

Tenebrae - The service is derived from a very ancient ceremony celebrated during Holy Week, when the lights of the Church are extinguished to symbolize Christ's approaching crucifixion. We will hear the story of Christ's passion, including the Last Supper, up to the point when he is arrested, and Peter denies him. After each reading a candle is extinguished so the church gradually becomes darker. At the end of the service, we leave in silence to observe Good Friday with our brothers and sisters in the faith and meet again in this place on Easter Sunday. The service will proceed unannounced.

**O Sacred Head Sore Wounded** recording of Thora

**Minister** He was counted among those that go down to the depths: He was as a man without help, free among the dead. They have laid him in the lower pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death.

**Hymn** This night, dear friends (CH375) Tune at R&S 654 (words at the end)

**Minister**

O sacred Head, sore wounded,  
with grief and shame weighed down;  
O royal head surrounded  
with thorns, thine only crown;  
O Lord of life and glory,  
what bliss 'til now was thine!  
I read the wondrous story,  
I joy to call thee mine.

From **O Sacred Head Sore Wounded** (Passion Chorale), *Paul Gerhardt (1607-76)*

**And so, we read the 'wondrous story':**

**1st Reader - Jean**

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples "As you know, the Passover is two days away - and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace, of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him. "But not during the Feast," they said, "or there may be a riot among the people".

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 1 is extinguished**

**2nd Reader - Pat**

While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

When the disciples saw this, they were indignant, "Why this waste?" they asked. "This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."

Aware of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Then one of the Twelve - the one called Judas Iscariot - went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him 30 silver coins. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 2 is extinguished**

**3rd Reader - Sandy**

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, the Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house". So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me".

They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?"

Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 3 is extinguished**

**4th Reader Naomi, followed by the Lord's Supper**

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying "Take and eat; this is my body" He offered it them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is the blood of my covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 4 is extinguished**

On the night he was betrayed and given over to the military and the powers of oppression, our Lord ate with his disciples. They broke bread together. We believe it was the Passover meal, that sacrificial meal of bread without leaven, of bitter herbs. He also washed his disciples' feet, taking the role of a servant.

**John 13:1-8**

**Take this foot as a reminder that we worship a servant King, we humble ourselves in the service of others. Let Jesus wash your feet, so you may walk in His way.**

**We sing The Servant King R&S 522 (remain seated)**

Remembering Christ's work and passion, looking for his coming again, and pleading his eternal sacrifice, we do this in obedience to his command. By the presence and power of his Holy Spirit, bless and consecrate these gifts so that the bread which we break may be for us a sharing in the body of Christ; and the cup which we bless, a sharing in the blood of Christ. So may we ourselves become a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for your acceptance.

Our Lord took the bread and said, "This is my body which is for you."

**The Minister serves all**

In the same way, he took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

**All: Lamb of God have mercy on us; Lamb of God have mercy on us; Lamb of God grant us peace**

**The Doxology to be sung (unaccompanied):**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise him all creatures here below;**

**Praise him above, ye heavenly host;**

**Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen**

**5th Reader - Helen**

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered." But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "This very night, before the cock crows, you will disown me three times."

But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same."

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 5 is extinguished**

**6th Reader - Robert**

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 6 is extinguished**

**7th Reader - Geoff or Mary**

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may Your will be done."

When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 7 is extinguished**

**8th Reader - Rachel S**

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 8 is extinguished**

**9th Reader - Joyce**

At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this has all taken place that the writings might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**

**Candle 9 is extinguished**

**10th Reader - Keith**

They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, elders and teachers of the law came together. Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire.

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.

Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: "We heard him say, "I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man." Yet even then their testimony did not agree.

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**  
**Candle 10 is extinguished**

**11th Reader - Wendy**

Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

"I am," said Jesus, "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

The high priest tore his clothes, "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?"

They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross**  
**Candle 11 is extinguished**

**12th Reader - Ian**

"Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee" she said. But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you are talking about" he said.

another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth." He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!"

After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them for the accent gives you away." Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I do not know the man!" Immediately a cock crowed.

**All: Reconcile us, O Christ, by your Cross.**  
**Candle 12 is extinguished**

**Silence...**

**A central candle will be lit.**

**All: The Grace**

**Depart in silence**

This night, dear friends, the night for weeping,  
when powers of darkness overcome the day,  
the night the faithful mourn the weight of evil  
whereby our sins the Son of Man betray.

This night the traitor, wolf within the sheepfold,  
betrays himself into his victim's will;  
the Lamb of God for sacrifice preparing,  
sin brings about the cure for sin's own ill.

This night Christ institutes his holy supper,  
blest food and drink for heart and soul and mind;  
this night injustice joins its hand to treason's,  
and buys the ransom-price of humankind.

This night the Lord by slaves shall be arrested,  
he who destroys our slavery to sin;  
accused of crime, to criminals be given,  
that judgement on the righteous Judge begin.

O make us sharers, Saviour, of your Passion,  
that we may share your glory that shall be;  
let us pass through these three dark days of sorrow  
to Easter's laughter and its liberty.

Latin text by Peter Abelard (1079-1142)  
Translated Richard Lyman Sturch  
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