

Good Friday: Cross, Nails and Crown of Thorns



The following is suitable for integrating into a Good Friday service of readings and meditations.

1

A large wooden cross is placed at the front of the worship area together with a hammer and a box of nails.

During the service a meditation is read which deals with a particular situation in the world: famine; war; environmental destruction; homelessness; drugs and alcohol abuse; child poverty; religious intolerance; race relations; abortion; women's rights.....the list is endless but it is important to select no more than about eight or nine at the most.

After each meditation/reading a member of the congregation goes to the front and hammers a nail into the cross to symbolise our ongoing crucifixion of Christ in our modern world and day to day lives.

Suitable music could be played very quietly in the background, for example: Gorecki's Three Sad Songs, but this is equally powerful when done in total silence.

On Easter Morning flowers and ribbons are fastened to the nails to symbolize the resurrection of Christ.

2

Here a table is set in the place of the cross and on this is set a crown of thorns; hawthorn or blackthorn are both suitable. A hammer and large nails are again provided.

The process is similar to that above but instead of driving nails into a cross they are symbolically placed in the crown of thorns. On Saturday, the nails are removed and fastened together in pairs to form a small cross which is then given to each person as they enter for a sunset to sunrise vigil.

On Easter morning, each person is given a flower or a candle to take away with them as well as the cross of nails. Again, this symbolises the death and resurrection of Christ.

*from Seasonal Worship from the Countryside pages 55-56
authors: The Staffordshire Seven
by kind permission of SPCK*