Vigil, after “The Hour” (3pm) passes, it eases a bit, and life can go back to a “somber normal” until after Vigil of Holy Saturday when Eastertide officially begins.

No true Mass is offered today. Instead, a liturgy called the “Mass of the Presanctified” is offered, which is not a true Mass as no consecration takes place. Instead, we consume Bread consecrated at yesterday’s Mass. Vestment colors will be black, and the Presiders wear Red stoles to remind us of Christ’s great sacrifice: the ultimate martyr. The liturgy consists of lessons, prayer, St. John’s version of the Passion, and ends with a long series of prayers for various intentions: the Church, our Patriarch, the faithful, those engaged in public affairs, catechumens, the needs of the faithful, unity, and the poor. These intentions are called the Great Intercessions, and we kneel after each.

Then the Cross will be unveiled and elevated to be adored by our kneeling three times before it at the words “Venite, adoremus” (come, let us adore). We kneel thrice because Jesus was mocked thrice: in the high priest’s courtyard, in Pilate’s house, and on Mt. Calvary.

The Cross is held up for us, and we file past -- to kneel or kiss the Cross while the Cantor and Assembled sings the Improperia (the Reproaches) of Christ, or Hymns of Veneration, in which Our Lord reminds of us all He has done for us and our ingratitude toward Him. Then the priests lay the Cross on a cushion and covers it with a white veil to symbolize the Entombment. They take off shoes, like Moses before God, and kneels three times as the choir chants. The acolytes kneel and kiss the Cross. After the Reproaches, we receive Communion, receiving Hosts consecrated at yesterday’s Mass. We depart in a deep and complete silence...

The Entrance - *Sit*

The altar is completely bare. The Presider enters with the other ministers without a processional cross, and after reaching the chancel, the priests and deacons prostrate before the Altar of God while all others in the Assembly kneel, or sit, in complete silence.

The Hymns at the Prostration - *Sit*

The Opening Prayer/Collect of the Day - *Stand*

All stand for the reading of the prayer.

Priest: Let us pray...

All: **Amen.**

The Liturgy Of The Word

First Reading

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

[the Cantor recites and the people join with a sung response.]

All: **Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.**

Second Reading

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel Acclamation - *Sit*

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

The customary responses before and after the Gospel are omitted this day. The Assembly remains seated during the first part of the proclamation. All stand after the sentence is read, "Then he handed him over to them to be crucified..." At the end of the proclamations, if chosen, all follow the Cantor's lead and sing the Acclamation.

The Homily

[after the sermon, a time of silence is honored]

The Solemn Collects

Priest: Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved; that all who believe in Him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with Him of everlasting life. We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

[The biddings may be read by a Deacon, or other person appointed; the Presider says, or chants, the Collects.]

Let us pray for the Holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;
For its unity in witness and service
For all bishops and other ministers and the people whom they serve
For N., our Presiding Bishop, N., our Bishop, for Pope N., their brother in
faith, and all the people of this diocese
For all Christians in this community
For those to be baptized, especially, N.N.
That God will confirm his Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in
peace.

Silence

Priest: Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of Your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before You for all members of Your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve You; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them;

For N.N., the President of the United States
For the Congress and the Supreme Court
For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations
For all who serve the common good
That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

Silence

Priest: Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with Your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility Your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of Your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;
For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute and the oppressed
For the sick, the wounded, and the crippled
For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish
For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair
For the sorrowful and bereaved
For prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger
That God in His mercy will comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of His love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

Silence

Priest: Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to You, that they may find Your mercy present in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of Him who suffered for us, Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us pray for all who have not received the Gospel of Christ;
For those who have never heard the word of salvation
For those who have lost their faith
For those hardened by sin or indifference
For the contemptuous and the scornful
For those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and persecutors of His

disciples and for those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others;
That God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to faith and obedience.

Silence

Priest: Merciful God, creator of all the peoples of the earth and lover of souls: Have compassion on all who do not know You as You are revealed in Your Son Jesus Christ; let Your Gospel be preached with grace and power to those who have not heard it; turn the hearts of those who resist it; and bring home to Your fold those who have gone astray; that there may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence

Priest: O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on Your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of Your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by Him through whom all things were made, Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Leader: We glory in Your cross, O Lord, and praise and glorify Your holy resurrection; for by virtue of Your cross joy has come to the whole world.

All: May God be merciful to us and bless us, and show us the light of his countenance.

Leader: Let Your ways be known upon earth, Your saving health among all nations.

All: Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You.

Priest: We glory in Your cross, O Lord, and praise and glorify Your holy resurrection;

for by virtue of Your cross, joy has come to the whole world.

After a brief silence, the Cross enters the Church from the back.

The Veneration of Our Lord's Cross

The Assembly stands, the Cross is raised up, and the Cantor proclaims, BEHOLD THE WOOD OF THE CROSS... When this chant is complete, the Cross proceeds to the middle of the center aisle, the Cross is raised, and the Cantor chants the refrain again. Finally, the Cross proceeds to the front of the Church, Cross is raised, and Cantor proclaims the chant one last time. Cross is then placed in the stand and the Presider approaches and reverences the Cross. Assembly is invited to come forward and do the same.

Offertory: Christus factus est - Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

Sung in Latin.

Christ became obedient for us unto death, even the death of the cross.
Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is
above every name. - (Philippians 2:8, 9)

Mass of the Presanctified

The Procession of the Holy Sacrament - Stand

The Blessed Sacrament is carried in procession by the Presider from the Chapel of Reservation to the Altar in the Main Sanctuary. As the Procession enters the church proper, the Assembly stands. The ministers dress the altar in a simple fair linen cloth, reminiscent of the shroud of Jesus; then a small, single candle is lighted.

The Confession of Sin

The Our Father

Priest: Let us pray in the words our Savior taught us.

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.**

The Communion Sentence

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All: **Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

The Communion Hymn - *Sit*

The Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

A Period of Silence

[When the distribution of Holy Communion is completed, there is a period of silence for individual prayer, then a song of praise, or a meditation hymn is played or may be sung. The people either stand, sit, or may kneel during this time.]

Meditation Hymn

The Prayer after Communion

Priest: Let us pray.

[All pray in silence for a while. Then the priest sings or says the Prayer after Communion. At the end of the prayer, people proclaim their consent.]

All: **Amen.**

The Stripping of The Altar - *Sit*

The Presider(s) changes into a simple black cassock with no adornment. Then returns to strip the altar. Those who wish to remain to witness the Stripping of the Altar, may do so in complete silence and in full prayer. After the Altar is Stripped, the Main Sanctuary will be slowly darkened.

The Concluding Rite

The service concludes with the following prayer. No blessing or dismissal is added.

Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray to You to set Your passion, cross, and death between Your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to Your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, You live and reign, one God, now and for ever.

All: **Amen.**

The Presider and Assembly process out of the church.

The Liturgy resumes tomorrow evening in the outdoor garden.

Complete silence is maintained in the church.



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