



MEDITATIONS ON THE CROSS REFLECTIVE SERVICE

14TH APRIL 2025
7.30PM

Welcome to Holy Trinity Church, Prestwood, on the Monday of Holy Week as we reflect and meditate on the Cross.

Today is Monday of Holy Week. Through participation in the whole sequence of services this week, we share in Christ's own journey, from the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the empty tomb on Easter morning.

Our worship celebrates Christ's love for all people.

We find rest in God's presence.

The Holy Spirit empowers our lives.

We enjoy building a loving community.

We believe in **inclusive church** – a church which **celebrates and affirms every person** and does not discriminate. We will continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of **disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality**. We believe in a Church which **welcomes and serves all people** in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.

A toilet with disabled and baby changing facilities is available next to the vestry.



If you don't already give regularly, you can support us by using the contactless donation box opposite the door as you enter or leave the church. To give regularly please take a Parish

Giving Scheme leaflet from the rack, or sign up to the Parish Giving Scheme by scanning here to get started:



Private prayer of preparation

Oh, Adorable Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, You have suffered death on the Cross for our sins. Oh, Holy Cross of Jesus, be my true light! Oh, Holy Cross, fill my soul with good thoughts. Oh, Holy Cross, ward off from me all things that are evil. Oh, Holy Cross, ward off from me all dangers and deaths and give me life everlasting!

Opening Music

Limina Luminis
Olivia Belli (2023)
performed by Anna Lapwood (2025)

Gathering

Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12.2

Dear Friends, tonight we reflect on the crucifix, the depiction of the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross. The crucifix draws our eyes and mind to the passion of Jesus, and the events of Holy Week. The crucifix reminds us of Jesus' love for us. The crucifix invites us to pray throughout the day. The crucifix evokes deep feelings, talking to God and creating space for God to talk back. As we reflect on the cross, we enter a period of stillness and calm.

Let us pray:

Eternal God, in the cross of Jesus we see the cost of our sin and the depth of your love: in humble hope and fear may we place at his feet all that we have and all that we are, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

First Image

The Crucifixion (previously attributed to school of Duccio, c.1255–before 1319)
c.1315–1330

Scripture

A reading from the Gospel according to Saint John

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to 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. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Reflection

In the centre of this image, the artist has painted Christ at the moment of his death. His head has fallen to one side, revealing an expression of pain as blood runs from his hands and head. On either side are the two thieves who were crucified at the same time. A chorus of angels surrounds him, bearing expressions

of grief. Beneath Christ are the figures of St John the Evangelist, the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene, who are reacting to the news of his death.

In this image, we see the pain and suffering that Jesus faced. The authorities that demanded his death, his mother almost fainting at the sight of her son's body dead on the cross. Meditating on this image we feel the pain and grief of those who watch on.

Music for Reflection

The Crucifixion

Petrina Pacheco feat. Heather Messick (2023)

Second Image

White Crucifixion | Marc Chagall (1938)

Scripture

A reading from the Gospel according to Saint John

Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. The chief priests of the Jews then said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

Reflection

Prior to the outbreak of the Second World War this image, by a Jewish artist, was painted to portray Jesus as an emblem of Jewish suffering. Around him we see images of Jews under threat, scenes of attack, destruction and flight. Painted in the context of synagogue-burnings, and Kristallnacht - The Night of Broken Glass.

In this image we see Jesus in his Jewishness, the prayer shawl girding his loins, the menorah surrounded by a halo light that echoes Jesus' halo. The artist attempts to bring Jewish suffering to the attention of Christians. The placard above Jesus' head reads 'Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews'. Here the ultimate image of the suffering Jesus is portrayed as a Jew in the midst of the anti-Semitic attacks on Jews preceding the Holocaust.^[1]

Music for Reflection

O Sacred Neck, Now Wounded

The Porter's Gate (2020)

Third Image

The Crucifixion | Graham Sutherland (1946)

Scripture

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you

except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in much fear and trembling; and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man conceived,
what God has prepared for those who love him,”

Reflection

Paul’s message to the Corinthians is stark and simple - Jesus Christ, crucified, is the way of life. This is reflected in the image. It describes Jesus’ suffering; the measured lines constricting his body. The absence of other figures suggests the event sits outside of a particular time, whilst also speaking to all times.

This image is a meditation not on suffering, but on suffering with compassion. Paul does what leaders are often unable to do, he admits his own weakness, his fear and his reliance on something greater than himself.^[2]

Music for Reflection

Into thy Hands

Jonathan Dove (1996)

performed by *Anna Lapwood and The Chapel Choir of Pembroke College,
Cambridge (2020)*

Fourth Image

Christ is our bridge to heaven - the only Way across the gulf between earthly life and eternal glory | Elizabeth Wang (2000)

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Saint John

‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.’ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.’

Reflection

In this image Jesus is depicted with his arms outstretched, bridging the chasm separating heaven from earth. On his shoulders a multitude of people are crossing from one side of the divide to the other. The cross towards a bright, heavenly light.

This image reminds us that Jesus is the way to salvation and eternal life. As we hear in John's Gospel, Jesus is the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through him. In his death, resurrection and ascension, Jesus goes ahead of us, to prepare the way. He is our bridge, the link between us and the Father.

Music for Reflection

Come to Me

Ivo Antognini

Performed by *Anna Lapwood and The Chapel Choir of Pembroke College, Cambridge (2025)*

Fifth Image

Christ of St John of the Cross | Salvador Dalí (1904–1989)

Poem

Salvador Dali: Christ of St John of the Cross

It is not of this world, and yet it is,
And that is how it should be.
Strong light hits back and the arms
Coming from where we cannot see,
Ought not to see, another dimension
For another time. At this time, we
Share the life of bay and boat
With simply painted fishermen
Who give no Amen
Even if clouds both apocalyptic and real
Made them look up and feel
What they had to feel
Of shattering amazement, fear,
Protection, and a wash of glory.
Was it an end coming near?
Was it a beginning coming near?
What happened to the thorns and blood and sweat?
What happened to the hands like claws the whipcord muscles?
Has the artist never seen Grünewald?
'I have to tell you John of the cross called,
Said to remind you light and death once met.'

Edwin Morgan (2007)

Reflection

Christ floats over a darkened sky, reflected by the shore beneath where we see a fishing boat moored. Influenced by a drawing of the Spanish Mystic John of the Cross.

In this image we are reminded that Jesus is the Light of the World, we are reminded of the disciples he called to share his message after his death. That these disciples were merely fisherman. We are reminded that Jesus' death is not the end, but the beginning. That through him light and death once met.

Music for Reflection

God So Loved the World from Stainer's 'The Crucifixion'

John Stainer (1840-1901)

performed by *The Chapel Choir of University College, Hurham*

The Dismissal

Christ crucified draw you to himself, to find in him a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sins forgiven; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

All: Amen

Go in the peace of Christ

All: Thanks be to God

Closing Music

Crucifixus

Antonio Lotti (1667-1740)

performed by *The Chapel Choir of University College, Hurham*

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^[1] Amitai Mendelsohn. 2019. 'The Jewish Jesus' and 'A Polyphonic Placard', in *The Visual Commentary Of Scripture* ed. by Ben Quash. (London: The Visual Commentary on Scripture Foundation). [Accessed 5.4.2025] <https://thevcs.org/reinscribing-cross#jewish-jesus>

^[2] Clementine Kane. 2024. 'Knowing Nothing', in *The Visual Commentary Of Scripture* ed. by Ben Quash. (London: The Visual Commentary on Scripture Foundation). [Accessed 5.4.2025] <https://thevcs.org/divine-incognito#knowing-nothing>



HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

13th - 20th April



Palm Sunday

9.30am Parish Eucharist, Holy Trinity

11.15am Morning Prayer, St Mary Magdalene

Holy Monday

7.30pm Meditative Service,
Holy Trinity

Holy Tuesday

7.30pm Healing Eucharist,
Holy Trinity

Holy Wednesday

7.30pm Stations of the
Cross, Holy Trinity

Maundy Thursday, Holy Trinity

8.00pm Sung Eucharist and Stripping of the Altars

9.15pm Vigil

11.55pm Compline

Good Friday

9.15am Walk of Witness (Depart from HTP)

10.30am Churches Together Service (Village Hall)

12.00pm The Seven Last Words of our Saviour on the Cross
Joseph Haydn (St Mary Magdalene)

2.00pm The Good Friday Liturgy, Holy Trinity

Holy Saturday

10.00am Craft & Praise, Holy Trinity

8.00pm First Mass of Easter, Holy Trinity

Easter Day

9.30am Family Festival Eucharist, Holy Trinity

11.15am Family Festival Communion, St Mary Magdalene

