

*St George the Martyr  
Shirley  
Lent Course 2010  
When I survey....Christ's cross and ours  
Thursday 25 February  
Darkness at Noon*

*From noon to three, the whole earth was dark,  
Around mid-afternoon Jesus groaned out of the  
depths, crying loudly,  
Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?  
which means  
My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?  
(Matthew 27)*

*God, God....my God!  
Why did you dump me  
miles from nowhere?  
Doubled up with pain, I call to God  
all the day long. No answer. Nothing.  
I kept at it all night, tossing and turning.  
(Psalm 22)*



*When I survey..*

*When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ, my God:  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.*

*See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingling down:  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

*His dying crimson like a robe,  
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;  
Now am I dead to all the globe,  
And all the globe is dead to me,*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were an offering far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*



*The Cross represents the worst that humanity gives to God,  
And the best that God gives to humanity.*

*What the Cross is about, and how it answers to the world's darkness  
and our personal darkness.*

*Behind the all-too-human gods of the world's various mythologies,  
there lurks a super God whose main characteristics are  
that we can't know anything about him or her or it,  
and that he, she or it is untouched by human weakness, unhurt by  
human pain, uninvolved in the business of human living, suffering,  
and dying.*

*The extraordinary claim of Christianity is that,  
in Jesus,  
this unknowable God  
entered into human living, suffering and dying:  
entered, and therefore transformed, our darkness.*

*That is majestically Good News.  
The bad news, and we can't pretend that it isn't true,  
is that we continue to experience darkness -  
sometimes short-lived darkness, sometimes years of darkness.  
Mother Theresa is one of many well-known Christians  
Who knew the darkness all too well.*

*Fortunately, the darkness doesn't have the last word:*

*In the darkness of unknowing,  
When your love seems absent,  
Draw near to us, O God,  
In Christ forsaken,  
In Christ risen,  
Our Redeemer and our Lord.*

*Please look at the crucifixion pictures,*

*And try to answer two questions:*

- (1) *What was happening when Jesus was crucified?*
- (2) *What does Christ's death on the cross mean to me?*

*Are you bothered that:*

- (a) *People wear a crucifix as a piece of jewellery - the young woman went into the jewellers and asked for "that cross with the little man on it"?*
- (b) *Children have to look at statues of a nearly naked man nailed to a wooden beam by his wrists and ankles/feet?*

*Why is it that we experience darkness, and what can we do to light candles to lighten our darkness and the world's darkness, rather than just Cursing the darkness?*

*When it is dark enough, you can see the stars. (Charles Austen Beard)*

*Those who wish to be sure of the road they tread must close their eyes and walk in the dark. (St John of the Cross)*

*I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope*

*For hope would be hope for the wrong thing;*

*Wait without love*

*For love would be love for the wrong thing;*

*There is yet faith*

*But the faith and the love and the hope are*

*All in the waiting.*

*Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought:*

*So the darkness shall be the light, and the*

*Stillness the dancing.*

*(T.S. Eliot)*

*There is in God, some say, a deep but dazzling darkness.*

*(Henry Vaughan)*

*Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*

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Shirley  
Lent Course 2010  
When I survey....Christ's cross and ours  
Thursday 4 March  
Into great silence*

*He was beaten, he was tortured,  
But he didn't say a word.  
Like a lamb taken to be slaughtered  
And like a sheep being sheared,  
He took it all in silence.  
(Isaiah Chapter 53)*

*Jesus was placed before the Governor..But when the  
accusations rained down hot and heavy from the high  
priests and religious leaders, Jesus said nothing. Pi-  
late asked him, "Aren't you going to say something?"  
Jesus kept silence—not a word from his mouth. The  
Governor was impressed, really impressed.  
(Matthew 27)*

*God wasn't found in the hurricane, earthquake or fire,  
but in the sound of silence  
(1 Kings 19)*

***Be still, my soul***

*Be still, my soul: the Lord is at your side;  
Bear patiently the cross of grief and pain;  
Leave to your God to order and provide;  
In ev'ry change he faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul: your best, your heav'nly friend,  
Through thorny ways, leads to a joyful end.*

*Be still, my soul: your God will undertake  
To guide the future as he has the past.  
Your hope, your confidence, let nothing shake,  
All now mysterious shall be clear at last.  
Be still, my soul: the tempests still obey  
His voice, who ruled them once on Galilee.*



***Be still and know that I am God. (Psalm 46)***

*Into Great Silence* is the English title of a three hour film recording life inside a Trappist monastery. Trappist monks maintain silence for much of their lives. The film is faithful to this tradition, and is silent apart from the singing in the abbey church..

Other than in the Gospel of John, Jesus is largely silent throughout his "trial" and crucifixion. In Matthew and Mark, his silence on the cross is broken only by the great cry of abandonment.



### *Speaking of Silence*

*True silence is the rest of the mind; it is to the spirit what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment. (William Penn)*

*Creativity is usually cultivated in the soil of contemplation. The ability to act decisively (and correctly) often arises from a well of stillness. (Bishop Stephen Cottrell)*

*Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.  
(The Dalhi Lama)*

*We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. (Mother Theresa)*

### *A Korean Prayer for the Week of Christian Unity*

*Blessed are you O Christ*

*When we are without hope, your cross is our hope*

*Blessed are you O Christ*

*When we are lost your cross is our guide*

*Blessed are you O Christ*

*When we are blind your cross is our light*

*Blessed are you O Christ*

*When we are weak your cross is our power*

*Blessed are you O Christ*

*When we are oppressed your cross sets us free*

*Blessed are you O Christ*

*When we are in peril your cross is our peace*

*Blessed are you O Christ*

*When we are apart your cross unites*

*God of all the world*

*We are united in your cross. In you, O Christ, is love, and your love has set us free.*

*The place of silence in the Bible and in Christian worship and living, corporate and personal*

*Let us try a collective 5 minute silence - how does it feel?*

*Have you ever kept silent when you should have spoken?*

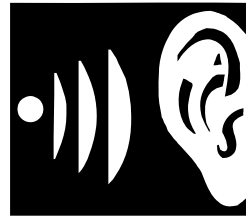
*Have you ever spoken when you should have kept silent?*

*What can we learn from Quaker silence, and from Pentecostal exuberance?*

*Can you handle silence, or do you never get the opportunity?*

*9 million people in this country are deaf or hard of hearing. How well do we as a church and as individuals cater for them?*

*Why did Jesus ask Jairus to keep quiet about the healing of his daughter?  
Would you have kept quiet in these circumstances?*



*Throughout the whole of eternity, God has spoken only one word, and that word is Jesus his Son.  
(St John of the Cross)*

*When we remember how adamant Jesus was that there are occasions when it is best not to say anything, then we recognise that perhaps there needs to be a Christian pause button.*



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When I survey.....Christ's cross and ours  
Thursday 11 March  
The Child on the Cross*



*Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her. He said to his mother "Woman, here is your son". Then to the disciple, "Here is your mother". From that moment, the disciple accepted her as his own mother. (St John Chapter 19)*

*Jesus called them back. "Let these children alone. Don't get between them and me. These children are the kingdom's pride and joy. Mark this: Unless you accept God's kingdom in the simplicity of a child, you'll never get in." (St Luke Chapter 18)*

*“The cry for God’s kingdom to come and remove the evil that happens in the world is never more intense than when one is looking into the face of a suffering child.”  
(Adrian Warnock)*

*Our model is a child growing towards adulthood with parents and grandparents in support. For much of history and for much of the world, the reality has been very different: with mothers commonly dying in childbirth, children commonly dying in infancy, and adults dying in what we would regard as early middle life.*

- *Since 1990, over 2 million children have been killed and 6 million seriously injured in wars.*
- *Some 180 million children around the world are used as cheap labour.*
- *Around 14 million children under 15 have lost one or both parents to AIDS.*
- *Some 27,000 children die each day.*

*When Jesus entrusted his Mother to St John and St John to his Mother, he could be seen as declaring that water (the water of Baptism) is thicker than blood (the blood of kinship). But - even setting aside uncertainty as to whether Mary and John had been Baptised as Christians - his message is perhaps more a further reminder that the two great commandments are one commandment: Love God whole-heartedly and love your neighbour (anyone within reach of your compassion) as much as you love yourself... Preferably more than you love yourself. Or, as St John puts it, “Remember the root command: Love one another.”*

*When Jesus singled out a child as a pattern for his followers, he wasn’t asking for a retreat into the innocence of ignorance, but for an advance into willingness to learn and willingness to change and openness to new understanding and to loving sacrificially.*



*The suffering of children is often seen as the hardest  
thing to reconcile with the loving God*

*“For the mother somewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, at this very mo-  
ment watching her little boy or girl slip away,  
and for Mary at the foot of the cross, the words of Simeon come true:  
“A sword will pierce your soul”.*

*In a world where so many children suffer,  
is there any place for joy, laughter, praise and singing?*

*Jesus was not crucified on an altar between two candles,  
but on a cross between two thieves.  
(Lord George MacLeod)*

*From the Helen House founder (Sister Frances Dominica)  
“One of the gifts our children have given us is the ability to live in the  
now, because they do not know if there is going to be a tomorrow.  
The message is that the present moment is what we’ve got  
and to live deeply in it.”*

*“Grief is the price we pay for love.”  
(HM the Queen)*

*Korean Blessing  
May the Christ who walks with wounded feet  
Walk with us on the road.  
May the Christ who serves with wounded hands  
Stretch out our hands to serve.  
May the Christ who loves with the wounded heart  
Open our hearts to love.*

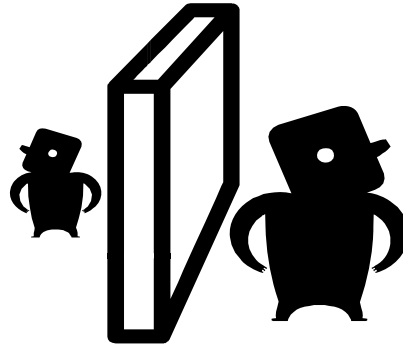
*“The local church should be a place where the child and young person is valued and listened to, and their name is known.”  
(John Bell, Iona Community)*

*“If I were in a Scottish parish, I would be reticent to have any elders on my kirk sessions if they didn’t know the names of the children in the Sunday School. That for me would be the litmus test. But the other end of the spectrum, the thing which I find really appalling, is how sometimes we treat or speak of old people as if, because they’ve reached pensionable age, they’re therefore redundant, and inveterately conservative and “Nothing new can happen in this place because we have an ageing congregation”. I ask “at what rate are they ageing? Because in most places it’s a day at a time - is there a kind of express track in this vicinity?”(John Bell)*

*While children suffer, while old people, while any human beings suffer, there is work to be done.. We are called to carry each other’s burdens, each other’s crosses. Simon of Cyrene was probably a black man, maybe not a Jew. He was called to carry the cross of Jesus. His two sons are named as Christians..  
Sometimes the call to serve is dramatic, often it is very ordinary.  
The very ordinary can be life-changing.*



*St George the Martyr  
Shirley  
Lent Course 2010  
When I survey....Christ's cross and ours  
Thursday 18 March  
Outside a City Wall*



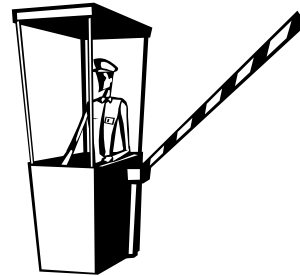
*There is a green hill far away,  
Outside a city wall,  
Where the dear Lord was crucified  
Who died to save us all.  
(Hymn 642)*

*When they got to the place called Skull Hill,  
they crucified him, along with the criminals,  
One on his right, the other on his left.  
(St Luke Chapter 23)*

*When a man has been given the death sentence, executed and hung from a tree,  
don't leave his dead body hanging overnight from the tree...  
A hanged man is an insult to God  
(Deuteronomy Chapter 21)*

*Christ redeemed us from that self-defeating, cursed life by absorbing it completely  
into himself. Do you remember the Scripture that says "Cursed is everyone who  
hangs on a tree"? That is what happened when Jesus was nailed to the cross: He  
became a curse, and at the same time dissolved the curse.  
(Letter to the Galatians Chapter 3)*

*Jesus was crucified outside the city gates - that is where he poured out the sacri-  
ficial blood that was brought to God's altar to cleanse his people. So let's go out-  
side, where Jesus is, where the action is - not trying to be privileged insiders, but  
taking our share in the abuse of Jesus. This "insider world" is not our home...  
Let's take our place outside with Jesus.  
(Letter to the Hebrews Chapter 13)*



*Christian discipleship is much more radical than adding a little religious varnish  
to an otherwise secular life. Jesus calls us to follow him outside.  
(John Young)*

*The tragedy is that after people have been in the church for a time, they find it  
hard to relate to outsiders. Jesus does not suffer from this problem.  
(Darrell L Bock)*

*Many an ordinary, apparently comfortable life has been offered to God, soaked in  
prayer, marked by faith, hospitality, forgiveness, good neighbourliness and sacri-  
ficial giving. This too is discipleship according to the New Testament.  
(Canon John Young)*

*To be a Christian in England today is to be an outsider?*

*Today, Britain is home to many faiths, but I hope it doesn't lose its own - the Christian faith that has inspired its greatest poetry, its finest architecture, and its bravest battles in defence of freedom.*

*(Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks)*

*The Church is the one organisation which exists entirely for the benefit of non-members (Archbishop William Temple)*

*Do you agree?*

*How does St George's cater for "outsiders"?*

*We are by reputation a friendly church: are we good at including those who are not already our friends?*

*Imagine yourself coming to St George's as a stranger: how does it feel?*

*What do you know of the outreach work of Street Pastors, School Pastors, Night Shelters, football (the Kick programme) in the name of Christ?*

*"If the Beatles got on the side of Christ, which they always were, and let people know that, then maybe the churches won't be full, but there'll be a lot of Christians dancing in dance halls. Whatever they celebrate, God and Christ, I don't think it matters as long as they're aware of Him and his message."*

*(John Lennon)*



*Beauty for brokenness*

*Hope for despair,  
Lord, in the suffering,  
This is our prayer.  
Bread for the children,  
Justice, joy, peace,  
Sunrise to sunset,  
Your kingdom increase.*

*Shelter for fragile lives,  
Cures for their ills,  
Work for the craftsmen,  
Trade for their skills.  
Land for the dispossessed,  
Rights for the weak,  
Voices to plead the cause  
Of those who can't speak,*

*God of the poor,  
Friend of the weak,  
Give us compassion we pray,  
Melt our cold hearts,  
Let tears fall like rain.  
Come change our love  
From a spark to a flame.*

*Refuge from cruel wars,  
Havens from fear,  
Cities for sanctu'ry,  
Freedoms to share.  
Peace to the killing fields,  
Scorched earth to green,  
Christ for the bitterness,  
His cross for the pain.*

*(Hymn 54)*

*We can't recite the Creed, sing hymns, or study the New Testament, without  
coming to terms with the inevitable return of the Glorified Outsider.*



# St George the Martyr Shirley



## Good Friday Three Hours Service

Thou hast bid us seek Thy glory, in a criminal crucified.  
And we find it - for Thy glory is the glory of Love's loss,  
And Thou hast no other splendour but the splendour of the Cross..  
And in Him I hear the promise that my dead shall rise again.  
High and lifted up I see Him on the eternal Calvary,  
And two pierced hands are stretching east and west o'er land and sea.  
On my knees I fall and worship that great Cross that shines above,  
For the very God of Heaven is not Power, bur Power of Love.  
(G.A. Studdert Kennedy)

**Good Friday 12 noon to 1 30 p.m.:**

During the first half of the Three Hours, there will be talks, prayers and music.

**Hymn 583: Sing my tongue the glorious battle**

**The Ministry of the Word**

*The ministers enter in silence, and all kneel (or sit) in silent prayer.*

**The Collect for Good Friday: Almighty Father, look with mercy on this your family for which our Lord Jesus Christ was content to be betrayed and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross: who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

Old Testament Reading - Isaiah Chapter 52 verses 12 to 53.

*There is a time of silence after the reading.*

**Hymn 453: My God I love thee not because**

Psalm 22 verses 1 to 22

The response after every two verses is: **By his wounds, we have been healed.**

New Testament Reading - The Letter to the Hebrews Chapter 4 verses 14-16 and Chapter 5 verses 7 to 9.

*There is a time of silence after the reading.*

**Hymn 649: The royal banners forward go**

The Passion Gospel according St John *(Please stand, or sit if necessary - this is a long reading. You can follow the reading on pages 137 - 141 of the red booklet Lent, Holy Week and Easter Services and Prayers.)*

*Sit for the time of silence after the Gospel.*

## The Proclamation of the Cross

*The veiled cross is carried from the back of the church to the front.  
At the front pew, the veil is removed.*

Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the Saviour of the world.

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your Holy Cross  
you have redeemed the world.**

*Kneel or sit to reflect on the meaning of the Cross in our own lives.  
Remain kneeling (or sitting) to sing the next hymn.*

**Hymn 727: When I survey the wondrous cross**

## Intercessions

*The form of prayer used is widely used  
within the worldwide English-speaking Church*

Lord, hear us

**Lord, graciously hear us**

**Hymn 457: My song is love unknown**

## The Ministry of the Sacrament

*Kneel or sit. During the hymn, the altar is covered with a linen cloth, and the  
sacrament reserved from Maundy Thursday is brought to the altar from the  
Lady Chapel. This is the sacrament used for Communion.*

Let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom in the words our Saviour taught us.  
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your  
will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. For-  
give us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not  
into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and  
the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he

gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

*Those who wish to receive Communion go forward.  
During the distribution of Communion the Choir sings the Agnus Dei.  
After Communion, there is a time of silence.*

**Hymn 554: Praise to the Holiest in the height**

*Kneel or sit.*

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved mankind: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross, we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*There is no dismissal or blessing.  
Please depart in silence.*

*You are invited to join the Junior Church and Sunday School in the Hall  
for hot cross buns and tea or soft drinks.*

