

CROSS

THE LESSON: MARK 15

By thy Cross and Passion; by thy precious Death... Good Lord, deliver us.

All of scripture points to the cross of Christ. This is the centre of our faith: that “he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities... All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:5-6).

Jesus Christ *came to die*. When John the Baptist saw Jesus approaching, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29) Jesus came to be the perfect sacrifice, to pay the price for our sin and to make us right with God. This payment was made “not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18-19). We were worth *this much*—something that has overwhelmed and transformed the hearts of believers for centuries.

In a moment we’ll read part of the passion narrative from St. Mark’s Gospel. Read it slowly, remembering that this is the story of our deliverance. *This* is how much you are loved.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

Scripture is filled with prayers and praises in the form of poetry and songs. During this unit, try your hand at song-writing; drawing inspiration from the love God has for you, made evident in the work of Jesus Christ.

Spend some time this week writing your own song of praise inspired by the cross of Christ.

(Stuck? Spend some time instead reflecting on the words of this hymn penned by Isaac Watts in 1707: “Alas! and did my Savior bleed, and did my Sovereign die! Would he devote that sacred head for sinners such as I? Was it for crimes that I have done, he groaned upon the tree? Amazing pity! Grace unknown! And love beyond degree!”)

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect.

Almighty and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(THE COLLECT FOR PALM SUNDAY, BCP PAGE 150)

CROSS

MARK 15: **THIS IS HOW MUCH YOU ARE LOVED**

¹²And Pilate again said to them, “Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” ¹³And they cried out again, “Crucify him.” ¹⁴And Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him”..

¹⁶And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. ¹⁷And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. ¹⁸And they began to salute him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ¹⁹And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. ²⁰And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him...

²⁴And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. ²⁵And it was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶And the inscription of the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.” ²⁷And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰save yourself, and come down from the cross!” ³¹So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³²Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

³³And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”..

³⁷And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”