

Good Friday "Tenebrae" Service

April 10, 2020

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church
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Orwigsburg, PA
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THE INSTRUCTION

Tonight we recall the passion, death, and burial of our Lord. The order of our worship is based on a medieval prayer service called "Tenebrae" - a Latin word meaning "shadows." Our worship is not a liturgical funeral for Jesus marked by gloom, but a solemn service of reflection, intercession, and adoration for God's Son as he offers up his life as the true and only Lamb of God.

The seven lighted candles represent the seven sayings or "words" of Jesus from the cross. After each of these sayings, selections from Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 are spoken antiphonally. These selections were written hundreds of years before Calvary, yet they accurately describe the suffering and death of Jesus. One by one the Tenebrae candles are extinguished and the lights in the church are gradually dimmed. This loss of light symbolizes the ebbing of Jesus' life and the darkness of the world's sin which surrounded the cross on that first Good Friday.

At the end of the service you will hear a loud noise, called the "strepitus." It symbolizes the earthquake that occurred when Jesus died and the closing of our Savior's tomb.

After our worship has ended, you may remain in the sanctuary to meditate on your sins and on God's grace. When you are done, please leave in silence.

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INVOCATION:

We gather in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

OPENING RESPONSE:

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God look with mercy on your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

Silence

“THE SEVEN WORDS”

THE FIRST WORD: THE WORD OF FORGIVENESS

“Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” *Luke 23:34*

THE RESPONSE (*from Isaiah 53*)

We all, like sheep, have gone astray; each one of us has turned to his own way,
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and he afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;

He was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and like a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

He poured out his life unto to death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.

For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

REFLECTION ON THE FIRST WORD

We extinguish one candle as Jesus forgives those who crucify him.

Silence

THE SECOND WORD: THE WORD OF ASSURANCE

“...Today you will be with me in Paradise.” *Luke 23:43*

THE RESPONSE *(from Psalm 22)*

But I am a worm and not a man;

scorned by men and despised by the people.

All who see me mock at me;

they hurl insults, shaking their heads;

“He trusts in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him.

let him deliver him, since he delights in him.”

REFLECTION ON THE SECOND WORD

We extinguish a second candle as Jesus looks toward heaven.

Silence

THE THIRD WORD: THE WORD OF COMFORT

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” *John 19:26-27.*

THE RESPONSE *(from Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53)*

Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me,

they have pierced my hands and my feet.

I can count all my bones;

people stare and gloat over me.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows,

and familiar with suffering.

Like one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised,

and we esteemed him not.

REFLECTION ON THE THIRD WORD

We extinguish a third candle as Jesus remembers his sorrow filled mother.

Silence

THE FOURTH WORD: THE WORD OF DESOLATION

At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" *Mark 15:34*

THE RESPONSE (*from Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53*)

My God, my God,

why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,

so far from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,

by night, and am not silent.

Surely, he took up our infirmities

and carried our sorrows,

yet we considered him stricken by God,

smitten by him and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions,

he was crushed for our iniquities;

the punishment that brought us peace was upon him,

and by his wounds we are healed.

REFLECTION ON THE FOURTH WORD

We extinguish a fourth candle as Jesus calls out to his heavenly Father.

Silence

THE FIFTH WORD: THE WORD OF SUFFERING

...[Jesus] said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." *John 19:28*

THE RESPONSE (*from Psalm 22*)

I am poured out like water,

and all my bones are out of joint.

My heart has turned to wax;

it has melted away within me.

My strength has dried up like a potsherd,

and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.

REFLECTION ON THE FIFTH WORD

We extinguish a fifth candle as death draws near.

Silence

THE SIXTH WORD: THE WORD OF TRIUMPH

[Jesus then] said, "It is finished." *John 19:30a*

THE RESPONSE (from *Psalm 22*)

All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord,
and all families of the nations will bow down before him,
for dominion belongs to the Lord
and he rules over the nations.

Posterity will serve him;

future generations will be told of the Lord.
they will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn—
for he has done it.

REFLECTION ON THE SIXTH WORD

We extinguish a sixth candle as Jesus knows his mission is complete.

Silence

THE SEVENTH WORD: THE WORD OF COMMITMENT

Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. *Luke 23:46*

Silence

THE RESPONSE (from *Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53*)

You who fear the Lord, praise him!

All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!

For he has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one;

he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.

REFLECTION ON THE SEVENTH WORD

We extinguish a seventh candle as Jesus dies and his body is entombed.

Silence

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Let us pray, sisters and brothers, for the power to discern what it is for us to live faithfully under the cross. *(Pause)*

God of gracious enlightenment: In every time and generation you call your people to contend with the reality of the cross. Instill in us a willingness to persevere in the path where Jesus has led the way. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Let us pray, sisters and brothers, for an eagerness to worship God through Word and Sacrament. *(Pause)*

God of magnificent holiness: From the cradle of the font, in a weekly cycle of renewal, you entreat your people to embrace your Word and to gather at your table. In the work of our liturgy, mold us into the image of your person that we may be strengthened for ministry in your world. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Let us pray, sisters and brothers, for the wisdom to equip God's people for mission and to live lives of faithful discipleship. *(Pause)*

God of extravagant possibilities: All around us you raise up gifted people to serve in your church. Teach us to work as one with all who would lend their talents to the tasks which lie abundantly before us. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Let us pray, sisters and brothers, for the grace to serve as companions and advocates for all who want for justice. *(Pause)*

God of all who are cast down: Jesus came among us to serve as he was able. Give us the courage to touch the bruised and broken places in the lives of all who share our world and let us be as Christs to one another. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Let us pray, sisters and brothers, for a willingness to share our gifts with the whole people of God. *(Pause)*

God of the greater Church: It is your will that the unity we profess in our Creed might be realized in our life together. Amidst the clamor of our age, lead us into partnership with all who would add their voice to the chorus which sings your praise. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Let us pray, sisters and brothers, for the grace to communicate clearly. (*Pause*)

God of wondrous good news: In every community you seek out the faithful to listen to the concerns of our age and to proclaim your Gospel. Teach us to bring your Word to life in response to the needs of your world. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.** Let us pray, sisters and brothers, for the zeal to respond faithfully to the many opportunities for mission. (*Pause*)

God of infinite good will: The breadth of your grace, like the depth of your love, is without bound. Lend your creative passion to the ingenuities of your people that we may leave no mission unexplored, no fruitful ministry untended. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Finally, sisters and brothers let us place before God our mutual concerns, speaking them aloud or cradling them in the quiet of our hearts. (*Pause*)

O loving God, to turn away from you is to fall, to turn toward you is to rise, to stand with you is to abide for ever. Grant us, dear God, in all our work your help; in all our uncertainties your guidance; in all our dangers your protection; in all our joys your blessing; in all our sorrows your peace. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and forever. Amen.

THE CLOSING RESPONSE

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Silence

THE CLOSING OF THE TOMB

*You may remain in the sanctuary as long as you like,
then please depart in silence.*