

Devotion for Saturday in Holy Week
Psalm 136:1-3; 10-15

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of gods, for His steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for His steadfast love endures forever.

To Him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt, for His steadfast love endures forever.

And brought Israel out from among them, for His steadfast love endures forever.

With a strong hand and an outstretched arm, for His steadfast love endures forever.

To Him who divided the Red Sea in two, for His steadfast love endures forever.

But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the sea, for His steadfast love endures forever.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 12:1-40 *The Passover and Exodus*

New Testament Reading: Matthew 27:1-66 *Jesus' death and burial*

Writing: Jesus' death on the cross *St. Athanasius of Alexandria*

But if any honest Christian wants to know why the Lord suffered death on the cross and not in some other way, we answer thus: in no other way was it expedient for us, indeed the Lord offered for us the one death that was supremely good. He had come to bear the curse that lay on us; and how could He "become a curse" otherwise than by accepting the accursed death? And that death is the cross, for it is written "Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree." Again, the death of the Lord is the ransom of all, and by it "the middle wall of partition" is broken down and the call of the Gentiles comes about.

How could He have called us if He had not been crucified, for it is only on the cross that a man dies with arms outstretched? Here again, we see the fitness of His death and of those outstretched arms: it was that He might draw His ancient people with the one and the Gentiles with the other, and join both together in Himself. Even so, He foretold the manner of His redeeming death, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Myself."

What Child is This? (Public Domain)

What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom angels great with anthems sweet, While shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;

Haste, haste to bring him laud, The babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?

Good Christian fear, for sinners here, The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce him through, The cross be born for me, for you;

Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh; Come peasant, king to own him.

The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;

Joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe the son of Mary.

Holy Saturday

The commemoration of Holy Saturday encompasses our Lord's rest in the tomb and His descent into hell. The descent into hell is not however, the depth of Christ's humiliation but rather the demonstration of His complete victory over death. This day takes us out of the depths of the most painful sorrow and out of the solitude of holy meditation upon Christ's Passion, to the celebration of victory as we anticipate the Lord's resurrection breaking forth in all its glory on Easter.

Prayer

Lord Jesus by your rest in the tomb you have made holy the resting places of all who have lived and died in you. For the sake of your dying and rising the grave is no longer a dark end, but rather a resting place; in which the bodies of those who have believed and been baptized into your dying and rising, wait to receive the fulfillment of grace; sharing in your resurrection to everlasting life. Bless us with your Spirit as we await your return and our rising in you. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

The Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Catechism for Lent: The Sacrament of the Altar

Those who are mindful of their weakness desire to be rid of it and long for help. They should regard and use the Sacrament just like a precious antidote against the poison that they have in them. Here in the Sacrament you are to receive from the lips of Christ forgiveness of sin. It contains and brings with it God's grace and the Spirit with all His gifts; protection, shelter, and power against death and the devil and all misfortune. Large Catechism V 70

Benediction

Isaiah 25:6-8a; 9b

“On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And He will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever...This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.”

