

# St John's Cathedral

## Morning Prayer Holy Saturday

11 April 2009, Saturday, 8.30am.



Holy Saturday tends to be dead time in the church – Jesus is in the tomb and like the disciples we don't quite know what to do with ourselves. Unlike them, however, we already know how the story turns out and so as we wait we can imagine what else might be going on. In the Orthodox tradition Holy Saturday liturgies imagine Jesus “descended to the dead”, trampling down the gates of hell and releasing the souls who wait in the depths. In our own tradition we use the wait to prepare the church for great festivities of Easter morning, living out our belief that dead time is not useless time after all.

God has shone in our hearts  
**To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God  
 in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Glory to God; Father Son and Holy Spirit:  
**As in the beginning, so now, and for ever. Amen.**

### **Canticle for Holy Saturday**

Today hell cries out groaning:  
 I should not have accepted the man born of Mary.  
 He came and destroyed my power.  
 He shattered the gates of brass.  
 As God, he raised the souls that I had held captive.  
**Glory to your cross and resurrection, O Lord!**

Today, hell cries out groaning:  
 My dominion has been shattered.  
 I received a dead man as one of the dead,  
 But against him I could not prevail.  
 From eternity I had ruled the dead,  
 But behold, he raises all.  
 Because of him do I perish.  
**Glory to your cross and resurrection, O Lord!**

Today, hell cries out groaning:  
 My power has been trampled upon.  
 The shepherd is crucified and Adam is raised.  
 I have been deprived of those whom I ruled.  
 Those whom I swallowed in my strength I have given up.  
 He who was crucified has emptied the tomb.  
 The power of death has been vanquished.  
**Glory to your cross and resurrection, O Lord!**

### **Opening Prayer**

The night has now passed, and the day lies open before us;  
 Let us pray with one heart and mind.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,  
 So may the light of your presence, O God,  
 Set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
 Now and forever. **Amen.**

## Psalm 30

*Refrain for Part One:*

*With gentle hand you raise me,  
from death you call me to life.*

From the depths of despair I cried out,  
seared with pain and with grief.

Where are you, O God?

How long must I suffer? *Refrain*

You drew me up from the deeps,  
like a prisoner out of a dungeon,  
a flesh-body touched by you hand,  
flickering and trembling with life. *Refrain*

You brought me out of a land full of gloom,  
a place of hollow silence and cold.  
You melted my paralyzed fear:  
the warmth of your sun coursed through my veins.

*Refrain*

The wrath of your Love last but a moment,  
for a lifetime you mercy and healing.  
Heaviness and weeping last through the night,  
yet day breaks into singing and joy.

*Refrain*

I will praise you, O God,  
for you have made me whole.  
I will give you thanks  
in the midst of your people.

*Refrain*

*Refrain for Part Two:*                      *When my feet stumble and stray,  
your hand steadies and guides me.*

In the strength you gave me I felt secure,  
built upon rock, firm as the hills.  
Basking in the warmth of your favour,  
the prosperity of my days increased.

*Refrain*

I slipped into the worship of money,  
The goods of this world ensnaring me.  
They gathered like a turbulent cloud,  
Blotting out the sight of your face.

*Refrain*

Then I was greatly dismayed,  
Feeling foolish in toppling pride,  
Unable to praise you from the wasteland of hell,  
To proclaim your name from the graveyards of death.

*Refrain*

O God, have mercy upon me,  
Forgive my self-satisfied pride,  
Disentangle the web I have woven,  
Patiently probe me with the scalpel of truth.

*Refrain*

You turn my lamentation into dancing,  
Lifting me to my feet, clothing me with joy.  
In the depths of my being I explode into laughter,  
And sing with gratitude the triumph of Love.

*Refrain*

*Living Christ, look on us with eyes of compassion; call us with  
the word of forgiveness, again and again, to seventy times  
seven, that we may at last hear and see, and turn our stricken  
and wounded faces, and know ourselves accepted and  
embraced, loved beyond measure and without reserve.*

**Reading 1****Genesis 2.1-3**

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

**Reading 2****John 19.38-42**

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

May your word live in us

**And bear much fruit to your glory.**

**Canticle**

Christ is the image of the invisible God:  
the first-born of all creation.

For in him all things were created:  
in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.

All things were created through him and for him:  
he is before all things  
and in him all things hold together.

He is the head of the body, the Church:  
he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead.

For it pleased God that in him  
 all fullness should dwell:  
 and through him all things be reconciled to himself.

### **The Prayers**

Lord have mercy

**Christ have mercy**

Lord have mercy

**Our Father in heaven,  
 hallowed be your name,  
 your kingdom come,  
 your will be done on earth as in heaven.  
 Give us today our daily bread.  
 Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
 Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
 For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
 now and for ever. Amen.**

O God, creator of heaven and earth:  
 Mercifully grant that as the crucified body of you dear Son  
 as laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath  
 So we may await with him the dawning of the third day,  
 And rise with him to newness of life;  
 Who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
 One God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **Intercessions**

Jesus, Saviour, man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, we  
 pray for all who grieve today and all who wait for a hopeful  
 tomorrow.

***We come to you for you alone can make us whole.***

Jesus, Saviour, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for  
 our iniquities, we pray for the courage and wisdom to respond  
 to your call on our lives.

***We come to you for you alone can make us whole.***

Jesus, Saviour, we come as a church broken by factions, weak in our mission and wavering in our faith. We pray for your church, for your ministers and for all your people, and for all who are preparing for baptism and confirmation.

***We come to you for you alone can make us whole.***

Jesus, Saviour, we come as people of the world, torn by war, ruined by greed, spoiled by selfishness. We pray for peace between nations and a spirit of generosity and compassion.

***We come to you for you alone can make us whole.***

Jesus, Saviour, we come as members of a family, insensitive to each other, blind to tears and deaf to cries. We pray for peace between ourselves, and the discernment to see your likeness in each other's faces.

***We come to you for you alone can make us whole.***

Jesus, Saviour, we come with the sick at heart, we come with the ill in mind, we come with the diseased in body. We bring before you all whose names are on our prayer lists, all whose names lie upon our altars and all whom we hold in our hearts.

***We come to you for you alone can make us whole.***

Lord and heavenly Father,  
 You have brought us safely to this new day:  
 Keep us by your mighty power, protect us from sin,  
 Guard us from every kind of danger,  
 And in all we do this day  
 Direct us in the fulfilling of your purpose,  
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**  
 Let us praise the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

May the peace of God which passes all understanding  
 keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

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Holy Saturday Canticle from the Orthodox Liturgy of Vespers for Holy Saturday, The Orthodox Christian Page, [http://www.ocf.org/OrthodoxPage/prayers/triodion/hwk\\_sat](http://www.ocf.org/OrthodoxPage/prayers/triodion/hwk_sat) Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, ©1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. Liturgical resources are derived from A Prayer Book for Australia which is copyright © 1995, The Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation, and published under the imprint Broughton Books. Used by permission. Hymns © The Australian Hymn Book Pty. Ltd., from Together in Worship, published by William Collins Publishers, Pty. Ltd. Reproduced with permission under CAL Licence No w1186 2007. (UK) Common Worship: Times and Seasons, material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2006. (NZ). Psalms for a Pilgrim People by Jim Cotter, Harrisburg, Morehouse Publishing 1993

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