

SOUTHWARK
◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

**An act of
regret
remembrance
restoration**

Crossbones Graveyard

Sunday 19 July 2020

The procession leaves the Cathedral and arrives at the Crossbones Graveyard.

The Dean, the Very Revd Andrew Nunn welcomes everyone by saying

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God
who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.

It has become a good tradition that each year at around the time of the Feast of St Mary Magdalene we gather in this graveyard to pray. This year we have to keep our distance and we cannot sing together, but we can be together.

Many of those who were buried here were distanced in their own time in their own society. Men would draw close for a time but then distance themselves. The church would be close for a time but then distance these women in death.

Mary, whose story has been mixed up with other stories – of fallen women, of disturbed women, of faithful women, of passionate women, of accused women, of scandalous women – had been socially distanced but Jesus drew her near and closer too as he made her the first witness of the resurrection. Of all the people he could have met in the garden by the tomb in the first dawn of Easter Day, it was Mary,

and made her the apostle to the apostles.

This land on which we stand has received the bodies of women of our community and their born and unborn children, who served the needs of men, but whose own needs were ignored; who were paid a price for love but were refused the gift of real love; who were used to line the coffers of the church but rejected by the church; whose sins excluded them even though Jesus would have included them.

We cannot undo the sins of yesterday but we can do right today and that is why we are here today as we have been here before, with regret, in remembrance and to pray for restoration, of this land, of these memories and of the eternal souls of our sisters and their children.

So let us pray.

Almighty God,
whose Son restored Mary Magdalene
to health of mind and body and called her
to be a witness to his resurrection:
forgive our sins and heal us by your grace,
that we may serve you in the power of his risen life;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Reading

A Sonnet for Mary Magdalene · Malcolm Guite

Men called you light so as to load you down,
And burden you with their own weight of sin,
A woman forced to cover and contain
Those seven devils sent by Everyman.
But one man set you free and took your part
One man knew and loved you to the core
The broken alabaster of your heart
Revealed to Him alone a hidden door,
Into a garden where the fountain sealed,
Could flow at last for him in healing tears,
Till, in another garden, he revealed
The perfect Love that cast out all your fears,
And quickened you with loves own sway and swing,
As light and lovely as the news you bring.

Acclamation

Mary, do not cling to me,

All for I have not yet ascended to the Father.

Go to my brothers and say to them,

**All 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father,
to my God and your God.'**

Mary went and said to the disciples,

All 'I have seen the Lord.' Alleluia.

Reading

John 20. 11–17

Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.’ When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?’ Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, ‘Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’ (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” ’

Prayers

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, you received all who came to you.
Forgive us when we exclude others.
Lord in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, you exploited no one
but gave yourself with generous love.
Protect the exploited, the slaves, the abused
and change the hearts of those who use and abuse
them.

Lord in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, men put a price on your head
and exchanged your life for money.
Liberate those who are trafficked in our world
and give us the courage to confront the traffickers.

Lord in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, you kept no one at a distance
but called all people to be close to you.
Bless those who have been isolated
in this time of pandemic
and especially those women who have suffered
abuse and violence in their locked homes.
Lord in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, they buried you outside the city walls in a
stranger's grave.
Receive with your love the bodies of those killed and
lost
to their communities and families.
Lord in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus,
hear our prayers
and as you received the love of Mary
hold in your presence
the souls of all who have gone before us
and give them peace.

All Amen.

Restoration

Let us ask God who created this land to hallow it still further this day.

It is right and good,
our duty and our salvation,
to praise you, the all-powerful Father, in every season,
and on this holy day to celebrate all who have gone before us.

In Mary Magdalene you kindled a fire of love for Christ,

whose word had set her free.

You gave her the courage of love to follow him even to the cross.

Seeking her teacher after his death, so great was her longing

that you made her the first to behold him risen from the dead,

and the first to announce to the apostles his new and glorious risen life.

As she stood in a garden that had become a graveyard

we stand in a graveyard that has become a garden.

Her words still ring throughout your world, to strengthen faith and encourage hope in those who gather faithfully for prayer.

May this be a holy place in our community,
set apart for the past, the present and the future
and a place where the dead and living may know
your peace.

All Amen.

*The Dean first sprinkles holy water on the ground as a
sign of God's refreshing blessing and then censes the
graveyard as a sign of God's holiness.*

Eternal Lord God, you hold all souls in life:
shed forth, we pray,
upon your whole Church in paradise and on earth
the bright beams of your light and heavenly comfort;
and grant that we,
following the good example of those who have loved
and served you here and are now at rest,
may at the last enter with them
into the fullness of your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
source of all being, eternal Word and Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

The sonnet on page 4 has been reprinted with permission by the author.

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000.

The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches in the USA: Scripture quotations from The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible © 1989 The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Southwark Cathedral
London Bridge
London SE1 9DA

020 7367 6700
southwarkcathedral.org.uk