



—Douglas Blanchard

## **Holy Week Prayers**

### **Good Friday Vespers**

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

## Before beginning...

- ⊕ *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.*
- ⊕ *Have at hand a box into which you can pack all icons and religious symbols that can be easily moved (crosses, candles, prayer beads, flowers, linens, etc.), along with a dark cloth (or more) to drape over items too large or permanent to pack away (wall art, door wreaths, and so forth). Have a basin of water and wash cloth available as well.*



THE CALL TO PRAYER

Call upon God. In the evening, in the morning, and at noon, utter your complaint and lament. God who is enthroned of old, will hear. -Psalm 55:16-17, 19

THE GREETING

**I spread out my hands to you; my soul gasps to you like a thirsty land. O Lord, make haste to answer me; my spirit fails me; do not hide your face from me or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.** -Psalm 143:6-7

SONG FOR THE DAY ~ *Gone is the Light*

Into the darkness we must go;  
Gone, gone is the light.  
Into the darkness we must go;  
Gone, gone is the light.

Jesus, remember me  
When you enter your kingdom.  
Jesus, remember me  
When your kingdom comes.

Father, forgive them;  
They know not what they do.  
Father, forgive them;  
They know not what they do.

-Gord Johnson / Steve Bell

**As for me, this is my prayer to you, at the time you have set, O Lord: "In your great mercy, O God, answer me with your unfailing help. Let not the torrent of waters wash over me, neither let the deep swallow me up; do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me. Answer me, O Lord, for your love is kind; in your great compassion, turn to me."** -Psalm 69:14-15, 17-18

## PRAYER OF ORIENTATION

His spirit and his life he breathes in all,  
Now on this cross his body breathes no more.  
Here at the centre of everything is still,  
Spent, and emptied, opened to the core.  
A quiet taking down, a prising loose,  
A cross-beam lowered like a weighing scale,  
Unmaking of each thing that had its use,  
A long withdrawing of each bloodied nail.  
This is ground zero, emptiness and space,  
With nothing left to say or think or do,  
But look unflinching on the sacred face  
That cannot move or change or look at you.  
Yet in that prising loose and letting be  
He has unfastened you and set you free.

*-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 Lord has not despised nor disregarded the poverty of the poor, has not turned away his face, but has listened to the cry for help.

*-Psalm 22:24*

**For God alone my soul in silence waits.**

*-Psalm 62:1*

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

Forcibly, after a perversion of justice, he was taken away.  
Yet who of his generation protested?  
He was cut off from the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people.  
They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich,  
although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.  
Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain.  
He made his life an offering for sin, doing everything the Lord had planned.  
Now the servant will live to see his own descendants,  
and through him the will of the Lord will prosper.  
After he has suffered,  
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;  
Through what he experienced, my righteous one, my servant,  
will make many "righteous ones," as he himself carries the burden of their sins.  
Therefore I'll reward him extravagantly—  
the best of everything, the highest honours—  
because he poured out himself to death,  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the transgressors.

-Isaiah 53:8-13

**For God alone my soul in silence waits.**

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

*In silence go through your house and gather all icons and religious symbols that can be easily moved (crosses, candles, prayer beads, flowers, linens, etc.). Pack these items away in the box you have at hand. Use the dark cloths to drape over any other items that are too large or permanent to pack away (wall art, door wreaths, and so forth). Finally, remove all items from the table where you've had your "altar" and together wash it thoroughly, leaving it bare until Easter morning.*

*Take a quiet moment to observe the barrenness. Which barren situations can you think of that cry out for new life?*

*(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.**

