



Grace Episcopal Church

3601 Russell Rd. Alexandria, Virginia 22305

www.gracealex.org 703.549.1980

Good Friday
April 18, 2025 – Noon
Stations of the Cross



Connecting @ Grace

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WELCOME TO GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

We are pleased to welcome you to Grace Church. If you are joining us for the first time, please send us a message at welcome@gracealex.org, so we can get to know you. We can also add you to our mailing list by request. We're glad to have you join with us in worshipping God in the beauty of holiness, something which is central to our identity at Grace. We hope you will join with us in sharing the love of God with this world that needs healing.

Assisted listening devices are available for use during worship. Please see an usher if you'd like to use one.



Please silence your cell phones during worship.

Our Mission Statement

To Love, Proclaim, and Serve God

Through + life-giving liturgical worship + joyful community + empowering others

Contacting Grace

Please feel free to contact our staff.

Our regular office hours are Monday to Thursday 9 am - 3 pm, and Fridays 9 am - 12 noon.

(Mother Anne & Mother Emma are out of the office on Mondays and Father Santiago is out of the office on Fridays)

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IN NEED OF PASTORAL CARE?

Clergy and staff are available for pastoral care. Please call the church office at (703) 549-1980 if you're ill or need pastoral care. For emergencies after hours, please call the **After-hours Emergency Number: (703) 261-9079**, and the priest on call will assist you.

HOME COMMUNION

Home Communion is available upon request for parishioners who desire this service by Eucharistic Visitors every Sunday. Home Communion will be in one form, Bread only. To request Home Communion, parishioners are asked to contact the Parish Office by telephone at 703-549-1980 no later than 12 pm on the Wednesday prior to the Sunday on which they would like to receive Home Communion.

MEDITATIONS ON THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

GOOD FRIDAY

NOON, APRIL 18, 2025

The people stand.

OPENING DEVOTIONS

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Officiant Lord, have mercy.

People **Christ, have mercy.**

Officiant Lord, have mercy.

Officiant and People

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.

Versicle We will glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Response **In whom is our salvation, our life and resurrection.**

Officiant Let us pray. *(Silence)*

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The procession goes to the First Station.

It is customary to genuflect as each station is announced. You may bow instead.

Parishioners will read the meditation for each station.

FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation; and they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him to Pilate. And they all condemned him and said, "He deserves to die." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. Then he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

Versicle God did not spare his own Son:

Response **But delivered him up for us all.**

MEDITATION

In this moment—condemned, betrayed, and alone—Jesus doesn't raise His voice or His hand. He does not resort to violence or shouting, even though the situation is unjust and the power structures around Him are corrupt and broken. His silence, His surrender, is not weakness, but strength. He confronts injustice with presence, truth, and unwavering love.

Jesus reveals a different kind of power—not the power to punish the weak or to arbitrarily determine that some human beings are not equal. Jesus reveals the power to endure, to stand up for what is right, and to act in a way that embodies Love. He reveals the power to transform.

By accepting His condemnation, Jesus begins a journey that shows us The Way through suffering—not around it. The Way of the Cross that Jesus accepted is not just His path; it is ours. It teaches us that when we choose to pick up our crosses with courage, humility, and love, our pain can be transformed into compassion, our struggles into strength, and our wounds into wisdom.

Jesus refused to accept or mirror the violence and brokenness of the world. He gave us a path that doesn't just resist evil, but also enables us to change ourselves and, as a result, change the world.

– Steven Zatta

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. **Amen.**

Holy God

Holy and Mighty,

Holy Immortal One,

Have mercy upon us.

SECOND STATION: JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Jesus went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Like a lamb he was led to the slaughter; and like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

Versicle The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all:

Response **For the transgression of my people he was stricken.**

MEDITATION

As I reflect on the second station, I think about the meaning of the cross then and now. Today the cross symbolizes Christianity and Jesus' ultimate act of love and humanness. But then, it meant shame and humiliation, an instrument for execution, reserved for criminals. Yet Jesus took it up willingly, accepting the injustice, betrayal and physical pain that came with it.

What must have been going through His mind after being denied by those He loved? How His heart must have hurt, in all of the human ways we might imagine. Did He feel anger, fear and heartache? Could Jesus feel His Father's love in this moment, or was it hard in the ways it can be hard for us?

Jesus took up His cross. What are we to make of this? I wonder if we're asked to discern what our cross is, when to pick it up, and how to carry it.

In a world full of hardship, we face many choices about how to respond, and how to act in love. What is God asking me to pick up, and how can I use my unique gifts and position to serve that purpose? How are we being asked to love? Maybe it's speaking up when it's uncomfortable, making a hard decision, or simply being present for others. Maybe it's big things and small moments.

I pray that we feel God's love and that it gives us strength to discern and act in love despite the weight of doing so.

- Clare Miller

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Almighty God, whose most dear Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and was born in human likeness. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name. Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, and kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is the Lord our God.

Versicle Surely he has borne our griefs:

Response **And carried our sorrows.**

MEDITATION

Jesus falls under the heavy weight of the cross. This reminds us of his humanity. In every human endeavor there is struggle. Our time calls for exceptional courage and resilience in the midst of a great struggle. Those who struggle:

poor people around the world who lost USAID funding;

federal workers who steadfastly carried out their duties who have been terminated from their jobs;

the less fortunate in our own country whose lives are made harder by rising prices and high costs of health care;

seniors whose life savings have dwindled;

women who don't have rights over their own bodies;

young men who lack community and purpose. What good to them is Jesus?

The weight of the cross is great and Jesus feels pain yet continues.

This shows us the strength of God and gives us courage to rise up and go forward. To fall is not to fail. We know that God is with us.

- Elizabeth Corley

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS AFFLICTED MOTHER

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

To what can I liken you, to what can I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What likeness can I use to comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For vast as the sea is your ruin. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended.

Versicle A sword will pierce your own soul also:

Response **And fill your heart with bitter pain.**

MEDITATION

This is a difficult moment to reflect on because it is hard to imagine not doing anything as a mother when your child is suffering. At first, I tried to imagine myself as Mary and what I would do in that situation, but I don't think that is what we are meant to wonder. I think we are meant to see Mary as a sign of God's love, even amongst terrible suffering. Mary is there with her son to show him that God is with him and that he is loved deeply.

I see this as a message to continue to love those around us, especially as they are suffering. Our love and support can be a sign of God's love and we need to continue to show that love as much as possible.

- Katy Pattarini

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

O God, who willed that in the passion of your Son a sword of grief should pierce the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary his mother: Mercifully grant that your Church, having shared with her in his passion, may be made worthy to share in the joys of his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

FIFTH STATION: THE CROSS IS LAID ON SIMON OF CYRENE

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

As they led Jesus away, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus. “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Versicle Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me:

Response **Cannot be my disciple.**

MEDITATION

This was a random encounter. One moment Simon was a witness to a gruesome scene. Then a Roman soldier was forcing him to join in on this phase of a man’s execution. The gospels say Simon was compelled – a Greek word associated with the Romans’ conscription of civilians for labor.

In the years after, Simon became a person of renown. Today, he is an icon of discipleship.

It reminds me of the characters who lived in holy imagination long before Jesus. Like Joseph, sold by his own brothers. Of his father Jacob, who wrestled with God. For all of them, providence seemed to intrude on life, sometimes following violence, often after betrayal.

I wonder if I know what discipleship is really like. Or if what I know of discipleship is only a part of it. In Simon’s case, following God looked a lot like survival. Or a tragedy that only later he could link to a higher purpose.

I hope Simon got to see the rest of the story. Jesus, the risen Lord. The one who ignited what C.S. Lewis called, “the deeper magic from before the dawn of time.” When death itself would start working backwards.

- Bill Malone

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Heavenly Father whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

SIXTH STATION: A WOMAN WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

We have seen him without beauty or majesty, with no looks to attract our eyes. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not. His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of men. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.

Versicle Restore us, O Lord God of hosts:

Response **Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

MEDITATION

Jesus, in the retelling of your suffering, we want to rescue you, we want to protect and heal you. In the path of death, you have shown us the meaning of love and devotion. Let us run to you in spirit and wipe your face in love and gratitude on that day in spirit.

- Sheng Davis

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

O God, who before the passion of your only-begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant to us that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance, may be strengthened to bear our cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

Versicle But as for me, I am a worm and no man:

Response **Scorned by all and despised by the people.**

MEDITATION

Getting up once takes courage. Getting up twice takes faith.

To fall once, experience pain, failure, rejection, fear, humiliation, is a terrifying experience. It requires a special brave-heartedness to not just stay down. When you're that low, there's a comfort in knowing it's hard to get lower. The worst has happened: here you are. Courage prompts you with the question: What if I tried again, and left the comfort of the ground?

To put your heart and soul into rising again, stepping forward now with the new knowledge of what falling felt like, and then fall again is a unique agony. You've already gotten up once, with the hope the first time was just a fluke, that the worst is behind you, only to find it could happen again. There's nothing like the first time falling, but there's also nothing like the second. Sometimes we get tired of getting up again and again and again.

The second time You rose, You knew how much it hurt. You knew the pain wasn't over. And You showed us with love and faith that where You were going was worth it, for all of us. Your sacrifice can relieve our pain, by bringing us together to share in Your message and Your love and the comfort these bring; yet Your sacrifice did not eliminate all pain entirely—instead, to the inevitable pain of life, it adds a transcendence we could not find without You.

When we get up the second time, we know it hurts and we know it can happen again. You took up the cross to give us so many things, and at this station I contemplate Your gift of transcendence through faith. When we cannot rise God will lift us.

- Hannah Sternberg

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

There followed after Jesus a great multitude of people, and among them were women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

Versicle Those who sowed with tears:

Response **Will reap with songs of joy.**

MEDITATION

The 8th Station of the Cross reminds us that the miracle of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection is only meaningful in the blessing and absolution that it confers upon the most vulnerable. During

Holy Week, we receive many moving descriptions of Christ's sacrifice. When we are moved, perhaps to tears, by these descriptions, we must remember Jesus's command, to weep not for him, but for those who will suffer after his death. On this Good Friday, weep for the mothers in Gaza and Palestine, past and present, whose breasts have been dry due to starvation, who have grieved over the lives of their children whom they fear may not live beyond their first few months. Christ walked among the lowliest of us, blessed the lowliest of us, and died for the lowliest of us. It is these people that we should remember as we celebrate his great sacrifice.

- Nicholas Gentry

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Teach your Church, O Lord, to mourn the sins of which it is guilty, and to repent and forsake them; that, by your pardoning grace, the results of our iniquities may not be visited upon our children and our children's children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A THIRD TIME

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light. He has besieged me and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me dwell in the darkness like the dead of long ago. Though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer. He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes. "Remember, O Lord, my affliction and bitterness, the wormwood and the gall!"

Versicle He was led like a lamb to the slaughter:

Response **And like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth.**

MEDITATION

This third fall of Jesus captures the physical and emotional pain of the moment, juxtaposed with his strength and perseverance. Having endured all he did before and knowing what was yet to come, Jesus persevered, but persevered for what exactly? The perseverance transcended the immediate moment of the third fall and is evidence of Jesus' commitment to fulfill his duty to mankind. The immediate challenges and horrors are steps in service to the greater good. Jesus' perseverance in these dark moments were an act of love for us. This act, this determination to perform his duty in spite of adversity and hardship, is a source of inspiration for us all.

As we navigate challenging times, it's helpful to focus on the larger picture. Putting the immediate moment in the context of the larger good can provide us with the strength we need to move forward, to pick ourselves up from yet another fall, to take the next steps. During dark moments, think about our love and devotion to others and those who will benefit if we pick ourselves up and continue forward just as Jesus did.

- Kevin Brathwaite

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

When they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And they divided his garments among them by casting lots. This was to fulfill the scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing."

Versicle They gave me gall to eat:

Response **And when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.**

MEDITATION

They have taken everything from Jesus, even his clothing. Clothes were a symbol of culture and status in Jesus' day, and in some ways still are. They've reduced Jesus to his most basic identity as a human being. They did this to humiliate Him, but Jesus accepted it with humility. Humiliation and humility sound similar, but there is a key difference. Humiliation is imposed by others to cause shame and a feeling of embarrassment. Humility is a chosen attitude of modesty and acceptance of your own strengths and weaknesses.

If Jesus were to speak to God the Father at this time, I imagine it might sound like this.

"Heavenly Father, by stripping me of my garments,
They want me to feel shame and inferiority,
But I do not. Instead, I feel humble,
Because you made me fully human as well as fully God.
I accept my human strengths and weaknesses.
I trust that You will give me the courage
To embrace my humanity as well as my Godhead,
And feel no shame in it."

It should be easier for us to embrace humility because we know we are not also God. But sometimes it isn't because we may take too much pride in our accomplishments. I pray that God will help me, and us all, to embrace humility when we sense that we are becoming too "full of ourselves."

- June Huber

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

When they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him; and with him they crucified two criminals, one on the right, and the other on the left, and Jesus between them. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

Versicle They pierce my hands and my feet:

Response **They stare and gloat over me.**

MEDITATION

Some years ago, at one of our Palm Sunday Intergenerational events, I was on one side of the Merrow Hall Auditorium, coaching older children and adults in the tricky art of Palm Cross folding. Suddenly I began to hear a pounding noise from the other side of the Hall where Holy Week activities for the younger children were being supervised by Sunday School teachers.

Curious, I took a break, leaving the Palm Cross supervision to my assistant, and went over to see what this was all about. I found young boys pounding nails into pieces of wood. One of the teachers, a father of two boys, had created this activity.

I was immediately struck—this is what we do—each of our sins is a whack on a nail driven into Christ's body, but normally we don't hear that terrible sound.

The memory of the sounds of that event has remained with me to this day, especially each time we reach this moment when we contemplate the nailing of Jesus to the Cross and all the sorrow and pain that pounding represents!

And yet, this sound also represents the Grace of our redemption and salvation by this act of sacrifice that we meditate upon now. As we hear this sound in our minds, may we renew in our hearts our commitment to follow Christ.

- Lucy-Lee Reed

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. **Amen.**

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished!" And then, crying with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." And he bowed his head, and handed over his spirit.

People genuflect and hold a period of silence.

Versicle Christ for us became obedient unto death:

Response **Even on a cross.**

MEDITATION

We are all going to die someday, you and I and everyone we love, but I hope to God we don't die as Jesus died, in agony, tortured to death in front of his mom, through no fault of his own. I wouldn't wish Jesus' death on my worst enemy. Yet the agonizing death of the innocent has been and is happening all over the world. I've never met anyone who has never suffered.

Even Jesus felt abandoned as he was dying, but I can't believe that we suffer and die because God doesn't love us, any more than I can believe that God didn't love Jesus.

I believe that God made human beings to love each other; and since love can't be forced, God had to give us all a choice about whether to love. We don't always make the right choice, but we are not stuck with wrong choices forever. Instead, God placed us in time and space so that every minute when one of us acts without love is followed by another, new minute, in which we can repent and choose, this time, to act with love. God knows we're still learning, and forgives us. During our lives we all suffer the consequences of our own and others' lack of love, as Jesus did. Eventually we will all die, as Jesus did. But because Jesus died in pain, we know that we will neither suffer or die alone.

The refrain of a song written by Marsha Stevens-Pino has meant a lot to me for half a century now:

And Jesus said, Come to the water, stand by my side,
I know you are thirsty; you won't be denied.
I felt every tear drop, as in darkness you cried,
And I strove to remind you that for those tears I died.

- Anne Clift Boris

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; who lives and reigns now and for ever.
Amen.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

THIRTEENTH STATION: THE BODY OF JESUS IS PLACED IN THE ARMS OF HIS MOTHER

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

All you who pass by, behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow. My eyes are spent with weeping; my soul is in tumult; my heart is poured out in grief because of the downfall of my people. "Do not call me Naomi (which means Pleasant), call me Mara (which means Bitter); for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."

Versicle Her tears run down her cheeks:

Response **And she has none to comfort her.**

MEDITATION

My good friend and fellow Grace member Kemp Williams often says, "we have Christmas because of Easter." By this, he means we get to celebrate the joyful and blessed birth of Christ at Christmas only because of his suffering, death and resurrection at Easter. Yet so much of the way that we think about Mary is connected to the birth of Christ.

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed that thou among women, and blessed it is the fruit of that wound, Jesus.

We love and revere Christmas Mary, Naomi, the blessed one. But that is not the Mary we encounter at Station 13 being handed the dead body of her son. Here we find a woman broken by the most crushing experience a mother can endure, the death of a child. Here we meet Mara.

When my grandmother was at the funeral of her son, and only biological child, who was killed in Vietnam, she refused to accept the American flag. My mother had to receive it in her stead. While she respected and valued the sacrifice her son made for his country, she had been dealt with very bitterly. My grandmother needed Mara at that moment. Although her bitterness was so deep that she cannot accept the flag, I never once saw her deny or turn away from God. I believe that is because my grandmother knew what Mary did not know at the time of Jesus's death. My grandmother knew what Mary and the world would discover three days later when Jesus broke the bounds of death and rose into the waiting arms of his father. Through all of her pain, grief and bitterness, my grandmother remained Naomi because she knew that her son was in the loving arms of his father in heaven.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

- Tracy Enger

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

Lord Jesus Christ, by your death you took away the sting of death; Grant to us your servants so to follow in faith where you have led the way, that we may at length fall asleep peacefully in you and wake up in your likeness; for your tender mercies' sake. **Amen.**

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Officiant We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:
People **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb.

Versicle You will not abandon me to the grave:
Response **Nor let your holy One see corruption.**

MEDITATION

The body of Jesus was laid in the tomb. The Sabbath has begun, the disciples were hidden in the upper room. Filled with despair, grief, and abandonment, they must have prayed, "Why didn't Jesus save himself? What happens now?" Their prayers to God were met with silence. There are times we too experience despair, grief, unanswered prayers. Where do we turn when God is silent in our darkness? How do we move forward? Some may experience a form of spiritual death without allowing God to help. For most of my life I've suffered with grief and depression. Thoughts of leaving this life was my way of coping. Then, two and a half years ago, after a near catastrophic event, I felt completely broken and lost. Wanting to finally end this crippling grief, I very nearly succeeded at ending my own life. When I awoke two days later, I was so angry at God for thwarting my plan. My faith was gone and I didn't know how to move forward. I was alone. Then two years ago, a dear friend shared that while praying on Holy Saturday, she saw me sitting in a cave with Jesus by my side. Even though I was still experiencing my crisis of faith, her words stayed with me. It's taking a long time, but I'm slowly coming back to God.

So on our darkest days, remember this isn't God's final word for us. God has not abandoned us; Jesus is sitting with us always. Battles are being fought for us, even when we do not see them. We will discover that God is nearer than we ever thought. And we'll see that just as night gives way to day, the crucifixion always gives way to the resurrection.

- Kelly Gable

Officiant Let us pray.

Silence

O God, your blessed Son was laid in a tomb in a garden, and rested on the Sabbath day; Grant that we who have been buried with him in the waters of baptism may find our perfect rest in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

The people kneel.

CONCLUDING COLLECTS

Silent prayer, music, and meditation will continue until the Solemn Liturgy of the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ begins at 1:30 p.m.

SERVING @ GRACE TODAY

Officiant	Mother Anne Turner
Crucifer	Kristine Hesse
Ushers	John Boris, June Huber
Meditations	Steven Zatta, Clara Miller, Elizabeth Corley, Katy Pattarini, Bill Malone, Sheng Davis, Hannah Sternberg, Nicholas Gentry, Kevin Brathwaite, June Huber, Lucy-Lee Reed, Anne Clift Boris, Tracy Enger, Kelly Gable
Altar Guild Crew Leader	Eleanor Reed

2025 Holy Week & Easter Sunday @ Grace

**Nursery Care Provided*

Palm Sunday, April 13

- 7:30 am - Holy Eucharist
- 8:45 am - La Santa Eucaristía con Procesión (*in Spanish*)*
- 9:00 am - Little Church with Eucharist*
- 9:30 am - Palm Cross Activity for all ages*
- 10:30 am - Festival Eucharist with Procession*
(*Livestreamed*)
- 5:00 pm - Contemplative Eucharist

Monday in Holy Week, April 14

- 7:00 pm - Contemplative Eucharist

Tuesday in Holy Week, April 15

- 7:00 pm - Contemplative Eucharist

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 16

- 7:00 pm - Choral Tenebrae led by our choir and
Dr. Alain Truche, Director of Music
(*Livestreamed*)

Maundy Thursday, April 17

- 7:00 pm - Maundy Thursday Festival Eucharist
with foot-washing and stripping of the altar
(*Livestreamed*)
Prayer Watch follows until Midnight

Good Friday, April 18

- 7:00 am - Liturgy of the Day (*Livestreamed*)
- 12:00 - 1:00 pm - Stations of the Cross (*Livestreamed*)
- 1:00 - 1:30 pm - Silence / Music (*Livestreamed*)
- 1:30 - 3:00 pm - Liturgy of the Day (*Livestreamed*)
- 5:00 pm - Children & Family Service
- 7:00 pm - Via Crucis (*in Spanish*)

Holy Saturday, April 19

- 9:00 am - Holy Saturday Liturgy of the Day
- 10:00 am - Quiet Morning Gathering
in the Saint John Room

Easter Vigil with Bishop Stevenson Saturday, April 19

- 8:00 pm - Easter Vigil with Baptism &
Confirmations* (*Livestreamed*)
Agape potluck meal will follow in the Auditorium

Easter Sunday, April 20

- 6:00 am - Sunrise Service by the Potomac River
- 8:45 am - La Santa Eucaristía (*in Spanish*)*
- 9:00 am - Little Church with Eucharist*
- 9:45 am Easter Egg Hunt *
- 10:30 am - Festival Eucharist & Baptisms*
(*Livestreamed*)
Festive prelude starts at 10 AM
- No 5 pm Service on Easter Sunday

