



'Worship at home' Good Friday 2023



You are invited to find **seven candles** for this time of worship.

Light each of the candles to remind you that Christ brings light to our times of suffering and darkness. **After you have read each Scripture passage, extinguish one of the candles.**



The events of Holy Week lead us into a time of shadows and darkness. However, we know from our experiences of life that new growth comes from the dark earth, and light shines brightly when the darkness is greatest. God is the source of life and light.

The Shadow of Betrayal: Mark 14:17-21

When it was evening, Jesus came with the twelve disciples. While they were at the table eating, Jesus said, "I tell you that one of you will betray me - one who is eating with me." The disciples were upset and began to ask him, one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, do you?"

Jesus answered, "It will be one of you twelve, one who dips his bread in the dish with me. The Son of Man will die as the Scriptures say he will; but how terrible for that man who will betray the Son of Man! It would have been better for that man if he had never been born!"

Good News Bible

**When have you felt you have let someone down,
or betrayed their trust?**

When have you felt you let God down?

When have you felt you let yourself down?

Extinguish one candle, and know God's abundant love and generous grace, releasing you from the shadow of betrayal.

The Shadow of Anguish: Matthew 26: 36-39

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. Grief and anguish came over him, and he said to them, "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost

crushes me. Stay here and keep watch with me." He went a little farther on, threw himself face downward on the ground, and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me! Yet not what I want, but what you want." *Good News Bible*

When have you felt the shadow of anguish and sorrow?

Extinguish one candle, and find courage in Christ who comforts us in our darkest times.

The Shadow of Denial: Matthew 26:69-75

Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard when one of the High Priest's servant women came to him and said, "You, too, were with Jesus of Galilee." But he denied it in front of them all. "I don't know what you are talking about," he answered, and went on out to the entrance of the courtyard. Another servant woman saw him and said to the men there, "He was with Jesus of Nazareth." Again Peter denied it and answered, "I swear that I don't know that man!" After a little while the

men standing there came to Peter. "Of course you are one of them," they said. "After all, the way you speak gives you away!" Then Peter said, "I swear that I am telling the truth! May God punish me if I am not! I do not know that man!" Just then a rooster crowed, and Peter remembered what Jesus had told him: "Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me." He went out and wept bitterly. *Good News Bible*

When have you acted out of self interest instead of standing up for what you know to be true?

Extinguish one candle, and ask God's forgiveness for times you may have denied a friend, even unintentionally. 2

The Shadow of Injustice: Matthew 27:20-24, 26

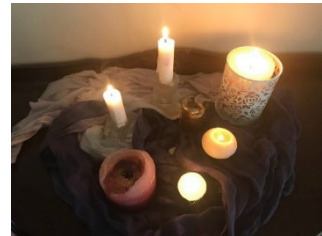
The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask Pilate to set Barabbas free and have Jesus put to death. But Pilate asked the crowd, "Which one of these two do you want me to set free for you?" "Barabbas!" they answered. "What, then, shall I do with Jesus called the Messiah?" Pilate asked them. "Crucify him!" they all answered. But Pilate asked, "What crime has he committed?" Then they

started shouting at the top of their voices: "Crucify him!" When Pilate saw that it was no use to go on, but that a riot might break out, he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am not responsible for the death of this man! This is your doing!" Then Pilate set Barabbas free for them; and after he had Jesus whipped, he handed him over to be crucified.

Good News Bible

When have you been aware of injustice, and not acted to address it?

Extinguish one candle, and pray for those who suffer oppression or injustice.



The Shadow of Humiliation: Matthew 27: 27-31

Then Pilate's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's palace, and the whole company gathered around him. They stripped off his clothes and put a scarlet robe on him. Then they made a crown out of thorny branches and placed it on his head, and put a stick in his right hand; then they knelt before him

and made fun of him. "Long live the King of the Jews!" they said. They spat on him, and took the stick and hit him over the head. When they had finished making fun of him, they took the robe off and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. *Good News Bible*

When have you judged or ridiculed another?

Extinguish one candle, and ask God to help you show mercy. Know that God's grace covers you, and them.

The Shadow of Abandonment: Psalm 22: selected verses

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? I have cried desperately for help, but still it does not come. During the day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer; I call at night, but get no rest. But you are enthroned as the Holy One, the one whom

Israel praises. Our ancestors put their trust in you; they trusted you, and you saved them. They called to you and escaped from danger; they trusted you and were not disappointed. "Praise him, you servants of the Lord!

Good News Bible

When have you felt alone and abandoned?

Extinguish one candle, and know that God is with you, even when you do not feel God's presence.

The Shadow of Death: Luke 23:44-46

It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock; and the curtain hanging in the Temple was

torn in two. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father! In your hands I place my spirit!" He said this and died.

Good News Bible

Extinguish the final candle.

Allow yourself to be confronted by the shadows of suffering, darkness, and death in our world.

Pray for people and situations where there is destruction and despair in our world.



We now await Easter Sunday: this is an in between time, a time of waiting. It is also a time of hope, because we know... that after the night comes a new day, after sin comes forgiveness, after defeat comes another chance, after struggles comes peace, after death comes resurrection, and the hope of eternal life. The light will shine in the darkness, and the darkness will never put it out.