

Prayer Office for Prime (7 am) Good Friday, 2021

Bell x 3

*

Today, the morning brings three calls of denial.

Today is the day of betrayal.

Today is the day the bonds of love and loyalty fail. Today the day twists from truth.

Today is the day of violence.

Today is the day we betray the most beautiful, most holy and most pure.

Last night, Jesus, shared a meal with his friends, served with love and compassion.

But it wasn't enough.

Last night, Jesus needed his friends to watch with him through his darkest night.

In the morning they awake, having left him alone.

Today is the day disciples are scattered. Today is the day they flee in fear.

Today is the day darkness not dawn creeps across the earth, and fear stirs like an enemy.

*

Let us wait in quiet and remember: **when we have denied truth for fear; when we have enabled violence – through cheering or staying silent; when we have abandoned or neglected our friends.**

Let us wait in quiet and remember: **when we have had our truth denied; or violence done to us; or have been abandoned or neglected by those we love.**

Let us wait in quiet and understand: **that in this story we are the disciples, and we are Jesus.**

We are the ones who bring suffering, and we are the ones who suffer.

Let us draw close to the One who knows all our pain.

Bell Silence. Breathe. Hold hand to heart. Bell

Reading: John 18:28-37

²⁸ Then Jesus was taken from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness his accusers did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?" ³⁰ "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you." ³¹ Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

"But we have no right to execute anyone," they objected. ³² This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.

³³ Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" ³⁴ "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?" ³⁵ "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

³⁶ Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place." ³⁷ "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Silence

Reflection:

Share a word or two, perhaps thoughts, ideas, associations that emerge from the reading of the Gospel.

Reading: in preparation for prayer, Hebrews 5:7-9

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Prayer:

Let us pray into this day knowing the Christ of this story is real, and is with us. **Allow Christ's suffering to bring to mind those today who are facing violence for the sake of truth and compassion.**

We pray for victims and perpetrators, for bystanders and enablers. **We cry out for your mercy, we are afraid.** Our stories are all tied up with each other. **Teach us to welcome truth, goodness and beauty; all of us need your healing oh Lord.**

We remember not only human suffering, but the suffering of other creatures, who belong to God as much as we do. **All that is living was made to bring joy and praise to You, oh Creator. The whole earth is in Christ and is deserving of our prayers.**

Help us to pray.

We may pray as we need, in silence or out loud.

Space: for further prayer, silence and reflection.

The Lord's Prayer

Sending:

Dear children, Today, Good Friday, is a day of remembrance, today is a day of repentance, today is a day of acceptance of how we have failed and hurt and wounded each other, and how we have wounded all that is light and love and Christ in the world.

Go into this day, knowing that this Jesus Christ -who is love- loves us even with all we have done and not done. May knowledge of our sin call us to love.

Go into this day, not in despair, but knowing that this Jesus Christ who is truth, goodness and beauty, sees the truth, goodness and beauty in us. He is in us and we are in him.

We need this story of death to understand this story of life. Death is all around us. But it is no longer all of the story. Christ entered into death so to be with us in our story, in our lives. We can walk with him today.

Amen.

Bell x 3

..... words adapted from a reflection by Christopher Page that can be found here: <https://inaspaciousplace.wordpress.com/2010/04/02/hello-world/>