

## Reflections for Good Friday 2020

### Preparation

1. If you have a cross you made on Palm Sunday or want to look at the picture on the front of this sheet as a focus do that.
2. When preparing for this mediation on the cross, find a place and time where you can be comfortable for half an hour, preferably where you cannot be disturbed. (Turn off the TV!).
3. Place something that you depend on in your daily life next to the cross. This could be a diary, a credit card, a bunch of keys, a box of tablets, a £20 note (if you have one!)
4. Light a candle/tea light if safe and possible.
5. Prepare to spend five to ten minutes in silence. You may hear noises around you. Try to accept that they are there and return to the cross. If you find silence difficult put on a CD of classical music or something which will help you reflect on the cross.
6. Watch the 5 minute video <https://youtu.be/CkSg6JiXjvg>
7. Read John 23:26-49



The story is told, that whilst Terry Waite was in captivity in a small cell, he would look for a cross in his environment (in a window frame) and he would focus on that as he prayed.

In this time of isolation we also can find ways to see the cross in our environment. Some of those reading this will have made a cross on Palm Sunday. Even if we are stuck in one room, we can look around and see things which have meaning.

The Hidden Christians of Japan, who survived years of persecution used to hold onto symbols of their faith which the authorities thought were simply trinkets or decorations. In the book Silence, by Sushako Endo, the main character is the missionary Sebastian Rodrigues who has gone to convert and give communion to the poorest people of Japan. These people are the ancestors of the Hidden Christians. The authorities catch Rodrigues and he is faced with a silence from God. Only once does God speak to him and that is at the very moment he is denouncing Christ and his faith by placing his foot on a picture of Jesus' face.

Jesus came to take upon himself all our violence, our doubts, our fears and our despair. He came, not in a detached sort of a way, like a distracted listener (you know the sort of thing, when you are talking to someone and they are saying, "Yes, dear" without really hearing you). Jesus does hear us, not

only with his ears, but with his whole being, heart, mind soul and strength.

The silence or abandonment Christ faces from his Father on the cross, is interrupted by the voices of those around him. Despite his pain he hears the voices of the thieves beside him and promises the one who asks this of him, "today you will be with me in Paradise".

Jesus hears those around him when he is on the cross and then he breaths his last breath, saying, "It is accomplished!" In that moment what has he done? He has taken on the sins of the world, those things which cause us pain in our heart, mind, soul and body and he has transformed them with his love for God and for each of us.

Now, look at the cross and still your body.

Focus on the cross. You have placed something that represents your daily life at the foot of this cross. Spend several minutes in silence, if you are able (see note 5 if you find silence difficult). Maybe for five or ten minutes, just sit in silence. When the silence is over, if you have lit a candle, blow it out. He has died. As he said himself, "It is accomplished!"