



GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP GUIDE

April 10, 2020

Choose a suitable space in your home for this Good Friday Tenebrae, a service observed during Holy Week in the church since the fourth century. Prepare and light seven candles in a row with the center candle representing the Christ Candle. Room lighting should be dim. In this service, you remember the death of Jesus and recall His seven last words on the cross. The gradual extinguishing of the candles from each end is accompanied by prayers and readings from Scripture.

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Gather in your selected space with your Bibles to begin worship. One person should take the role of leader for the service, but all may participate in reading Bible passages. If worshiping as one, speak the role of leader and silently pray the community responses, connecting your prayers to the Body of Christ.

Leader: Yet it was our weaknesses He carried; it was our sorrows that weighed Him down.

All: And we thought His troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for His own sins!

Leader: But He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins.

All: He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

Leader: All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own.

All: Yet the Lord laid on Him the sins of us all.

[Isaiah 53:4–6 NLT]

PREPARATION FOR TENEBRAE

Leader: What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul. When I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown, Christ laid aside His crown for my soul. To God and to the Lamb, who is the great I AM, while millions join the theme, I will sing. And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be, and through eternity I'll sing on.

THE FIRST WORD

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. [Luke 23:34]

Read: Psalm 51

Pray: Almighty God, Jesus prayed that You would forgive those who were crucifying Him because they were unaware of what they were doing. We ask to be included in that prayer, too. Whether we sin out of ignorance or intention, give us Your mercy, acceptance, and peace. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our suffering Savior. Amen.

Extinguish the first candle and pause for reflection.

THE SECOND WORD

Today you will be with me in paradise. [Luke 23:43]

Read: Read John 14:1–7

Pray: Jesus, in Your agony, You showed compassion to a man who recognized his sinfulness and Your holiness. You gave him the gift of eternal life. Thank You for giving us that same indescribable gift. Help us to show that same compassion to the lost so that they can also live with You in heaven. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Extinguish the second candle and pause for reflection.

THE THIRD WORD

Dear woman, here is your son...here is Your mother. [John 19:26–27]

Read: Mark 3:31–35

Pray: O Blessed Savior, in Your hours of greatest suffering, You expressed compassion for Your mother and made arrangements for her care. In following Your example, help us show the same concern for the needs of others. Hear this, our prayer, for Your mercy's sake. Amen.

Extinguish the third candle and pause for reflection.

THE FOURTH WORD

My God, My God, why have You forsaken me? [Matt. 27:46]

Read: Psalm 22:1–11

Pray: Almighty God, You abandoned Your Son on the cross, showing the world Your punishment for human sin. As we hear His cry, pour out Your grace upon us that we may know and believe that we will never be forsaken because of His sacrifice. Christ is always present with us now and forever. For the sake of Jesus Christ who bore our sins on the cross. Amen.

Extinguish the fourth candle and pause for reflection.

THE FIFTH WORD

I am thirsty. [John 19:28]

Read: Isaiah 55:1–5

Pray: O blessed Savior, whose lips were dry and whose throat was parched, we too need water. Fill us with the water of life. May our thirst for righteousness be satisfied by Your love and mercy. Move us to bring this same relief to others. We pray in Your holy name. Amen.

Extinguish the fifth candle and pause for reflection.

THE SIXTH WORD

It is finished. [John 19:30]

Read: Luke 13:31–35

Pray: O Lord Jesus, You completed the work that You were sent to do. Enable us by Your Holy Spirit to be faithful to our call. Give us strength to bear our crosses and endure our sufferings, even to death. Enable us to live and love so faithfully that we also become good news to the world, joining Your witness. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Extinguish the sixth candle and pause for reflection.

THE SEVENTH WORD

Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit. [Luke 23:46]

Read: Luke 2:29–35

Pray: Father, Your Son handed over His spirit to You when His work was finished. Give us courage to follow His example and place our lives in Your hands. Lead us to commit fully to You. In the name of Jesus who gave His life for us all. Amen.

Extinguish the seventh candle and pause for reflection.

BENEDICTION

We go into the dark, but there is a light that shines that not even death can put out.

We go into the dark, but even now new life is dawning.

We go into the dark, in the sure and certain hope that Christ is with us. Amen.