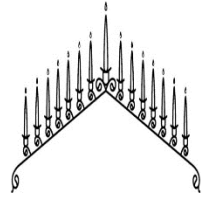




# A Service of Tenebrae

Wednesday in Holy Week  
March 27, 2024



## About this Service

The name Tenebrae (the Latin word for “darkness” or “shadows”) has for centuries been applied to the ancient monastic night and early morning services (Matins and Lauds) of the last three days of Holy Week, which in medieval times came to be celebrated on the preceding evenings.

As we meditate on Christ’s journey to the cross in poetry, song, and story, one by one the candles and other lights will be extinguished until only a single candle, considered a symbol of our Lord, remains. Toward the end of the service this candle is hidden, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end, a loud noise is made (symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the Resurrection—Matthew 28:2), the hidden candle is restored to its place, and by its light all depart in silence.



*At the sound of the bell, please stand. The ministers enter in silence.*

## Opening Prayer

*Officiant* Lord God of all creation, whose awesome will lifts up the cross, a sign of entry to eternal life, change our hearts that we may turn from all past ways of worldly power, from means of destruction and coercion, to embrace the way of the cross, the weakness that is true power, the folly that marks your wisdom and your reign.

*All* Amen.

*Please be seated.*

## Antiphon

*Officiant* Arise, O God, maintain my cause.

## The First Reading

Psalm 69:1-23

Save me, O God, for the waters have risen up to my neck.  
I am sinking in deep mire, and there is no firm ground for my feet.  
I have come into deep waters, and the torrent washes over me.  
I have grown weary with my crying; my throat is inflamed; my eyes have failed from looking for my God.  
Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; my lying foes who would destroy me are mighty. Must I then give back what I never stole?  
O God, you know my foolishness, and my faults are not hidden from you.  
Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me, O God of hosts; let not those who seek you be disgraced because of me, O God of Israel.  
Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach, and shame has covered my face.  
I have become a stranger to my own kindred, an alien to my mother’s children.  
Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

I humbled myself with fasting, but that was turned to my reproach.  
 I put on sack-cloth also, and became a byword among them.  
 Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, and the drunkards make songs about me.  
 But as for me, this is my prayer to you, at the time you have set, O God:  
 ‘In your great mercy, O God, answer me with your unfailing help.  
 ‘Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; let me be rescued from those who hate me and out of  
 the deep waters.  
 ‘Let not the torrent of waters wash over me, neither let the deep swallow me up; do not let the Pit  
 shut its mouth upon me.  
 ‘Answer me, O God, for your love is kind; in your great compassion, turn to me.  
 “Hide not your face from your servant; be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.  
 Draw near to me and redeem me; because of my enemies deliver me.  
 You know my reproach, my shame and my dishonour; my adversaries are all in your sight.”  
 Reproach has broken my heart and it cannot be healed; I looked for sympathy, but there was  
 none, for comforters, but I could find no one.  
 They gave me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

*The first candle is extinguished.*

## The Second Reading

“Judas, Peter” by Luci Shaw

because we are all  
 betrayers, taking  
 silver and eating  
 body and blood and asking  
 (guilty) is it I and hearing  
 him say yes  
 it would be simple for us all  
 to rush out  
 and hang ourselves  
 but if we find grace  
 to cry and wait  
 after the voice of morning  
 has crowed in our ears  
 clearly enough  
 to break our hearts  
 he will be there  
 to ask us each again  
 do you love me?

*The second candle is extinguished.*

## The Third Reading

from *Made for Goodness* by Desmond and Mpho Tutu

I hear your call as you are falling.  
 You stumble over your own wrongdoing and topple into the bottomless pit of guilt and shame.  
 But there is no abyss. It is an illusion.  
 There is no depth to which you can fall that is beyond my reach.  
 I have lived with you from the age of the ages.  
 The dream of you has delighted me, the fact of you pleases me.

There is a choice in every moment.  
 In every moment there is a chance to flourish and not to fail.  
 Every instant is rich with possibility.  
 I have not carved out the path that you must follow, we form the way together, you and I.  
 I have destined you for good and a field of goodness lies before you.  
 Listen to me, and though the way may not be easy, every step and stone will lead to joy.  
 Turn aside to heed the voice of the tempter and faltering will mark your journey.  
 I trust you my child.  
 Even when you have fallen the road does not end.  
 You can rise up from the ground and turn around.  
 You can repent and head for home in me.  
 Seek me out. You will find me.  
 I have been here from eternity.  
 Until eternity this is where I will be.  
 I am waiting and you will find me.

*The third candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.*

## Responsory

*Officiant* Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked:  
*All* **From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.**

*Officiant* On the mount of Olives, Jesus prayed to the Father:  
*All* **Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.  
 The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

*Officiant* Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.  
*All* **The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

## Taize Chant

Bless the Lord

Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's ho - ly name.

Bless the Lord my soul, Who leads me in - to life.

## Antiphon

*Officiant* False witnesses have risen up against me, and also those who speak malice.

## The Fourth Reading

Psalm 88

O my God, my Savior, by day and night I cry to you.  
 Let my prayer enter into your presence; incline your ear to my lamentation.  
 For I am full of trouble; my life is at the brink of the grave.  
 I am counted among those who go down to the Pit; I have become like one who has no strength;  
 Lost among the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave,

Whom you remember no more, for they are cut off from your hand.  
You have laid me in the depths of the Pit, in dark places, and in the abyss.  
Your anger weighs upon me heavily, and all your great waves overwhelm me.  
You have put my friends far from me; you have made me to be abhorred by them; I am in prison  
and cannot get free.  
My sight has failed me because of trouble; O God, I have called upon you daily; I have stretched  
out my hands to you.  
Do you work wonders for the dead; will those who have died stand up and give you thanks?  
Will your loving-kindness be declared in the grave or your faithfulness in the land of destruction?  
Will your wonders be known in the dark or your righteousness in the country where all is  
forgotten?  
But as for me, O God, I cry to you for help; in the morning my prayer comes before you.  
O God, why have you rejected me; why have you hidden your face from me?  
Ever since my youth, I have been wretched and at the point of death; I have borne your terrors  
with a troubled mind.  
Your blazing anger has swept over me; your terrors have destroyed me;  
They surround me all day long like a flood; they encompass me on every side.  
My friend and my neighbor you have put away from me, and darkness is my only companion.

*The fourth candle is extinguished.*

## The Fifth Reading

“Gethsemane” by Mary Oliver

The grass never sleeps.  
Or the roses.  
Nor does the lily have a secret eye that shuts until morning.  
Jesus said, wait with me. But the disciples slept.  
The cricket has such splendid fringe on its feet,  
and it sings, have you noticed, with its whole body,  
and heaven knows if it ever sleeps.  
Jesus said, wait with me. And maybe the stars did, maybe  
the wind wound itself into a silver tree, and didn't move,  
maybe  
the lake far away, where once he walked as on a  
blue pavement,  
lay still and waited, wide awake.  
Oh the dear bodies, slumped and eye-shut, that could not  
keep that vigil, how they must have wept,  
so utterly human, knowing this too  
must be part of the story.

*The fifth candle is extinguished.*

## The Sixth Reading

from *No Man Is an Island* by Thomas Merton

Only when we see ourselves in our true human context, as members of a race which is intended to be one organism and “one body,” will we begin to understand the positive importance not only of the successes but of the failures and accidents in our lives. My successes

are not my own. The way to them was prepared by others. The fruit of my labors is not my own: for I am preparing the way for the achievements of another. Nor are my failures my own. They may spring from the failure of another, but they are also compensated for by another's achievement. Therefore the meaning of my life is not to be looked for merely in the sum total of my own achievements. It is seen only in the complete integration of my achievements and failures with the achievements and failures of my own generation, and society, and time. It is seen, above all, in my integration in the mystery of Christ.

*The sixth candle is extinguished.*

## Responsory

*Officiant* My soul is very sorrowful, even to the point of death;

*All* remain here, and watch with me.

Now you will see the crowd who will surround me;

you will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.

*Officiant* Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

*All* You will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.

## Taize Chant

Stay with Me

Stay with me, re - main here with me, watch and  
 pray, watch and pray.

## Antiphon

*Officiant* God did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.

## The Seventh Reading

Psalm 22:1-20

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? and are so far from my cry  
 and from the words of my distress?

O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer; by night as well, but I find no rest.  
 Yet you are the Holy One, enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

Our forefathers put their trust in you; they trusted, and you delivered them.

They cried out to you and were delivered; they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

But as for me, I am a worm and no man, scorned by all and despised by the people.

All who see me laugh me to scorn; they curl their lips and wag their heads, saying,

“He trusted in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, if he delights in him.”

Yet you are he who took me out of the womb, and kept me safe upon my mother's breast.

I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born; you were my God when I was still in my mother's womb.

Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.

Many young bulls encircle me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me.

They open wide their jaws at me, like a ravening and a roaring lion.

I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint; my heart within my breast is melting wax.

My mouth is dried out like a pot-sherd; my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; and you have laid me in the dust of the grave.

Packs of dogs close me in, and gangs of evildoers circle around me; they pierce my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones.

They stare and gloat over me; they divide my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing.

Be not far away, O LORD; you are my strength; hasten to help me.

Save me from the sword, my life from the power of the dog.

Save me from the lion's mouth, my wretched body from the horns of wild bulls.

*The seventh candle is extinguished.*

## The Eighth Reading

“The Courtyard Scene” by Ann Weems

Over and over again

we sit in our courtyards,

our mouths speaking what our hearts are full of...

WE DO NOT KNOW HIM

DONOTDONOTDONOT

KNOWHIMKNOWHIMKNOWHIM echoes loudly emphatically

filling time and space

heaven and earth;

and yet

the saddest part is

when the cock crows

we don't have the ears to hear

TOHEARTOHEARTOHEAR.

At least Peter had the ears to hear

and the heart to weep.

*The eighth candle is extinguished.*

## The Ninth Reading

from *I Thirst*, by Mother Teresa

I know what is in your heart—I know your loneliness and all your hurts—the rejections, the judgments, the humiliations. I carried it all before you. And I carried it all for you, so you might share my strength and victory. I know especially your need for love—how you are thirsting to be loved and cherished. But how often have you thirsted in vain, by seeking that love selfishly, striving to fill the emptiness inside you with passing pleasures—with even greater emptiness of sin. Do you thirst for love? “Come to me, all you who thirst.” I will satisfy you and fill you. Do you thirst to be cherished? I cherish you more than you can imagine to the point of dying on a cross for you. I thirst for you. Yes, that is the only way to even describe my love for you: *I thirst for you.*

*The ninth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.*

## Responsory

*Officiant* Lo, we have seen him without beauty or majesty,  
*All* with no looks to attract our eyes.  
He bore our sins and grieved for us,  
he was wounded for our transgressions,  
and by his scourging we are healed.

*Officiant* Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.  
*All* And by his scourging we are healed.

## Taize Chant

Wait for the Lord

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the Taize Chant. The first staff is in G major (one sharp) and 2/2 time. The melody consists of quarter and half notes with some rests. The lyrics 'Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.' are written below the staff. The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics 'Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!' and ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

## Antiphon

*Officiant* God is my helper; it is the Lord who sustains my life.

## The Tenth Reading

Psalm 90:1-12

O God, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.  
Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age  
you are God.  
You turn us back to the dust and say, "Go back, O child of earth."  
For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night.  
You sweep us away like a dream; we fade away suddenly like the grass.  
In the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered.  
For we consume away in your displeasure; we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.  
Our iniquities you have set before you and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.  
When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.  
The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty; yet the sum of them is but  
labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.  
Who regards the power of your wrath; who rightly fears your indignation?  
So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

*The tenth candle is extinguished.*

## The Eleventh Reading

"Good Friday" by Christina Rossetti

Am I a stone and not a sheep,  
That I can stand, O Christ, beneath Thy cross,  
To number drop by drop  
Thy blood's slow loss And yet not weep?

Not so those women loved  
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee;  
Not so fallen Peter weeping bitterly;  
Not so the thief was moved;

Not so the Sun and Moon  
Which hid their faces in the starless sky,  
A horror of great darkness at broad noon —  
I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,  
But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd of the flock  
Greater than Moses, turn and look once more,  
And smite a rock.

*The eleventh candle is extinguished.*

## The Twelfth Reading

from "Christ of the Americas," by Henri Nouwen

When we say "Christ has died," we express the truth that all human suffering in time and place has been suffered by the Son of God who also is the Son of all humanity and thus has been lifted up into the inner life of God Himself. There is no suffering—no guilt, shame, loneliness, hunger, oppression, or exploitation, no torture, imprisonment, or murder, no violence or nuclear threat—that has not been suffered by God. There can be no human beings who are completely alone in their sufferings, since God, in and through Jesus, has become Emmanuel, God with us. It belongs to the center of our faith that God is a faithful God, a God who did not want us to ever be alone but who wanted to understand—to stand under—all that is human. The Good News of the Gospel, therefore, is not that God came to take our suffering away, but that God wanted to become part of it.

*The twelfth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.*

## Responsory

*Officiant*     Darkness covered the whole land when Jesus had been crucified;  
*All*             **and about the ninth hour he cried with a loud voice:**  
                     **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**  
                     **And he bowed his head and handed over his spirit.**

*Officiant*     Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.  
*All*             **And he bowed his head and handed over his spirit.**



## Taize Chant

Jesus, Remember Me

The image shows two systems of musical notation for the Taize Chant. Each system consists of a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "Je-sus, re-mem-ber me when you come in - to your king - dom." The first system ends with a repeat sign, and the second system ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

## Antiphon

*Officiant* They shall mourn for him as one mourns for an only child; for the Lord, who is without sin, is slain.

## The Thirteenth Reading

Isaiah 53:3-5

He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.

*The thirteenth candle is extinguished.*

## The Fourteenth Reading

“Mary speaks” by Madeleine L’Engle

O you who bear the pain of the whole earth,  
I bore you.  
O you whose tears give human tears their worth,  
I laughed with you.  
You, who, when your hem is touched, give power,  
I nourished you.  
Who turn the day to night in this dark hour,  
light comes from you.  
O you who hold the world in your embrace,  
I carried you.  
O you who laughed and ate and walked the shore,  
I played with you.  
And I, who with all others, died for,

now I hold you.

May I be faithful to this final test,  
in this last time I hold my child, my son,  
His body close enfolded to my breast,  
the holder held: the bearer bare.  
Mourning to joy: darkness to mourn.  
Open, my arms: your work is done.

*The fourteenth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.*

## Responsory

*Officiant* The veil of the temple was torn in two,  
*All* **and the earth shook, and the thief from the cross cried out, Lord, remember me  
when you come into your kingdom.**

*Officiant* The rocks were split, the tombs were opened,  
and many bodies of the saints who slept were raised:  
*All* **And the earth shook, and the thief from the cross cried out, Lord, remember me  
when you come into your kingdom.**

*During the reading of Psalm 51, the final candle at the top of the hearse is hidden.*

## The Concluding Reading

Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion blot out my offences.  
Wash me through and through from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin.  
For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.  
Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.  
And so you are justified when you speak and upright in your judgement.  
Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, a sinner from my mother's womb.  
For behold, you look for truth deep within me, and will make me understand wisdom secretly.  
Purge me from my sin and I shall be pure; wash me and I shall be clean indeed.  
Make me hear of joy and gladness, that the body you have broken may rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy Spirit from me.  
Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.  
I shall teach your ways to the wicked, and sinners shall return to you.  
Deliver me from death, O God, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.  
Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.  
Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.  
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.  
Be favourable and gracious to Zion, and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.  
Then you will be pleased with the appointed sacrifices, with burnt-offerings and oblations; then shall they offer young bullocks upon your altar.

## Responsory and Concluding Collect

*Officiant* When the Lord was buried, they sealed the tomb,  
*All* rolling a great stone to the door of the tomb; and they stationed soldiers to guard him.

*Officiant* The chief priests gathered before Pilate, and petitioned him:  
*All* **And they stationed soldiers to guard him.**

*Officiant* Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross.

*Nothing further is said; but a loud noise is made, and the remaining candle is brought from its hiding place and returned to the worship area. By its light, all depart.*



Material for this service compiled from:

*The Book of Occasional Services*, 2022, Episcopal Church

Tenebrae bulletins from Trinity Wall Street. 3/31/2021 and 4/5/2023.

*Celebrating Common Prayer*, Society of St. Francis. Mowbray, 1994.

“Judas, Peter” by Luci Shaw, *Christianity Today*, April 6, 1979.

*Made for Goodness: And Why This Makes All the Difference*, by Desmond and Mpho Tutu. HarperCollins, 2010.

“Gethsemane” by Mary Oliver, from *Thirst*. Beacon Press, 2006.

*No Man Is an Island* by Thomas Merton. The Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, 1955. Renewed by The Trustees of the Merton Legacy Trust, 1989.

“The Courtyard Scene” by Ann Weems, from *Kneeling in Jerusalem: Poetry for Lent and Easter*. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

*I Thirst: Forty Days with Mother Teresa*, edited by Joseph Langford, M.C. Augustine Institute, 2019.

“Good Friday” by Christina Rossetti, from *Poems*. Cambridge Press, 1876.

“Christ of the Americas”, in *America*, April 21, 1984, Vol. 150. No. 15, pp. 293 - 302.

“Mary speaks” by Madeleine L’Engle, from *A Cry like a Bell*. Crosswicks, 1987



*The liturgy of Tenebrae does not include an Offertory when we make a sacred gift to God as part of worship. If you would like to make a contribution today as an act of devotion, you may do so by putting cash or checks in one of the offering plates either at the back of the chapel or the back of the church, or making an electronic gift by texting Trinitytowson to 73256 or using the QR code provided.*



# Holy Week & Easter

## 3/24 : Palm Sunday

*remembering Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the beginning of Holy Week*

Services in the Church at 8am & 10:15am; in Lee Chapel at 4pm

## 3/27 : Tenebrae in Lee Chapel at 7pm

*a quiet service where we meditate on Christ's journey to the cross in poetry, song, and story*

## 3/28 : Maundy Thursday

*commemorating Jesus' last gathering with his followers and commandment to serve one another*

Agape dinner & footwashing in Memorial Hall at 6pm; Service & stripping of the altar in the Church at 7pm; Overnight vigil on Zoom from 8pm-7am

## 3/29 : Good Friday

*remembering Jesus' trial, crucifixion, and death on a cross*

Stations of the Cross at 12 noon on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the Old Courthouse  
Service in the Church with music led by the Contemporary Music Team at 7pm


## 3/30 : The Great Vigil in the Church at 7pm

*celebrating the story of humanity's redemption and Christ's resurrection in story and song*

## 3/31 : Easter Day

*celebrating new life and resurrection*

One service in the Church at 10:15am followed by an Easter Egg Hunt on the grounds



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