

## **GOOD FRIDAY**

**15/4/22**

## **CAVES BEACH**

### **INTRO**

Today is not a normal service. The readings from John's Gospel speak for themselves as we go through the harrowing story of what we call Good Friday.

Let's remain seated, even though the hymns.

People will come forward to give us the readings & I will finish.

At the end of the service we are invited to stay as long as we like and then leave quietly.

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

People of God, come today with open hearts.

Today is significant for now and for the future.

The story is troubling,

but we must hear it again.

Come, friends, let us draw closer together

as we listen again to the Word.

### **READING #1**

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.<sup>2</sup> Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples.<sup>3</sup> So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?"<sup>5</sup> They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.<sup>6</sup> When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground.<sup>7</sup> Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking

for?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”<sup>8</sup> Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he.<sup>1</sup> So if you are looking for me, let these men go.”<sup>9</sup> This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.”<sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus.<sup>11</sup> Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?”

## **PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

God of the sorrowing,

God of mercy,

O God of all,

Hear the cry of injustice,

the pain of despair,

the sorrowing of broken love

the emptiness of loneliness.

God, our God,

Jesus, our brother,

We come with humble hearts and open ears,

willing to listen, sorrowing as one,

determined to understand

and daring to change.

God of the sorrowing,

we call to you!

## **READING #2**

<sup>12</sup> So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. <sup>13</sup> First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. <sup>14</sup> Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, <sup>16</sup> but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. <sup>17</sup> The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."  
<sup>18</sup> Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

**HYMN 339** O Sacred head sore wounded

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwgM8R7akeU>

### **PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING**

In the bleakest of times, where hope is fading,

You, O Gracious God, shine unexpected light.

Ever present, ever aware,

You, O God of Truth, reveal to us certainty.

Where judgement blinds us,

grace opens us up.

Where hardship knocks us,

grace sustains us.

Where sorrow meets us,

grace greets us.

Where injustice hampers us,

grace redeems us.

Jesus, on this day, where horror and sorrow are fully revealed,

we thank you for the revelations and truth that your journey reveals.

May this be the day of insight and understanding, honesty and hope,

reveal truth to us again so that we see your story.

May we hold firmly to where there is grace.

### **READING #3**

<sup>19</sup> Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. <sup>20</sup> Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. <sup>21</sup> Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" <sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

<sup>25</sup> Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." <sup>26</sup> One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" <sup>27</sup> Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

**HYMN 350** There is a green hill

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogRvBVRvqvk>

### **READING # 4**

<sup>28</sup> Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" <sup>30</sup> They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." <sup>31</sup> Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." <sup>32</sup> (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

<sup>33</sup> Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" <sup>35</sup> Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" <sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my

kingdom is not from here.”<sup>37</sup> Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”<sup>38</sup> Pilate asked him, “What is truth?”

## **SERMON #1**

There is an old story about a Christian in the middle-ages. The person had come on hard times towards the end of his life. Old and very ill, he was rescued from a grubby street and taken to an infirmary. This is what we would now consider a very primitive hospital or nursing home. Believing that the man was unconscious the medico of the time said to his colleagues: “What will we do with this poor, worthless creature?”

On hearing this the man gradually raised himself up onto one arm and responded: “Don’t call a person worthless for whom Christ has died!”

If we are ever to fully comprehend the crucifixion we need to fully comprehend the significance as being more than just an historical event.

So much of our lives is spent pursuing acceptance and approval from many areas in our lives. Initially there are our parents, then our teachers and peers at school, followed by our spouses and our friends and of course our bosses. This means that for so much of our lives we have struggled with issues self-esteem and self-worth. We spend so much of our lives seeking to establish some significant place in our limited world. The reality of the struggle is that we can’t do it alone.

While we struggle with this inner turmoil we strive to not show this doubt to those around us. The reality is that God sees it, knows all about it and has the solution.

St Augustine the ancient theologian observed that this turmoil is a vital part of the manufacturing process: “For you have made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee.”

The full nature of our worth in God’s eyes is centred in the obvious fact that Jesus Christ was willing to die for each one of us. This was to fill the God shaped vacuum in each of our hearts.

For us to fully comprehend the full impact of Good Friday we must follow the path to The cross and seek a personal encounter with Christ. It is only at the foot of the cross that we can comprehend the depth of God’s love and acceptance of each of us. As we look in the mirror every morning we see the one for whom Christ died.

## READING # 5 me

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him."<sup>39</sup> But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"<sup>40</sup> They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.<sup>2</sup> And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.<sup>3</sup> They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face.<sup>4</sup> Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him."<sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"<sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him."<sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

<sup>8</sup> Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever.<sup>9</sup> He entered his headquarters<sup>ii</sup> again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.<sup>10</sup> Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?"<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."<sup>12</sup> From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha.<sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!"<sup>15</sup> They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor."<sup>16</sup> Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

## SERMON #2

How many Good Friday services have you been to?

Is there anymore that you can learn from the scriptures?

Is our mind made up about the meaning of the horrific death suffered by Christ for us?

These are questions that I ask myself every Easter. Looking around the world today Easter seems to be about Easter Bonnet Parades at school. There are many different animals associated with Easter sitting on the chocolate shelves in the supermarket. There are baby chicks, rabbits and lately bilbys. On Sunday there are massive hunts for Easter Eggs and other chocolate treats.

So where are we on this Good Friday?

Are we just running with the advertising or are we seriously drawing ourselves into the whole emotional circumstances of Easter?

Today is not a day to look at Resurrection. Today is a time to recall pain and suffering so willingly undertaken on our behalf. This is not necessarily a one off event as we need to revisit the situation every year. The Easter Sunday event would have no significance without Good Friday. Our being showered with grace could not occur without Christ's suffering.

It is so easy just to read a few words on Good Friday without taking time to reflect on what lies behind the whole story.

We are about to recall those last terrifying moments of a life given for each of us. We can't earn the release it gives us nor can we ignore the love that sits behind it.

As we quietly leave the service today I would like to suggest that you take some time to just comprehend as much as you can the massive impact those last few painful hours have had on our world. Despite all the stories of doom and gloom in the media we also need to look forward to celebrating all that this crucifixion achieved for us.

## **READING #6 me**

So they took Jesus;<sup>17</sup> and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.<sup>18</sup> There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them.<sup>19</sup> Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup> 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.'"<sup>22</sup> Pilate

answered, "What I have written I have written."<sup>23</sup> 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.<sup>24</sup> 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 fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots."

<sup>25</sup> 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 Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.<sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."<sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

<sup>28</sup> After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty."<sup>29</sup> 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.<sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

**HYMN 345** Were you there Vs1-5

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MI9V8owRTA4>

(You may wish to skip the final verse as we will do.)

**READING #7** me

<sup>31</sup> Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the Sabbath, especially because that Sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed.<sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him.<sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.<sup>34</sup> Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.<sup>35</sup> (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.)<sup>36</sup> These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken."<sup>37</sup> And again another



passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

<sup>38</sup> After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. <sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. <sup>40</sup> They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup> Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup> And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*Silent reflection and individual prayers after each focusing statement.*

God of the sorrowing, we bring before you those for whom we care...

Family and friends in our community who are isolated.

Families and friends of those ill and dying from the pandemic.

Those in the wider community who struggle in these uncertain times.

The vulnerable ones suffering mentally or physically.

Those living with disabilities and those who experience isolation and greater difficulties in these pandemic times.

Our indigenous families seeking acceptance and reconciliation.

Refugees seeking a home and healthy society.

God of the sorrowing,

enable us to care with right thinking and living justice

to bring your grace to this world.

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.

**HYMN 342** When I survey

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MF9tVfTMXs>

## **BENEDICTION**

Go then, on this day of sorrow and brokenness,

call out to the God who hears you.

Stand firm with Jesus, who walks with you.

Be affirmed as the Spirit fills you

because God reveals truth, enlightened thinking

and peace-filled living.

Go friends and pray with openness and vulnerability.

God of the sorrowing listens.

We will hold firmly to where there is grace.