

## **Good Friday Service. 2020.**

### **Music.**

I invite you to play some contemplative music of your choice to quieten heart and mind to prepare yourself for our service.

### **The Grace.**

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

### **Prayer of adoration.**

During the week, Anne asked me, 'what are the Coronavirus restrictions like for you'? My reply was, 'Rather like pedalling a bicycle from Dublin to Jerusalem'. Upon leaving the monastery where I was staying in Dublin, I brought the bike up to cruising speed and, looking at the front wheel, wondered how many times it would revolve before I reached Jerusalem. I then looked at the cranks and wondered how many times they would revolve before my arrival in Jerusalem, at my best guess in seven to eight months. Common sense prevailed. I had not even cleared the Dublin city limits! I dismissed thoughts of Jerusalem as fanciful and got on with my job of simply getting into the daily routine of pedalling.

The Coronavirus restrictions are like that. I gave little or no thought to any end date of the restrictions. I get on with my daily routine of many years, my time spent between (alphabetically) academy, church, friends and family, wilderness walking. That is until today (Wednesday). A friend of mine, who has just recovered from a significant injury, asked if I would walk with him in the Jamieson Valley. I did so (keeping 1.5 metres between us, and 1.5 kilometres between us and anybody else). During our few hours together, he asked if we could walk together in Tasmania when the restrictions are lifted. I never need my arm twisted to accede to such requests. But this was special. His enthusiasm had us planning, all things being equal, a walk in the Walls of Jerusalem in November. It felt good to put this goal on the agenda and commit to weekly fitness walks with him in the Valley.

I give thanks to God for the unexpected and welcome events of life.

Take some time to think of something that you give thanks to God for in this time of compulsory restrictions.

## Prayer of confession.

Loving God,

We live in a world which many are describing as the 'new normal', whatever that might mean. We pray that we might not be distracted by the ambiguous and the opaque. Help us to focus on the 'old' normal. And to question it. It might be normal, but is it sane? May we consider the promptings of Michael Leunig. Forgive us if we baulk at them.

Amen



## Reading. John 18:1 to 19:42

The reading from John is a long one. Read it slowly, thoughtfully. Time is something we have plenty of.

## Sermon.

## **Prayers of the People.**

Good Friday Intercessions (Australian Prayers by Rev Bruce Prewer)

God of the crucified Jesus, we pray:

For the church:

that we may be courageous in carrying the cross,  
compassionate in forgiving our enemies,  
*and willing to use our resources in love for all whom Jesus died.*

For Australia:

that our Australian nation may be both just and generous,  
*and experience the grace that comes from losing life and finding it.*

For the suffering:

that sick, hungry or suffering people may know your love and receive your help  
which they need physically, mentally or spiritually.  
*In the fellowship of Christ's sufferings may they know there is a God who understands.*

For our families and friends"

that, according to their individual needs,  
your divine strength may be experienced in human weakness,  
*and that hopes that have been buried may germinate and grow  
and be ready for a resurrection.*

For each of us here:

that we may be lifted above anxieties, guilt, bewilderment, pain and fear,  
*and, by the mercy of Jesus,  
who bore our sorrows and carried our shame,  
find peace at the foot of the holy cross.  
Blessed be your name, God of the crucified, friend of all the needy and forsaken.*

## **Blessing.**

**May the Blessing of God Eternal, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always.**

**Amen**