



Ecce Homo by Hieronymus Bosch.

Good Friday
Ecce Homo
(Behold the Man)
Andrew Hudgins

Christ bends, protects his groin. Thorns gouge
his forehead, and his legs
are stippled with dried blood. The part of us

that's Pilate says, *Behold the man.*
We glare at that bound, lashed,
and bloody part of us that's Christ. We laugh, we howl,
we shout. *Give us Barabbas,*
not knowing who Barabbas is, not caring.
A thief? We'll take him anyway. A drunk?
A murderer? Who cares? It's better him
Than this pale ravaged thing, this god. Bosch knows.
His humans waver, laugh, then change to demons
as if they're seized by epilepsy. It spreads
from eye to eye, from laugh to laugh until,
incited by the ease of going mad,
they go. How easy evil is! Dark voices sing,
You can be evil or you can be good,
but good is dull, my darling, good is dull.
And we're convinced: How lovely evil is!
How lovely hell must be! *Give us Barabbas!*

Lord Pilate clears his throat and tries again:
I find no fault in this just man.
It's more than we can bear. In gothic script
our answer floats above our upturned eyes.
O crucify, we sing. O crucify him!

1991

The Collect for Good Friday

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contact Information

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

