

Good Friday

Today is the 19 April, Good Friday.

We will reflect a little differently as we observe the weight of this day. To accompany our prayer journey, we hear Allegri's Miserere performed by the Choir of Holy Sepulchre London.

Our reading is from the Gospel of John, and we'll hear it in three parts today. As you listen to the story of the passion of Christ, you might ask God to give you a deep compassion for the sufferings of Jesus. And as you listen to this first part, feel the weight of the cross. Ask to be allowed to walk with him.

Then Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified. 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."

Follow Jesus as he walks to Golgotha. What is in your heart and mind as you walk this way of the Cross?

The inscription INRI - "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" - what does it say to you about the God who comes to save us?

Now listen to the second part. Get a sense of the poverty of Jesus, deprived of everything, even his clothes...

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.

Jesus's clothes were his only remaining possession. What can you feel for him, stripped of everything?

He will soon give even his life out of love for you. What do you want to say to him as he goes to his death?

Listen now to the third part. Notice how Jesus thinks of others even when he is dying...

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, 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.

Watch the face of Jesus as he dies on the cross. What do you want to say to God, or to Mary the mother of Jesus, as you see this?

How does it affect you to know that Jesus died for the world, for us, for you?

The Passion continues today in the world. This might be a moment to ask God for compassion, for a deeper love of the people Christ loved so much.