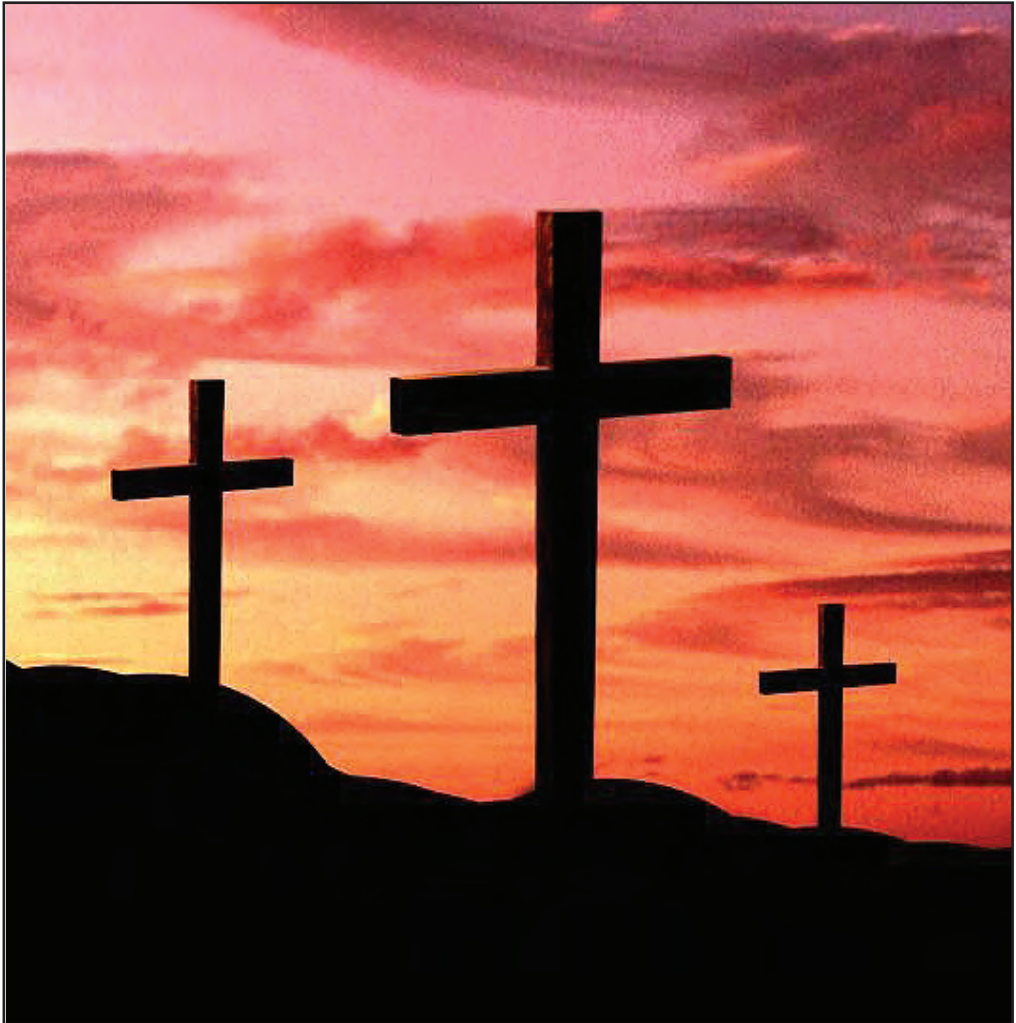


O My People



Sunday 2 March 2008
St Mary's Church, Cottonstones
St Mary's Singers

Introit

Ierusalem, Ierusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

(Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.)

This setting is an extract from the Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah, composed in the 16th century by the Spanish composer Tomás Luis de Victoria.

Introduction

Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal, have mercy upon us.

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled. Let us then renounce our willfulness and ask God's mercy, by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

We confess to you our selfishness and lack of love: fill us with your spirit.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Hymn 63

My song is love unknown

O MY PEOPLE

Old Testament Reading: Hosea 11: 1-4, 8-12

When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. The more I called them, the more they went from me; they kept sacrificing to the Baals, and offering incense to idols. Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them.

How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboyim? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and no mortal, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath. They shall go after the Lord, who roars like a lion; when he roars, his children shall come trembling from the west. They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt, and like doves from the land of Assyria; and I will return them to their homes, says the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Silence

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul:

O my God, in you I trust.

You are the God of my salvation:

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

In you I hope all the day long,

O my God, in you I trust.

Remember, Lord, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul: O my God, in you I trust.

New Testament Reading: Hebrews 4: 12-6

Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account. Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Silence

Hymn 156

Come down, O Love divine

Gospel: Luke 7: 36-39, 44-50

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment.

She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him – that she is a sinner."

Then Jesus, turning toward the woman, said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?". And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Silence

The Solemn Reproaches of the Cross

**"O my people, What have I done to you?
How have I offended you? Answer me!"**

The Reproaches are an ancient text of Western Christianity. Following the pattern of Psalm 78, they rehearse God's acts of faithfulness and humanity's repeated rebellion, leading to the crucifixion of Christ:

**"I gave you a royal sceptre :
but you gave me a crown of thorns.
I raised you to the height of majesty :
but you have raised me high on the Cross."**

Each of the nine verses follows a similar pattern, contrasting God's saving acts with the disloyalty of his people. The verses are interspersed with the traditional Trisagion ("Thrice Holy") of the Orthodox Church:

**Holy is God! Holy and strong!
Holy immortal one! Have mercy on us.**

Hymn 115

Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Prayers of Intercession

For forgiveness for the many times we have denied Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For grace to seek out those habits of sin which mean spiritual death, and by prayer and self-discipline to overcome them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For Christian people, that through the suffering of disunity there may grow a rich union in Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who make laws, interpret them, administer them, that our common life may be ordered in justice and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who still make Jerusalem a battleground, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who have the courage and honesty to work openly for justice and peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those in the darkness and agony of isolation, that they may find support and encouragement, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who, weighted down with hardship, failure, or sorrow, feel that God is far from them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who are tempted to give up the way of the cross, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we, with those who have died in faith, may find mercy in the day of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal, have mercy upon us.

The Peace

Once we were far off, but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood, for he is our peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

We share with one another a sign of peace.

Hymn 72

Lift high the Cross

Omit verses 3-6 and verse 11

The Blessing

May the Father, who so loved the world that he gave his only Son, bring you by faith to eternal life.

Amen.

May Christ, who accepted the cup of sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will, keep you steadfast as you walk with him the way of his cross.

Amen.

May the Spirit, who strengthens us to suffer with Christ that we may share his glory, set your minds on life and peace.

Amen.

And the blessing of God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, be upon us and remain with us, now and for ever.

Amen.

Let us depart in peace.

Thanks be to God.

The minister and choir leave in silence.

Motet

"Eli, Eli, lamma sabactani?"

("My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?")

This motet by the contemporary Czech composer Antonín Tušapský is a setting of Christ's last words on the Cross, according to Matthew.

