

The Seven Last Words from the Cross



Concordia Seminary
April 16, 2019

Please enter and leave the nave in silence in reverence for the solemnity of Holy Week.

The Service of the Seven Last Words is framed by the Fantasy and Fugue in G Minor by J.S. Bach. The piece is used here programmatically to depict the intensity of the crucifixion scene. The Fantasy, played before the Seven Last Words, contrasts a dense, “agonizing” texture with a somber, “mourning” texture. The Fugue, played after the Seven Last Words, features an “agitating” fugue theme that progressively grows thicker in volume and intensity. The piece ends with a glimmer of Easter hope, signifying the final victory of Christ over sin and death!

Silence

Organ Reflection

Fantasy and Fugue in G Minor

J. S. Bach

—Remain seated—

First Word from the Cross | Luke 23:32-34

Hymn

LSB 439, st. 1

—Kneel if able—

(You are encouraged to leave your kneeler in position)

Prayer

Each prayer concludes with “for your endless mercies’ sake.”

—Sit—

Second Word from the Cross | Luke 23:39-43

Hymn

LSB 439, st. 7

—Kneel if able—

Prayer

—Sit—

Third Word from the Cross | John 19:25b-27

Hymn

LSB 439, st. 5

—Kneel if able—

Prayer

—Sit—

Fourth Word from the Cross | Mark 15:33-39

Hymn LSB 439, st. 4

Prayer —Kneel if able—

—Sit—

Fifth Word from the Cross | John 19:28-29

Hymn LSB 439, st. 2

Prayer —Kneel if able—

—Sit—

Sixth Word from the Cross | John 19:30

Hymn LSB 439, st. 8

Prayer —Kneel if able—

—Sit—

Seventh Word from the Cross | Luke 23:44-46

Hymn LSB 439, st. 15

Prayer —Kneel if able—

—Sit—

Organ Reflection **Fantasy and Fugue in G Minor**
J. S. Bach

The Fugue will last approximately six minutes. The assembly is invited to remain in the nave for reflection until the end of the Fugue. If you need to leave, please do so quietly. During the reflection the stripping of the altar will occur in preparation for the remainder of Holy Week.

The Stripping of the Altar

Silence

Servants of the Word

Dean of the Chapel Kent Burreson

Liturgist

Seminarian Alvaro Witt Duarte

Assistant

Director of Musical Arts Jim Marriott

Organist

Notes on the Service

The tradition of structuring a service around the seven last words of Jesus on Good Friday gained prominence starting in the 17th century in Peru from where it spread across South America. In the late 19th century it was picked up by Anglicans from whom it spread to the English-speaking Christian world. Often the service is a three-hour service on Holy Good Friday covering the hours from 12 to 3 pm when Jesus hung on the cross. The seven words of Jesus from the Gospel accounts of the Passion provide the focal points of reflection. Often the words are proclaimed in choral form. In Lutheran circles the service also regularly includes preaching upon the seven last words. This day the words are surrounded with reflection from the classic Lutheran hymn by Johann Heermann, “O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken?”

The Stripping of the Altar, originally a very utilitarian action allowing for the cleaning of the altar, its paraments, and linens in preparation for the Easter festival, developed into a symbolic rite signifying the stripping of dignity and honor from Christ Jesus in preparation for his crucifixion and passion. The church usually enacts the rite as the final act of the Holy Maundy Thursday liturgy.

Corporate Confession and Absolution

The rite of corporate confession and absolution will be offered immediately following the chapel service today. All are invited to receive absolution as part of the discipline of Lent and Holy Week. If not staying, you are encouraged to leave the nave in silence.