



–Sieger Koder

Holy Week Prayers

Thursday Vespers

*You are invited to pray these words following supper,
or anytime in the evening before going to sleep.*

Before beginning...

- ✚ *Light a candle as a sign that God is with you in Spirit.*
- ✚ *If you're using the audio recording, feel free to stop and start it as necessary. If you're not using the recording, you are free to pray through the material as you wish.*
- ✚ *If you're with a group, you may wish to have different people read different sections. Or you may have a leader read the light print, and have the group read together the text in bold print.*
- ✚ *Where you see a + you are invited to make the sign of the cross.*
- ✚ *You may want to create a family "altar" in your home for Holy Week. Pick a spot in your house where you can gather by yourself or with others, and there place a candle, a cross, and a bowl.*
- ✚ *Have a bowl with some water in it nearby, as well as a hand towel.*



THE CALL TO PRAYER

Come and listen, all you who fear God, and I will tell you what God has done for me.

-Psalm 66:14

THE GREETING

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but stands fast forever. The hills stand about Jerusalem; so does the Lord stand round about his people, from this time forth for evermore.

-Psalm 125:1-2

SONG FOR THE DAY ~ *This is Love*

Father, just before the hour comes
That was set aside to glorify your Son
With a glory from before the world began,
With a glory given to no other man:
Protect the ones you've given me to love;
I so desire that none of them be lost.
They've yet to understand the mystery
Why the Son of God would wash another's feet.

This is not the same,
It's a different thing altogether.
This is not the same,
It's another thing altogether.
This is love.

My prayer is not for only these alone
But for those who follow after I'm gone.
May they understand the love you have for me
As the kind of love that changes everything.
They'll argue who will sit next to the throne,
And I cringe to hear them say "Thy kingdom come."
They think they know what they're getting into
but we both know that they haven't got a clue.

Now here's something they won't like:
Someone's coming to take the Life—
No one has to look farther than me—I am He.
Some will trust in the things they think they know.
They should think again and let them go.
Put away the sword and get behind, and let me die.

-Steve Bell

Remember your word to your servant, because you have given me hope. This is my comfort in my trouble, that your promise gives me life.

-Psalm 119:49-50

PRAYER OF ORIENTATION

Here is the source of every sacrament,
The all-transforming presence of the Lord,
Replenishing our every element,
Remaking us in his creative Word.
For here the earth herself gives bread and wine,
The air delights to bear his Spirit's speech,
The fire dances where the candles shine,
The waters cleanse us with his gentle touch.
And here he shows the full extent of love
To us whose love is always incomplete,
In vain we search the heavens high above,
The God of love is kneeling at our feet.
Though we betray him, though it is the night
He meets us here and loves us into light.

-Malcolm Guite

CONFESSION

Almighty God, our heavenly Father: I have sinned against you, through my own fault, in thought, and word, and deed, in what I have done and in what I have left undone. For the sake of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive me all my offenses; and grant that I may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your Name. Amen. +

Listening Silence

(Feel free to pause your playback device)

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

-Psalm 51:18

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

WORD OF GOD, WORD OF LIFE
(read by Jennifer Rempel)

Just before the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that the time had come to leave this world to go to the Father. Having loved his dear companions, he continued to love them right to the end. It was suppertime. The Devil by now had Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, firmly in his grip, all set for the betrayal.

Jesus knew that the Father had put him in complete charge of everything, that he came from God and was on his way back to God. So he got up from the supper table, set aside his robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, drying them with the towel that was tied around him. When he got to Simon Peter, Peter said, “Master, *you* wash *my* feet?”

Jesus answered, “You don’t understand now what I’m doing, but it will be clear enough to you later.”

Peter persisted, “You’re not going to wash my feet—ever!”

Jesus said, “If I don’t wash you, you can’t be part of what I’m doing.”

“Master!” said Peter. “Not only my feet, then. Wash my hands! Wash my head!”

Jesus said, “If you’ve had a bath in the morning, you only need your feet washed now and you’re clean from head to toe. My concern, you understand, is holiness, not hygiene. So now you’re clean. But not every one of you.” (He knew who was betraying him. That’s why he said, “Not every one of you.”) After he had finished washing their feet, he took his robe, put it back on, and went back to his place at the table.

Then he said, “Do you understand what I have done to you? You address me as ‘Teacher’ and ‘Master,’ and rightly so. That is what I am. So if I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other’s feet. I’ve laid down a pattern for you. What I’ve done, you do.

—John 13:1-15

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

Take a few quiet moments to reflect on your day. Or perhaps “zoom out” to reflect on your life. Where have you experienced cleansing? And where might you need to be washed now? And when you consider others in your life, where is there dirt that needs to be rinsed away? When ready, offer those things to God by washing your hands in the water.

(Feel free to pause your playback device)

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous. May the Lord Almighty grant us and those we love a peaceful night and a perfect end; and all for your love’s sake. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 forever.

THE CONCLUDING PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Lord, it is evening after a long day. What has been done has been done; what has not been done has not been done; let it be.

The night is dark. It is for stillness. Let our fears of the darkness, of the world, and of our lives rest in You. Let us be still in your Presence.

The night is quiet. Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all who are dear to us, and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, and new possibilities. Amen. +

Listening Silence

(Feel free to pause your playback device)

THE FINAL THANKSGIVING

Lord, you now have set your servant free to go in peace as you have promised; for these eyes of mine have seen the Saviour, whom you have prepared for all the world to see: a Light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

