

Good Friday

Environment

Prepare the place of prayer with a suitable "focus center." Remember that the liturgical color of the day is red. If you are in a community that reserves the Blessed Sacrament, perhaps gather in that place (if so, the Blessed Sacrament is not present; perhaps the tabernacle or vessel open). Perhaps use a crucifix, nails, crown of thorns, a desert plant, etc. Have candles lighted and other lights are dim. Make sure everyone has a comfortable place to sit.

Beginning

The leader calls everyone into silence, with these or similar words:

We gather again on Good Friday as we concluded last evening - in silence.

After a suitable amount of silence, the leader continues:

Listen to a reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:

(Have another person read)

One look at him and people turned away.

We looked down on him, thought he was scum.

We thought he brought it on himself,

That God was punishing him for his own failures.

But it was our sins that did that to him,

That ripped and tore and crushed him --- our sins!

He was beaten, he was tortured,

But he didn't say a word.

Like a lamb taken to be slaughtered

And like a sheep to be sheared,

He took it all in silence.

Justice miscarried, and he was led off ---

And did anyone really know what was happening?

He died without a thought for his own welfare,

Beaten bloody for the sins of my people.

Even though he's never hurt a soul

Or said a word that wasn't true.

Sacred Silence

After an appropriate amount of silence, begin playing:

Music: "Crucifixion" - Haugen

Sacred Silence

In the liturgy today we pray for the entire world. Jesus came to show us all how to live and love. He cares for each and every human person and he cares for all of creation. He loves so deeply, so completely, that he died on the cross. We pray for the Church, the Pope, for those preparing for baptism, for unity, for the Jewish people, for other faith traditions, for those in public office, and finally, for those in tribulation:

Sisters, let us pray to God, that he banish disease, drive out hunger, unlock prisons of all kinds, loosen that which binds us up, health to the sick and salvation to the dying.

(pause for silent prayer)

Good and gracious God, may the prayers of those who cry out in any tribulation come before you, that all may rejoice, because in their hour of need, your mercy was at hand. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pause, then continue

The Cross has become a sign of salvation for Christians. And so on Good Friday we venerate this instrument of torture and death by embracing it and kissing it. Jesus overcame death because he embraced it. Death had no power over him.

If the community desires, the leader may invite everyone to offer some sign of reverence. Listen to:

Music: "Were You There?"

Spend some time in silent reverence of the Cross.

Then the leader continues:

It is finished. Let us stand there with Mary, John and the women who could not leave as their Beloved hung on the cross and died. In your imagination see yourself standing with Mary and putting an arm around her to comfort her in this tremendous loss of her son. Feel your own sorrow that this dear friend of yours is gone.

(silence for a moment)

The rest of Friday and all day on Saturday are spent as a time of grieving and remembering the loss. It is a solemn time. Think of what it must have been for Mary and the disciples.

pause, then play:

Music: "Wondrous Love."

Again, the leader leaves in silence, indicating that the service is over.