**Unfolding the Word on Holy Saturday**

***Preparation***

Into your hands we entrust our souls,

for you have redeemed us, O God of truth.

Christ our God, your love is poured out in death for our sakes:

Hold us in your embrace as we wait for Easter’s dawn.

Comfort us with the promise that no power on

earth, not even death itself, can separate us from

your love; and strengthen us to wait until you are

revealed to us in all your risen glory.

Amen.

***Liturgy of the Word***

FIRST READING

Job 14.1.14

‘A mortal, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble, comes up like a flower and withers,

flees like a shadow and does not last. Do you fix your eyes on such a one?

Do you bring me into judgement with you?

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

No one can.

Since their days are determined, and the number of their months is known to you,

and you have appointed the bounds that they cannot pass, look away from them, and desist,

that they may enjoy, like labourers, their days. ‘For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its root grows old in the earth, and its stump dies in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant. But mortals die, and are laid low; humans expire, and where are they?

As waters fail from a lake, and a river wastes away and dries up, so mortals lie down and do not

rise again; until the heavens are no more, they will not awake or be roused out of their sleep.

O that you would hide me in Sheol, that you would conceal me until your wrath is past,

that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If mortals die, will they live again?

All the days of my service I would wait until my release should come.

Psalm 31.1-4

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;

let me never be put to shame; ♦

deliver me in your righteousness.

Incline your ear to me; ♦

make haste to deliver me.

Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me,

for you are my rock and my stronghold; ♦

guide me, and lead me for your name’s

sake.

Take me out of the net

that they have laid secretly for

me, ♦ for you are my strength.

SECOND READING

John 19.38-end

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came,

bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

MEDITATION

Little by little, God grows us more in grace because God wants

to be seen and sought. God wants to be awaited and trusted.

*Julian of Norwich (1342-1420), Revelations*

***The Prayers***

We pray in silence.

COLLECT

Grant, Lord, that we who are baptized into the death of your Son our Saviour Jesus

Christ may continually put to death our evil desires and be buried with him;

and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection; through his merits, who died and was buried and rose again for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Standing at the foot of the cross let us pray with confidence as our Saviour taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done,**

**on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, now and forever. Amen.**

HYMN

Dark is the night, the passing hours are long,

Lone voices whisper sorrow’s secret song,

Each faltering prayer will fear it’s made in vain,

When we will sing the world to life again?

Dark is the night; not all are blessed with sleep.

Some wake and work, and some must watch and weep:

Angels disguised, they tend a world in pain,

Off’ring the hope that there’ll be life again.

Dark is the night, the silent hours are slow.

Heav’ns tears anoint the suffering earth below,

Blessing with dew the secret springing grain,

Pledge that the world will soon know life again.

*Words: Ally Barrett*

*Tune: Abide with me*

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**for you have redeemed us, O God of truth.**