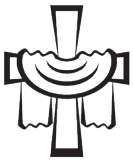
Sola Lectionary Text Study

Good Friday

March 26, 2027 (Year B)



"[Christ] has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, and has freed me from sin, death, and the power of the devil, not with silver and gold, but with his holy and precious blood and his innocent suffering and death.

He has done all this in order that I might be his own..."

– Martin Luther –

Small Catechism

Proclamation Points

The following are some thoughts and questions to be used for a text study on the weekly lessons, or for jump-starting the imagination of the preacher and hearer in preparing for the proclamation event.

Isaiah 52:13—53:12

This classic Good Friday text describes the Suffering Servant of God as one who was acquainted with grief, despised, and crushed for the sins of others. In its original context, this would have been heard as a reference to God's faithful people as a whole — particularly how they had suffered and been abused at the time of their Exile in Babylon.

- *How does the suffering of Israel in their calling to be a light to the nations, foreshadow the suffering that Christ himself would experience at the hand of outsiders?*

Isaiah described the one who was pierced for human sin as "a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief" who was "despised and rejected by men" (v. 3). He will be the one who will carry the sorrows of God's people and be persecuted for their sins but out of it all will come peace and healing. He will restore the people even though it will cost him his very life.

- *How do these verses describe the reality that Jesus faced from his birth to his death?*
- *As you read these verses, how do they humble <u>you</u>? What thoughts come to mind as you think of what Christ has done for humanity through his innocent suffering?*

Psalm 22

The psalmist lamented being rejected and cast aside by God. His sense of being abandoned is palpable and pitiful. "I cry by day, but you do not answer," he moaned. His suffering goes on and on as he described the many ways in which God had forsaken him and humanity deplored him: scorned, mocked, encircled by predators, wasting away in body and spirit, strength dried up, left to die in the dust.

- *Have you ever felt as bad as the psalmist described in this psalm? What happened? How did you come out of it?*

Just as the psalmist seems to be near death something changes. His voice shifts from lament to hope, "You have rescued me..." (22:21b). Then he sings about sharing God's beloved name with his family and encouraging all people to praise his holy name.

- *How does pain and suffering often turn into joy and relief? Why is it so hard to wait for the Lord even though we have experience with his coming to rescue us in the knick of time?*

Psalm 31 (alternate psalm)

In verse 5, the psalmist prayed, "Into your hand, I commit my spirit." These same words would be spoken centuries later by Jesus on the cross as the final breath of life was exhaled out of his lungs (Luke 23:46).

- *The biblical word "spirit" refers to the breath of life — the power that keeps us alive. Who is the giver of this power in the first place?*
- *Who holds our death and life in his hands? Why is this an <u>encouraging</u> promise for us as people of faith?*

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

The high priests in Israel were ones who made sacrifices for the community but also for themselves. Only they were allowed to pass through the veil to the inner sanctuary of God's temple. Now, Jesus has become our great high priest who made the final sacrifice for our sins, and had passed through that veil. Jesus was the perfect lamb of God. He did not need to make a sacrifice for himself — he made the sacrifice for the sake of sinners just like us!

- *Why do we trust that we will "pass through the heavens" like Jesus did? Is this something we have earned or can do on our own?*

Our high priest, Jesus, though he was perfect, knew what it was to be like us. For this reason he can sympathize with what we face in life. Having taken on human form he lived without sin, and yet he knew what it was like to suffer and to be weak.

- *How does it make you feel to know that Jesus fully understands our human struggles? Are there any other gods you know of that this can be said about?*

John 18:1—19:42

John told the story of the last moments of Jesus with his disciples as they headed to the garden near the Kidron Valley. He said, "Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples." Judas, who was about to turn Jesus over to the Roman soldiers, knew this place well. He had spent much time there with Jesus and the other eleven, learning, praying, and worshiping.

- *Why do we have a stronger reaction when something bad happens within a familiar or sacred space, with the good memories associated?*

From the cross, Jesus said ,"It is <u>finished</u>" (John 19:30). The same word can mean "accomplished" or "completed."

- *In the cross, what was finished? In what sense does this "finish" still leave more to be accomplished — on the third day, as well as in our lives?*

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