**Good Friday:
Praying with Jesus’ 7 last sayings**

They shouted
‘Crucify him
crucify him!’
Pilate asked
‘Shall I crucify
your King ?’
The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but the emperor.’ Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to The Place of the Skull. There they
crucified him
and with him
two others,
one on either
side with Jesus
between them.
Pilate also had
an inscription
written and put
on the cross.
It read "Jesus
of Nazareth, the
King of the Jews.

The following is a prayer activity for Good Friday.
As you might know, each of the four gospels has an account of Jesus’ crucifixion.
We have taken Jesus’ last 7 sayings from the cross from across the four gospels.

For each one you have the saying, a question or an observation which will prompt you to recall the story, and prayer – either for yourself or for others.

You could pray through all 7 in one go – perhaps taking half an hour for the whole thing, or you could take one every hour throughout the day.

*We 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. Amen.

1. ***“Father forgive them” Luke 23:34***From the cross, Jesus speaks words of forgiveness.
He says, “Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing”.

Who are ‘they’?

On this day, at this time,
irrespective of our faith or lack of it,
we accept deeply in our hearts
words that set us free:

your sins are forgiven,
your sins are forgiven. Amen.

1. ***“You will be with me in paradise” Luke 23:43***Seeing Jesus for who he was, one of the criminals hanging next to him says,
“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom”.
And Jesus replies,
“Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise”.

Dying Jesus,
at the end of yourself you turned,
and spoke words of togetherness in the places of torn.
May we always find words to hold. Amen.

1. ***“Here is your son” John 19:26***From the cross, Jesus establishes a ‘new’ family. He gives his mother a son, and gives John another mother.

Lord Jesus, your mother and your dearest friend stayed with you to the bitter end, yet even while racked with pain you ministered to them: be with all broken families today
and care for those who long for companionship.
You cared for your loved ones even in your death-throes:
give us a love for one another
that is stronger even than the fear of death. Amen.

1. ***“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me”? Mark 15:34***From the cross, Jesus cries out in agony, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me”?
Did you know these are words from Psalm 22? I wonder if this speaks of Jesus’ humanity.
How does this make you feel?

We do not ask for easy answers
to hard times;
there are many who can offer these.

We ask for a sense of your solidarity,
that will be enough
to let us know
that we do not walk or cry alone;
that will enable us to go through the dark
and find light again in the morning. Amen.

1. ***“I am thirsty” John 19:28***From the cross, Jesus knew thirst and hunger.

Jesus, you knew need.
We pray for the sick and the suffering,
and for all those who minister to their needs.

1. ***“It is finished” John 19:30***As Jesus’ journey on earth moved to its completion, “he bowed his head and gave up his Spirit”.

Jesus, you knew death.

We pray for all who today are nearing the end of their lives.
Lord, give hope and faith to the dying and to those who are bereaved.

1. ***“Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit” Luke 23:46***

In Luke’s gospel, Jesus says these words before breathing his last breaths.

In this letting go, Jesus’ final act is one of trust.

And so, standing at the foot of the cross on this Good Friday,
in faith and in trust we pray:

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.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

***You might want to end by singing a Good Friday Hymn When I survey the Wonderous Cross or There is a Green Hill Far Away.***

*Some material in this service is from Common Worship New Patterns and Times and Seasons © The Archbishops’ Council of the Church of England. Some material is adapted from Stages on the way: Worship resources for Lent, Holy Week and Easter, p.155 and 157 and Daily Prayer with the Corrymeela Community, Padraig O Tuama, p.33*