

Isaiah's vision of the Suffering Servant is harrowing. It is hard to square the one who is to prosper with one who is so battered and torn that they seem barely human.

And yet, somewhere, in that suffering Isaiah sees greatness. It is somehow in his pouring himself out that we are filled—in his tortures that we are healed—in his forgiveness that our sins are redeemed.

It seems a total contradiction—and yet, as we read the description and our heart bleeds for the one enduring so much, we sense the truth in it.

Somehow, we too sense the glory of the one dying on that cross—even though, for a time, it is hidden from human sight.

God's gifts of love and mercy are poured out with the blood—and breath—and very life of Jesus. Hard gifts to receive under such circumstances but given without reserve for love of humanity.

## Reflective Prayer

Read slowly and ponder...

Lord Jesus,  
in your last hours and moments,  
we see the power and the depths  
of the Father's love.

Open our hearts to receive such a love—  
a love that flows through the universe—  
and poured from a human heart.

Open our beings to receive such mercy—  
a mercy that believes in the best in us  
while knowing the worst.

Open our hands—  
help us — like you —  
to reach out in love and mercy,  
to heal the hurts of our wounded world.

# Lent 2019 Year C

## GOOD FRIDAY

### God's Gifts of Love and Mercy: The Ultimate Gift



# God's Gift of Love and Mercy: Good Friday

See, my servant shall prosper;  
he shall be exalted and lifted up,  
and shall be very high.

Just as there were many who were astonished at him  
—so marred was his appearance,  
beyond human semblance,  
and his form beyond that of mortals—  
so he shall startle many nations;  
kings shall shut their mouths because of him;  
for that which had not been told them they shall see,  
and that which they had not heard  
they shall contemplate.

Who has believed what we have heard?  
And to whom has the arm of the Lord  
been revealed?

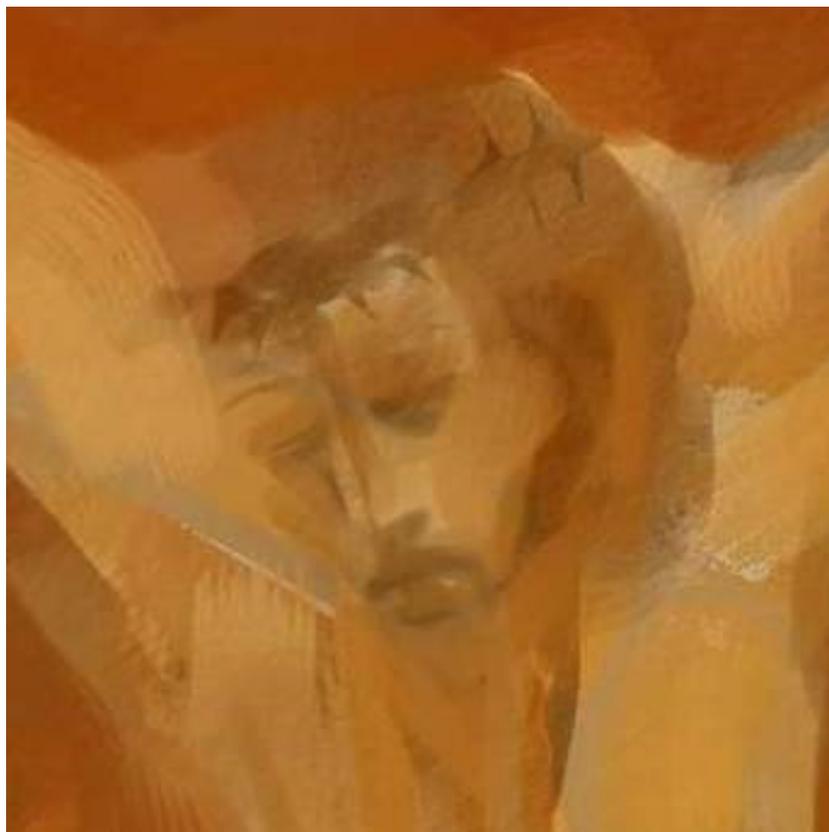
For he grew up before him like a young plant,  
and like a root out of dry ground;  
he had no form or majesty  
that we should look at him,  
nothing in his appearance  
that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by others;  
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;  
and as one from whom others hide their faces  
he was despised,  
and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities  
and carried our diseases;  
yet we accounted him stricken,  
struck down by God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions,  
crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,  
and by his bruises we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have all turned to our own way,  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.



By a perversion of justice he was taken away.  
Who could have imagined his future?  
For he was cut off from the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people.  
They made his grave with the wicked  
and his tomb with the rich,  
although he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain.  
When you make his life an offering for sin,  
he shall see his offspring,  
and shall prolong his days;  
through him the will of the Lord shall prosper.

Out of his anguish he shall see light;  
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.  
The righteous one, my servant,  
shall make many righteous,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will allot him  
a portion with the great,  
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;  
because he poured out himself to death,  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the transgressors.

*Isaiah 52: 13-53: 12*