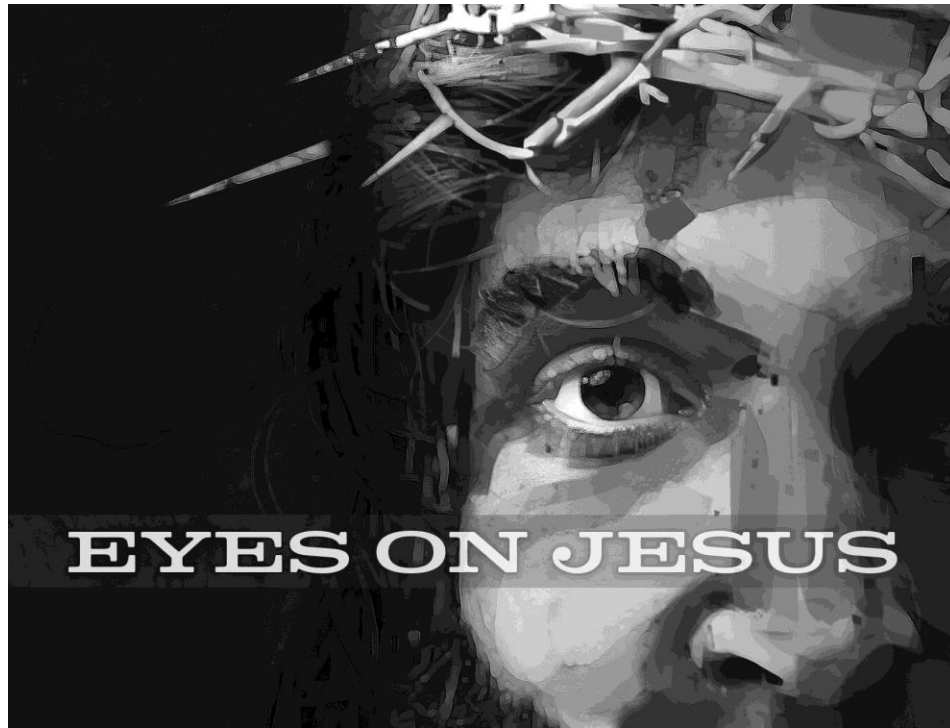


Tenebrae Vespers

APRIL 10, 2020



This Lent, we have been using the metaphor of eyesight to examine how the various people in Mark's Gospel viewed Jesus during His Passion. In most cases, they misunderstood who He was and what He was doing; then again, sometimes by faith people did recognize Him correctly.

As we conclude these forty days of Lent, looking within ourselves as people of faith in our day, we again ask how we are like or unlike the people who saw Jesus in the flesh. Most important, today we see again what Jesus has done to save us from our sins by His holy, precious blood and innocent suffering and death.

We are standing at the foot of the cross, but there are others standing with us. Simon of Cyrene, the people who mock Jesus, and the centurion all have their eyes on the cross as well. But the only viewpoint that truly matters is that of the triune God. The Father sees our sins taken upon Jesus on the cross, the Son looks on us in forgiving mercy, and the Holy Spirit sees the message we are to proclaim. "Oh, come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus" (Hebrews 12:2).

If you have means to do so, three candles may be lit

Opening Versicles

- L** O Lord, open my lips,
- C** and my mouth will declare Your praise.
- L** Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
- C** make haste to help me, O Lord.
- Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.**

- ¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?
- ²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.
- ³Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
- ⁴In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
- ⁵To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
- ⁶But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
- ⁷All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
- ⁸"He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"
- ⁹Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.
- ¹⁰On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother's womb you have been my God.
- ¹¹Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.
- ¹²Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
- ¹³they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.
- ¹⁴I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
- ¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.
- ¹⁶For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—
- ¹⁷I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;
- ¹⁸they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

¹⁹But you, O LORD, do not be far off!

O you my help, come quickly to my aid!

²⁰Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!

²¹Save me from the mouth of the lion!

You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

²²I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

²³You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

²⁴For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.

²⁶The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.

²⁸For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

²⁹All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.

³⁰Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;

³¹they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn,
that he has done it.

419 Savior, When in Dust to Thee - <https://vimeo.com/403569142>



1 Sav - ior, when in dust to Thee Low we bow the a -
 2 By Thy help - less in - fant years, By Thy life of -
 3 By Thine hour of dire de - spair, By Thine ag - o -
 4 By Thy deep ex - pir - ing groan, By the sad se -

dor - ing knee; When, re - pen - tant, to the skies
 want and tears, By Thy days of deep dis - tress
 ny of prayer, By the cross, the nail, the thorn,
 pul - chral stone, By the vault whose dark a - bode

Scarce we lift our weep - ing eyes; O, by all Thy
 In the sav - age wil - der - ness, By the dread, mys -
 Pierc - ing spear, and tor - turing scorn, By the gloom that
 Held in vain the ris - ing God, O, from earth to

pains and woe Suf - fered once for us be - low, Bend - ing
 te - rious hour Of the in - sult - ing tempt - er's pow'r, Turn, O
 veiled the skies O'er the dread - ful sac - ri - fice, Lis - ten
 heav'n re - stored, Might-y, re - as - cend - ed Lord, Bend - ing

from Thy throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
 turn a fa - v'ring eye; Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
 to our hum - ble sigh; Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
 from Thy throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!

Text and tune: Public domain

Introduction to Readings

L The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. John, the 19th chapter.

Passion Reading

John 19:1–16

¹Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. ²And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. ³They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. ⁴Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." ⁵So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" ⁶When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." ⁷The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." ⁸When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" ¹¹Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

¹²From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." ¹³So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. ¹⁴Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" ¹⁵They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." ¹⁶So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus,

A candle is extinguished.

451 Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted - <https://vimeo.com/402948273>

1 Strick-en, smit-ten, and af-flict-ed, See Him dy-ing on the
 2 Tell me, ye who hear Him groan-ing, Was there ev-er grief like
 3 Ye who think of sin but light-ly Nor sup-pose the e-vil
 4 Here we have a firm foun-da-tion, Here the ref-uge of the
 tree! 'Tis the Christ, by man re-ject-ed; Yes, my
 His? Friends through fear, His cause dis-own-ing, Foes in-
 great Here may view its na-ture right-ly, Here its
 lost: Christ, the Rock of our sal-va-tion, Is the
 soul, 'tis He, 'tis He! 'Tis the long-ex-pect-ed
 sult-ing His dis-tress; Man-y hands were raised to
 guilt may es-ti-mate. Mark the sac-ri-fice ap-
 name of which we boast; Lamb of God, for sin-ners
 Proph-et, Da-vid's Son, yet Da-vid's Lord; Proofs I
 wound Him, None would in-ter-vene to save; But the
 point-ed, See who bears the aw-ful load; 'Tis the
 wound-ed, Sac-ri-fice to can-cel guilt! None shall
 see suf-fi-cient of it: 'Tis the true and faith-ful Word.
 deep-est stroke that pierced Him Was the stroke that jus-tice gave.
 Word, the Lord's a-noint-ed, Son of Man and Son of God.
 ev-er be con-found-ed Who on Him their hope have built.

Tune and text: Public domain

Passion Reading

John 19:16–42

¹⁶So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus, ¹⁷and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. ¹⁸There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. ¹⁹Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." ²⁰Many of the Jews read this

inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. ²¹So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" ²²Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

²³When 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, ²⁴so 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, ²⁵but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

²⁸After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." ²⁹A 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. ³⁰When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

³¹Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. ³²So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. ³⁵He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. ³⁶For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." ³⁷And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."

³⁸After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. ³⁹Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. ⁴⁰So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴²So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

Reading Response

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

A candle is extinguished.

423 Jesus, Refuge of the Weary - <https://vimeo.com/403869400>

1 Je - sus, ref - uge of the wea - ry, Blest Re - deem - er,
2 Do we pass that cross un - heed - ing, Breath - ing no re -
3 Je - sus, may our hearts be burn - ing With more fer - vent

whom we love, Foun - tain in life's des - ert drea - ry, Sav - ior
pen - tant vow, Though we see You wound - ed, bleed - ing, See Your
love for You; May our eyes be ev - er turn - ing To be -

from the world a - bove: Of - ten have Your eyes, of - fend - ed,
thorn - en - cir - cled brow? Yet Your sin - less death has brought us
hold Your cross a - new Till in glo - ry, part - ed nev - er

Gazed up - on the sin - ner's fall; Yet up - on the
Life e - ter - nal, peace, and rest; On - ly what Your
From the bless - ed Sav - ior's side, Grav - en in our

cross ex - tend - ed, You have borne the pain of all.
grace has taught us Calms the sin - ner's deep dis - tress.
hearts for - ev - er, Dwell the cross, the Cru - ci - fied.

Tune and text: Public domain

Sermon - <https://youtu.be/UTBe0CjPEmw>

"God's Eyes" (Mark 15:21–39)

Prayer of the Church

- L** Lord Jesus Christ, on this most holy night in which we remember Your Passion, grant that we may continuously fix our eyes on You, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joys set before You endured the cross, scorning the shame and took up Your eternal throne at God's right hand. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** We thank You for enduring flogging and death in our place. As You were crowned with thorns before Your Passion, so now may we be given the crown of life for the sake of Your merits. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** As Pilate declared You guiltless and Your Father vindicated Your innocence by raising You from the dead, grant that we may enjoy a guiltless conscience now by Your forgiveness and a verdict of innocence on Judgment Day for the sake of Your righteousness. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**

- L** The inscription above Your sacred head on the cross rightly declared You the King of the Jews. May we always worship You as the King of glory and live under You in Your kingdom and serve You in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** As You saw to the care of Your mother by entrusting her to the beloved disciple, so may we also faithfully care for those whom You have placed in our lives. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** Your thirst for our salvation led You to endure the cross for us. May we thirst for Your righteousness above all other things during our pilgrimage here below. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** By Your death, You finished all the work necessary for our justification. Grant us likewise the strength to do the good works You have prepared for us between now and the day our lives are finished. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** We praise You for the water and the Spirit and the blood with which You have blessed us in Your holy Word and Sacraments. By Baptism, Absolution, and Your Holy Supper, continue to pour out Your grace upon us. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** As Your tomb was a fitting resting place for Your sacred body, may we likewise find the grave to be a place of rest until we greet You on the day of Resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- L** Lord Jesus, we thank and praise You for all that You have done for us. Come quickly, that we might soon enjoy the fulfillment of all that You came to accomplish, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

- C** **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
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Collect of the Day

L Let us pray.

Almighty God, graciously behold this Your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and delivered into the hands of sinful men to suffer death upon the cross; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Concluding Collect

L Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, You willed that Your Son should bear for us the pains of the cross and so remove from us the power of the adversary. Help us so to remember and give thanks for our Lord's passion that we may receive forgiveness of sin and redemption from everlasting death; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

The final candle is extinguished.

560 Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed - <https://vimeo.com/404853983>

1 Drawn to the cross, which Thou hast blessed With heal - ing
2 Thou know - est all my griefs and fears, Thy grace a -
3 Wash me and take a - way each stain; Let noth - ing
4 And then for work to do for Thee, Which shall so

gifts for souls dis - tressed, To find in Thee my
bused, my mis - spent years; Yet now to Thee with
of my sin re - main. For cleans - ing, though it
sweet a ser - vice be That an - gels well might

life, my rest, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
con - trite tears, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
be through pain, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
en - vy me, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.

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