

**Good Friday 2013**  
**Prayer Around The Cross**  
**Church of the Sacred Heart Scariff**

**Instrumental Music as people gather in the Church**

**All entering the Church will receive a candle/night light.**

**During the prayer people can come forward to leave their candle at the foot of the Cross.**

**Words of Welcome and Gathering**

We come here tonight to remember a man. A man...who had dreams,  
who had those dreams shattered, who needed time to think and pray,  
who knew he was likely to die for what he believed...

On this night we look at the cross, and we remember...

the betrayal of friendship and its consequences,  
the casual cruelty of Roman authority and execution,  
and how unreliable others proved to be in a crisis.

We gather around the Cross with all those who are living Good Friday in their lives at this time. We pray that all who suffer may find hope here. Beyond the Cross there is life hope and resurrection. With all creation we give thanks for such great and selfless love. Together with Mary and John and Mary Magdalene we watch and pray at the foot of the cross

**Chant**

Stay with me. Remain here with me.

Watch and Pray. Watch and Pray

**It Was On The Friday**

It was on the Friday that they ended it all.

Of course, they didn't do it one by one.

They weren't brave enough.

All the stones at the one time or no stones thrown at all.

They did it in crowds.... in crowds where you can feel safe  
and lose yourself and shout things you would never shout  
on your own, and do things you would never do if you felt  
the camera was watching you.

It was a crowd in the church that did it,  
and a crowd in the civil service that did it,  
and a crowd in the street that did it,  
and a crowd on the hill that did it.

And he said nothing.

He took the insults, the bruises, the spit on the face,  
the whip on the back, the curses in the ears.

He took the sight of his friends turning away,  
running away.

And he said nothing.  
He let them do their worst until their worst was done,  
as on Friday they ended it all...  
and would have finished themselves had he not cried,  
"Father, forgive them all."

And the revolution began.

### **READING**

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews", but, "This man said, I am King of the Jews."' Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.' When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfil what the scripture says, 'They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.' And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. 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.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

### **Chant**

Adoramus Te Domine

### **Peter – The Voice of Denial**

Did you hear it? That cock crowing. Did it wake you? I can still hear it. There! Is that it again? No, no, no. I'm fine. I guess it just startled me. I've been up all night. I didn't realize the morning was so near. But it's dark. What hour is it? So late. It's cold out here.

The crowing of the cock meant an end to the night and cold. It meant home and warmth and food. But not after tonight. I have been with Jesus. They have Him now in Caiaphas' dungeon, I suppose. I'm afraid. Now the Romans are in with them.

The Master warned me. He prayed for me that my faith would not completely fail. He told us He was going to die. I said, "No, I would die for Him." What brave words. Now I am the voice of denial.

I asked the man next to me what was happening. He turned and said, "So, you're a Galilean, too, aren't you?" Several faces turned our way. I recognized two or three who had been standing at the

fire. "Man, I don't know what you're talking about." Angry and excited, I began to call curses down on myself. I swore that I never knew Jesus.

The words caught in my throat. It was just as He predicted. He told me that I would deny Him three times. I said it would never happen. Peter, the rock. The Master's faithful follower and chief defender. I had become the voice of denial. The crowing of the cock told me what I really was. I am disgraced. The others will despise me. My name will become a curse.

I failed Him. I was chief among the Twelve, and I failed Him. Three times over I failed Him. How could I fail one whom I have loved so? Now I wonder do I really love Him? Can real love produce this kind of failure? But I do love Him. Don't I? If I loved Him, I would keep His word. I would not fail. Do I even love Him? My own words testify against me. My own heart condemns me. I was a leader among the Twelve. I confessed Him on the mountain, but I denied Him in the night. Hereafter I will be known only as the voice of denial.

### **Chant**

Jesus Remember me, when you come into your Kingdom

Jesus Remember me, when you come into your Kingdom

### **The Mob – The Voice of Hatred**

Jerusalem is our capital, the major city in our land. It teems with people at any time of the year, but especially at festival time. Jews from everywhere converge on Jerusalem to observe the appointed feasts. Our city is filled with crowds. And it doesn't take much to turn a crowd into a mob. A throng is a crowd in love. A mob is a crowd in hate. I've been in a mob or two. I was there when the mob raised its voice in hate.

I fell in step and from snatches of conversation, I soon learned there was to be an arrest, and a trial. Someone was going to die. I was ready for a fight. But they were after one man who looked completely unremarkable. Evidently He was a rabbi who had been praying there in the garden with His disciples.

Pilate challenged us. "I find no fault in this man. What do you want me to do with Him?" The chief priests led the chant, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" We picked it up quickly. Perhaps you have never been swept up in a pure hatred. Rage has a mindless strength that no power can resist. I shouted with the others. "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Kill Him! He deserves to die." All this for a man I did not even know.

We finally made our way through the gate of the city and out to the place the Romans call Calvary, where common criminals were crucified, raised on a cross barely off the ground and left to die. The mob spread across the hillside to watch. Most were men like myself, cursing the one on the cross. He had claimed to be a saviour. We taunted Him, calling Him to come down from the cross and save Himself.

And as He hung there near death, He spoke toward heaven. I heard Him call on His Father to forgive us, those assembled in the mob. But how could He pray for our forgiveness after what we had done to Him? How could He answer our hatred with love?

Yes, I was in that crowd. I was part of that angry mob. We raised our voices in hatred. But the one on the cross answered our hatred with love and forgiveness. I don't understand it. He did not live long enough to remember my voice, but as long as I live, I'll never forget His.

### **Chant**

Ubi caritas et amor, Ubi caritas,  
Deus ibi est

### **Intercessions**

Faithful and compassionate God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy;  
hear the prayers we offer, that in the particular ministry to which you have called us,  
we may serve you faithfully

Faithful and compassionate God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide  
with your wisdom those in authority, that justice, peace, and freedom may increase, until the earth  
is filled with the knowledge of your love.

Faithful and compassionate God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer,  
hear the cry of all who call on you in any trouble, grant them the joy of receiving your help in their  
need, and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them.

Faithful and compassionate God, you create and love all the peoples of the earth; may your good  
news be so lived and proclaimed, that all are brought home to your presence.

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that with all who have died in  
the peace of Christ, and with those whose faith is known to God alone, we may enter the fullness of  
life in the joy of Christ's resurrection.

### **Chant**

O Lord Hear my Prayer, O Lord Hear my Prayer  
When I call, Answer me.  
O Lord Hear my Prayer, O Lord Hear my Prayer  
Come and Listen to me.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

#### **Broken**

Broken – the jar of precious perfume,  
broken – the promises of loyalty,  
broken – the adulation of the crowds,  
broken – the Passover bread,  
broken – the dreams of disciples,  
and Jesus is left alone  
to face his death sentence.

Broken – in body and spirit,  
broken – and crying out in anguish,  
broken – the dream of the Kingdom,  
broken – and far from home,  
broken – and giving up his life,

and Jesus dies before soldiers,  
and a few weeping friends.

Broken – the veil of the Temple,  
broken – the power of sin and death,  
broken – the power that oppresses,  
broken – the sealed entrance to the tomb,  
from all life's broken places  
life rises up again and sings Alleluia.

#### **PRAYER OF BLESSING**

Lord God, you have given us everything. You have not held anything back, not even your only begotten son. With humble hearts we thank you. In new hope we offer to you and for the work of salvation all that you have given us including: every minute of the day, all our gifts and ourselves completely. Be pleased, O God, in the name of Jesus, to accept all that we offer at this time. Look upon the intentions of our hearts. In Jesus name we pray Amen

#### **Chant**

Bless the Lord my soul and Bless his holy name.  
Bless the Lord my soul, he rescues me from Death.