



A Service of Tenebrae

SERVANTS OF CHRIST
ANGELICAN CHURCH

Introduction

The word *tenebræ* is Latin for “darkness” or “shadows.” For centuries it has been applied to the ancient monastic services held in the night and early morning (Matins and Lauds) of the last three days of Holy Week, which in medieval times came to be celebrated on the preceding evenings as vigils. The liturgy includes prayers, hymns, and scripture readings, which recall the seven last words of Christ on the cross.

The most conspicuous feature of the service is the gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights in the sanctuary. Toward the end of the service, the last candle is extinguished, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil. After a moment of reflection, all depart in silence.

Silent Processional

Call to Worship

<i>Officiant</i>	Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
<i>People</i>	yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.
<i>Officiant</i>	But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities;
<i>People</i>	upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.
<i>Officiant</i>	All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – every one – to his own way;
<i>People</i>	and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:4-6

We gather together to contemplate the final words of Jesus, the Suffering Servant, on the cross. This passage from Isaiah opens our service, orienting us to the kind of king Jesus is.

Jesus quotes the first verse of Psalm 22 on the cross. Doing so would have called to mind the remainder of the Psalm in the minds of the hearers, again, pointing them to the kind of Messiah Jesus was to be.

Psalm 22

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My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Why art Thou so far from helping me,
and from the words of my roaring?
O my God, I cry in the day time,
but Thou hearest not;
and in the night season, and am not silent.
No, no.

But Thou art holy,
O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.
Our fathers trusted in Thee:
they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.
They cried unto Thee, and were delivered:
they trusted in Thee, and were not confounded.
No, No.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

Litany of Remembrance

Officiant Let us remember Jesus: who though rich,
became poor and dwelt among us, who was
mighty indeed, healing the sick and the
troubled, who as a teacher to his disciples,
was their companion and servant.

People **May we ever be grateful for Jesus Christ
and what he has done for us.**

Officiant Let us remember Jesus: who prayed for
forgiveness of those who rejected him and
for the perfecting of those who received him;
who loved all people, and prayed for them,
even if they denied and rejected him; who
hated sin because he knew the cost of pride
and selfishness, of cruelty and hatred, both
to people and to God.

People **May we ever be grateful for Jesus Christ
and what he has done for us.**

Officiant Let us remember Jesus: who humbled
himself, obedient unto the cross. God has
exalted him who has redeemed us from the
bondage of sin and given us new freedom.

People **May we ever be grateful for Jesus Christ
and what he has done and continues to do for
us.**

Please be seated.

The Reproaches

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You delivered us from Pharaoh;
We delivered you to death.
You gave manna in the desert;
We gave a crown of thorns for your head

You brought us out of slavery
Into the promised land
We brought you up to Calvary
And pierced your feet and hands

***Holy God,
Holy Mighty One,
Holy Immortal One, have mercy, mercy
Have mercy on us.***

You opened up the Red Sea,
We opened up your side.
"Come down, come down" we mocked you
"My God, my God," you cried

We now enter a cycle within the service: we hear a reading from Scripture, a prayer is said, and we sing three verses of the hymn, "Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes." This pattern repeats seven times and after each time, a candle is extinguished.

The First Word

Luke 23:26–34

²⁶ And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷ And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. ²⁸ But turning to them Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' ³⁰ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' ³¹ For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

³² Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³ And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Prayer on the First Word From the Cross

Officiant Almighty God, to whom your crucified Son prayed for the forgiveness of those who did not know what they were doing, grant that we, too, may be included in that prayer. Whether we sin out of ignorance or intention, be merciful to us and grant us your acceptance and peace: in the name of Jesus Christ, our suffering Savior. **Amen.**

Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes

Words and music by Thomas B. Pollock, Public Domain.

Jesus, in Thy dying woes,
Even while Thy lifeblood flows,
Craving pardon for Thy foes:
Hear us, Holy Jesus.

Savior, for our pardon sue,
When our sins Thy pangs renew,
For we know not what we do:
Hear us, Holy Jesus.

Oh, may we, who mercy need,
Be like Thee in heart and deed,
When with wrong our spirits bleed:
Hear us, Holy Jesus.

The first candle is extinguished.

The Second Word

Luke 23:35-43

³⁵ And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?” ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ⁴³ And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Prayer on the Second Word From the Cross

Officiant O Lord Jesus Christ, in your agony you showed compassion to a man who recognized his sinfulness and your holiness. You gave him the gift of life eternal. We thank you for that same indescribable gift you give to us. Help us to show such compassion to the lost so that they may too dwell in paradise with you. **Amen.**

Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes

Words and music by Thomas B. Pollock, Public Domain.

Jesus, pitying the sighs
Of the thief, who near thee dies,
Promising him paradise:
Hear us, Holy Jesus.

May we in our guilt and shame
Still thy love and mercy claim,
Calling humbly on thy name:
Hear us, Holy Jesus.

May our hearts to thee incline,
Looking from our cross to thine.
Cheer our souls with hope divine:
Hear us, Holy Jesus.

The second candle is extinguished.

The Third Word

John 19:23-27

²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, ²⁴ so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which

says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."

So the soldiers did these things, ²⁵ but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Prayer on the Third Word From the Cross

Officiant O Blessed Savior, who in your hours of greatest suffering expressed compassion for your mother and made arrangements for her care, grant that we who seek to follow your example may show our concern for the needs of others, reaching out to provide for those who suffer in our human family. Hear this our prayer for your mercy's sake. **Amen.**

Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes

Words and music by Thomas B. Pollock, Public Domain.

Jesus, loving to the end
Her whose heart thy sorrows rend,
And thy dearest human friend:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

May we in thy sorrows share,
For thy sake all peril dare,
And enjoy thy tender care:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

May we all thy loved ones be,
All one holy family,
Loving for the love of thee:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

The third candle is extinguished.

The Fourth Word

Matthew 27:45-46

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Prayer on the Fourth Word From the Cross

Officiant Almighty God, who forsook your Son upon the cross, showing the world your judgement upon human sin and guilt, grant us, upon hearing his cry, the grace to know and believe that we will never be forsaken, that he is present with us even to the end of the age. For the sake of Jesus Christ who bore our sins on the cross. **Amen.**

Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes

Words and music by Thomas B. Pollock, Public Domain.

Jesus,whelmed in fears unknown,
With our evil left alone,
While no light from heav'n is shown:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

When we seem in vain to pray
And our hope seems far away,
In the darkness be our stay:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

Though no Father seem to hear,
Though no light our spirits cheer,
May we know that God is near:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

The fourth candle is extinguished.

The Fifth Word

John 19:28–29

²⁸ After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.

Prayer on the Fifth Word From the Cross

Officiant O Blessed Savior, whose lips were dry and whose throat was parched, grant us the water of life that we who thirst after righteousness may find it quenched by your love and mercy, leading us to bring the same relief to others. **Amen.**

Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes

Words and music by Thomas B. Pollock, Public Domain.

Jesus, in thy thirst and pain,
While thy wounds thy lifeblood drain,
Thirsting more our love to gain:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

Thirst for us in mercy still;
All thy holy work fulfill;
Satisfy thy loving will:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

May we thirst thy love to know;
Lead us in our sin and woe
Where the healing waters flow:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

The fifth candle is extinguished.

The Sixth Word

John 19:30

³⁰ When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Prayer on the Sixth Word From the Cross

Officiant O Lord Jesus Christ, who finished the work that you were sent to do, enable us by your Holy Spirit to be faithful to our call. Grant us strength to bear our crosses and endure our sufferings, even unto death. Enable us to live and love so faithfully that we also become good news to the world, joining your witness, O Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes

Words and music by Thomas B. Pollock, Public Domain.

Jesus, all our ransom paid,
All thy Father's will obeyed;
By thy suff'rings perfect made:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

Save us in our soul's distress;
Be our help to cheer and bless,
While we grow in holiness:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

Brighten all our heav'nward way
With an ever holier ray
Till we pass to perfect day:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

The sixth candle is extinguished.

The Seventh Word

Luke 23:44-49

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" ⁴⁸ And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

The Homily

Prayer on the Seventh Word From the Cross

Officiant Father, into your hands your Son Jesus Christ commended his spirit, grant that we too, following his example, may in all of life and at the moment of our death entrust our lives into your faithful hands of love, who gave your life for us all. Amen.

Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes

Words and music by Thomas B. Pollock, Public Domain.

Jesus, all thy labor vast,
All thy woe and conflict past;
Yielding up thy soul at last:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

When the death shades round us low'r,
Guard us from the tempter's pow'r,
Keep us in that trial hour:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

May thy life and death supply
Grace to live and grace to die,
Grace to reach the home on high:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

The End (Good Friday)

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Day of evil's triumph over virtue!
On this day the Good is called the vile.
Treated as a wolf, this gentle Shepherd.
Foulest envy does the Good defile.

Day of falsity, lies and pretension!
On this day is Truth's bent body killed.
When high priest and judge both fail the True One.
Foulest cup of Satan's lies is swilled.

Day of shadows, blood and tears and sorrows!
On this day is Beauty torn asunder.
Glory marred with whips and thorns and nails.
Foulest darkness covers Beauty's wonder.

Purest Jesus, you held us to the end.
Truest Jesus, you taught us to the end.
Strongest Jesus, you bore us to the end.
Dearest Jesus, you loved us to the end.

The seventh candle is extinguished.

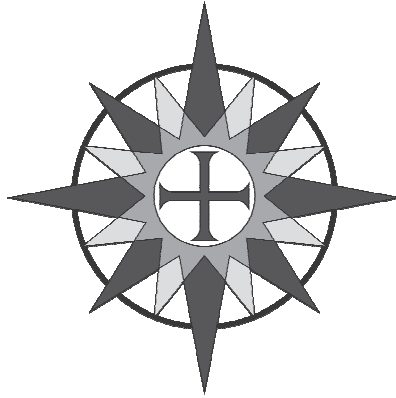
Jesus, Remember Me

Words and music by Jacques Berthier, Public Domain.

Jesus, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom.

All depart in silence.

This simple song will be repeated many times as we silently contemplate our Lord's words and his death for us.



SERVANTS OF CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Worship Sundays at 9:30 am

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