

Simple Prayer, Simple Praise Worship for Holy Saturday

Opening Meditation

The only true prerequisite for prayer is a broken heart
Hasidic Wisdom Saying

In our broken-heartedness, let us pray:

Holy One of All, we weep with you at the death of your Son, our Lord. Help us to find the sacred in this absence, the holy in this waiting, and the blessing that never ever ends.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen

(C. Dempsey-Sims, 2020)

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew (27:57-66)

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, 'Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, "After three days I will rise again." Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, "He has been raised from the dead", and the last deception would be worse than the first.' Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard* of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.*' So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

Meditation

On this day of absence we learn the depth of God's presence. Today, as Jesus lay among the dead, we know in our souls that his descent into death means that our own deaths will not be endings, but rather entries into the fullness of life. In spite of this sure and certain promise of our faith, when we experience the death of a beloved, when they have entered the fullness and we are still here, in our emptiness, our hearts break and our souls lament.

Today we, just like the first followers of Jesus, are broken-hearted. There is a tendency to rush through the brokenness and into the fullness of what comes next.

I urge you not to hurry.

Sit and wait. Sit and wonder. Sit and weep. Sit and pray.

The darkness of grief may seem too much, but it will not overtake you.

For in this grief, God dwells.

Linger for awhile, feel the emptiness like a deeply exhaled breath, for when we fully exhale we ready ourselves to be filled anew.

Breathe in all that today brings, do not fear the emptiness, embrace it, be in it.

For only through our brokenness can we be truly filled.

The Rev. Cathy Dempsey-Sims

The Lord's Prayer

And now in the words we have been taught, we are bold to say:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on 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
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Grace

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine:

Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.

Amen (*Ephesians 3:20,21*)

Join online worship with Bishop Rowe Easter Sunday at 10 am at this link: <https://zoom.us/j/127336938>. Use the password **lakeerie. To join by phone instead of video, dial 646-876-9923 and use code 127336938#. **The Daily Office from the National Cathedral** cathedral.org/worship/**

*This service was compiled for the Episcopal Dioceses of WNY and NWPA
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