



**A LATE EVENING OFFICE
FOR USE AT HOME
Wednesday 8th April 2020
Wednesday in Holy Week**

Blessed be our God for all time, now and for evermore. **Amen.**

Glory to you, our God, glory be to you,
Holy Spirit, Comforter,
treasure of all goodness and giver of life,
come and dwell in us,
cleanse us from all sin,
and in your love bring us to salvation.

**Holy God, holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

PSALM 134

Come bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord:
you that by night stand in the house of the Lord.
Lift up your hands towards the holy place:
and bless the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion:
the Lord who made heaven and earth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and shall be for ever. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 50:4-9a

The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.
The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backwards.
I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.
It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?
All of them will wear out like a garment;
the moth will eat them up.

PSALM OF THE DAY: 102:1-15

O Lord, hear my prayer ♦
and let my crying come before you.
Hide not your face from me ♦
in the day of my distress.
Incline your ear to me; ♦
when I call, make haste to answer me,
For my days are consumed in smoke ♦
and my bones burn away as in a furnace.
My heart is smitten down and withered like grass, ♦
so that I forget to eat my bread.
From the sound of my groaning ♦
my bones cleave fast to my skin.
I am become like a vulture in the wilderness, ♦
like an owl that haunts the ruins.
I keep watch and am become like a sparrow ♦
solitary upon the housetop.
My enemies revile me all the day long, ♦
and those who rage at me have sworn together against me.
I have eaten ashes for bread ♦
and mingled my drink with weeping,
Because of your indignation and wrath, ♦
for you have taken me up and cast me down.
My days fade away like a shadow, ♦
and I am withered like grass.
But you, O Lord, shall endure for ever ♦
and your name through all generations.
You will arise and have pity on Zion; ♦
it is time to have mercy upon her; surely the time has come.
For your servants love her very stones ♦
and feel compassion for her dust.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and shall be for ever. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Luke 23:1-49

The assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.' Then Pilate asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' He answered, 'You say so.' Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, 'I find no basis for an accusation against this man.' But they were insistent and said, 'He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.'

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, 'You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.'

Then they all shouted out together, 'Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!' (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting, 'Crucify, crucify him!' A third time he said to them, 'Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.' But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us." For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?'

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.']] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.' And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

NUNC DIMITTIS

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:
according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen:
thy salvation.
Which thou hast prepared:
before the face of all people.
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles:
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father:
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.

PRAYERS

Let us pray to the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son to give us life:

Simon from Cyrene was forced to carry the cross for your Son. Give us grace to lift heavy loads from those we meet and to stand with those condemned to die.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, graciously hear us.

Your Son watched the soldiers gamble to share his clothes. Transform the hearts of those who make a profit from their victims, and those whose hearts are hardened by their work.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, graciously hear us.

The thief, who was crucified with Jesus, was promised a place in your kingdom. Give pardon and hope, healing and peace to all who look death in the face.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, graciously hear us.

From the cross Jesus entrusted Mary his mother and John his disciple to each other's care. Help us also to care for one another and fill our homes with the spirit of your love.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, graciously hear us.

In Mary and John your Son created a new family at the cross. Fill our relationships, and those of new families today, with mutual care and responsibility, and give us a secure hope for the future.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, graciously hear us.

The centurion was astonished to see your glory in the crucified Messiah. Open the eyes of those who do not know you to see in your Son the meaning of life and death.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, graciously hear us.

Joseph of Arimathaea came to take your Son's body away. Give hope and faith to the dying and bereaved, and gentleness to those who minister to them.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, graciously hear us.

Simon and Joseph, Mary and John became part of your Church in Jerusalem. Bring into your Church today a varied company of people, to walk with Christ in the way of his passion and to find their salvation in the victory of his cross.

Lord of the Church, hear our prayer, and make us one in heart and mind to serve you in Christ our Lord. Amen.

COLLECT OF WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Saviour gave his back to the smiters and did not hide his face from shame: Give us grace to endure the sufferings of this present time, with sure confidence in the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. **Amen.**

LENT COLLECT

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A PRAYER FOR HEALTH WORKERS, CARE WORKERS AND KEY WORKERS:

O Heavenly Father, who by your Son Jesus Christ has taught us the glory of self-sacrifice and service: bless all doctors, nurses, anaesthetists and hospital personnel who are called to care for the sick, especially those suffering from the Coronavirus. Give your strength to all who work in Nursing homes, and who attend those in need of care in the community. Protect all who work in essential shops, and businesses and supply companies. Help each to remember that they are fellow-workers with you; and give them such patience, skill and love that they may bring healing and comfort to those who they serve, and their loved ones.

Guard them in their work from themselves contracting the virus, and watch over their families and loved ones in their anxiety for them. We ask this in the name of the one who spent himself for others with no thought for himself, even our Great Healer, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

COMMON COLLECT

**Lord Almighty,
come and scatter the darkness of our hearts by the light of your presence;
that we may know you the Light of the world
and the one true God, blessed this night and for evermore. Amen.**

HYMN: 235

**O sacred head, sore wounded,
with grief and scorn weighed down;
O kingly head, surrounded
with thorns, thine only crown:
Death's pallor now comes o'er thee,
the glow of life decays;
yet hosts of heaven adore thee
and tremble as they gaze.**

**What language shall I borrow
to praise thee, dearest friend,
for this thy dying sorrow,
thy pity without end?
O agony and dying!
O love to sinners free!
Jesus, all grace supplying,
turn thou thy face on me.**

In this thy bitter passion,
good Shepherd, think of me
with thy most sweet compassion,
unworthy though I be:
beneath thy Cross abiding
for ever would I rest,
in thy dear love confiding,
and with thy presence blessed.

Words: P. Gerhardt (1607-76) from Salve caput cruentatum attrib. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1154) tr. Henry Williams Baker (1821-77) and James Waddell Alexander (1804-59)

Tune: PASSION CHORALE secular melody in H.L. Hassler's Lustgarten (1601) as set by J.S. Bach (1685-1750) in the St. Matthew Passion (1727)

Be thou my consolation,
my shield, when I must die;
remind me of thy passion
when my last hour draws nigh.
Mine eyes shall then behold thee,
upon thy cross shall dwell,
my heart by faith enfold thee;
who dieth thus, dies well.

BLESSING

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

May the Almighty and merciful God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
bless us and keep us. **Amen.**

Belfast Cathedral Closure

We regret that, due to current restrictions
as a result of the Covid-19 virus, Belfast Cathedral is closed.

Please continue to watch the website
for up to date news and online prayer resources.

HOLY WEEK 2020

Each Day to Good Friday 10th March

Our Holy Week Services for you to use at home each day
are available to download from the Cathedral Website.

Please also join us on the Cathedral Facebook page for a Live Streaming of
Evening Prayers for Maundy Thursday at 4.30pm.
Also a Live Stream of the Seven Words of Christ from the Cross of Calvary
from 12 noon – 1pm
and Evening Prayers at 4.30pm
on Good Friday, 10th March.

Next Sunday 12th April is Easter Day.
Please join us for an Easter Day Service of Resurrection Hope
Streamed on the Cathedral Facebook Page
At 11.00am.

*Bible passages in this service are from the New Revised Standard Version.
Material in this service is reproduced from the Book of Common Prayer copyright © RCB 2004.
Belfast Cathedral text and music licence numbers CCL 8124, MRL 1049409
belfastcathedral.org*