

March 21
19:42

John 18:1 -

Good Friday

Memories, full of memories. Growing up and in the first decade of my ministry, Good Friday was a day for three-hour services, based on the seven last words of Jesus, each local minister taking turns to speak on one every 20-30 minutes, plenty of music, plenty of prayers, plenty of silence. A few people came, not many even though most had the day off work.

Then it was over a decade of one-hour services in the Episcopal tradition with all the local clergy participating. Good attendance, good preaching, good offerings for a local cause, fair music sung exceedingly well by all the clergy crowded up in the chancel echo box. But the most memorable part - entering and leaving. A couple dozen clergy, robed in all their variety, some hard leather heels clanking on the bare stone floor, entering and leaving - in total silence.

Silence. Jesus refuses to speak to Pilate. Jesus is silent. Simon Peter after the rooster crowed - silent. Judas, after the moment of betrayal - not a word. Peter warming himself around a fire - avoiding any sound that would draw attention to him. The Roman governor, waking up too early in the morning for a visit from the local gentry - not even humming to himself. Pilate steaming with indignation after he asked what truth is - and having no words to answer himself. Jesus, presented to the roused rabble - offering no defense. Jesus, hanging on a cross - handling a moan?

Silence. My intro to theology prof in seminary put that in his opening lecture - perhaps, the only honest response to the deity is silence; any words would only detract from the fullness of God. Perhaps, unbeknownst to us at the time, our moments of silence are our best clues to God, our best moments of experiencing God, the times we closest to God. Maybe that's one piece of how we dare to call this day good, God. Thank you for being there in our silences.

A Way to Pray - Silence

- How long can you be quiet? Explore the possibles.
- Besides the things that come from inside -
 - Heart, thoughts, air in nose, feelings, aches,...

- And things that come from outside –
 - Noises, sounds, movement, people,...
- What happens when I am silent?