

# Prayer Service

## Good Friday Prayer Service

### Opening Prayer:

#### Leader:

I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out of joint;  
my heart is like wax;  
it is melted within my breast;  
my mouth is dried up like a potsherd  
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;  
you lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs are all around me;  
a company of evildoers encircles me.  
My hands and feet have shriveled;  
I can count all my bones.  
They stare and gloat over me;  
they divide my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.

But you, O Lord, do not be far away!  
O my help, come quickly to my aid!  
Deliver my soul from the sword,  
my life from the power of the dog!  
Save me from the mouth of the lion!

Psalm 22:14-21

### Group Prayer: *(Each group member should read one Paragraph.)*

Holy God,  
holy and strange,  
holy and intimate,  
have mercy on us.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

I brooded over the abyss,  
with my words I called forth creation:  
but you have brooded on destruction,  
and manufactured the means of chaos.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

I breathed life into your bodes,  
and carried you tenderly in my arms:  
but you have armed yourselves for war,  
breathing out threats of violence.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

I made the desert blossom before you,  
I fed you with an open hand:  
but you have grasped the children's food,  
and laid waste fertile lands.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

I abandoned my power like a garment,  
choosing your unprotected flesh:  
but you have robed yourselves in privilege,  
and chosen to despise the abandoned.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

Holy God,  
holy and strange,  
holy and intimate,  
have mercy on us.

I would have gathered you to me as a lover,  
and shown you the ways of peace:  
but you have desired security,  
and you would not surrender your self.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

I have torn the veil of my glory,  
transfiguring the earth:  
but you have disfigured my beauty,  
and turned away your face.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

I have labored to deliver you,  
as a woman delights to give life:  
but you have delighted in bloodshed,  
and labored to bereave the world.



## Good Friday Prayer Service (continued)

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

I have followed you with the power of my spirit,  
to seek truth and heal the oppressed:  
but you have been following a lie,  
and returned to your own comfort.

O my people, what have I done to you?  
How have I offended you?  
Answer me.

Holy God,  
holy and strange,  
holy and Intimate,  
have mercy on us.

Janet Motley. England, 1988 - Genesis 1,2:7; Psalm 22:9-10. 104:28;  
Isaiah 35:1, 46:3-4. 53:1-4; Matthew 27:51; Luke 13:34, 19:41-44;  
John 16:20-22

**All:**  
Hands like these  
Were hammered on the tree.  
Feet like our feet  
Were pierced.  
A head like our head  
Bore the shameful thorns.  
Gwenallt, 1959  
Gwreiddiau, Gwasg Gomer  
Welsh Pilgrim's Manual, ed. Brendan O'Malley, Gomer, 1989

### Brief Period of Silence

### Reading and Reflection

**Reader 1:**  
Structures of sin are rooted in personal sin, and thus always linked to the concrete acts of individuals who introduce these structures, consolidate them and make them difficult to remove. And thus they grow stronger, spread, and become the source of other sins, and so influence people's behavior.

**Reader 2:**  
These attitudes and "structures of sin" are only conquered—presupposing the help of divine grace—by a diametrically opposed attitude: a commitment to the good of one's neighbor with the readiness, in the gospel sense, to "lose oneself" for the sake of the other instead of exploiting him, and to "serve him" instead of oppressing him for one's own advantage.

**Reader 3:**  
Solidarity helps us to see the "other"—whether a person, people, or nation—not just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our "neighbor," a "helper" (cf. Gen. 2:189720), to be made a sharer, on a par with ourselves, in the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God: Hence the importance of reawakening the religious awareness of individuals and peoples.

**Reader 4:**  
Thus the exploitation, oppression, and annihilation of others are excluded. These facts, in the present division of the world into opposing blocs, combine to produce the danger of war and an excessive preoccupation with personal security, often to the detriment of the autonomy, freedom of decision, and even the territorial integrity of the weaker nations situated within the so-called "areas of influence" or "safety belts."

**Reader 5:**  
The "structures of sin" and the sins which they produce are likewise radically opposed to peace and development, for development, in the familiar expression of Pope Paul's encyclical, is "the new name for peace."

**Reader 6:**  
In this way, the solidarity which we propose is the path to peace and at the same time to development. For world peace is inconceivable unless the world's leaders come to recognize that interdependence in itself demands . . . the sacrifice of all forms of economic, military, or political imperialism and the transformation of mutual distrust into collaboration. This is precisely the act proper to solidarity among individuals and nations.

**Reader 7:**  
The goal of peace, so desired by everyone, will certainly be achieved through the putting into effect of social and international justice, but also through the practice of the virtues which favor togetherness, and which teach us to live in unity, so as to build in unity, by giving and receiving, a new society and a better world.

**Period of Silence (5-10 minutes)**



## Good Friday Prayer Service (continued)

### Litany for Peace

**Reader 1:** Lord Jesus, by your cross and resurrection

**All:** *deliver us*

By your witness to the truth

*deliver us*

By your passion and death

*deliver us*

by your victory over the grave

*deliver us*

from the desire for power

*deliver us*

from the conspiracy of silence

*deliver us*

from the worship of weapons

*deliver us*

from the slaughter of the peoples

*deliver us*

from the nightmare of hunger

*deliver us*

from peace that is no peace

*deliver us*

from security that is no security

*deliver us*

from the politics of terror

*deliver us*

from the plundering of the earths resources

*deliver us*

from the dispossession of the poor

*deliver us*

from the despair of this age

*deliver us*

**Second Reader:** By the light of the gospel

**All:** *give us peace*

by the good news for the poor

*give us peace*

by your healing of our wounds

*give us peace*

by faith in your word

*give us peace*

by hunger and thirst for justice

*give us peace*

by the coming of the Kingdom

*give us peace*

**All:** Amen.

Linda Frewin and Tony Bartlett, *Prayers for Peacemakers*, ed. Valerie Flessati, Kevin Mayhew Publishers, 1988 - Isaiah 53

