



God is on our side

Good Friday Message 2026

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Jesus is making his way up to Jerusalem with his friends. What hopes, what expectations they must have had. With this Jesus, a new world is dawning. Soon, our dark world will become a more just, more compassionate, and more loving place. This new world is the world of God, the one Jesus spoke of and lived out through his devotion to humanity. But then came this: arrest, trial, conviction, execution. Suddenly, all the hopes and expectations Jesus' friends had placed in him were called into question. Instead of hope for love, justice, and life, there was only hatred, contempt, and death.

We still remember this today on the day of Jesus' crucifixion. Yet it is astonishing that this day is called "Good Friday" in English. What is good about this day full of pain, suffering, and death? The author of the Letter to the Hebrews (Heb 4: 14-16) gives us a clue: "For

we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are” (Heb 4:15).

That is the beauty of this day of Jesus’ death. Jesus draws very close to us. He is one of us—standing with those who suffer, who are afflicted, at a loss, hopeless, at the end of their strength, at the mercy of the powerful, without any prospects. Jesus descends into the deepest depths of human existence. He suffers. He dies. It is precisely this solidarity with us that is the good thing about this sad day of death. Jesus knows us and bears what burdens us. When we feel we have reached the end, when we don’t know which way to turn, when we are powerless and hopeless, then Jesus is at our side. He is not a God of the hereafter. He does not stand above things. Rather, he is right in the midst of our world, in our lives, in our challenges. Jesus knows loneliness and fear. He knows what it is like to feel powerless and abandoned by everyone. He knows the tears, the despair. He has experienced them himself. Thus, he —the compassionate God — is on our side. He gives us strength and courage in the midst of all our dark experiences.

We “hold fast to our confession” of this Lord (Heb 4:14). He strengthens us on our journey, he encourages us to take steps on the path of peace, and he gives us strength in the midst of all our afflictions. That is why the day of Jesus’ death is “Good Friday,” and his death is an encouragement to life.

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