

Holy Saturday
4th April 2026

Music:

Prelude on "St Cross"

(O come and mourn with me awhile...)

C Hubert H Parry

First Word:

Job 14:1-14

"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

He comes forth like a flower, and withers; he flees like a shadow, and continues not.

And dost thou open thy eyes upon such a one and bring him into judgment with thee?

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one.

Since his days are determined, and the number of his months is with thee, and thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass,

look away from him, and desist, that he may enjoy, like a hireling, his day.

"For there is hope for a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease.

Though its root grow old in the earth, and its stump die in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant.

But man dies, and is laid low; man breathes his last, and where is he?

As waters fail from a lake, and a river wastes away and dries up, so man lies down and rises not again; till the heavens are no more he will not awake, or be roused out of his sleep.

Oh that thou wouldest hide me in Sheol, that thou wouldest conceal me
until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and
remember me!

If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my service I would wait, till
my release should come.

Sonnet 98

William Shakespeare

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth on everything,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd, and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of differet flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you - you pattern all of those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

Music:

Prelude on Gibbons' "Song 13"
(Jesu, grant me this, I pray...)

Healey Willan

Second Word

Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24

I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.
He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.
Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day.
My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones.
He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail.
He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.
He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy.

Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.
He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked.
Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall.
My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.
This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.
It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.
They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.
The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

From **Ballad of the Bread Man**

Charles Causley

When they got back to the village
The neighbours said, to a man,
'That boy will never be one of us,
Though he does what he blessed well can.'
He went round to all the people
A paper crown on his head.
Here is some bread from my father.
Take, eat, he said.

Nobody seemed to be hungry.
Nobody seemed to care.
Nobody saw the God in himself
Quietly standing there.
He finished up in the papers,
He came to a very bad end.
He was charged with bringing the living to life.
No man was that prisoner's friend.
There's only one kind of punishment
To fit that kind of crime.
They rigged a trial and shot him dead.
They were only just in time.
They lifted the young man by the leg,
They lifted him by the arm,
They locked him in a cathedral
In case he came to harm.
They stored him safe as water
Under seven rocks.
One Sunday morning he burst out
Like a jack-in-the-box.
Through the town he went walking.
He showed them the holes in his head.
Now do you want any loaves? he cried.
'Not today,' they said.

Music:

Prelude on "Picardy" (Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle...) *John Joubert*

Third Word

Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.

² Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.

³ For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.

⁴ Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.

¹⁵ My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

¹⁶ Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.

April Fool *Louis MacNeice*

Here come I, old April Fool,
Between March hare and nuts in May.
Fool me forward, fool me back,
Hares will dance and nut will crack.

Here come I, my fingers crossed
Between the shuffle and the deal.
Fool me flush or fool me straight,
Queens are wild and queens will wait.

Here come I, my clogs worn out
Between the burden and the song.
Fool me hither, fool me hence,
Keep the sound but ditch the sense.

Here come I, my hair on fire,
Between the devil and the deep.
Fool me over, fool me down,
Sea shall dry and devil shall drown.

Here come I, in guts and brass,
Between the raven and the pit.
Fool me under, fool me flat,
Coffins land on Ararat.

Here come I, old April Fool,
Between the hoar frost and the fall.
Fool me drunk or fool me dry,
Spring comes back, and back come I.

Music:

Prelude on "Herzliebster Jesu" (Ah, holy Jesu...)

David Blackwell

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Fourth Word

I Peter 4:1-8

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

² That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

³ For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

⁴ Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

⁵ Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

⁶ For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

⁸ And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

From **The Waste Land** *T S Eliot*

April is the cruellest month, breeding

Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing

Memory and desire, stirring

Dull roots with spring rain.

Winter kept us warm, covering

Earth in forgetful snow, feeding

A little life with dried tubers...

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock,
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.

Music:

Prelude on "Christus, der uns selig macht"
(*See the Lord of Life and Light...*), BWV 620

J S Bach

Fifth Word

Romans 6:3-11

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Do Not Stand at my Grave and Weep

Mary Elizabeth Frye

Do not stand at my grave and weep.

I am not there I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.

I am the diamond glints on snow.

I am the sun on ripened grain.

I am the gentle autumn's rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush,

I am the swift uplifting rush

Of quiet birds in circling flight.

I am the stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry,

I am not there. I did not die.

Music:

Prelude on "Alle Menschen müssen sterben"

(Hark! a voice saith, All are mortal), BWV 643

J S Bach

Sixth Word

Matthew 27:57-66

When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

The times are nightfall, look their light grows less

Gerard Manley Hopkins

The times are nightfall, look, their light grows less;
The times are winter, watch, a world undone:
They waste, they wither, worse; they as they run
Or bring more or more blazon's man's distress.
And I not help. Nor word now of success:
All is from wreck, here, there, to rescue one -
Work which to see scarce so much as begun
Makes welcome death, does dear forgetfulness.
Or what is else? There is your world within.
There rid the dragons, root out there the sin.
Your will is law in that small commonweal.

Music:

Saraband in modo elegiaco

Herbert Howells

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Seventh Word

John 19:38-42

And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Holy Saturday

John Harell

This Holy Saturday we watch and wait.
What comes will surely be his surprise-
He's working on it right now-
And we must wait for it,
There is nothing else to do.

On Holy Saturday we realize, as at no other time,
We simply have to wait.
And then it happens!

Music:

Prelude on "Rockingham" (When I survey...)

Kenneth Leighton

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Collect

O God, creator of heaven and earth,
As the crucified body of Your dear Son
Was laid in the tomb
And reasted on this holy Sabbath,
So may we await with Him
The coming of the third day
And rise with Him to newness of life;
Through Jesus Christ, the passion of God.
Amen

Benediction

Save us, O Lord, waking,
And guard us sleeping;
That awake we may watch with Christ,
And asleep we may rest in peace.
The Lord almighty grant you
A quiet night and a perfect end.
Amen

(We depart the Church in silence)