



GOOD FRIDAY

On Good Friday we commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus. It is a somber day of silence and prayer and is the only day of the church year we do not celebrate the Eucharist. The origin of the name "Good" Friday is unclear. Some believe it comes from an older name, "God's Friday". Good Friday was called Long Friday by the Anglo-Saxons, a name still used in some places. It is also called "Holy Friday" in some languages and Karfreitag (Sorrowful Friday) in German.

READ:

In the Episcopal Church we read the portion of the Gospel of John known as The Passion each Good Friday. You can find the full story in John chapters 18-19. As we read, it is critical to acknowledge these texts have been used to perpetrate anti-semitism and violence against Jewish people. It is critical to learn and remember why John was written as it was, and that it was *the Roman Empire* who killed Jesus, not the Jews. Shedding light on that truth is our Christian responsibility. An excerpt from The Passion appears below:

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. 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 fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did. 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 fulfill 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.

WONDER:

At the end of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, the altar is stripped of its linens and the sanctuary is darkened. We do this to remember how dark and lonely the world would feel without Jesus' life or love and the absence of Jesus in our presence through the sacrament of bread and wine. For an hour or evening, darken your home. Fast from media and electricity, using only candlelight for illumination. What do you notice? How do you feel?

(Adapted from: "Engaging All Ages," Planning for Rites & Rituals: Year A, Church Publishing 2019, p. 153)

PRAY:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgement and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your hold Church peace and concord; and to us everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and forever. Amen



(Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer p.282)