



“ANYTHING BUT NORMAL” GOOD FRIDAY AN AT-HOME LITURGY

THE BIG IDEA: Holy Week is a story of presence found only through absence, a story of harsh nails and painful wounds. On Good Friday, we sit in a growing darkness, with all of the absence and loneliness this story brings, as the shadows grow longer in us. Since the twelfth century, Christians have gathered this night to let the shadows grow long in our hearts and minds, revealing to us the darkest places in each of us. The shadows of betrayal and despair, the shadows of accusation and shame. At the center of this night is a candle, a light that gets weaker and weaker with each mumbled word, each sorrowful whisper. And as we hear the Passion and as the light grows dimmer, we see the power of silence and darkness in revealing to the heart of God.

What You Will Need: 1. A copy of this liturgy 2. Five small candles, 1 large candle, and a lighter 3. A cross to place at the center of the table

PART 1: DRAWING THE LIGHT: *Light the candles and turn off as many other lights as you can, while still being able to see your order of worship. Gather for a moment in the silence and the shadows.*

Greeting God is light, and in God’s light, even our shadows cannot hide.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and we loved darkness rather than light.

Blessed be the name of the Lord our God, who redeems us from sin and death.

PART 2: THE LENGTHENING SHADOWS: Prayer for Illumination Pray together: **On this solemn evening, come, Holy Spirit, that we might be comforted by your presence and that our reading of this story might be filled with wisdom, compassion, and understanding. Amen.**

1: The Shadow of Betrayal: Read Matthew 26:20-25

(Extinguish one of the smaller candles, and as the shadows grow, reflect in the silence: In this awkward season, how are you seeing the shadow of betrayal and abandonment in your life more clearly?)

2: The Shadow of Spiritual Agony: Read Matthew 26:36-50

(Extinguish one of the smaller candles, and as the shadows grow, reflect in the silence: In this awkward season, how are you seeing the shadow of spiritual anguish in your life more clearly?)

3: The Shadow of Denial: Read Matthew 26:69-75

(Extinguish one of the smaller candles, and as the shadows grow, reflect in the silence: In this awkward season, how are you seeing the shadow of denial in your life more clearly?)

4: The Shadow of Accusation: Read Matthew 27:11-14, 20-29

(Extinguish one of the smaller candles, and as the shadows grow, reflect in the silence: In this awkward season, how are you seeing the shadow of blame in your life more clearly?)

5: The Shadow of Humiliation: Read Matthew 27:31-43

(Extinguish one of the smaller candles, and as the shadows grow, reflect in the silence: In this awkward season, how are you seeing the shadow of shame in your life more clearly?)

6: The Shadow of Death: Read Matthew 27:45-54

(The Christ Candle is removed: take the large candle out of the space and into another room; place it on a shelf or another table and return back to your original place.

As the shadows grow deepest, reflect in the silence: In this awkward season, how are you seeing the shadow of death in your life more clearly?)

7: The Shadow of Burial: Read Matthew 27:57-60

(In the darkness, reflect in the silence: In this awkward season, what needs to be buried in your life this season, so that you might experience what God is doing more fully?)

PART 3: THE LONGING FOR THE LIGHT *(Silent Meditation)*

The Christ Candle is restored: bring the large candle back into the space, placing it back at the center of the table.

Sing together: When I Survey the Wondrous Cross (verse 4)

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small,
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

DISMISSAL Go in peace. May Jesus Christ, who for our sake became obedient unto death, even death on a cross, keep you and strengthen you this night and forever. Amen.

Linger at the empty table, in a silence filled only by the light of the candle. As you leave the table, blow the candle out.