



# Connections

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the Highest!*

**SPECIAL  
ISSUE #5**



The crown of the Christian year is the celebration of Our Lord's resurrection, preceded by the tragic events that led up to his victory. Even people who have rejected the Christian faith of their childhood are drawn to the mystery of a God who loves us so much that he came to live among us and to suffer a cruel, painful, unjust death for us. And they crowd the churches on Easter Day, yearning for the joy of knowing that the Lord is risen - risen indeed.

This year will be different. There will be no Alleluias ringing out in Christ Church, no lilies at the altar, no Eucharist for us to share, but all over the Christian world it will still be Easter Day.

In this issue of *Connections* you will find ways to journey through Holy Week to Easter while still staying safe in your home.



*Please pray for these members  
of our faith community and  
their families*

Anne S	George
Annet K	Jenille L
Beverly B	Joan & John N
Christina & Joshua	Ken K
Corinne P	Margo P
David M	Maureen C
Deb A	Sherri-Ann & Ron
Dorothy	Valerie A
Euphrasia	Viggy M
Florence S	Wendy & Rob
Fred L	William I

*and for all those affected by the  
COVID-19 virus*

## **SHARE HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES ONLINE**

### **FROM ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL**

Join with Anglicans across the Diocese in observing Holy Week and celebrating Easter through online worship from St. James Cathedral.

The following services will be live streamed or recorded:

- Palm Sunday: April 5 at 11 am
- Chrism Mass: Tuesday April 7 at 10:30 am
- Maundy Thursday: April 9 at 7 pm
- Good Friday: April 10 at 12 pm
- Easter Sunday: April 12 at 11 am

You can watch each video directly on Facebook (you don't need an account to watch) or through the diocesan website.



## **PERSPECTIVE: HOLDING ONTO THE GOD OF GRACE**

- Pastor Pam

From the beginning of the book of Genesis we see that God, who was before time and spoke creation into being, then stepped back and reflected. God's thinking: "it is good". Over and again, as creation was made, the waters, vegetation, sun and moon, creatures in and out of the waters, God's response was, "it is good". In creating mankind, "let us make humankind in our image"... "male and female he created them"... and, upon reflection on what God had done, all "was very good".



And yet, these same words, "it is good", could not have been what Jesus thought as he journeyed toward Jerusalem, about 2000 years ago. During the days that led up to the cross did he ever think, instead, "It shouldn't be like this"? All had been made so "good". Instead, Jesus received anything but. One minute there were accolades in the form of waved palm branches and the next, derision and hate. Where had "good" gone?

"It shouldn't be like this", has certainly been my thought in these last weeks. Especially after listening to a 2006 TED talk by Dr. Larry Brilliant. The American epidemiologist walked listeners through how smallpox was eradicated from the planet in 1980. He called for a new global system that could identify and contain pandemics before they spread. THIS IN 2006! If so much was known fourteen years ago, how could the pandemic of the COVID-19 virus occur today and with such widespread and detrimental effects?

Of course, thinking "it shouldn't be like this", does not help any of us to do anything constructive. In the same way, wallowing in the hate of the world would not do Jesus any good. So what did Jesus do? I invite you to walk with Jesus in this next week, utilising the Stations of the Cross, which you will find in *Connections*. Jesus faced evil. He did not let it

overcome him. He persevered and won for himself, in a sense, re-created, a holy people. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 1:8b to 10 "join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel".

If Jesus endured the journey that was the cross, we too can endure, holding onto the God of grace. He is our hope and light now and at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel.

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### **Easter traditions around the world**

Children in Canada grow up expecting decorated eggs and candy from the Easter bunny each year. Brought to this country by German immigrants in the 1700s, the practice is rooted in the belief that rabbits and eggs symbolize fertility and rebirth.

Other cultures have their own unique Easter celebrations. It's drenching people with water in Poland, bonfires in Finland or reading crime novels in Norway.

In Florence, Italy, locals celebrate a 350-year-old Easter tradition known as Scoppio del Carro, or "explosion of the cart." An ornate cart packed with fireworks is led through the streets by people in 15th century costumes before stopping outside the Duomo; the Archbishop then lights a fuse during Easter mass that leads outside to the cart and sparks a lively fireworks display. The meaning behind the custom dates back to the First Crusade, and is meant to ensure a good harvest.

On the morning of Holy Saturday, people on the Greek island of Corfu throw pots, pans and other earthenware out of their windows. This "throwing of the pots" ritual welcomes spring, symbolizing the new crops that will be gathered in new pots.

## CHRIST CHURCH FINANCES

Three weeks ago, our world was turned upside down. In addition to cancelling worship, events and even meeting others in person, our finances were completely disrupted, especially the main sources of our income: Sunday offering, fundraising, and rental income. As most of our expenses, eg. salaries, heat, insurance etc., continue, this poses a major challenge, not only to us, but to all churches. In the midst of this, the Diocese has responded quickly, announcing that for April and May, they will cover clergy compensation costs and forgo the Diocesan assessment charge for all parishes. To cover the cost, the Diocese has borrowed the money and pledged property it owns as collateral. If necessary, it is prepared to sell the property to cover the cost. This is an incredibly generous offer, worth about \$10,000 to Christ Church for each month, and we are very thankful for it.

The Diocesan offer has relieved some of the immediate pressure on our parish finances, but we still need your support through this time. We will continue our employment arrangements with Ellen and Sam, as it is important to support them at this time. We look forward to learning more news about the government wage support program to help cover these costs. The programs of all our renters are shut down, and their sources of income restricted or non-existent. Of particular concern is the Daycare, and we are in discussion with them concerning their rent obligations. Faith Tabernacle church has already given us their April payment. We appreciate their seeing this as being important at this time.

We are thankful for your continuing support, and grateful to those who have already forwarded their offerings. We still have about \$7,000 a month expenses to cover over the next two months. If you are able, we will welcome receiving your help donation. Envelope offerings may be mailed or deposited through the mail slot at the church (cheques only - no cash), or if you give me a call 416-265-5995, I will either arrange to pick up, or make other arrangements.

Ian Campbell, Treasurer

### ***Worship with us through technology***

**Please see the Christ Church website for the worship resources we are preparing for Palm Sunday, for Holy week and thereafter. You might even see Pastor Pam preaching and**

**you will hear Sam's wonderful playing and can sing along.**



**The best place for more information is [https://](https://www.toronto.anglican.ca/2020/03/13/covid-19-updates/#worship)**

**[www.toronto.anglican.ca/2020/03/13/covid-19-updates/#worship](https://www.toronto.anglican.ca/2020/03/13/covid-19-updates/#worship)**

**Some parishes will live stream. For these you will have to find out the time of the service. Others are taped beforehand and you can see them at any time on Sunday morning or thereafter.**

**For our parishioners from Barbados, St. Thomas Barbados service is available at <https://www.facebook.com/stthomasparishchurch/> (This is a livestreamed service.)**

### **CHRIST CHURCH SCARBOROUGH**

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**416-261-4169 M1M 3A1**

**[office@christchurchscarborough.com](mailto:office@christchurchscarborough.com)**

**[Website: www.christchurchscarborough.com](http://www.christchurchscarborough.com)**

**ALL SERVICES AND MEETINGS**

**CANCELLED**

**UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

The phrase

*"do not be afraid"*

is written in the Bible 365 times. That's a daily reminder from God to live every day being fearless ♥

## FROM "HOSANNA!" TO "CRUCIFY HIM!" TO "ALLELUIA - HE IS RISEN!"



### APRIL 5 PALM SUNDAY

They wanted a Messiah, someone who would drive out their Roman oppressors. So they shouted "Hosanna!" which means "Save us!" when the charismatic preacher from Nazareth rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. We begin our journey with these misguided people.

**Readings** *Psalm 118: 1 & 2, 19 to 29; Philipians 2: 5 to 11; Matthew 21: 1 to 11; Luke 19: 1 & 2, 39 & 40*

#### The Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God, in tender love for all our human race you sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take our flesh and suffer death upon a cruel cross. May we follow the example of his great humility and share in the glory of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN



### STATIONS of the CROSS

### APRIL 6 MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK

We spend a little time each day retracing the tragic procession that took Jesus from the place where he had been brutally beaten to the cruel cross where he would die. Our thoughts are directed with reflectins and prayer as we move from one step to the next as He did on that awful day.

*(See the following pages for appropriate guides to recalling the events of this week.)*

**Readings** *Isaiah 42: 1 to 9; Psalm 36: 5 to 10; Hebrews 9: 11 to 15; John 12: 1 to 11*

#### The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, whose Son was crucified yet entered into glory, may we, walking in the way of the cross, find it is for us the way of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN



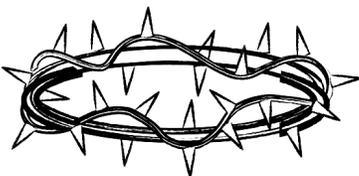
### APRIL 7 TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Burdened under the heavy cross that will be his instrument of death, lashed by the jeers and insults of the crowd lining his path, our Lord makes his painful way though the streets of Jerusalem to Golgotha, "The Place of the Skull" outside the walls of the city.

**Readings** *Isaiah 49: 1 to 7; Psalm 71: 1 to 12; 1 Corinthians 1: 18 to 31; John 12: 20 to 36*

#### The Collect of the Day

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. May our lives be so transformed by his passion that we may witness to his grace; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN



### APRIL 8 WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Jesus is exhausted. He stumbles and falls. His strength is ebbing, but he must go on, until the full price for our sins has been paid by this innocent man.

**Readings** *Isaiah 50: 4 to 9a; Psalm 70; Hebrews 12: 1 to 3; John 13: 21 to 30*

#### The Collect of the Day

Lord God, your Son our Saviour gave his body to be whipped and turned his face for men to spit upon. Give your servants grace to accept suffering for his sake, confident of the glory that will be revealed through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN



## **APRIL 9 MAUNDY THURSDAY**

The word "Maundy" is derived from the Latin word for "command" and refers to Jesus' commandment to the disciples to "Love one another as I have loved you."

We remember how Jesus washed the feet of his disciples to teach us to serve each another.

We remember the supper that Jesus sanctified to his memory.

We remember how we usually strip the altar on this night and empty the chancel of every article that gives us joy in the living

Redeemer, as we grieve his death. The chancel becomes a silent tomb, awaiting the Saviour of the world.

**Readings** *Exodus 12: 1 to 14; Psalm 116: 10 to 17; 1 Corinthians 11: 23 to 26; John 13: 1 to 15*

### **The Collect of the Day**

O God, your Son Jesus Christ has left to us a meal of bread and wine in which we share his body and his blood. May we who celebrate this sign of his great love show in our lives the fruits of his redemption; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN



## **APRIL 10 GOOD FRIDAY**

Our Lord asks us to stand at the foot of his cross as he suffers agony for us.

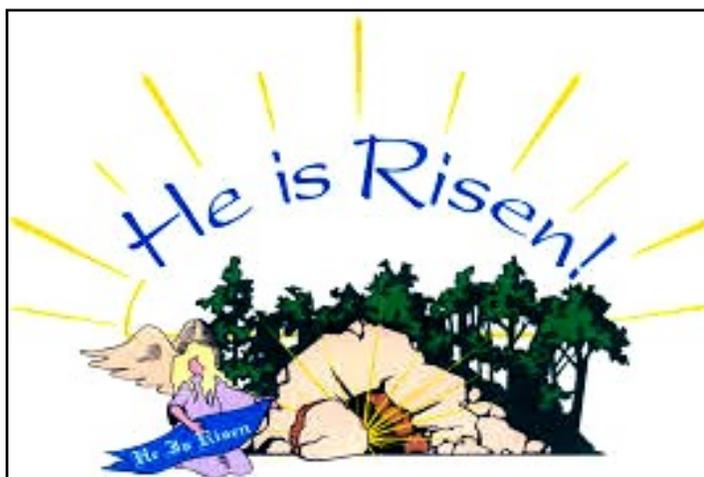
We hear his heartbroken cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

We face the reality of his death.

**Readings** *Isaiah 52: 13 to 53 and 12; Psalm 22: 1 to 17; Hebrews 4: 14 to 16, 5, and 7 to 9; John 18: 1 to 19 and 42*

### **The Collect of the Day**

Almighty God, look graciously, we pray, on this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. AMEN



## **APRIL 12 EARLY ON THE THIRD DAY**

We celebrate our Lord's resurrection on the day that changed the world forever. We greet each other by telephone or e-mail or text message with the words "The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!"

Even in physical separation, we are together in Christian fellowship as we rejoice in the amazing truth that God has forgiven all our transgressions and we are born to new life through Jesus.

**Readings** *Jeremiah 31: 1 to 6; Psalm 118: 14 to 24; Colossians 3: 1 to 4; John 20: 1 to 18*

### **The Collect of the Day**

Lord of life and power, through the mighty resurrection of your Son, you have overcome the old order of sin and death and have made all things new in him. May we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, reign with him in glory, who with you and the Holy Spirit is alive, one God, now and forever. AMEN

# THE WAY OF THE CROSS

As we trace Jesus' terrible journey, we should walk from room to room in our home or backyard. The steps we take are not taken alone. Two thousand years ago Jesus walked the path of betrayal, mocking and death upon a cross. He was tested and not found wanting. Nothing we can experience can exceed what he experienced. He walks with us and he asks us to walk with him.

## 1. JESUS IS JUDGED AND CONDEMNED TO DEATH

**Scripture reading** *Matthew 27: 1 and 2 and 15 to 26*

**Reflection** King Herod and the temple rulers agreed that Jesus should die. Caught in the middle was Pilate. His past record had serious errors. He didn't need this local squabble. The truth was, Jesus was innocent. But the crowd demanded a murderer instead of Jesus. Protect your power and influence. So Pilate played it safe.

Playing it safe sometimes works, but when we choose expediency we suffer shame and guilt. The blessing is that God is always there, to love and to forgive us.

**Prayer** *We pray for all political leaders, diplomats and government officials, that they may work for the common good and pursue peace and justice for all. For every occasion when people hurt others. For those in prison and those on trial in the courts. And we pray for ourselves, when we judge and condemn others. When we are judged and condemned. Help us to know the humility of Jesus. Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 2. JESUS IS MOCKED AND GIVEN THE CROSS

**Scripture reading** *Matthew 27: 27 to 31*

**Reflection** What a pathetic sight! Bruises all over his body, blood on his face from his crown of thorns. "Hail, King of the Jews" the soldiers yelled. Don't blame them. They were just doing their jobs. Today, this event would be revolting. But, like the soldiers, because of our ignorance or selfishness, we too mock his kingdom. Like the soldiers, we scourge him. Every time we hurt someone, every time we fail to help someone, we put a crown of thorns on his head. God is hurt.

**Prayer** *We pray for all who serve and protect; police, firefighters, paramedics, our armed forces. For all who hate and for all who are hated. For all who mock others and for all who are mocked. For all victims of violence and for those who are violent to others. For those who live under oppression of any kind. And we pray for ourselves, when we insult or hurt others; when we are hurt or humiliated; that we may not be indifferent to the hurt of others. Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 3. JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

**Narration** *Not only did the soldiers mock Jesus, they painfully scourged his body. Then they thrust the weight of a rough wooden cross on his sagging shoulders. Step after step, he begins the tortuous journey along the cobbled streets of the holy city. Without warning, his knees buckle and he falls.*

**Reflection** Bloodied and exhausted, he lies there under the weight of a cross and the despair of what has happened. He was chastised so we might have peace. He was mocked so we might have hope. He was betrayed so we might be forgiven. On his back was laid all the fear, shame, guilt and sin of every one of us. He fell because its weight was overwhelming.

**Prayer** *We pray for those suffering from chronic pain. For those living with cancer, aids, Covid-19 and other diseases. For those who are physically or mentally exhausted. For those who are hungry, especially children in Canada. For those facing any kind of failure in their lives. For those who care for the sick, the weak and the frail elderly. For doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers. For caregivers of any kind, especially family and friends. And for ourselves, when we face sickness or disease, weakness, fatigue, chronic pain, social isolation; when we experience failure of any kind. Lord, hear our prayer.*

#### 4. SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS CARRY THE CROSS

**Scripture reading** *Mark 15: 21 and 22*

**Reflection** Simon was not a volunteer. He was called out of the crowd by a soldier - the only one to share the burden of the cross with Jesus. How often do we bear someone else's cross? Do we always wait to be asked? Or do we reach out the hand of love? Whenever we respond to a need with kindness, we make a difference to God. It is better to volunteer, but if we are drafted by God, we take up the cross of Jesus and carry it by doing his work in the world.

**Prayer** *We pray for the people of Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Afghanistan and others in conflict. For the people in every land who seek freedom, security and justice. For the millions of refugees in camps. For international understanding that fosters mutual respect. For all who are disadvantaged by colour, race, gender or religious beliefs. For the removal of all barriers of bias between people. And for ourselves, that we may be free from prejudice of any kind; that self-love may not hinder us from caring for and serving others. Lord, hear our prayer.*

#### 5. VERONICA WIPES THE BROW OF JESUS

**Narration** *The men who were his friends ran away in fear for their lives, but the women who believed in Jesus stayed with him. Loyalty and compassion triumphed over despair. Tradition says that the woman whom Jesus healed of a blood disease was named Veronica. Despite the danger to herself, she gently wipes the blood from his sweating face. No-one else seems to care. But she does.*

**Reflection** Exposure to cruelty tends to reveal the true measure of a person. The crowd revealed mostly cowardice, apathy or a 'let's party' attitude. But it can also bring out compassion and courage. Out of the crowd came one woman - Veronica. Never mind the soldiers. Never mind the crowd. Take a risk. Do something - for the Lord. Every day we have to make choices. Turn our backs on evil, or take the risk and respond in love. Choose.

**Prayer** *We pray with thanks for those who see with God's eyes and see beauty and love where others see only ugliness and squalor. For those who feel unattractive to themselves and others. For all those who make others feel disliked or rejected. For those who reach out to others with acceptance and affection. And we pray for ourselves, that we may see beauty where God sees beauty, that our hearts may be open to compassion, our minds to console, our voices to comfort, our hands to serve and heal. Lord, hear our prayer.*

#### 6. JESUS FALLS FOR A SECOND TIME

**Narration** *Each step makes the heavy beam fall like a sledgehammer on his aching back. His ears are bombarded by the laughter and insults of the crowd who, like angry bees, push and jostle him. He goes down again, this time face forward, cracking his elbows and knees on the stone walkway. He has fallen for the second time.*

**Reflection** They hailed him as a king. Now he is despised and rejected, a pitiful excuse for a human being. A common criminal, carrying his cross. The paradox is striking. The Centurion's power and the utter degradation of one powerless man. Our hearts know the truth. It is our weakness he carries, our sins he bears, our burdens, yours and mine. His aching muscles are ours. His battered bones are ours.

**Prayer** *We pray that mercy will always temper justice. For those imprisoned seeking release or pardon. For parole boards and those responsible for official mercy. For those who suffer from stress and mental and spiritual illness. For those who suffer with Alzheimer's and their families and friends. And we pray for ourselves, that we may openly and honestly seek forgiveness from those whom we have hurt and sincerely forgive those who have hurt us. That we see the pain in others and reach out to them in love. Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 7. JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

**Scripture reading** *Luke 23: 27 to 31*

**Reflection** Two groups of women followed Jesus on this day; first, the faithful followers. He didn't talk to them. He just looked at them with love. But others, excited by what was happening, meant well, but they were merely spectators who hadn't taken his teachings to heart. Jesus tells them not to weep for him but for themselves and their children. How often are we like the women of Jerusalem? Lacking true caring for those who are wounded in body, mind or spirit?

**Prayer** *We pray for women everywhere, that they may be treated as equals. For those who watch their loved ones go to war. For those who grieve their loved ones killed or wounded as a result of violence, that peace may replace conflict. In penitence and sorrow for each time right is overcome by might; when the powerful are given respect while the disadvantaged remain powerless; when the poor are ignored or oppressed. For the liberation of all persons. And we pray for ourselves, that the Holy Spirit will give us the mind of Jesus so that we will actively care for all those in need and respect the dignity of every human being. Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 8. JESUS FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME

**Narration** *With Simon helping, the grim parade reaches the old quarry where the Romans hold crucifixions. Each breath is a struggle ... each step a stumble ... each muscle shrieks pain ... his foot catches a cobblestone ... his wobbling knees explode ... he collapses in a heap. Jesus falls a third time.*

**Reflection** He lies on the cold ground, not guilty of anything but love. When you love someone, you give of yourself, so there should be less of yourself than there was at the start. Yet you feel more. You feel you really are the person you were meant to be. In the prostrate form of Jesus, we see the greatest love the world has ever known. Love for you, love for me, love for all of us together by name. He lies there, battered and bleeding ... for us.

**Prayer** *We pray for those who experience moral weakness. For those whose faith is filled with doubts. For those who have given up hope. For those who have reached the limit of their physical, mental and spiritual strength. For those who counsel the despairing or suicidal. For those who offer comfort to the dying or bereaved. For chaplains who minister to those in hospitals or prisons. And we pray for ourselves, when we experience spiritual failure; when everything seems hopeless; that we may have the patience and resolve that Jesus had on his long, painful march to death. Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 9. JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

**Scripture readings** *John 19: 17 and 18 and Mark 15: 23 and 24*

**Reflection** The soldiers did not waste anything, so they threw dice to divide his clothes. Finally Jesus had absolutely nothing. Yet his loss gave us new life. By his death, he conquered death. By his love, he defeated hate. By forgiving his executioners, he destroyed guilt and shame. To live for yourself alone is hardly worth living. But if you live with Jesus, you are fully and freely alive, as you were meant to be.

**Prayer** *We pray for all who are exposed to ridicule, shame or humiliation. For battered women and children. For women who are raped and children who are victims of violence and sexual abuse. For those who degrade and humiliate others by their words or actions. For those who exploit others racially, mentally, intellectually, socially. And we pray for ourselves, when we feel ashamed, guilty or abused by race, gender, colour, social or mental status, that we may live with healing and freedom. Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 10. JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

**Scripture reading** *Mark 15: 25 to 32*

**Reflection** “Father, forgive them.” These words promise us the grace for which this tragic scheme is the price tag. The soldiers hammering in the nails. “Father, forgive them.” The crowd that yelled “Crucify him!” - his reply - “Father, forgive them.” Crucifixion is not pretty, yet in this act of love and obedience we see the beauty of what God is like and what we could be like. Every time we turn away from God we are there at the cross, and Jesus says “Father, forgive them.”

**Prayer** *In awe and gratitude, we stand before the cross. God loved the world so much that he gave up his son to suffering and death. So we pray for those who destroy that which is good, true and sacred. For those who suppress the Good News of Jesus crucified. For those who are persecuted for their faith and for their persecutors. And we pray for ourselves, when we are called to stand up for our faith; that we follow the way of the cross in our lives so that sin and suffering can be broken on the rock of love Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 11. JESUS GREETES HIS MOTHER

**Scripture reading** *John 19: 25 to 27*

**Reflection** There were three Marys at the foot of the cross ... Mary his friend ... Mary his aunt ... and Mary his mother. Shock and sorrow were tearing them apart. For Mary his mother, there he was, nailed on the cross, his suffering wracking her body with sobs. In compassion, he asks one of his disciples to take care of her. So we must all care for our brothers and sisters, from the starving children in Africa to the homeless man sleeping on a grate in Toronto. All have real needs of body, mind and spirit.

**Prayer** *We give thanks for the love of Mary, the mother of Jesus. We pray for our own mothers, fathers and grandparents, and we name them now in our minds and hearts. For the love and joy they have given us, and in sorrow for the ways we hurt them. For those still living and those who have died and are at rest. For the children for whom we are parents, that they may grow in wisdom and stature and in favour with God, themselves and others. And we pray for ourselves, that we may experience the love of Jesus and Mary in all our relationships. Lord, hear our prayer.*

## 12. JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

**Scripture reading** *Matthew 27: 45 to 51*

**Reflection** All of them say “It is finished.” The soldiers, the chief priests, Pilate, the crowd. The disciples. But they were all wrong. These words of Jesus on the cross mean “It is accomplished.” Everything needed for our salvation is in place. So Jesus cried, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. IT IS FINISHED.”

**Prayer** *We pray for the dying, particularly those dying from COVID-19, in their last hours, in gratitude because through Jesus no-one need ever die alone or without hope. For those who care for the dying, families, friends, doctors, nurses and other caregivers. For hospices and those who minister in them. For those who have never met Jesus and need our prayers and witness. And we pray for ourselves, that we may truly know Jesus and share his love, his risen and eternal life. Lord, hear our prayer.*

### 13. JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

**Scripture reading** *John 19: 31 to 34*

**Reflection** Jesus hangs lifeless on the cross. Two men, Joseph and Nicodemus, whose love wins out over fear, take his body down from the cross, anoint it and wrap it in a cloth. But even in death, Jesus stands for justice and the homeland of love. And surely we believe that the cry for justice will not be stilled. That Jesus is Lord. That justice must prevail. And that we must work to make it happen.

**Prayer** *We pray for the dead, especially those we have known and loved. We remember them in our hearts and minds. We give thanks for all who have helped to make us better persons. We pray for those who mourn, especially those whose grief has disrupted their lives or left them lonely, and for all those who care for the bereaved. And we pray for ourselves, that we will not forget that Jesus gave his life for us; that by his Spirit we may be strengthened to give ourselves in caring for others. Lord, hear our prayer.*

### 14. JESUS IS BURIED IN THE TOMB

**Scripture reading** *Mark 15: 42b to 47*

**Reflection** They laid to rest The Light of the World. But his light was not extinguished. There was still God's promise, and on the third day he rose from the dead. The Light is the resurrected Jesus, a light which the darkness does not like, can never understand and is never able to put out. If we believe only in a buried Jesus, there is no light for us, just the darkness of our own selfish spirits. If we believe in a resurrected Jesus, the light shines even when we reject him, because he still forgives and loves us.

**Prayer** *Lord, by your death you have reconciled us to you. When we pity ourselves and think we make great sacrifices for others; when our patience wears thin and we are ready to give up; when we get angry and wish to retaliate against our enemies; when we suffer pain of body, anguish of the mind and despair of the spirit; when we are afraid to stand for that which is honourable and true; strengthen us with the courage you showed on the way to your cross. Lord, hear our prayer.*

