

Good Friday Pilgrimage 2026

Coberley
Cowley
Elkstone
Colesbourne





Material drawn from "The sun slowly rises" and "Lent and Easter Readings", both published by Iona Books. Many items are by George MacLeod, the founder of the Iona Community.

St Giles, Coberley

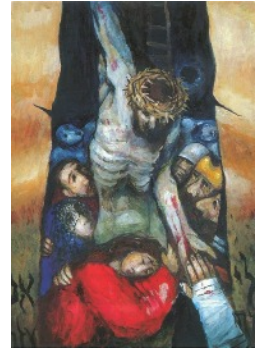
Reading

Matthew 19, 28 - 30

Reflection

*Hot, dry air burns his parched mouth and throat
with every laboured breath.
Cracked lips barely move,
scarcely enough breath to make the words audible,
'I thirst',
for an end to this.*

*Hot desert winds
lift the dust of the cracked,
parched earth.
The Living Water is dry,
and dying.*



*The Living Water
is dry and dying,
and we struggle to watch, to stay.
We want to run from here,
or raise our fists and fight.
Give us the courage to still our feet,
to lower our fists,
and stay with you,
where you already are,*

Prayer

God who knows my frailties, forgive my self-doubt and uncertainty when I am content from a distance to watch others' pain.
God who calls my name, even when I am reluctant, forgive my resistance and my fear of being overwhelmed by the task you compel me to take on.

God who offers me the cross, a burden too great for me to carry, help me be a willing participant on a journey I can neither understand nor change.
God who believes in me, help me to go on believing that you take the little I have offered and use it to make a difference. God who knows me and calls me, who burdens me and believes in me, help me to hear your voice of thanks, and be ready to serve again.

St Mary the Virgin, Cowley

Reading John 17, 6 - 8a, 16 - 19

Reflection

It is said that the angel Gabriel met Jesus at the gates of heaven.

'Lord, this is a great salvation that thou hast wrought,' said the angel.

But the Lord Jesus only said, 'Yes.'

'What plans hast thou made for carrying on the work? How are all to know what thou hast done?' asked Gabriel.

'I left Peter and James and John and Martha and Mary to tell their friends, their friends to tell their friends, till all the world should know.'

'But Lord Jesus,' said Gabriel, 'suppose Peter is too busy with the nets, or Martha with the housework, or the friends they tell are too occupied, and forget to tell their friends – what then?'

The Lord Jesus did not answer at once; then he said in his quiet wonderful voice: 'I have not made any other plans. I am counting on them.'

Prayer

Christ, you are before us. This is what gives us courage to go on.

It is you who directs..It is you who beckons.

It is you who is counting on us to carry on your work.

So we dedicate ourselves. And we bless you now. Amen



St John the Evangelist, Elkstone

Reading John 19, 16 - 22



Reflection

... I simply argue that the cross be raised again at the centre of the market place as well as on the steeple of the church. I am recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves; on the town garbage heap; at a crossroad so cosmopolitan that they had to write his title in Hebrew and in Latin and in Greek (or shall we say in English, Xhosa and in Afrikaans?) at the kind of place where cynics talk smut, and thieves curse, and soldiers gamble. Because that is where he died. And that is what he died about ...

Prayer

O Christ, the Master carpenter, who at the last, through wood and nails, purchased our whole salvation, wield well your tools in the workshop of your world, so that we who come rough-hewn to your bench may here be fashioned to a truer beauty of your hand.

We ask it for your own name's sake.. Amen

St James, Colesbourne

Reading Mark 11, 15 - 19

Reflection

Too often we are the money changers: giving short change in spiritual things to many who seek the true coin: making the Church an institute when you want it to be a chaos of uncalculating love.

Prayer

Jesus, whatever our traditions, help us to create churches with your passion and light planted at the heart
Churches where we are prepared to address injustice and where 'in a gesture a thousand words are spoken'
Challenging, prophetic churches possessing a generous, rich fund of warmth and love and welcome and real celebration.

Christ, light and life of the world,
bless your Church with the grace and power to flourish and bear fruit;
the courage and faith to grow rooted in your gospel and in the grassroots of community. Amen

