

Morning Prayer
Passiontide
Sunday, 5 April 2020
Palm Sunday

Preparation

O Lord, open our lips
All and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Let your ways be known upon earth,
All your saving power among the nations.

One or more of the following is said or sung:

this or another prayer of thanksgiving

Blessed are you, Lord God of our salvation,
to you be praise and glory for ever.
As a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief
your only Son was lifted up
that he might draw the whole world to himself.
May we walk this day in the way of the cross
and always be ready to share its weight,
declaring your love for all the world.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
All Blessed be God for ever.

a suitable hymn, or A Song of Lamentation

1Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? ♦
Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow,

2Which was brought upon me, ♦
which the Lord inflicted
on the day of his fierce anger.

3For these things I weep;
my eyes flow with tears; ♦
for a comforter is far from me,
one to revive my courage.

4Remember my affliction and my bitterness, ♦
the wormwood and the gall!

5But this I call to mind, ♦
and therefore I have hope:

6The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, ♦
his mercies never come to an end;

7They are new every morning; ♦
great is your faithfulness.

8'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, ♦
'therefore I will hope in him.'

9The Lord is good to those who wait for him, ♦
to the soul that seeks him.

10It is good that we should wait quietly ♦
for the salvation of the Lord.

11For the Lord will not reject for ever; ♦
though he causes grief, he will have compassion,

12According to the abundance of his steadfast love; ♦
for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

Lamentations 1.12, 16a,b; 3.19, 21-26, 31-33

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

This opening prayer may be said

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.

All Amen.

The Word of God

The appointed psalmody is said.

Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

A Song of Victory

1 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!

2 Let Israel say,
"His steadfast love endures forever."

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.

21 I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!
O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!

26 Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
We bless you from the house of the Lord.

27 The Lord is God,
and he has given us light.
Bind the festal procession with branches,
up to the horns of the altar.

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.

29 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Each psalm or group of psalms may end with

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*If there are two Scripture readings, the first may be read here, or both may be read
after the canticle.*

Philippians 2. 5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Canticle

A Song of the Lord's Gracious Deeds, or another suitable canticle, for example, [number 23 \(page 574\)](#), [number 42 \(page 593\)](#) or [number 43 \(page 594\)](#), may be said

Refrain:

**All I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,
the praises of the Most High.**

1Who is this that comes from Edom, ♦
coming from Bozrah, his garments stained crimson?

2Who is this in glorious apparel, ♦
marching in the greatness of his strength?

3'It is I, who announce that right has won the day, ♦
it is I,' says the Lord, 'for I am mighty to save.'

4Why are your robes all red, O Lord, ♦
and your garments like theirs who tread the winepress?

5'I have trodden the winepress alone, ♦
and from the peoples no one was with me.'

6I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, ♦
the praises of the Most High;

7All that God has done for us in his mercy, ♦
by his many acts of love.

8For God said, 'Surely, they are my people,
my children who will not deal falsely,' ♦
and he became their Saviour in all their distress.

9So God redeemed them by his love and pity; ♦
he lifted them up and carried them
through all the days of old.

Isaiah 63.1-3a, 7-9

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**All I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,
the praises of the Most High.**

Scripture Reading

One or more readings appointed for the day are read.

The reading(s) may be followed by a time of silence.

Matthew 21. 1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd[b]

spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

A suitable song or chant, or a responsory in this or another form, may follow

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

All by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.

All We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

We preach Christ crucified,
the power of God and the wisdom of God.

All By your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

God forbid that I should glory,
save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

cf 1 Corinthians 1 and Galatians 6

Gospel Canticle

***The Benedictus (The Song of Zechariah) is normally said,
or Saviour of the World (page 644) may be said***

Refrain:

***All The word of the cross is folly
to those who are perishing,
but to those who are being saved
it is the power of God.***

1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, ♦
who has come to his people and set them free.

2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, ♦
born of the house of his servant David.

3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old ♦
to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all that hate us,

4 To show mercy to our ancestors, ♦
and to remember his holy covenant.

5This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: ♦
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

6Free to worship him without fear, ♦
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

7And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, ♦
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

8To give his people knowledge of salvation ♦
by the forgiveness of all their sins.

9In the tender compassion of our God ♦
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

10To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, ♦
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.68-79

***All* Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Refrain:

***All* The word of the cross is folly
to those who are perishing,
but to those who are being saved
it is the power of God.**

The Sermon The Reverend Mother Yejide Peters

Most of the time, when we imagine the scene for Palm Sunday, we imagine excited crowds of people joyously welcoming the saviour of the world. We imagine lots of energy and hopefulness; people pressing together and crowding in for a glimpse of the great rabbi. I think of ticker tape parades in big cities or people crowded near the bandstand of the Quarry during the Flower Show to watch the beautiful fireworks.

This Palm Sunday is different. Perhaps you, like me, feel the edge of the crowd, their hunger for Jesus to make things right. I feel them pressing in for their own blessings, desperate to touch “even the hem of his garment” and be healed. I feel their anger at the unfairness of life itself, so many of them leading precarious lives, and most of them searching for visible signs of the living God in lives filled with indignities and uncertainties.

We should not insert ourselves into the scripture as if their only purpose is to amplify our current situation. Yet we cannot help but to read them with our own eyes, through the lens of what are living and have lived. Here we are. Faced with an international crisis of such magnitude that the usually clever pundits are left with nothing but summations of statistics, graphs and charts that are meant to reassure but leave many of us more puzzled than when we began.

“Stay inside. Protect the NHS. Save Lives.” Gives us some guidelines on how to cooperate as a civic society, though it does not resolve how we spiritually and emotionally cope with any of this. It does not say how this will end. It does not say how we deal with many many people dying.

Such perfect reassurance and certitude is outside the scope of humans full stop. No human, or human institution can set our hearts absolutely at ease. Some are more effective at what they do and how, yet make no mistake- the fullness of this endeavour is beyond human scope.

Perhaps this is what drew people to Jesus. They could sense his Divinity, the reassurance he provided that was neither bravado nor advertisement. We are told in another part of scripture that he taught “as one with authority.” It is that authority we are seeking, perhaps. And we will only find it at the throne of grace.

We are in our Palm Sunday, we are desperate for Jesus. We are hungry for his Good News, and many of us have an idea of what we would like that to be: safety for those we love, for our country, for the world, a cure, an end to the deaths, and a return to our normal life.

We bring all of that to our prayer and praise of Him. Come into the midst of this troubled situation, O God! Hosannah! Hold us close, Lord Christ. We praise you and we bless you. We who have known you in the breaking of bread and the prayers, we who have known you in the teaching and preaching, in the quiet times at home and in the bustle and hurry of life, we say Hosannah.

We who on any other Palm Sunday would walk the streets singing your praises, singing them more earnestly today knowing how desperately we need you. Come, Lord Jesus. We Praise you Lord Christ. In the midst of the suffering and the sorrow, visit us with your love. Prepare a way for our sisters and brothers who are alone and afraid. Give rest to those who die, that they may know the gift of your eternal presence. Please. Give us the hope only you can give. Hosannah in the Highest. Blessed be you, Lord Jesus. We need you, we love you, we thank you. We believe, and when we doubt we want to believe. Save us and help us, we pray. Hosannah in the Highest.

Prayers

Intercessions are offered

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world;
for Justin Archbishop of Canterbury, John Archbishop of York; Michael our Diocesan

Bishop and Sara, our Area Bishop; and for all ministers and people. Pray for the Church.*Silence*

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; we pray for our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth, our Prime Minister Boris Johnson, all Ministers of Parliament, and all who govern and hold authority in this and every land.

Pray for the well-being of all people. Pray for justice and peace.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison. Pray for those in any need or trouble. We pray for those who working on the front lines, especially those working with the NHS and other key workers. We pray especially for those who have asked the prayers of this benefice: for Chris Cheshire, Cathryn, Emma, Sarah Doyle, Malcolm Booth, Jessica, Laverne, Maureen, Rachel, Jubilee, Lara, McKell.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him. Pray that they may find and be found by him.

Silence

I ask your prayers for those who have died. We pray for the departed [especially Jean Grierson, Timothy Carter, Joanna Nichols, Beryl Babel, and Pamela Joy Owens. We also pray for those have died from COVID-19. Pray for all who have died and for those they leave to mourn.

Silence

We also pray for those who are remembered especially this week for Ivy Lowe, Gladys Whitrick, Elizabeth Warren, John Mulhearn

Silence

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honoured. Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.
Silence

The Collect of the day is said

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,

and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer is said

Standing at the foot of the cross,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

(or)

Standing at the foot of the cross,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All

**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,
the power and the glory,**

**for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Conclusion

May Christ, who bore our sins on the cross,
set us free to serve him with joy.
All Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

The Last Gospel: Matthew 26:14-27:66

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What will you give me if I betray him to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?" He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born." Judas, who betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" He replied, "You have said so."

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you." Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." And going a little farther,

he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? 41 Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?" They answered, "He deserves death." Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, saying, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?" Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that

moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!" Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

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 the tomb to 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.

© [The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, 2000-2005](#)

Official Common Worship apps, books and eBooks are available from [Church House Publishing](#).

The Bible readings (other than the psalms) are from *The New Revised Standard Version* Anglicized Edition, copyright 1989, 1995 Division of Christian Education of the [National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America](#). Used by permission. All rights reserved.