

At the Foot of the Cross: Further Resources

Palm Sunday

Alternative Acclamation

The cross of Christ.

The cross on which the Saviour of the world was hung.

Suggested Readings

Luke 9:18–24

Silent Cross, Michel Quoist

Attached to the Cross, Peter De Rosa

Not Crushed by Death, Clare Richards

Intercessions

Jesus calls us to put God at the centre of our lives,
to love God by loving the whole created world,
to honour God with our every thought and action.

Jesus calls us to follow the path to God.

God walked the world to change us.

In compassion he healed us, and the people cried,

Hosanna in the highest.

God walked the world to open our eyes,

to show us a clearer vision of creation as a kingdom of love.

Hosanna in the highest.

God walked the world to join us to each other,

to join heaven with the earth.

Hosanna in the highest.

Symbols may be laid at the foot of the cross: a globe, a picture of Jerusalem, palms.

Christ Jesus challenges us to claim the world for God through love.

Christ Jesus challenges us to claim the world for God through selflessness.

Christ Jesus challenges us to claim the world for God through sacrifice.

Alternative Collect

Lord of the universe, creator of time and space,

you loved us so much you gave us your only Son

so that all who believe in him should not die but have eternal life:

give us hope in you,

even in the darkest times,

and help us to follow in Jesus' footsteps

so that we too may show your love to all the world;

in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Commissioning

Go out in quiet faith

to walk the way towards the hope of Easter Day

and our meeting with the risen Christ.

Blessings

And may hosannas of joy sound in all the earth,
welcoming the One who looks evil in the face,
and may the presence of God
lift high our hopes for the transforming of life. **Amen.**

Christ give *you* grace to grow in holiness, to deny *yourselves*, take up *your* cross and follow him; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, rest upon *you* and all those *you* love, this day and always. **Amen.**

Good Friday

Alternative Acclamation

This is the wood of the cross,
On which hung the Saviour of the world.

Suggested Readings

In connection with a main service: Matthew 27:27–31

As a stand-alone service: Mark 15:1–39

A Quiet Roar, Veronica Zundel

God on a Stick, Paul Hobbs

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, Isaac Watts

Reflection on the Crown of Thorns

The crown of the king of kings:
A crown of torment and taunting,
Of mockery and mutilation,
Laceration and laughter,
An obscene joke.
Mock love if you will,
Laugh at compassion if you must,
Spit in the face of justice if you have to,
But never forget the face of God we see in Jesus,
Battered and bruised,
With blood and tears mingling on his face,
Tears shed not for himself, but for us.

Intercessions

Lord Jesus, you were illegally tried, unjustly condemned.
We pray for all who are powerless in the face of power,
who suffer through the fear and greed of others.

When the innocent suffer

Lord, have mercy.

When the poor are exploited,

Lord, have mercy.

When prisoners are abused and tortured

Lord, have mercy.

Where the truth is a casualty of power,
let there be justice.

Where the law is a weapon in the hands of those who buy it,
let there be justice.

Where hope us crushed by oppression,
let there be justice.

Pictures of countries where there is oppression may be put at the foot of the cross.

Christ, who prayed in Gethsemane:
intercede for those who weep.

Christ, falsely accused and condemned:
vindicate those who are denied justice.

Christ, whipped and tortured:
stand with those who suffer.

Christ, who walked the way of tears:
strengthen those whose way is hard.

Christ, who died on a cross:
comfort those who are dying.

Christ, raised to life by God's power:
bring us all to share eternal life.

Lord Jesus Christ,
strengthen us to maintain the truth of love
by prophetic words
and acts of justice
even in the face of the world's condemnation;
so that sharing your suffering
we may also share your victory
over all that hurts and destroys life. **Amen.**

Alternative Collect

Lord Jesus,
upon the cross you knew pain and suffering,
the loneliness of abandonment,
all for our sake:
be with all those who suffer this day,
give them strength,
give them healing,
give them hope;
for in you alone we put our trust. **Amen.**

Commissioning

Go silently from here,
for there are no words which will speak of this moment in the life of God.

Blessings

Go blessed by the company of God,
who dies rather than leave us alone.
Go blessed by the faithfulness of Christ,
who chooses life in the face of death.
And go as those who stay with the truth,
even as we wait for Easter Day.

May Christ who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds;
and the blessing...

Easter Day

Alternative Acclamation

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Suggested Readings

In connection with a main service: John 20:19–29
As a stand-alone service: John 20:11–18
There Was No, Stewart Henderson
April Wind, Damian Lundy
This Joyful Eastertide, George Ratcliffe Woodward

Thanksgiving

Risen Jesus, we thank you for the wonder of this day.
When we come expecting only death
You surprise us with the message of new life.
When we have lost you, when we have lost hope,
You roll away the stone of despair
Which imprisons us and limits us.
Today the world is transformed,
Today the boundaries of what we thought possible
have been burst asunder.
Today a new start is possible for all people,
And the whole creation.
You have been raised, and now we know that
God's love is so much greater than we had ever imagined.
Open our lives to meet you, Risen Christ,
And make all our days Easter days.

Intercessions

With Mary of Magdala
Who stayed to weep and saw the Lord

Glory and praise to God

With all the people of God who have come in sorrow
And found their joy fulfilled

Glory and praise to God

Glory and praise to God
For Christ has been raised

Life has conquered death
Hope has conquered fear

When Christ our life is revealed
We will share his glory.

Flowers may be placed on and around the cross

We praise you and we bless you, our risen Lord Jesus, King of glory,
for the love which drew Mary Magdalene to your tomb
to weep over your death.

As you broke into her grief with your death-shattering life,
so reach into our broken hearts with your promise of hope
To you, Lord Jesus, reaching into the deepest tombs of our despair,
be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Our spirits sing in joy, O God.
Thankfulness spreads through all the earth,
like bursts of golden sunshine springing forth
among the grey-green colours of our trembling hopes.
Liberation from cynicism and apathy blossoms red in gladness,
celebrating a different future, a vision splendid,
in the face of your determination to bring new life to the world.
Thanks be to you, O God, for the miracle of Easter. **Amen.**

People pray for places and people that need the new life Christ brings

Alternative Collect

Father in heaven,
you raised Jesus up from the dead
as the first-fruits of your new creation,
bringing life and hope to your world:
on this Easter Day, renew our lives,
build up our love for one another and for you
and make us a new creation
ready to celebrate with Jesus
in his everlasting kingdom of love. **Amen.**

Commissioning

Go into the world as those
who are filled with the risen life of Christ
and the bearers of grace.

Blessings

And may the wonder of Easter break forth anew in us,
in those we love and in all the earth,
on this day and the days to come.
In the name of the Great Creator,
the risen Christ and the Holy Spirit of God,
Amen.

May Christ who out of defeat brings new hope and a new future,
fill *you* with his new life;
and the blessing...

Sunday after Easter

An Outline for Taking Down the Cross

It is so easy for the days after Easter to become an anti-climax. No wonder the Sunday after Easter Day became known as Low Sunday. It can soon seem that Easter is a distant memory and we are back to reality. The world around us, we ourselves can seem the same. But the great truth is that we are an Easter People, because every day and every moment we live in the risen Christ and he lives in us.

“The angel said, ‘He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him. This is my message for you’.” (Matthew 28:7)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
**because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

Silence

During the silence pray for your hopes for the future

Stay with us, loving Jesus.
Stay with us as you did on Good Friday
and do not leave us as we turn outward and look upon the world,
with its seemingly lost battles for good,
and the harsh mysteries of its injustices to the innocent.
Stay with us in the tough places, Risen Jesus,
with the warm heartbeat of your risen life. **Amen.**

Alternative Acclamation

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Suggested Readings

In connection with a main service: John 21:1–19

As a stand-alone service: John 20:19–29
And That Will Be Heaven, Evangeline Paterson
I Never Saw a Moor, Emily Dickinson

Intercessions

Go ahead of us, O God, into the Galilees of our day,
into the places where we try to make a difference,
and where new possibilities are forgotten.

Go ahead of us, gracious Jesus,
into the places we fear to tread
because we can see few signs of change,
or violence and oppression
which seem beyond your power, or our power, to change.

Embrace your church, O God,
so that we may know your life-giving hope so profoundly
that our celebration flows over and covers the groaning creation
with the wonder of your abundance.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Commissioning

Go as those who are called to be Christ's witnesses to the ends of the earth.
Go carrying life which springs forth in abundance
in the meanest places,
places which deny the risen life of God.

Blessings

And may the Christ,
who lives in the vivid colour of abundant life, be with us,
the God, who so loves the world that we are never left alone,
be before us
and the Spirit, who takes our hands for all that life will bring,
be present to us.

Amen.

The risen Christ go with *you* in every journey,
strengthen *you* in every task and fill *you* with every lasting joy:
and the blessing

