

# *Suggestions for a group using the meditation material*

Each meditation is free standing and might be suitably used over a period of between fifteen and thirty minutes.

The Scripture quotations are deliberately short and are profitably read by the leader very slowly, even one phrase at a time.

The music can be used in different ways before, during or after the meditation reading.

The short final prayer is suggested as part of a conclusion to the time of personal prayer and reflection.

The leader may well wish to change the comment/question sections but the advice is to keep to the very short nature of the comments.

The quotations from the hymn by Samuel Crossman are selected to fit the meditation but some groups might like to read or sing the whole hymn at some point during the meditation.

# Love

Love expressed in friendship.

A friendship must be mutual, an experience of love drawing out more love.

St. John 15v.9 “As the Father has loved me so have I loved you...”

Imagine the joy Jesus brought to his Father as the Father's love was revealed in every look, every gesture, every movement of his life.

v.12, “I have called you friends, for everything I have learned from my Father, I have made known to you.”

Jesus offers everything he has to his friends.

v.13, “greater love has no-one than this that he lay down his life for his friends”

*O, who am I  
That for my sake  
My Lord should take  
Frail flesh and die.*

## Silence or Music

St. John 15v.9-15

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, you gave your life for your friends,  
Now you call me your friend. By your grace I dare to call myself your friend.  
Help me to be faithful. Amen.

# Love Healing

*He made the lame to run,  
He gave the blind their sight,*

Love that heals, makes whole, is a quality that cannot be measured or quantified, let alone set against performance targets.

Parents desperate enough to risk humiliation. A willing response on the part of Jesus. Undeterred by bad news, even panic, Jesus treated the family with respect, giving them the privacy that they needed. Then Jesus took her by the hand, said “Little girl, get up” and to the parents, “Now give her something to eat.”

What was the source of Jesus' calm confidence in the face of sickness and death?

Do we see God moving in love toward humanity in the person of his Son?

Think on these things in some silence or as you listen to the music.

**St Mark 5v.22-30**

Spend a few minutes in prayer for a sick friend.

## Prayer

Jesus, you went about doing good,  
You brought the whole making touch of Almighty God  
To all who came to you,  
Enable us, your friends to anoint many with the oil of gladness.

# Love Grieving

St. Matthew 9v.35-36

St Luke 19v.41-44

Compassion; suffering with another. Jesus saw the people, harassed and helpless, not clamouring and invasive of his privacy. His powerful love went out to them, their pain became his pain. He longed that the Father would send and equip those who could reach them. He invited his disciples to join in his prayer.

Picture a crowd, Saturday shoppers or late night revellers or maybe displaced persons on the long road to where? (Maybe you're in Eastern Congo or Sri Lanka or could it be Pakistan?) See women carrying pots and blankets on their heads, children trailing behind their weary parents. Feel some loss, some despair. Pray to the Father.

## Silence or music

*Never was love, dear king,  
Never was grief like thine*

## Prayer

Lord, you have born our griefs, carried our sorrows. Give us grace to see the world through your eyes so that your work of redeeming love may continue in our generation.

# Love Unknown

A tentative smile,  
A lift of the eyes,  
A momentary glance  
To pass undetected  
Or be confirmed  
In meeting the others more open stance.  
Love risking all to find love.

Love always waiting,  
Hoping, expecting,  
Longing to share  
Its joy and excitement,  
Its millions of new ideas,  
Surprises awaiting creation,  
Love working in transformation.

Once there was one,  
Always ready, noticing,  
Looking, seeking, finding,  
Offering strength and direction,  
Calling out life and commitment,  
“Come for water, bread, wine, light, fish...”

This One was rejected,  
His words denied,  
His body crucified,  
Resurrected, Love unknown was multiplied.

# Love Guiding

## St John 14v.5-9

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Where did following Jesus lead his disciple friends?

Among crowds, in the public Synagogue for regular worship, to the capital city at festival time in the great Temple, in the market places of Galilee, at a wedding, at a graveside, in a sick room, alone on a mountain or across the stormy lake. They met religious leaders, hard working families, social outcasts. They were with him, they went where he went, watched how he approached people, responded to questions, offered challenges, fed the hungry, healed the sick, confronted the powers of darkness.

Does Jesus guide differently today as the Holy Spirit brings to mind his life, as through the Spirit he lives in us and we in Him?

Where am I today? Where am I experiencing love? To whom is Jesus offering love through me?

## Silence or Music

*In life no house, no home  
My Lord on earth might have*

*Heaven was his home  
But mine the tomb  
Wherein He lay.*

## Prayer

Lord Christ, may I learn to think your thoughts and be moved to action at the impulse of your love.

# Hosanna Cry

## St. Mark 11v.1-3&7-10

The Messiah is coming to claim his kingdom.  
Think how Jesus had become certain of his destiny.

*Sometimes they strew his way.  
And his sweet praises sing  
Resounding all the day  
Hosannas to their king:  
Then crucify  
Is all their breath,  
And for his death  
They thirst and cry.*

St. Mark 14v. 43-50 in the garden  
14v.55-56 before the Sanhedrin  
14v.61-65 at the High Priest's house  
St. Mark 15v.6-15 before Pilate

*They rise and needs will have  
My dear Lord made away;  
A murderer they save  
The Prince of life they slay.  
Yet cheerful He  
To suffering goes  
That He his foes  
From thence might free.*

## Silence or music

Isaiah 53v.5 He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities,  
The punishment that brought us peace was upon him.

**Prayer** Let us praise God for so great salvation.

*My song is love unknown  
My Saviour's love to me,  
Love to the loveless shown  
That they might lovely be.*

# Love Serving

**St John 13v.14** Now that I your lord and teacher have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

**St. Matthew 20v.26-28.** ...whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Social hierarchy was important in Roman and Jewish culture as it is in so many parts of the world today. Promotion, qualifications, financial status can enable someone to leave behind routine tasks once part of normal life. Jesus took on himself the form of a servant, his life at the disposal of those who needed Him. No task was below his dignity. (St. Matthew uses the word for a servant, diakonos and the word for a slave, doulos. A slave was in life long service.)

*Yet cheerful He  
To suffering goes  
That he his foes  
From death might free.*

Service without resentment, cheerful service.  
At what points in my life do I struggle to serve cheerfully?

## Silence or music

## Intercession

Let us pray with thanksgiving for those in our society who undertake essential menial tasks: cleaning streets or toilets, maintaining sewers, sorting garbage, others who are carers supporting the elderly or handicapped. May they know their work is valued on earth as it is in heaven.

## The Lord's Prayer.

# Love Obedient

**Philippians 2v.8** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.

**St. John 4v.34** “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish his work.”

**St. Mark 8v.31** He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected....

*Sweet injuries,  
Yet they at these  
Themselves displease  
And 'gainst Him rise.*

**St. John 13v.34** “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you.”

How am I obeying Jesus in this regard?

## Silence or Music

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, You were obedient as you continued loving in a sinful world. By your grace, may I love those in your family for whom you wish me to share some responsibility. Lord, I need help to face the cost of obedience.

# Love Suffering

*Then crucify is all their breath  
And for his death  
The thirst and cry.*

## **St. Luke 22v.63**

Now the men who were holding Jesus mocked him and beat him, they also blindfolded Him and asked Him, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" And they spoke many other words against Him, reviling Him.

## **Hebrews 5v.15**

For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weakness but One who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.

## **Silence or Music**

Can we contemplate our Lord sharing in our life today, understanding where we experience sorrow or pain? Can we share with Him those for whom we feel some agony?

## **Intercession with thanksgiving**

Take time to remember some of those who suffer discrimination, imprisonment, even torture because they are loyal to Jesus... Praise God that they will share in his glorious resurrection.

Lord, hear our prayer. And let our cry come unto thee.

# Love Comforting

## St. John 16v.7

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is for your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”

## v.12

“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”

## v.15

“All that the Father has is mine. He will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

Comforting means bringing strength to one who is distressed or in weakness of any kind. In the love the Father has for his children He sends the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not say their suffering is not unreal or unimportant but brings the presence of Jesus who went through all suffering and all weakness to His resurrection life. His presence strengthens, enlivens and enables us to face the future.

## Silence or Music.

Spend time seeking the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Give thanks for every experience of His renewing strength, through his word of promise, through an encouraging friend, in the stillness as you remember the faithfulness of God.

*But O! my Friend,  
My Friend indeed,  
Who at my need  
His life did spend.*

## Prayer

Send us out in the power of your spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen

*(Holy Communion, Common Worship)*

# Love Unknown

*Here might I stay and sing,  
No story so divine;  
Never was love, dear King!  
Never was grief like Thine.*

## St. John 13v.1

When Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to his Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end, (He showed them the full extent of his love) quarrelsome, agitated, sleepy, frightened, on the run – He loved them to the end.

Unconditional love flows freely from the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. That love is very costly. It cost Jesus his life.

## Silence or Music

Meditate on how you have experienced the overflowing, often surprising love of God, from your earliest memories, through times of growth, times of struggle, times of loss, times of darkness.

Think of Jesus at the Last Supper, taking a towel, washing the disciples feet, on the cross, thinking of his mother and beloved disciple, reassuring the dying thief.

*This is my Friend,  
In whose sweet praise  
I all my days  
Could gladly spend.*

## Prayer

O Lord, open our lips  
And our mouths shall show forth thy praise

*(Book of Common Prayer 1662)*