

# Liturgy of the Word

## The Collect of the Day

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*St. Mark's Episcopal Church*

*Holy Saturday Liturgy*

*April 8, 2023      9:00 am*

## Lamentations 3:1-9,19-24

I am one who has seen affliction under the rod of God's wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light; against me alone he turns his hand, again and again, all day long. He has made my flesh and my skin waste away, and broken my bones; he has besieged and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me sit in darkness like the dead of long ago. He has walled me about so that I cannot escape; he has put heavy chains on me; though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer; he has blocked my ways with hewn stones, he has made my paths crooked. The thought of my affliction and my homelessness is wormwood and gall! My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me.

But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."

Here ends the Reading

## Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

1 In you, O God, have I taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame; \*  
deliver me in your righteousness.

2 Incline your ear to me; \*  
make haste to deliver me.

3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,  
for you are my crag and my stronghold; \*  
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me.

4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, \*  
for you are my tower of strength.

15 My times are in your hand; \*  
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,  
and from those who persecute me.

16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, \*  
and in your loving-kindness save me."

### **1 Peter 4:1-8**

Since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry.

They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

Here ends the Reading

### **Matthew 27:57-66**

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

Here ends the Reading

### **Homily**

**The Reverend Nancy L. Threadgill**

*Celebrant and People*

*In the midst of life we are in death;  
from whom can we seek help?  
From you alone, O Lord,  
who by our sins are justly angered.*

*Holy God, Holy and Mighty,  
Holy and merciful Savior,  
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.*

*Lord, you know the secrets of our hearts;  
shut not your ears to our prayers,  
but spare us, O Lord.*

*Holy God, Holy and Mighty,  
Holy and merciful Savior,  
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.*

*O worthy and eternal Judge,  
do not let the pains of death  
turn us away from you at our last hour.*

*Holy God, Holy and Mighty,  
Holy and merciful Savior,  
deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.*

## **Prayers**

*Officiant* The Lord be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

*Officiant and People*

<i>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, for ever and ever. Amen.</i>	<i>Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.</i>
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*Please add you own petitions and thanksgivings at this time.*

God, in your mercy  
*Hear our prayer.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.  
*Amen. 2 Corinthians 13:14*

From *The Book of Common Prayer* 1979

## **Sabbath**

Sabbath is time that is made holy by being set apart for rest. Sabbath is a way of remembering that we are not God, that everything is not up to us, and that no matter what we may acquire or achieve in this lifetime, we are still mortals, and yet we are still beloved. Through the practice of Sabbath, we learn that we do not have to produce or earn our way to our value as human beings. That value is intrinsic, like that of the whole of creation. But in our culture, we seldom take time to truly observe this practice of Sabbath. We may take days off from work or school, but even those days are usually spent doing other kinds of work that we never seem to have time for during the week. Our culture has taught us that idle time is wasteful—a squandering of the precious time that God has given us. But this attitude runs counter to the Third Commandment, as well as God’s own behavior in the story of creation and on the day after Jesus’ death. On the Sabbath, God and Jesus rest.

Take some time today to rest. Ponder the unspeakable gift of doing nothing. Free yourself from the worries of your earthly labors, and allow yourself to just be. We are, after all, human *be*-ings, not human *do*-ings. Think about what this Holy Week has meant to you, and what lessons you have learned along the way. Refrain from your Easter celebrations just a little longer. Try to take in this holy moment of rest.

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*Sharing Christ's love unconditionally through  
transformational worship and service*