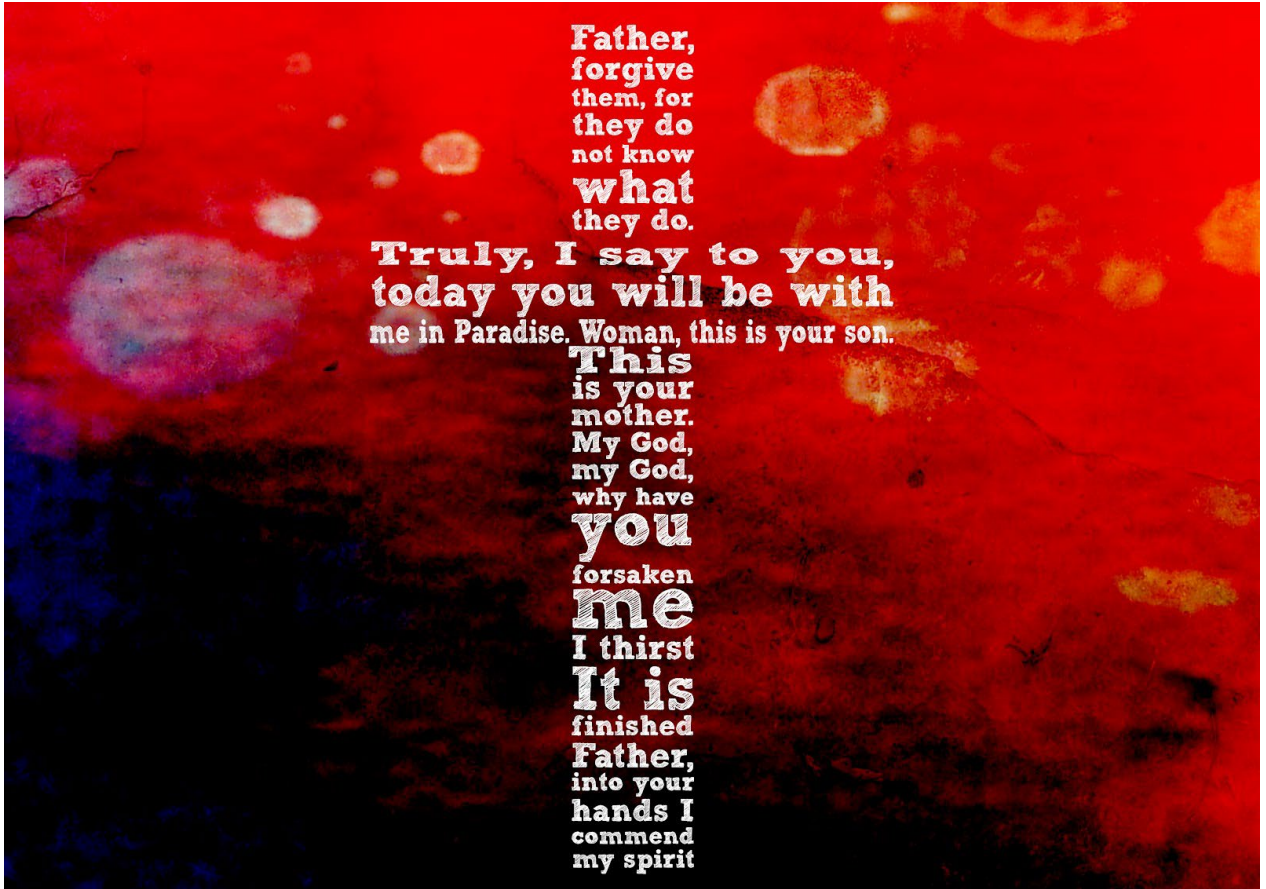


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## Good Friday Prayer Vigil Guide

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# Good Friday Prayer Vigil Guide

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It's a long standing practice for many Christians to pray from 9 AM - 3 PM on Good Friday as they remember the six hours Jesus spent on the cross. Some pray the entire six hours, some pray on each hour, and some pray sometime during the six hours.

Another option would be to pray for 30 minutes, starting when the minute hand reaches 9 and continuing in five minute intervals till the minute hand reaches 3.

The amount of time isn't as important as the remembering-setting aside time to watch and wait with those few faithful followers who did not abandon Jesus.

Below you will find a guide for praying. It includes the scriptures relating Jesus' words from the cross plus some sentences to focus your prayer time. The more formal prayers come from the book *Listening at Golgotha* by Peter Storey.

May this guide be a blessing to you as you seek the deeper graces of God this holy season.

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## The 9 AM Reading and Prayers

Luke 23:32-38 NRSV

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. **Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”** And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!” The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

Holy Jesus,  
Your forgiving love saves and disturbs me.  
Without it, I am lost,  
yet, if I receive it, I must practice it.  
By your mercy, make me merciful;  
by your forgiveness, help me to forgive as I have been forgiven. Amen.

*Continue by praying for all who are trapped in bitterness, revenge, and resentment so that all may know the freedom of forgiving as Christ did. Include yourself, as needed.*

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# The 10 AM Reading and Prayers

Luke 23:39-43 NRSV

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” **He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”**

Holy Jesus,  
Love held you to the cross for my sake, but not mine alone.  
Your love is frightening in its breadth and depth;  
When I embrace it, it stretches my poor spirit.  
Enlarge my heart to made space for your friends;  
Let me love as one forgiven. Today. Amen.

*Continue by praying for the salvation of family and friends who do not know Christ,*

*For those living in our community, in our nation, and across the world.*

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*If you would like to extend your prayer time this hour, here is an incredibly beautiful prayer by Steve Garnaas-Holmes entitled “Jesus, Remember Me.”*

## **Jesus, Remember me**

Jesus, remember me

when you come into your kingdom.

When you gather your Beloved into your Realm,

the disgraced and ashamed,

the twisted and helpless,

remember me.

When you pronounce your law,

“Blessed are the poor,

for the Empire is theirs,”

remember me.

When you raise up the brokenhearted,

forgive the guilty, heal the broken

and redeem those who struggle and fail,

remember me.

When you spread your mercy over the land,  
and your grace conquers all evil,  
your love reigns supreme  
and violence, even mine, is conquered,  
remember me.

When you take your throne of suffering,  
and accept your blood-jeweled crown,  
when you marshal your troops  
armed with self-emptying love,  
remember me.

When I must choose  
between love and comfort,  
remember me.

Jesus, remember me  
when you come into your kingdom.

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# The 11 AM Reading and Prayers

John 19:25-27 NRSV

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.

Holy Jesus,  
I give thanks for your mother  
and all like her who have borne the pain of loving too deeply.  
Thank you for your gift the church.  
Help me receive as your gift all whom I encounter, whoever they are,  
And to become family to them in Your name. Amen.

*Continue by praying for Christian unity,*

*For the dividing walls between denominations to come down*

*For congregations in the midst of misunderstanding, pain, and conflict*

*For protection from the evil one and all that distances God's people*

*That your congregation, and every congregation, would love as Christ loves*

*Embodying the hospitality and welcome only Christ can provide*

*Sharing His Word and ways with grace, compassion, and boldness*

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# The Noon Reading and Prayers

Matthew 27:45-46 NRSV

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?"

*Begin by praying for all who are suffering,*

*For our brothers and sisters across the globe who are persecuted for their faith*

*For those who are suffering because they do not have access to daily needs-  
clean water, housing, education, medical care*

*For those who are suffering due to war, injustice, and tyrannical leaders*

*For those who are suffering due to mental or physical illness, addiction or grief*

Holy Jesus,  
There was no suffering like yours.  
I am silent in the darkness, Your darkness.  
There can be no words, only worship. Amen.

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# The 1 PM Reading and Prayers

John 19:28-29 NRSV

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill 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.

Holy Jesus,  
All the longing of God,  
Through all the ages, for all humanity,  
Cries out to me from your cross.  
Give me a heart to hear that cry  
And a longing to be found by your love. Amen.

*Pray today for all who are longing,*

*Longing for love*

*Longing for answers*

*Longing for healing*

*Longing for daily bread*

*Longing for justice*

*Longing for hope*

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## The 2 PM Reading and Prayers

John 19:30 NRSV

When Jesus had received the wine, **he said, “It is finished.”**

*Silent adoration and wonder*

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## The 3 PM Reading and Prayers

Luke 23:44-43 NRSV

Darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun’s light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. **Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.”** Having said this, he breathed his last.

Rest now, Holy Jesus

Hero of the Cross

Your work is done.

The world has done its sinning,

And you have done your loving

Each beyond limit.

And, at the end, limitless love prevails.

Your dying becomes my hope and the hope of the world. Amen.

*Offer prayers of surrender, commitment, and thanksgiving*

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**Prayer Guide:** Hourly Scriptures and Prayers for Good Friday compilation © 2013 Lisa Ann Moss Degrenia. Formal prayers from Peter Storey’s book, *Listening at Golgotha*. (Published by The Upper Room - October 1, 2004) Used with permission.

