

The Gethsemane Watch



*selected prayers and readings
for those keeping watch*



Introduction

This small book of scriptures, prayers, and poems has been created to assist you, as you keep watch with our Lord during this Maundy Thursday Gethsemane Watch. Like the disciples in Gethsemane, we are called to pray with Christ - to stay spiritually awake and to keep watch in penitence for our own sin and sorrow for the world's need. This is a demanding task, as even the disciples abandoned Christ, falling asleep from grief. As with Christ in Gethsemane, we have the agony of apprehending, wrestling with, and accepting God's saving will for the world and for our individual lives. We are given the chance to become fully awake to a world that requires Golgotha, but is also given the empty tomb.



The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Matthew

Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. (21.33-39)



Redemption

A Poem by George Herbert

Having long been tenant to a rich Lord,
Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,
And make a suit unto him, to afford
A new small-rented lease, and cancel th' old.
In heaven at his manor I him sought:
They told me there, that he was lately gone
About some land, which he had dearly bought
Long since on earth, to take possession.
I straight returned, and knowing his great birth,
Sought him accordingly in great resorts;
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts:
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth
Of thieves and murderers: there I him espied,
Who straight, "Your suit is granted," said, and died.



Alone Thou Goest Forth

A Hymn by Peter Abelard

Alone thou goest forth, O Lord in sacrifice to die;
Is this thy sorrow nought to us who pass unheeding by?

Our sins, not thine, thou bearest, Lord; make us thy
sorrow feel, Till though our pity and our shame love
answer's love appeal.

This is earth's darkest hour, but thou dost life and light
restore; then let all praise be given thee who livest
evermore.

Grant us with thee to suffer pain that, as we share this
hour,
thy cross may bring us to thy joy and resurrection power.



A Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah

A Reading from the Book of Lamentations

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?
 behold, and see
if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow,
 which is done unto me,
wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me
 in the day of his fierce anger. (1.12)



A Request for God's Presence

A Reading from Psalm 71

O God, be not far from me; come quickly to help me, O my God.



Go to Dark Gethsemane
A Hymn by James Montgomery

Go to dark Gethsemane,
You who feel the tempter's pow'r;
Your Redeemer's conflict see;
Watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His griefs away;
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the judgment hall;
View the Lord of life arraigned;
O the worm-wood and the gall!
O the pangs His soul sustained!
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss;
Learn of Him to bear the cross.

Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb
There' adoring at His feet,
Mark the miracle of time,
God's own sacrifice complete:
"It is finished!" Hear the cry;
Learn of Jesus Christ to die.*

**The final verse of this hymn has been purposefully omitted to keep time with the Easter Triduum.*



A Plea for Deliverance

A Reading from Psalm 70

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.

O Lord, make haste to help me!

Let those be put to shame and confusion
who seek my life.

Let those be turned back and brought to dishonour
who desire to hurt me.

Let those who say, 'Aha, Aha!'
turn back because of their shame.

Let all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you.

Let those who love your salvation
say evermore, 'God is great!'

But I am poor and needy;
hasten to me, O God!

You are my help and my deliverer;
O Lord, do not delay!



Jesus and His Disciples in Gethsemane

A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Matthew

³⁶Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. ³⁸Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." ³⁹And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." ⁴⁰And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you *men* could not keep watch with Me for one hour? ⁴¹Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴²He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done." ⁴³Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. ⁴⁵Then He came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!" (26.36-46)



Jesus is Betrayed by Judas

A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Matthew

⁴⁷While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, *who came* from the chief priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him." ⁴⁹Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. ⁵⁰And Jesus said to him, "Friend, *do* what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. ⁵¹And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. ⁵³Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, *which say* that it must happen this way?" ⁵⁵At that time Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as *you would* against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. ⁵⁶But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets." Then all the disciples left Him and fled. (26.47-56)



The Loving Care of God

A Reading from Psalm 139

O Lord, you search me and you know me;

You know my resting and my rising,

You discern my purpose from afar.

You mark when I walk or lie down,

All my ways lie open to you.

O where can I go from your Spirit, or

Where can I flee from your face? (1-3, 7)



I Abandon Myself to You
A Prayer by Charles De Foucauld

Father,
I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you do, I will thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me, as in all your
creatures.
And I'll ask nothing else, my Lord.
Into your hands I commend my spirit;
I give it to you
with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands,
with a trust beyond all measure,
Because you are my Father.



The Wesleyan Covenant Prayer
A Prayer by John Wesley

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours.
So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in
heaven.
Amen.



The Sacrifice

A Poem by George Herbert

O all ye, who pass by, whose eyes and mind
To worldly things are sharp, but to me blind;
To me, who took eyes that I might you find:

Was ever grief like mine?

The Princes of my people make a head
Against their Maker: they do wish me dead,
Who cannot wish, except I give them bread:

Was ever grief like mine?

Without me each one, who doth now me brave,
Had to this day been an Egyptian slave.
They use that power against me, which I gave:

Was ever grief like mine?

Mine own Apostle, who the bag did bear,
Though he had all I had, did not forbear
To sell me also, and to put me there:

Was ever grief like mine?



For thirty pence he did my death devise,
Who at three hundred did the ointment prize,
Not half so sweet as my sweet sacrifice:

Was ever grief like mine?

Therefore my soul melts, and my heart's dear treasure
Drops blood (the only beads) my words to measure:
O let this cup pass, if it be thy pleasure:

Was ever grief like mine?

These drops being temper'd with a sinner's tears,
A balsam are for both the Hemispheres,
Curing all wounds, but mine; all, but my fears.

Was ever grief like mine?

Yet my Disciples sleep: I cannot gain
One hour of watching; but their drowsy brain
Comforts not me, and doth my doctrine stain:

Was ever grief like mine?



Arise, arise, they come! Look how they run!
Alas! what haste they make to be undone!
How with their lanterns do they seek the sun!

Was ever grief like mine?

With clubs and staves they seek me, as a thief,
Who am the way of truth, the true relief,
Most true to those who are my greatest grief:

Was ever grief like mine?

Judas, dost thou betray me with a kiss ?
Canst thou find hell about my lips? and miss
Of life, just at the gates of life and bliss ?

Was ever grief like mine?

See, they lay hold on me, not with the hands
Of faith, but fury; yet at their commands
I suffer binding, who have loosed their bands:

Was ever grief like mine?



All my Disciples fly; fear puts a bar
Betwixt my friends and me. They leave the star,
That brought the wise men of the East from far:

Was ever grief like mine?

Then from one ruler to another bound
They lead me: urging, that it was not sound
What I taught: Comments would the text confound.

Was ever grief like mine?

The Priests and Rulers all false witness seek
'Gainst him, who seeks not life, but is the meek
And ready Paschal Lamb of this great week:

Was ever grief like mine?

Then they accuse me of great blasphemy,
That I did thrust into the Deity,
Who never thought that any robbery:

Was ever grief like mine?



Some said, that I the Temple to the floor
In three days razed, and raised as before.
Why, he that built the world can do much more:

Was ever grief like mine?

Then they condemn me all with that same breath,
Which I do give them daily, unto death.
Thus Adam my first breathing rendereth:

Was ever grief like mine?

They bind, and lead me unto Herod: he Sends me to Pilate.
This makes them agree;
But yet their friendship is my enmity.

Was ever grief like mine?

Herod and all his bands do set me light,
Who teach all hands to war, fingers to fight,
And only am the Lord of hosts and might.

Was ever grief like mine?



Herod in judgment sits, while I do stand;
Examines me with a censorious hand:
I him obey, who all things else command:

Was ever grief like mine?

The Jews accuse me with despitefulness;
And vying malice with my gentleness,
Pick quarrels with their only happiness:

Was ever grief like mine?

I answer nothing, but with patience prove
If stony hearts will melt with gentle love.
But who does hawk at eagles with a dove?

Was ever grief like mine?

My silence rather doth augment their cry;
My dove doth back into my bosom fly,
Because the raging waters still are high:

Was ever grief like mine?



Hark how they cry aloud still, Crucify:
It is not fit He live a day, they cry,
Who cannot live less than eternally:

Was ever grief like mine?

Pilate a stranger holdeth off; but they,
Mine own dear people, cry, Away, away,
With noises confused frightening the day:

Was ever grief like mine?

Yet still they shout, and cry, and stop their ears,
Putting my life among their sins and fears, therefore with my
blood on them and theirs:

Was ever grief like mine?

See how spite cankers things. These words aright
Used, and wish'd, are the whole world's light:
But honey is their gall, brightness their night:

Was ever grief like mine?



They choose a murderer, and all agree
In him to do themselves a courtesy;
For it was their own cause who killed me:

Was ever grief like mine?

And a seditious murderer he was:
But I the Prince of Peace; peace that doth pass
All understanding, more than heaven doth glass:

Was ever grief like mine?

He clave the stony rock, when they were dry;
But surely not their hearts, as I well try:
Why, Caesar is their only King, not I:

Was ever grief like mine?

Ah, how they scourge me! yet my tenderness
Doubles each lash: and yet their bitterness
Winds up my grief to a mysteriousness:

Was ever grief like mine?



They buffet me, and box me as they list,
Who grasp the earth and heaven with my fist,
And never yet, whom I would punish, miss'd:

Was ever grief like mine?

Behold, they spit on me in scornful wise;
Who with my spittle gave the blind man eyes,
Leaving his blindness to mine enemies:

Was ever grief like mine?

My face they cover, though it be divine.
As Moses' face was veiled, so is mine,
Lest on their double-dark souls either shine:

Was ever grief like mine?

Servants and abjects flout me; they are witty:
Now prophesy who strikes thee, is their ditty.
So they in me deny themselves all pity:

Was ever grief like mine?



And now I am deliver'd unto death,
Which each one calls for so with utmost breath,
That he before me well-nigh suffereth:

Was ever grief like mine?

Weep not, dear friends, since I for both have wept,
When all my tears were blood, the while you slept:
Your tears for your own fortunes should be kept:

Was ever grief like mine?

The soldiers lead me to the common hall;
There they deride me, they abuse me all:
Yet for twelve heavenly legions I could call:

Was ever grief like mine?

Then with a scarlet robe they me array;
Which shows my blood to be the only way,
And cordial left to repair man's decay:

Was ever grief like mine?



Then on my head a crown of thorns I wear;
For these are all the grapes Sion doth bear,
Though I my vine planted and watered there:

Was ever grief like mine?

So sits the earth's great curse in Adam's fall
Upon my head; so I remove it all
From th' earth unto my brows, and bear the thrall:

Was ever grief like mine?

Then with the reed they gave to me before,
They strike my head, the rock from whence all store
Of heavenly blessings issue evermore:

Was ever grief like mine?

They bow their knees to me, and cry, Hail, King:
Whatever scoffs or scornfulness can bring,
I am the floor, the sink, where they it fling:

Was ever grief like mine?



Yet since man's sceptres are as frail as reeds,
And thorny all their crowns, bloody their weeds;
I, who am Truth, turn into truth their deeds:

Was ever grief like mine?

The soldiers also spit upon that face
Which Angels did desire to have the grace,
And Prophets once to see, but found no place:

Was ever grief like mine?

Thus trimmed, forth they bring me to the rout,
Who Crucify him, cry with one strong shout.
God holds his peace at man, and man cries out:

Was ever grief like mine?

They lead me in once more, and putting then
Mine own clothes on, they lead me out again.
Whom devils fly, thus is he toss'd of men:

Was ever grief like mine?



And now weary of sport, glad to engross
All spite in one, counting my life their loss,
They carry me to my most bitter cross:

Was ever grief like mine?

My cross I bear myself, until I faint:
Then Simon bears it for me by constraint,
The decreed burden of each mortal Saint:

Was ever grief like mine?

O all ye who pass by, behold and see:
Man stole the fruit, but I must climb the tree;
The tree of life to all, but only me:

Was ever grief like mine?

Lo, here I hang, charged with a world of sin,
The greater world o' the two; for that came in
By words, but this by sorrow I must win:

Was ever grief like mine?



Such sorrow, as if sinful man could feel,
Or feel his part, he would not cease to kneel,
Till all were melted, though he were all steel.

Was ever grief like mine?

But, O my God, my God! why leavest thou me,
The Son, in whom thou dost delight to be?
My God, my God—————

Never was grief like mine.

Shame tears my soul, my body many a wound;
Sharp nails pierce this, but sharper that confound;
Reproaches, which are free, while I am bound:

Was ever grief like mine?

Now heal thyself, Physician; now come down.
Alas! I do so, when I left my crown
And Father's smile for you, to feel his frown:

Was ever grief like mine?



In healing not myself, there doth consist
All that salvation, which ye now resist;
Your safety in my sickness doth subsist:

Was ever grief like mine?

Betwixt two thieves I spend my utmost breath,
As he that for some robbery suffereth.
Alas! what have I stolen from you? death:

Was ever grief like mine?

A king my title is, prefix'd on high;
Yet by my subjects I'm condemn'd to die
A servile death in servile company:

Was ever grief like mine?

They gave me vinegar mingled with gall,
But more with malice: yet, when they did call,
With Manna, Angels' food, I fed them all:

Was ever grief like mine?



They part my garments, and by lot dispose
My coat, the type of love, which once cured those
Who sought for help, never malicious foes:

Was ever grief like mine?

Nay, after death their spite shall further go;
For they will pierce my side, I full well know;
That as sin came, so Sacraments might flow:

Was ever grief like mine?

But now I die; now all is finished.
My woe, man's weal: and now I bow my head:
Only let others say, when I am dead,

Never was grief like mine.