

# The Parish Churches of Maxton & Mertoun linked with Newtown linked with St Boswells

Reflections for 10th April 2020

Good Friday

Led by Fran Selkirk

Welcome to this short act of worship for Good Friday. I hope you are all well and safe and have all that you need.

We shall meditate on Jesus' words from the cross. Jesus was utterly alone, isolated from the soldiers, the jeering crowd, and the small group of followers who loved him enough to endure this last watch with him. He had suffered physical abuse and plumbed the depths of mental and emotional turmoil and he hangs upon the cross dying.

Let us pray: Today is a solemn day. The day when we remember the suffering and death of Christ our Lord upon the cross, the total self-giving of Love for the beloved, in pain, in humiliation, in despair. Lord, as we worship you this day, fill us with wonder, with gratitude, with solemn joy, in the name of our crucified Messiah, our uplifted Saviour, Jesus Christ who taught us these words, which we say together:-

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 debts as we forgive our debtors and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever. Amen

As Jesus hung upon the cross we have seven statements that he uttered – His words from the Cross.

Luke 23:34. "Father, forgive them: for they do not know what they are doing". Here was Jesus praying for the Jewish people and the soldiers; those who had belittled and ridiculed him and demanded his death, yet he showed mercy, love and pity for them. His sacrifice has brought all humanity the opportunity of returning to God, and to know his love and salvation. We his people can be made anew through this tragic event, which we remember today.

Luke 23:43. "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise" These were the words Jesus said to the repentant thief who was crucified beside him. The thief had recognised in Jesus the goodness of God, and he acknowledged and repented his crimes, but Jesus was pure, holy and innocent of any wrong doing. We too deserve punishment for our sins, but through Jesus, we are forgiven all our faults, when we confess and are truly repentant, just like the thief.

John 19: 26-27 "Woman, here is your son! Here is your mother!" Jesus commends his mother's care to his disciple John. Jesus demonstrates at this momentous time, just how we are through faith, encouraged to care for one another. It's not simply a question of family, but of real and abiding love, being shown to those in need.

**Let us pray:** O God, we confess that when our ease is threatened or anything we hold dear is put at risk, we run away in fear. When darkness covers the land and the curtain of the Temple is torn in two, lighten our clouded minds, heal our divided hearts and forgive our putting goodness to death. O God, we confess that while great injustices are perpetrated around us, we throw dice and embrace trivialities. O God, we confess that while the wounds of the earth cry out in agony, we noisily justify our inaction and do not listen to its pain. When darkness covers the land and the curtain of the Temple is torn in two, Lighten our clouded minds, heal our divided hearts and forgive us for putting goodness to death. Hear the words of forgiveness. Here is hope: when we admit that we are the light of the world overcome by

darkness; the good physician heals our dividedness. And whether we admit it or not; the Christ once crucified is risen and works within us. Amen.

Matthew 27: 46 “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.” Jesus expresses the words of Psalm 22:1 and we are aware of his agony of separation from the Father as He bears the sins of the world, on our behalf. On reflection this is tragic and beyond agony, that for our sake, Jesus who is perfect, pure and filled with goodness, should be the one who bears all the pain of our sin, the small trivial, spitefilled sin and the gross, murderous, wickedness. What suffering he must have endured, the loss and humiliation of dividing the symbiotic link with the Father, all for our sake.

John 19:28 “I am thirsty.” Jesus hung on the cross, stripped of everything and waiting to die, utters these words to fulfil the scriptures, so that all may know he is the Messiah, sacrificed for us.

John 19:30 “It is finished”. Jesus had remained faithful and obedient unto death. He has followed God’s plan to the letter. Dying to redeem God’s people. Imagine the strain of knowing all that must happen and having the power to walk away but Jesus sticks it out until the end. He has completed the work God gave him, to bring SALVATION to the world.

Luke 23:46. “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit”. Jesus has completed his work. He has done everything asked of him, he has experienced the separation from God that is the consequence of sin and at the very moment of death, he returns his spirit to God the Father. How they must both have suffered!

Let us pray: Christ, bridge between past and future, we thank you as we recall your death. Body broken, blood shed, breath extinguished: crucified because you would compromise your integrity, vision or compassion - because you would not turn away from the poor, the oppressed, the outcast; but must be there on the edge, with them to the end. This we remember and give you thanks and praise: And the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be ours and the world’s this today and for ever more. Amen.