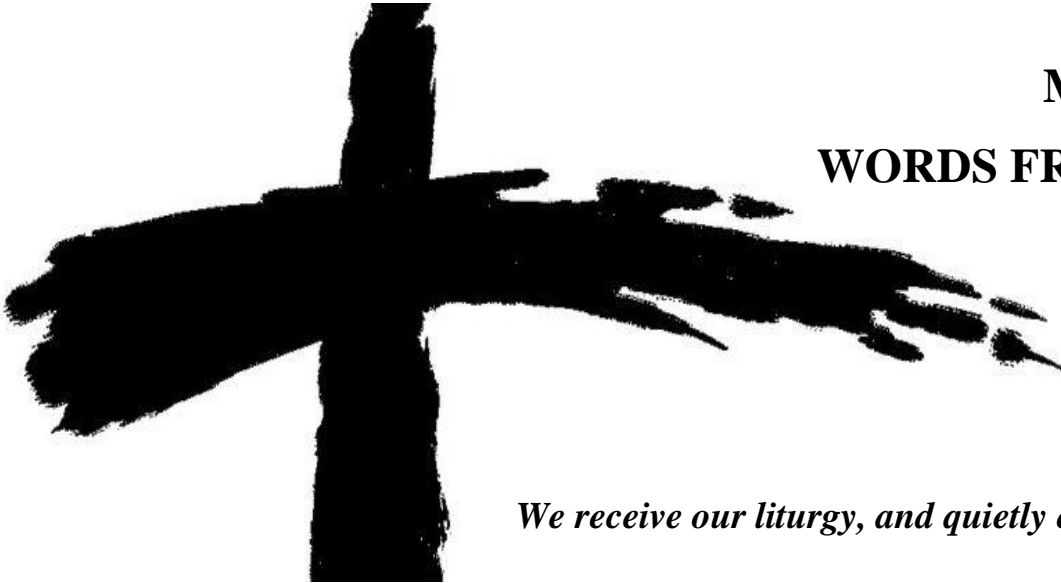


**HOLY FRIDAY
MARCH 29TH 2024**

WORDS FROM THE CROSS



We receive our liturgy, and quietly enter, taking our seats

Lay Down Your Head

Iona Community © 1996

1. Lay down your head, Lord Jesus Christ, fast falls the night.
Close follow those who crave your end, blinded by sight.
God give you rest, strength for your task, light for our way.
Lay down your head, and, by your side, we'll sleep and stay.

2. All that you've done and all you've said, suffered, and shared,
proves you're the one for whom the world waits unprepared.
Had you conformed, had you condoned, had you complied,
none would be heard pricing your head, nursing their pride.

3. What lies ahead we fear to guess, you fail to fear:
hopes seem to fade, heaven seems far, hell seems so near.
Here, with our faith stretched to the full, put to the test,
you calmly talk, then kneel to pray, then take your rest.

4. Lay down your head, Lord Jesus Christ, fast falls the night.
Close follow those who crave your end, blinded by sight.
God give you rest, strength for your task, light for our way.
Lay down your head, and, by your side, we'll sleep and stay.

FIRST WORD

Reading: Two others also who were criminals were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called 'The Skull', they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.' (Luke 23:32-34)

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.'

Reflection: *Look at the image*

Jesus forgave their sins...debts...trespasses.
Jesus, as you forgave, help us to forgive those who have
ignored...oppressed...abused...made us
fearful...manipulated...starved us of love...devalued us...
Jesus, heal our numbness...pain...resentment...anger.
We need to be forgiven when we
ignore...oppress...abuse...manipulate...devalue
Forgive our sins...debts...trespasses...
Forgive our sins...debts...trespasses...
Amen

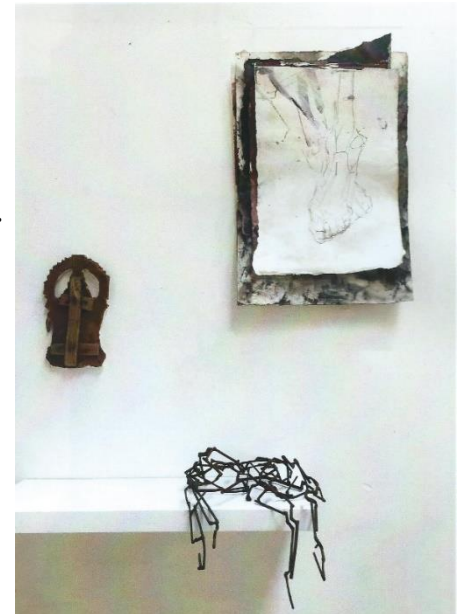
Sung Taizé response:

Cantor: Jesu Christe Miserere

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Cantor: To you O Lord, I lift up my soul

All: Jesu Christe Miserere



A Portrait of nailed feet and a soft dying lamb – Artist, Harrie Fasher

Prayer: On this day, at this time, whatever our faith or lack of it, we accept, deep in our hearts, the only words that can set us free: Your sins are forgiven.

Our sins are forgiven. Amen

SILENCE

SECOND WORD

Reading: One of the criminals who was hanged there kept deriding him and saying, ‘Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.’ But the other rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.’ The he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.’ He replied, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’ (Luke 23: 39 – 43)

‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’

Reflection:

*Look at the ‘The Prodigal Son’
and consider the light,
the shadows, the colour,
the way each person is dressed,
and the brothers as they look on.*



The Prodigal Son, Gelyy Korshev

We are not abandoned. We journey in hope.
Our hearts can still sing, even in dark days.
And in the last moments of his life on earth,
the man hanging beside Jesus,
in that place of apparently ultimate abandonment,
discovered these truths for himself.
He returned home, rejoicing.
And in the walled garden of Paradise...
the place of honour and of friendship...
encountered the face of Love.

Sung Taizé response:

Cantor: Jesu Christe Miserere

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Cantor: In your kindness, remember me

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, remember us when you come into your kingdom.
Remember us, not for our impressive CV,
nor for the things we hope will appear in our obituaries.
Remember us, not for the virtues we occasionally display,
nor for the great things we think we have done in your name.
Remember us as flawed and failing people,
like those who hung on either side of you.
Lord Jesus, remember us when we come into your kingdom. *Amen*

SILENCE

THIRD WORD

Reading: Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and his 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. (John 19: 25 – 27)

'Woman, here is your son'... (pause)... 'Here is your mother.'

Reflection: *Look at the image*

I saw a hand stretching out to me. It was my mother's hand.



On September 11, 2001, there were many ‘last words’ from hijacked planes and the twin towers, telephone calls to say goodbye and to offer final words of care and love to those who were loved...Someone who is about to die in terrible anguish makes room in their mind for someone else; for the grief and terror of someone they love. They do what they can to take some atom of that pain away from the other...that moment of ‘making room’ is what I as a Christian have to notice. It isn’t ‘pious’, it isn’t language about God; it’s simply language that brings into the world something other than self-defensiveness. It’s a breathing space.

Rowan Williams, *Writings in the Dust*

Sung Taizé response:

Cantor: Jesu Christe Miserere

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Cantor: You bring light to those in darkness

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Prayer: Where our families are open, loving and supportive,
Lord Jesus, shield our joy.
Where our families are tense, troubled and fragmented,
Lord Jesus, guide us to find a way through pain.

Where our churches are welcoming, including and encouraging,
Lord Jesus confirm and strengthen them.
Where our churches are introverted, suspicious and suffocated,
Lord Jesus redeem and renew them.

For ourselves, in this place of worship,
surrounded by people whose journey we have not travelled,
whose depth of faith we do not know,
whose potential we cannot imagine,
help us to believe that we belong together.

Amen

SILENCE

FOURTH WORD

Reading: When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o’clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, ‘*Eloi, Eloi, Iema sabachthani*’, which means My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’

Reflection: *Look at Salvador Dalí’s ‘Christ of St John of the Cross.’ He wrote. ‘I had a ‘cosmic dream’ in which I saw this image in colour and which in my dream represented the ‘nucleus of the atom.’ This nucleus later took on a metaphysical sense; I considered it ‘the very unity of the universe,’ the Christ!’*

From the very depths of suffering
those haunting words of utter despair.
Left alone, abandoned, we too may cry out;
'My God, my God, why have you forsaken
me?'

In times of trial this is the cry of one who
believes in God
even when faith is fragile.
We stretch out empty handed, hoping...

Sung Taizé response:

Cantor: Jesu Christe Miserere

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Cantor: Your ways, O Lord, make
known to me

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Prayer: We stretch out empty handed,
hoping...
Amen

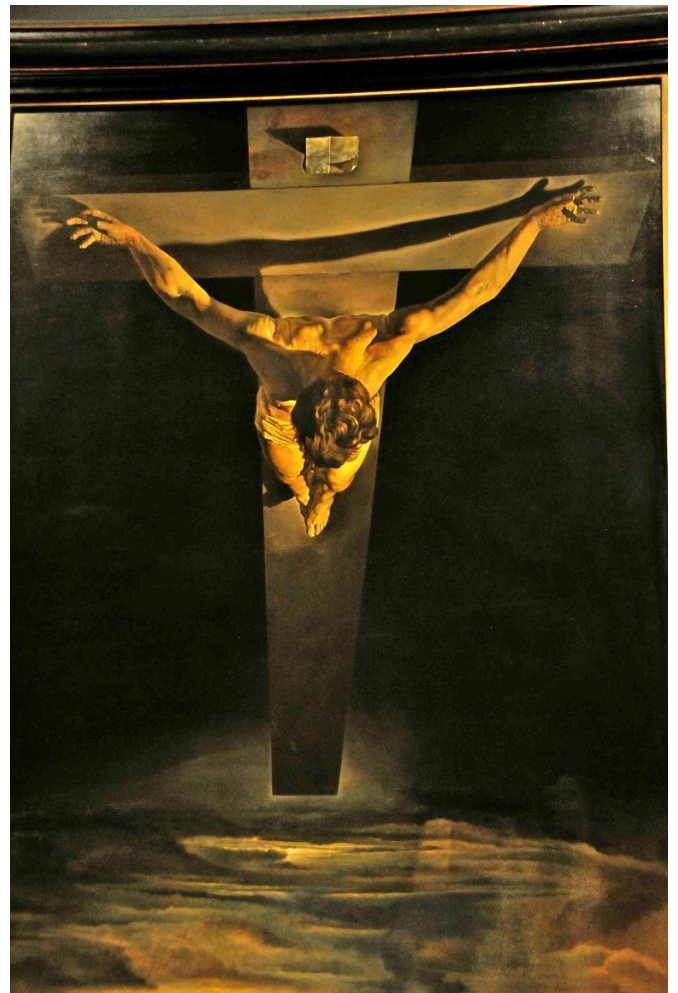
SILENCE

FIFTH WORD

Reading: After this, when Jesus knew that all was finished, he said (in order to fulfil 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. (John 19:28)

'I thirst'

Reflection: *Look at the dryness, blistering heat: death.*



Cobargo, NSW,
January 2020



There's a silent, screaming slide
into the bowels of ultimate despair.

Hostage is a man hanging by his fingernails over the edge of chaos.
Hostage is the humiliating stripping away of every sense and fibre,
of body, mind and spirit that make him what he is...

But he's a human being,
a unique and beautiful creation,
of which these things should form no part.

Brian Keenan, Irish Schoolteacher, who lived in solitary confinement for four years in Beirut.

Sung Taizé response:

Cantor: Jesu Christe Miserere

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Cantor: In you I trust, keep me from shame

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Prayer:

Humankind cannot bear too much reality.

I have seen situations of torture: South Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen,
places where the "Pacific Solution" is offered: Nauru and Manus Island, where
people go slowly or quickly crazy, where the worst of what humans and governments
do is on show.

The Living Water is dry and dying and we struggle to watch, to stay.

We want to run from here, or raise our fists and fight this.

Give us the courage to still our feet:

the courage to stay with you, where you already are,
in the places where you suffer still

Amen

SILENCE

SIXTH WORD

Reading: When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' (John 19:30)

'It is finished.'

Reflection: *Look at the image of
the Christ at the point of death*



Life taking on the powers is dangerous.

Origen of Alexandria hands to us a statement of Jesus not found in Scripture, but true nevertheless.

“Whoever is close to me, is close to the fire; whoever is far from me, is far from the Kingdom.”

It is dangerous being close to Jesus;

It threatens to set us afire, to consume us.

And only in the face of this danger does the vision of the Kingdom of God that has come near in him, light up.

(Johann Baptist Metz: Gefährlich Christus – the dangerous Christ)

What I must now do

to follow in your footsteps

and continue what you began?

Sung Taizé response:

Cantor: Jesu Christe Miserere

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Cantor: Guide me in your truth and teach me

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Prayer: O God, help me to follow in your footsteps and continue what you began
Amen

AN ACT OF CONFESSION AND PENITENCE

We use a pen and paper to confess our failings: ways in which we have shared in and contribute to the world's brokenness. We take the paper and place upon the altar, returning to our seats in silence.

SEVENTH WORD

Reading: It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed and the curtain of the Temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last.

'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.'

Reflection:

Reflect on how even reality and history share the pain of the crucifixion: the light dims, darkness overtakes the world.

Loving God,
Reality shared your pain, as the light darkened.
And the curtain tore in two.
The temple that conspired with Rome to kill Jesus
received your verdict.
And access to you is unencumbered by
those powers that claimed to speak for you.
You come to us through Jesus.
We come to you through Jesus.

Sung Taizé response:

Cantor: Jesu Christe Miserere

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Cantor: To you O Lord, I lift up my soul

All: Jesu Christe Miserere

Prayer:

Christ make my flesh your home,
my hands your hands,
My faltering love the starting point
for your unwavering passion.
That my starving spirit might be renewed.
That the world might change, if only a little.
Even as I hesitate hear me say:
Christ into your hands I commit my spirit.
Amen

SILENCE

We leave in silence.



Minister: Rev'd Dr. Geoff Dornan
Music Coordinator: Jade McFaul
Vocals: Caitlin Launt
Reader: Sonia Di Mezza
Sound and Video: Ann Sutton and David Bengier

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(Reflections and prayers by Catherine Benbow, Karen Bowden, Elaine Gisbourne, Malcolm King, Peter Millar, Rowan Williams, Carolyn Smyth, David McNeish JSP)
Reference: Taken from the pilgrimage through the village of Iona, Easter 2011
Sung Taizé Responses by Jacques Berthier, "Jesu Christe Miserere"