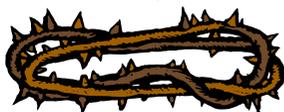


Holy Saturday

There is no reading for Holy Saturday. We spend the day reflecting upon the powerful reality of Jesus' death.



What is important is that we keep this day holy, and let our "sense" of the mystery of death shape our reflection, and our longing to celebrate the Easter gift of Jesus alive, for us and with us.

Prayer: Companion of the Broken-hearted, stay with us today as despair seeks to engulf us. Console any who feel Hope has been crucified and sealed in a cave forever. Comfort those who doubt that tomorrow will come and that Life will triumph. Help us stay with others through their times of darkness, and touch our own wounds with the balm of your grace. May we know you as the One who rolls away stones today. Amen.

Reflection: What is waiting to happen in my life? What is ready to burst forth, at the right time?

Find ad Easter Sunday Service tomorrow .

Easter Sunday — read John 20 : 11—16

Jesus isn't here, he has been raised from death. Luke 68: 0

Their eyes were opened and they recognised him. Luke 68: 75

Today God has the last word and the word after that. "I never left you, I have not deserted you. I have always been with you even when you thought and felt otherwise."

God rarely appears when and when and how we expect him. It is God's way to come cloaked, as he did to the disciples on the Emmaus Road. His greatest promises come disguised, when the storm is darkest or the fear is overwhelming. It is utterly his way to come when Hope seems to be gone. No resurrection without Golgotha. No freedom without blood sweat and tears. No life without death. Today he flings back his hood and reveals the truth of his glory, but there will be many other days when we must plod on waiting to recognise him through the veil of our tears.

Reflection: Easter one of your Easter eggs or hot cross buns in prayerful way today. What is God saying through it?

Prayer: Come Lord Jesus and fill me with your life and hope Amen.



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HOLY WEEK REFLECTIONS

Originally written by Vivian Coleman in 2011

This little diary of eight Easter prayers is intended to be used daily.

Palm Sunday— read Luke 19: 28—44

And when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it, saying, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace!"

Luke 19:41, 42

You keep track of all my sorrows.

You have collected all my tears in your bottle.

Psalm 56:8

Jews and Christians have a practice that brings healing when we are in the midst of grief — it is called lament. To lament is to express sorrow or to mourn aloud. The practice of lament gives you time and permission to vent deep sadness, pent-up anger and self-blame. It can be hugely therapeutic to pour out your grief and discover you are heard.



Reflection: Over what do I need to lament today?

Have I given my sorrow a safe space? Do I sense that grief is part of the way God created humanity to fully experience his love and grace?

Prayer: God let me journey with you in these days of sorrow. Help me to experience this week fully, instead of skipping from waving palms to Easter lilies. Help me share your heart of compassion. Amen

Monday of Holy Week—read Luke 19: 45—48

*My house shall be house of prayer....*Luke 19: 46

Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? 5 Cor 7: 5⁰

In this incident in the temple, Jesus was so incensed at the exploitation and consumerism that he acted with uncharacteristic ferocity.

Reflection: Our church offers many good things, but is prayer the overriding concern Jesus wants it to be? Is communion with him at the heart of our community life, or is prayer just an optional extra? Paul tells us we are the house of prayer, but what does that mean? Am I greedily buying and selling just like they were the temple? How do I drive out such false idols from my heart?

An Ancient Prayer: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from you no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name,

Tuesday of Holy Week — read John 12: 1–8

Jesus spent this day quietly at home with his friends in Bethany. He needed to prepare himself for the mortal danger he foresaw..



The Lord said to her, “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.” Luke 10: 41, 42

“Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial..... you have the poor always but you will not always have me.” John 12:7

Reflection: What do I bring to Jesus in the in-between times? Is my mind still on the busyness of the day or can I bring the alabaster jar of my life and break it open to him? This metaphor gives us hope to think that what we offer of ourselves is as welcomed by Jesus as sweet perfume.

Prayer: Lord help me to be content do what I can, when I can. Then remind me that what I offer to you even my brokenness, is your delight. Amen.

Maundy Thursday — read Mark 14: 12–26

And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. Mark 58: 67

For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. John 59: 8

On their way to supper, Jesus and his disciples may have walked across a valley that was planted in grapevines. As they pass along the terraces, Jesus stops to show the disciples a grape branch with signs of spring growth. He talks about fruit and fruitfulness, and how a farmer cares for his crop. “You are the branches, created on purpose to be connected with me.” Both the parable of the vineyard and the metaphor of drinking wine in communion with Him remind us that disciples then, and now, fulfil their God-given purpose of fruitfulness by abiding, and remaining connected with Jesus.



Reflection: What am I doing in my life right now to stay connected with Jesus?

Prayer: Thank you Lord for entering our life - with its profound joys and its punishing evils - that we might never experience those struggles alone, Amen.

Wednesday of Holy Week — read John 13: 1–10

Jesus may have used this day to secure with the “water carrier” the room in which he would host his friends to supper the next evening. Perhaps he gave some thought to the fact that their feet would need to be washed.

I have given you an example to follow... you ought to wash each other's feet.
John 13: 15, 14

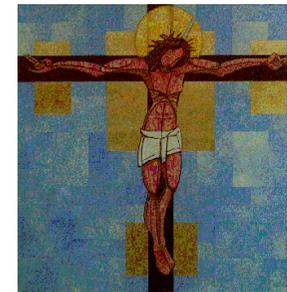
Reflection: A lot of people are brick and mortar Christians. They've mistakenly thought that Christianity is all about “doing” — going to services, building huge churches, maintaining facilities, and attending committee meetings “at church.” But there are others who are towel and basin Christians, who've discovered that “being” (not “doing”) church is the Way of Jesus. Instead of pointing their finger at what doesn't suit their preferences, they see their job as loving and giving a hand. (*The Journey Blog*)

Prayer: Most loving God,
Grant us the wisdom to discern our calling,
the humility to understand our frailties,
the courage to turn them over to you,
and the energy to persevere



Good Friday

Today crosses appear round necks and on top of churches. But in the first century a cross was a horrific method of execution. Invented by the Phoenicians and perfected by the Romans, it was reserved for the worst of criminals. The one who was ‘without sin’ was led out a cross to die.



From the foot of the cross, I look up to Thee
O Jesus, Lord, bow down to me
For I stand in the faith of my God today
Put love in my heart and hope always. (Celtic hymn)