

## Maundy Thursday

### Reading: Luke 23: 1 – 12

Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. <sup>2</sup>They began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.' <sup>3</sup>Then Pilate asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' He answered, 'You say so.' <sup>4</sup>Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, 'I find no basis for an accusation against this man.' <sup>5</sup>But they were insistent and said, 'He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.'



<sup>6</sup> When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. <sup>7</sup>And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. <sup>8</sup>When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. <sup>9</sup>He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup>The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. <sup>11</sup>Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. <sup>12</sup>That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

**Reflection:** Spend a little time reading slowly through this reflection, pause at the end of each section to absorb what you have read.

He will walk, a little in front of us, towards Jerusalem.  
He will not be scared even though we are apprehensive.  
If we try to discourage him he will recognise the devil in our voice  
And he will tell us so in no uncertain terms.  
Then he will go on again, in faith, towards Jerusalem.

He will walk, a little in front of us, into controversy.  
He will not be scared even though we are apprehensive.  
He will argue with the intelligent,  
contradict the self-assured,  
embrace the untouchable,  
upset bank balances by his outlandish behaviour in the sanctuary,  
and weep in public.  
Then he will go on again, in faith, towards a garden.

He will walk, a little in front of us, into Gethsemane.  
He will not be scared even though we are apprehensive.  
He will sweat blood and ask God if there is another way,  
And when God says 'no' he will  
take the traitor's kiss... the soldier's spit,  
the bile and venom from the princes of religion.  
Then he will go on again, in faith, towards the cross.

He will walk, a little in front of us, towards Calvary.  
He will not be scared, no, he will not be scared.  
He will feel the pain of wood and nails  
But more than this he will feel the weight of  
all the evil... all the malice... all the pettiness,  
all the sins of the world heaped upon his shoulders.  
He will not throw off that weight, though he could.  
He will not give back evil for evil,  
return malice for malice,  
take revenge on the petty-minded  
or spew out hate on all who have despised and rejected him.  
He will not give back the sin of the world,  
He will take it away into death, into hell,  
so that he can lead us into heaven.  
Then he will go on, in faith towards the Resurrection.

He will walk, a little behind us, through the graveyard.  
He will wait until we are sure he has died  
and admit our complicity in his life's ending.  
Then he will come up behind us and say our name,  
so that we can say his, forever.

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**Prayer:**

Gracious God, help us to use this time given to us.

May we draw closer to you through it, understanding more of your nature and our own.

May it deepen our faith, strengthen our commitment and confirm our sense of calling.

May we learn what it means to follow Christ and what it means to serve you.

May we recognise more clearly the true cost of discipleship but equally the rewards.

May we understand more fully why you have put us here, what you would have us do, who you would have us be, how you would have us live, and where you would have us go. Amen.

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