

DAY 16: HOLY SATURDAY

Opening Prayer

God our Father,
We have been baptised into the death
Of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ:
Grant that buried with him we may pass through
the grave and gate of death and enter
the joy of Christ's resurrection. Amen

Scripture Readings: Jeremiah 8:1-9; Psalm 88; John 20:1-9

Reflection on the importance of the cross

You will never understand the message of the cross, or receive the benefits of salvation that come from the cross, until you first kneel at the cross and receive Jesus Christ as your personal saviour. The story is told of a great preacher who was touring Italy. A friend told him to go to a certain village and see a painting of the crucifixion of Christ. "What is it like?" he asked. His friend said, "Never mind what it is like. I want you to see it. Please promise me you will." He replied, "I will." He went to the village and visited the chapel where the painting was. The old caretaker said, "You've come to see the painting, haven't you?" He said, "Why, yes I have." The caretaker responded, "Follow me." The great preacher was not prepared for what he was about to see. Instead of a beautiful masterpiece, the painting seemed all out of proportion and didn't make sense. "I don't understand this painting," he said. The caretaker replied, "Come closer." He did. The caretaker said, "Get lower." He did. Finally, as he was kneeling at the foot of the cross, he looked up and saw the power and beauty of the painting and was reduced to tears. It's only when you lay aside your pride, your preconceived notions, and your intellectual approach, and humble yourself, that the message of the cross transforms you. "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18 NKJV). From: Radio Pulpit – The Word for Today

We do not have much to go on regarding Holy Saturday as the scriptures are silent about this day. The Church's lectionary do not even make provision for a Eucharist Service. So, when Saturday came, the writers were quiet – it seemed that everybody was in hiding, either afraid for the Jews, or still in shock of what happened to their Master. But John was still present, because when Mary Magdalene came looking for him, she found him (John 20:9). Jesus was dead, he's body lifeless. John regarded Jesus as a very close friend that is why he always referred to himself in the Gospel as the beloved disciple. Now his friend was dead and buried, but still he lingered around. Why was he there; waiting for the resurrection? No, as far as he knew, he's friend was forever silent, no more teachings, wanderings around healing and doing good. The reason for John hanging around can just be speculated about. But it was dangerous to be still there in Jerusalem with all the hostility around. Maybe he hanged around taking care of Jesus' Mother, or perhaps he did not have anywhere else to go.

Maybe he lingered because he loved Jesus. To others, Jesus was a miracle worker, a teacher, the hope of Israel. But to John, he was all of these and more, but ultimately, Jesus was a friend. And you do not abandon a friend—not even when that friend is dead. John stayed close to Jesus. He had a habit of being close to Jesus; with the Transfiguration, in the upper room, in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was also at the foot of the cross at the crucifixion,

and he was a quick walk from the tomb at the burial. He did not understand Jesus, why he was dying on the cross, but he never left Jesus' side. What about us? When we are in John's position, what do you do? When it's Saturday in your life, how do you react? John chose to linger, and because he lingered on Saturday, he was around on Sunday for the miracle. Adapted from: <https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/easter-devotionals>

Concluding Prayer

O God, the well-spring of life
pour into our hearts the living water of your grace
that refreshed by you
we may live this day in steadfast reliance on the strength you give;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all for ever. Amen**