GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY
Friday 2 April 2021
10am Oxford Time
The liturgy today is in some ways the second act of a greater liturgy that began last night on Maundy Thursday with the remembrance of Jesus’ Last Supper with his disciples, his washing of their feet, and the institution of the Eucharist. After the service, the altars were stripped, the Sacrament placed on the Altar of Repose, and a silent watch was kept remembering his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Today’s service begins starkly and without our usual ceremony, still holding the silence that was kept through the night. The Choir sings the story of the Passion, with members of the Choir taking the parts of Christ, Pilate, and the crowd, calling us to set ourselves within the story and to go with Jesus to Calvary.

A large cross is brought into the Cathedral and as the Choir sings, we are invited to use it as a reminder of what God has done for us and for all the world. In ordinary years, this is an opportunity to touch or kiss the cross as a proxy for Christ, giving thanks that an instrument of torture became instrumental in our salvation: ‘the tree of shame become the tree of glory.’ Perhaps this year, as we contemplate in a different way, we could pray for a new insight into the depth of God’s love revealed in the death of Jesus.

In the presence of this cross, reminding us that through an instrument of torture God brings healing and hope to all the world, solemn intercessions are offered for all people.

The service ends as starkly as it began, with no blessing or dismissal. The Choir and Ministers leave in silence. This silent watching and waiting is kept through the rest of Good Friday and Holy Saturday, before we join in the joy of the resurrection with our Easter Vigil service and Easter Day celebrations. You are very welcome to join us for these in person or via livestream: please see www.chch.ox.ac.uk/HolyWeek2021 for details. If you would like us to keep in touch with you, please make sure we have your contact details by contacting the office cathedraloffice@chch.ox.ac.uk/ 01865 286 869.

Cover Image: Calvary, Giovanni di Paolo (1403–82), JBS 30, © Christ Church, reproduced by permission of the Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford
The service begins in silence. The Ministers prostrate themselves before the Altar in silent prayer.

After some time, the President stands to pray.

The Collect

President  Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

President  Almighty Father,
look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ
was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of sinners,
and to suffer death upon the cross.

All  Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Sit comfortably to listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.

First Reading

Isaiah 53:4–8, 11–12 (NRSV)

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured himself out to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

The Passion according to St John
Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, and said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews’: and they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, ‘Behold the man!’ Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, ‘Behold the man!' When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, ‘Crucify him, crucify him.’ Pilate saith unto them, ‘Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.’ The Jews answered him, ‘We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.’

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgement-hall, and saith unto Jesus, ‘Whence art thou?’ But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him,
‘Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?’ Jesus answered, ‘Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.’ And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, ‘If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.’

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgement-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, ‘Behold your King!’ But they cried out, ‘Away with him, away with him, crucify him.’ Pilate saith unto them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar.’ Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified: and they took Jesus, and led him away.

And he, bearing his cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha: where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross; and the writing was, ‘JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.’ This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, ‘Write not, ‘The King of the Jews’; but that he said, ‘I am the King of the Jews’.’ Pilate answered, ‘What I have written, I have written.’

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, ‘Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be’: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, ‘They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.’ These things therefore the soldiers did. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by,
whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, ‘Woman, behold thy son.’ Then saith he to the disciple, ‘Behold thy mother.’ And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, ‘I thirst.’ Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, ‘It is finished’: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

If you are able, you are invited to kneel or sit, as we keep silence, and to stand again when the reading resumes.

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day (for that sabbath-day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, ‘A bone of him shall not be broken.’ And again another Scripture saith, ‘They shall look on him whom they pierced.’

Silence is kept.
The Proclamation of the Cross

A wooden cross is brought into the Cathedral and is set up in front of the Altar.

As the cross is carried and put in place the following response is sung three times, the pitch rising each time:

In the extended period of reflection which follows, you are invited to focus on the cross which you see in the Cathedral, or if you prefer, to focus on a cross in your home. In ordinary years, this is an opportunity to touch or kiss the cross as a proxy for Christ, giving thanks that an instrument of torture became instrumental in our salvation: ‘the tree of shame become the tree of glory.’ Perhaps this year, as we contemplate in a different way, we could pray for a new insight into the depth of God’s love revealed in the death of Jesus.

During this time, the Choir will sing:

Crux Fidelis

Crux fidelis, inter omnes arbor una nobilis:
nulla Silva talam profert fronde, flore, germine.

Dulce lignum, dulces clavos,
dulce pondus sustinet.

Faithful cross, amongst all others,
tree unique in its nobility:
No forest on earth brings forth
one with such foliage, blossom, and bud.

Sweet the wood and sweet the nails,
sweet the burden that it bears.

WORDS: Venantius Fortunatus (530–609)
MUSIC: John IV, King of Portugal (1603–56)
Silence is kept.

Acclamations

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

President  This is the wood of the Cross,
on which hung the Saviour of the World.
All    Come, let us worship.

President  O Saviour of the World,
who by your cross and precious blood have redeemed us,
All    save us and help us,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord.

Prayers of Intercession

President  Let us pray.

God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world,
but that the world might be saved through him.
Therefore we pray to our heavenly Father for people everywhere according to their needs.

Deacon  Let us pray for the Church of God throughout the world:
for unity in faith, in witness and in service;
for all who lead, for all who serve;
for those to be baptised and confirmed:

Silence is kept.

Deacon  Lord, hear us.
All    Lord, graciously hear us.
President Almighty and everlasting God,  
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church 
is governed and sanctified:  
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people; 
that each may serve you in holiness and truth;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.  
All Amen.

Subdeacon Let us pray for all nations and their leaders;  
for our government and Parliament; 
for all who strive for justice and reconciliation:  
Silence is kept.

Subdeacon Lord, hear us.  
All Lord, graciously hear us.

President Most gracious God and Father, in whose will is our peace:  
turn all hearts to yourself, that your peace and justice  
may be established throughout the world;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
All Amen.

Deacon Let us pray for God’s ancient people, the Jews:  
for greater understanding between Christian and Jew, 
for freedom from all bitterness 
and for faithfulness to God’s covenant:  
Silence is kept.

Deacon Lord, hear us.  
All Lord, graciously hear us.
President    Lord God of Abraham,  
bless the children of your covenant, both Jew and Christian;  
and hasten the coming of your Kingdom,  
when the Gentiles shall be gathered in,  
all Israel shall be saved,  
and we shall dwell together in mutual peace  
under the one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
All      Amen.  

Subdeacon  Let us pray for those who do not believe the Gospel of Christ:  
for those who have not heard the message of salvation,  
for all who have lost faith  
or cannot bring themselves to believe:  
Silence is kept.  
Subdeacon    Lord, hear us.  
All      Lord, graciously hear us.  
President    Merciful God, creator of all people on earth,  
have compassion on all who seek to know you  
and to live according to your will,  
that all may come at last to see you  
in the face of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord  
All      Amen.  
Deacon    Let us pray for all those who suffer:  
for all who are in pain;  
for those in the darkness of fear, doubt or despair;  
for prisoners, refugees,  
and victims of oppression or violence;  
for all at the point of death:  
Silence is kept.
Deacon  Lord, hear us.
All   **Lord, graciously hear us.**

President Almighty and everlasting God, the strength of those who suffer; hear our prayers and grant mercy, relief and refreshment, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All **Amen.**

Subdeacon Let us commend ourselves and all God's children to his unfailing love, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have died in the peace of Christ, we may come to the fullness of eternal life and the joy of resurrection.

Silence is kept.

Subdeacon  Lord, hear us.
All **Lord, graciously hear us.**

President O God of unchangeable power and eternal light, look favourably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery, and let the whole world know that things which were cast down are being raised up and things which had grown old are being made new and all things are returning to perfection through their source and origin, Jesus Christ our Lord.
All **Amen.**
Psalm 22:1-11

1 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?

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

3 And thou continuest holy: O thou worship of Israel.

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

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

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

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

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

9 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.

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

11 O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand: and there is none to help me.
Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory.

Amen.

There is no liturgical ending to this service. The Ministers depart in silence.
Holy Week Services

Good Friday, 2 April
3pm Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday, Ticketed
6pm Choral Meditation with Sermon, Online Only

Holy Saturday, 3 April
2pm Ecumenical Service with Wesley Memorial Church, Online Only
8pm Easter Vigil, Ticketed

Easter Day Services, 4 April

8am BCP Holy Communion
10am Sung Eucharist, Ticketed
Preacher: The Bishop of Oxford
The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft
12pm Choral Eucharist, Online Only
3pm Sung Eucharist, Ticketed
6pm Choral Evensong, Online Only

All services begin at Oxford Time
Please see chch.ox.ac.uk/HolyWeek2021 for further details.