



**Some Thoughts for Passion Sunday.**

using the liturgy at Central

***Fifth Sunday in Lent***

***John 19 Vs 1 NIV Bible***

***Jesus sentenced to be crucified***

**19** Then Pilate took Jesus  
and had him flogged.

- 1 Beneath the cross of Jesus,  
I find a place to stand ;  
and wonder at such mercy  
that calls me as I am.  
For hands that should discard me,  
hold wounds which tell me ‘Come.’  
Beneath the cross of Jesus  
my unworthy soul is won.
- 2 Beneath the cross of Jesus  
his family is my own ;  
once strangers chasing selfish dreams,  
now one through grace alone.  
How could I now dishonour  
the ones that you have loved ?  
Beneath the cross of Jesus  
see the children called by God.
- 3 Beneath the cross of Jesus,  
the path before the crown,  
we follow in his footsteps  
where promised hope is found.  
How great the joy before us —  
to be his perfect bride.  
Beneath the cross of Jesus  
we will gladly live our lives.

Keith Getty (*b.* 1974) and Kristyn Getty (*b.* 1980)

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Prayer:  
We stay together,  
Almighty God, through Jesus Christ You  
conquered death and opened to us the  
gate of everlasting life. Grant that we,  
who joyfully embrace the day of our  
Lord's resurrection may by the  
renewal of Your word find the path of  
life in Your service. Through Jesus  
Christ our Lord Amen.  
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Yesterday, Saturday afternoon, I walked to School Lane through deserted streets to check the church premises, to place the next symbol on the Lent Cross, and to remove the 'Church Open for Private Prayer' notice.

All very desolate. Shops shuttered, stark, only faint echoes of traces of previous activity. Stillness, and pin-dropping quietness broken by the shrill calling of gulls. Red Kites defying gravity, lingering overhead, swooping and moving on the next prey. Winds chilling, dust-rising barrenness.

Jesus, 40 days of desert longing and prayer, surfacing to face crowds of expectancy, now reduced to blood-baying crowds. A sacrifice is needed to restore good Roman governance, and Kosha law. And, He was it.

The very symbol of long-expected hope, the fulfilment of prophecy, the very part of God innermost being... here was the Lamb of God whose sacrifice will take away the sins of the world. Yes, the world. Once. For all time.

Empires will fall. Creation will kneel in humility. Souls will be raised.

But, not yet. For the next hours, for Jesus, will bring pain and torture, and brutality from the depths of our imagination. A Crown of thorns, a purple robe, mocking, weight on shoulder, dragging, exhaustion, nailing, lifting. Final breaths of love open to public gaze and disgust.

And we try to imagine, we try to think, we try to understand, we try...

But for this time in this season of this year we wait still in our privacy for revelation. News full of publicly private stories, vigil candles lit, hand-clapping, hoping 'not me, not mine'. Yet, in the midst of it all, stands firm the cross of Jesus, where God gave everything for you and me.

And we gaze - lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Amen.

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,

joy of heaven to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesu, thou art all compassion,  
pure, unbounded love thou art ;  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter every trembling heart.

2 Come, almighty to deliver,  
let us all thy life receive ;  
suddenly return, and never,  
never more thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.

3 Finish then thy new creation,  
pure and spotless let us be ;  
let us see thy great salvation,  
perfectly restored in thee :  
changed from glory into glory,  
till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love, and praise !

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

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*Prayer:*

*We say together:*

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for all the benefits you have won for us: for all the insults and pains you have borne for us. Most merciful redeemer, friend and brother may we know you more clearly; love you more dearly, day by day. Amen.

*(St Richard of Chichester)*

