

And There Was Darkness

The service is entirely spoken; there is only the benediction song, *Were You There?* The people gather in silence. As the service ends, all lighting that is not essential to exiting the sanctuary safely is extinguished, so that the service ends in semi-darkness.

[The People Gather in Silence]

Call to Worship: Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Surely, he has born our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, And with his stripes we are healed.

[A Time of Silence]

Litany for Good Friday:

Leader: O Crucified Jesus, Son of the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, eternal Word of God,

People: we worship you.

Leader: O crucified Jesus, holy temple of God, dwelling place of the Most High, gate of heaven, burning flame of love,

People: we worship you.

Leader: O crucified Jesus, sanctuary of justice and love, full of kindness, source of faithfulness,

People: we worship you.

Leader: O crucified Jesus, ruler of every heart, in you are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, in you dwells all the fullness of the Godhead,

People: we worship you.

Leader: Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us. Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us. Jesus, redeemer of the world,

All: grant us peace. AMEN

Reader: *Behold, my servant will deal wisely. He will be exalted and lifted up, and will be very high. Just as many were astonished at you (his appearance was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men), so he will cleanse many nations. Kings will shut their mouths at him: for they will see that which had not been told them; and they will understand that which they had not heard.* [From Isaiah 52]

Reader: *Having then a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let's hold tightly to our confession. Let's therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace for help in time of need. Having been made perfect, he became to all of those who obey him the author of eternal salvation* [From Hebrews 4 and 5]

[A Time of Silence]

The Lord's Prayer in Unison *Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, they will be done, in 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, AMEN*

Reproaches of the Cross:

Leader: O my people, O my church, What have I done to you, or in what have I offended you? Answer me! I led you forth from the land of Egypt and delivered you by the waters of baptism, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: I led you through the desert forty years and fed you with manna and gave you my body, the bread of heaven, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: What more could I have done for you that I have not done? I planted you, my chosen and fairest vineyard, but when I was thirsty, you gave me vinegar to drink and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: I went before you in a pillar of cloud, and you have led me to the judgment hall of Pilate. I scourged your enemies and brought you to a land of freedom, but you have scourged, mocked, and beaten me and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord, have mercy.

My peace I gave, which the world cannot give and washed your feet as a sign of my love, but you scatter and deny and abandon me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord, have mercy.

I pray that all may be one in the Father and me, but you continue to quarrel and divide. I call you to go and bring forth fruit, but you cast lots for my clothing, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: I came to you as the least of your brothers and sisters; I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

[A time of silence]

A Reading from the gospel of Luke 4

Reader One: In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

Reader Two: Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty.

Reader One: And all went to be enrolled to their own cities. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

B Reader Two: But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave sentence that their demand should be granted. He released Barabbas, the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, who they asked for, but Jesus he delivered up to their will.

Reader One: And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered.

Reader Two: And when they came to the place which is called the skull, there they crucified him and

two criminals—one on the right and one on the left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Reader One: And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes....

Reader Two: And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Reader One:... and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. And in that region there were shepherds out in the fields keeping watch over their flock by night.

Reader Two: And the people stood by watching.

Reader One: And an angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them. And they were filled with fear! But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which shall be for all people. For to you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Reader Two: But the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his chosen One!"

Reader One: And this will be a sign for you....

Reader Two: While the sun's light failed, the curtain of the temple was torn in two. And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!"

Reader One: You will find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes....

Two: Then Joseph of Arimathea took down the body of Jesus and wrapped it in a linen shroud....

Reader One:... and lying in a manger.

Two:... and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb.

[Pause, as the tellers switch stories.]

Reader Two: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom God is pleased."

Reader One: The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid, and returned and prepared spices and ointments.

Reader Two: When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened that the Lord has made known to us!"

Reader One: And on the first day of the week at early dawn they went to the tomb.

Reader Two: And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Reader One: And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body.

Reader Two: And when the shepherds saw the babe lying in the manger, they made known the saying which had been told them concerning the child.

Reader One: While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel; and the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? Remember how they told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise."

Two: And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds had told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart.

Reader One: And they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to the rest.

Two: And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Reader One: But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

Diminishing Lights: *It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.*

Extinguishes Christ Candle

Solo: *Were You There?*

The People Depart in Silence