

Suggestions for Holy Week Prayer Vigil

*The suggestions which follow are meant for your help. Please feel free to use any of this material which is helpful. Remember, the object of this time is to spend time in prayer. May the Spirit of the Lord be with you. **Find a quiet place wherever you are, so that you can focus on what God is saying to you and join others in prayer. You should have no distractions for the next hour.***

Meditate on this passage by reading it at least 3 times. Allow a time of silent meditation between each reading. What images does the Holy Spirit bring to your mind

The New Commandment John 13: 31-35

31 When he had left, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him at once. 33 My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. You will look for me, and as I told the Jews, 'Where I go you cannot come,' so now I say it to you. 34 I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. 35 This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Finally, read the passage one final time. Is there some action God is calling you to take based on this scripture passage?

Ask the Spirit of Christ to fill your heart in this moment and help you to be obedient. Pray the following, or a similar prayer, concentrating on each word:

O Lord Jesus Christ, who did conquer death and rise from the dead, and who are alive for ever more, help us never to forget your Risen Presence forever with us. Help us to remember:

That you are with us in every time of perplexity to guide and to direct;

That you are with us in every time of sorrow to comfort and console;

That you are with us in every time of temptation to strengthen and to inspire;

That you are with us in every time of loneliness to cheer and befriend;

That you are with us even in death to bring us to the glory of your side.

Help us to be certain that there is nothing in time or in eternity which can separate us from you, so that in your presence we may meet life with love and courage, and death without fear. You turn our darkness into light, in your light we shall see light.

Risen Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Most high and glorious God, enlighten the shadows of our hearts, and fill us with true faith, certain hope, and perfect love, which casts out all fear.

Now try to simply listen to God. You may do this in silence. Perhaps close your eyes and hear the Spirit speaking. Or, open your eyes and observe the beauty of what lies outside your window.

You may wish to spend a few minutes reading the words from favorite hymns or scripture passages. Please see the final two pages for some suggested hymns. Following are some suggested scripture passages.

Scripture Passages:

John 18:1-11

Matthew 27:33-56

Luke 23:50-56

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 28:1-10

John 20:1-18

Next, intercede for known needs. *You may pray for anything which the Lord directs you. The following are some suggestions. You are not limited to these:*

For our unique worship service tomorrow

For those you will invite to be with us on Easter

For those who are homebound, or otherwise not able to come to worship

For our pastor and his family

For the sermon on Sunday, that the gospel may be heard

For our Session

For the church's ministry teams:

For our administrator, Jorida Vakiari,

For our ministries coordinator, Miguel Carlin

For our Academy children and staff, and their director, Renee Henry

For our choir and music staff, and their director, Gabe Perez

For our administrative assistant, Ethan Mitchell

For our extreme financial needs at this time

For all groups who would ordinarily use our facilities

For any known ill and otherwise in need of prayer:

We also pray for Delfino Cerrillo Jr. (Delia Nix's cousin) who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and who is in the hospital recovering.

We also pray for Scott Lassiter and the crew aboard the USS Nebraska

We also pray for Cary Finch who is fighting lymphoma at this time. (Lu Taylor's friend's husband)

We also pray for Phil Schwarz and Lorenzo Bailey who are fighting cancer at this time. (Lu Taylor's friends)

We also would like to lift up the doctors and nurses at this time as they continue to provide care to our neighbors.

We also would like to lift up our first responders throughout Spring Valley Village, Spring Branch, and the city of Houston as they keep us safe during this time.

For needs in your own life

End with one of the following, or your own prayer of dedication:

Heavenly Father I come before you and present my prayer unto you, as your amazing sacrifice is before me. Speak your Word into my very soul. As I bring this prayer of grace before you, accept it and bless me as you did our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Let your kingdom come in my life and in the earth as it is in heaven, and may the healing and peace that is beyond all understanding rest upon my family and myself. Once again thank you for loving me so much that you sent your one and only Son Jesus to die on the cross so that I can be free. Thank you for listening to my prayers to you, my beloved Father in heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Were You There?

D. B. Towner

1 Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

3 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

4 Were you there when God raised him from the tomb?
Were you there when God raised him from the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when God raised him from the tomb?

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

Bernard of Clairvaux

1 O sacred Head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down;
now scornfully surrounded
with thorns, thine only crown;
O sacred Head, what glory,
what bliss 'til now was thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call thee mine.

2 What thou, my Lord, hast suffered
was all for sinners' gain:
mine, mine was the transgression,
but thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve thy place;
look on me with thy favor,
vouchsafe to me thy grace.

3 What language shall I borrow
to thank thee, dearest Friend,
for this, thy dying sorrow,
thy pity without end?
O make me thine forever;
and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
outlive my love to thee.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Isaac Watts

1 When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ, my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them through his blood.

3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Ah, Holy Jesus, How Hast Thou Offended?

Johann Heermann

1 Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou offended,
that we to judge thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected,
O most afflicted!

2 Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee!
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee;
I crucified thee.

3 Lo, the Good Shepherd for the sheep is offered;
the slave hath sinned, and the Son hath suffered.
For our atonement, while we nothing heeded,
God interceded.

4 For me, kind Jesus, was thy incarnation,
thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion,
for my salvation.

5 Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot pay thee,
I do adore thee, and will ever pray thee,
think on thy pity and thy love unswerving,
not my deserving.