

# Saint John's Episcopal Church, Concord

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## Maundy Thursday: Night Watch

April 1, 2021



Image Credit: Agony in the Garden (John August Swanson)

**The Rev. Jill LaRoche Wikel – Rector**

*Worship leaders enter in silence and go to their prayer desks.*

### **OPENING ACCLIMATION**

*Leader:* Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

*People:* ***Hosanna in the highest!***

*Leader:* The Lord be with you.

*People:* ***And also with you.***

*Leader:* Let us pray.

### **Collect of the Day**

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

### **SACRED SCRIPTURE**

Mark 14:32-38

<sup>32</sup>They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” <sup>33</sup>He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup>“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,” he said to them. “Stay here and keep watch.”

<sup>35</sup>Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup>“*Abba,*<sup>[a]</sup> Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

<sup>37</sup>Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Couldn’t you keep watch for one hour? <sup>38</sup>Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

### **THE STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR**

*This ceremony prepares the church for Good Friday and serves to remind us what life might be like without the Christian sacraments as provided by the Church. After the sacred vessels and symbols are removed from the sanctuary or covered to indicate their unavailability, the worship leaders kneel and recite the following psalm in unison. Psalm 22 was quoted by Jesus from the Cross, and for*

*Christians it is a sign that the work of Christ on the Cross was anticipated in Hebrew scriptures long before the Christian era.*

Psalm 22

*Deus, Deus meus*

Prayer Book, 610

*They divide my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing.*

- 1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? \*  
and are so far from my cry  
and from the words of my distress?
- 2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer; \*  
by night as well, but I find no rest.
- 3 Yet you are the Holy One, \*  
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.
- 4 Our forefathers put their trust in you; \*  
they trusted, and you delivered them.
- 5 They cried out to you and were delivered; \*  
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.
- 6 But as for me, I am a worm and no man, \*  
scorned by all and despised by the people.
- 7 All who see me laugh me to scorn; \*  
they curl their lips and wag their heads, saying,
- 8 "He trusted in the LORD; let him deliver him; \*  
let him rescue him, if he delights in him."
- 9 Yet you are he who took me out of the womb, \*  
and kept me safe upon my mother's breast.
- 10 I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born; \*  
you were my God when I was still in my mother's womb.
- 11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near, \*  
and there is none to help.
- 12 Many young bulls encircle me; \*  
strong bulls of Bashan surround me.
- 13 They open wide their jaws at me, \*  
like a ravening and a roaring lion.
- 14 I am poured out like water;  
all my bones are out of joint; \*  
my heart within my breast is melting wax.

- 15 My mouth is dried out like a pot-herd;  
my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; \*  
and you have laid me in the dust of the grave.
- 16 Packs of dogs close me in,  
and gangs of evildoers circle around me; \*  
they pierce my hands and my feet;  
I can count all my bones.
- 17 They stare and gloat over me; \*  
they divide my garments among them;  
they cast lots for my clothing.
- 18 Be not far away, O LORD; \*  
you are my strength; hasten to help me.
- 19 Save me from the sword, \*  
my life from the power of the dog.
- 20 Save me from the lion's mouth, \*  
my wretched body from the horns of wild bulls.
- 21 I will declare your Name to my brethren; \*  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.
- 22 Praise the LORD, you that fear him; \*  
stand in awe of him, O offspring of Israel;  
all you of Jacob's line, give glory.
- 23 For he does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;  
neither does he hide his face from them; \*  
but when they cry to him he hears them.
- 24 My praise is of him in the great assembly; \*  
I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him.
- 25 The poor shall eat and be satisfied,  
and those who seek the LORD shall praise him: \*  
"May your heart live for ever!"
- 26 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, \*  
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.
- 27 For kingship belongs to the LORD; \*  
he rules over the nations.
- 28 To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; \*  
all who go down to the dust fall before him.

29 My soul shall live for him;  
my descendants shall serve him; \*  
they shall be known as the LORD's for ever.

30 They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn \*  
the saving deeds that he has done.

*Worship leaders depart in silence.*

*The Night Watch begins.*

*Keep awake with Jesus this hour. The following readings and meditations may be used while you gaze upon the empty sanctuary.*

**Poem: “Gethsemane” by Mary Oliver**

The grass never sleeps.  
Or the roses.  
Nor does the lily have a secret eye that shuts until morning.  
Jesus said, wait with me. But the disciples slept.

The cricket has such splendid fringe on his feet,  
and it sings, have you noticed, with its whole body,  
and heaven knows if it ever sleeps.

Jesus said, wait with me. And maybe the stars did, maybe  
the wind wound itself into a silver tree, and didn't move.  
Maybe the lake far away, where once he walked  
as on a blue pavement,  
lay still and waited, wild awake.

Oh the dear bodies, slumped and eye-shut, that could not  
keep that vigil, how they must have wept,  
so utterly human, knowing this too  
must be part of the story.

**“The Holy Hour” from *Saint Augustine’s Prayer Book* and *the Psalter of the Book of Common Prayer***

*I. God’s Presence: Adoration*

God is everywhere. There is no place in heaven or in earth from which God is

excluded. From the first moment of my existence to the present moment, I have been in God's presence. Everywhere. At all times. Often I forget this truth. Often I go about my life with no thought of God's nearness. But here, in this place and in these minutes, I will remember that I am in the presence of God.

Psalm 139—*Domine, Probasti* (BCP p. 794)

Lord, you have searched me out and known me; \*  
    you know my sitting down and my rising up;  
    you discern my thoughts from afar.  
You trace my journeys and my resting-places \*  
    and are acquainted with all my ways.  
Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, \*  
    but you, O Lord, know it altogether.  
You press upon me behind and before \*  
    and lay your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; \*  
    it is so high that I cannot attain to it.  
Where can I go then from your Spirit? \*  
    where can I flee from your presence?  
If I climb up to heaven, you are there; \*  
    if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.  
If I take the wings of the morning \*  
    and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,  
Even there your hand will lead me \*  
    and your right hand hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, \*  
    and the light around me turn to night,"  
Darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day; \*  
    darkness and light to you are both alike.

## *II. For the Forgiveness of Sins: Penitence*

Knowing the presence of God, and standing close to Jesus, I come to know myself more clearly as well. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus faces what will come. Just moments before, he interpreted his coming death and offered himself for the healing of the world – "This is my blood, which is shed for the forgiveness of sins." In some way, the final effect of every sin is the death that Jesus is about to endure. Jesus accepts this burden. And now, I acknowledge that my sins are part of that burden. I am responsible, in some part, for the agony Jesus suffers.

*As you have done it to the least of these, you have done it to me. — Matthew 25*

O Blessed Jesus, in your presence I know the full glory of a human life and the distortions and destruction caused by sin; give me grace to see my sins, things done and things left undone; give me grace to know how my words have been dishonest or hurtful, how my habits have disfigured my soul, and how I have failed in the face of temptations, great and small. Let me confess them honestly and with genuine sorrow that I have added to the burden of the world's suffering that falls on you.

*Here make as honest and complete a confession as you can, trusting in God's mercy.*

Almighty and most merciful Father,  
we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,  
we have followed too much  
the devices and desires of our own hearts,  
we have offended against thy holy laws,  
we have left undone those things which we ought to have done,  
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.

*Here pause to name the particular sins and omissions you need to confess...*

But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us,  
spare thou those who confess their faults,  
restore thou those who are penitent,  
according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord;  
and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,  
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,  
to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.  
— *The Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 41-42

Psalm 51 *Miserere mei, Deus* (BCP pp. 656-657)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; \*  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.  
Wash me through and through from my wickedness \*  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
For I know my transgressions, \*  
and my sin is ever before me.  
Against you only have I sinned \*  
and done what is evil in your sight.  
And so you are justified when you speak \*  
and upright in your judgment.

Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, \*  
a sinner from my mother's womb.  
For behold, you look for truth deep within me, \*  
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.  
Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; \*  
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.  
Make me hear of joy and gladness, \*  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins \*  
and blot out all my iniquities.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence \*  
and take not your holy Spirit from me.

## *II. Petition*

Jesus has taught and healed, traveling through the villages and cities, always accompanied by disciples and followers. Even now, when in the last moments before his arrest and death, he has gathered at the table with his friends, and he takes those closest to him with him into the garden. Now he invites me to come and be with him and he is ready to hear my prayers.

*Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. — Philipians 4*

First, I ask for my spiritual needs  
For light and grace to know and do what is good;  
For faith to believe and to trust in God;  
To grow in love and to be strong in service;  
To develop virtues and to know the fruits of the Spirit;  
To continue in the Christian faith and life,  
and finally to die a good and holy death.

I also bring the needs of my daily life—yearnings and hopes, frustrations and fears—not because he does not know them, but because he asks me to come honestly and openly to him. Even the petty and the silly can be spoken here, they must be spoken here; to hide them or pretend would cut me off from Jesus. The deepest longings of my heart can only be known when I am willing to honestly face all my longings. These requests and needs I bring, knowing that in the end, all prayers lead to Jesus' great act of renunciation—"nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." So, here I name my



needs and admit my desires, asking that God will shape my desires toward what is good and holy and life-giving.

*Lift up to God those cares and concerns which weigh upon your spirit.*

Psalm 23 *Dominus regit me* (BCP pp. 612-613)

The LORD is my shepherd; \*  
I shall not be in want.

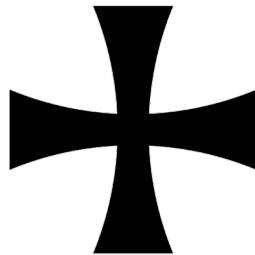
He makes me lie down in green pastures \*  
and leads me beside still waters.

He revives my soul \*  
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I shall fear no evil; \*  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; \*  
you have anointed my head with oil,  
and my cup is running over.

Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, \*  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.



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