

Devotions – March 28 – April 3, 2021

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Sunday March 28, 2021 – Palm Sunday

Text: John 12:12-16

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord – the King of Israel!” Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as is written: “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!” His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.

This is an event that has come to be celebrated every year marking the beginning of Holy Week. Jesus’ triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. Yes, it was a triumphant entrance procession and yet it was so different. No conquering hero king riding a war-horse. But the King who comes humbly riding on a colt. The crowd had come out because they had heard Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. His disciples did not understand these things at first, only after Jesus was glorified would they begin to understand.

Often we cannot understand what is going on when we are caught up in it. Still, our King, the Christ, comes. How do we respond? This past year has been trying for all of us. Not being able to gather with our worshipping communities as we have in previous years has been a struggle. Still, our King comes. We long for our world to return to normal but can that ever be? Still, our King comes. This Holy Week calls us to remember, our King comes. We join in proclaiming, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord,” putting our trust in God as we continue our journey.

Let us pray: *Gracious God, we rejoice as we enter this Holy Week. We ask that you guide us as we relive the Passion of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. We ask that you guide us as we journey in faith throughout the days ahead. Amen.*



Monday in Holy Week – March 29, 2021

Text: John 12 1-2

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him.

They had come, as had so many others, to be in Jerusalem. They had journeyed with Jesus from the day that each of them had been called to follow. The followers of Jesus did not know what lie ahead. Indeed, they could not know. Jesus tried to tell the Apostles, but they did not understand. Still, they went with him in faith. They went with him trusting. Only after this had passed would they begin to understand. Only as they looked back through the eyes of faith could they see God at work in this. They would never be the same. But now, for the time being it was good simply to have come this far and take rest in the company of Lazarus, Mary and Martha.

It is good, at times, to pause in our life journey, to take time to meditate and to look back. I believe it is important to reflect upon the journey Jesus Christ has called each of us to walk in faith. We too, cannot know what lies ahead in our life, but we can follow the examples of those who have gone before us in faith. We can journey trusting in God to guide us. We can rest in the assurance of God's grace. As we journey through this Holy Week, let us look through the eyes of faith and see the presence of God working in and through our lives.

Let us pray: *Pour out your Spirit, O Lord, that reflecting upon your grace and meditating on your word we may live each day to fulfill the hope in which you created us. Amen*



Tuesday in Holy Week – March 30, 2021

John 12:27-32

“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say – ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

The crowd had heard the voice of God. Jesus was willing to sacrifice all in obedience to the God. The voice of God spoke and the people did not understand. Some thought it was thunder, others the voice of an angel. Some had heard through the ears of this world only while others heard with ears of faith. Jesus, the Word ... the voice of God, has come for our sake. Jesus

declares to you and to me, “I, when I am lifted up, will draw all people to myself.” God speaks, we are called to hear with ears and hearts and minds of faith.

Let us pray: *Open our ears, our hearts, our minds that we may hear, receive and believe. Empower us to live each day to glorify you. Amen.*



Wednesday in Holy Week – March 31, 2021

Text: John 13: 2b-7, 12-15

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ... ¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

Jesus gets up from the table, removes his robe and washes the disciple’s feet. This was the task of the lowest servant or the least important. “I have set you an example.” To this day, I can still hear my father’s voice saying to me, “Actions speak louder than words.” WE are called by our Lord to be those who proclaim God’s grace and love in word and deed.

Let us pray: *Lord, we come asking that you open our eyes to see the opportunities to serve which you put before us daily and that we may act upon them knowing that in serving others we live as you desire. Amen.*



Maundy Thursday, April 1, 2021

Text: John 13:33-35

“Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

A new commandment, in Latin a “mandatum”. “Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” He had just told them they could not go with him and now they are told to love one another as he has loved them. Soon they would learn that this meant to be willing to suffer and die for the other. These words are spoken to us as well. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we too are called to love one another, to give of self for others. By God’s grace we are empowered to do this in faith.

Let us Pray: *Lord, you call upon us to love one another. Keep us mindful of this great call. Fill us with your Spirit that we may joyfully live out this “mandatum” and love as you would have us love. Amen.*



Good Friday – April 2, 2021

Text: John 19:25-27a

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”

Mary stood at the foot of the cross, filled with grief and a myriad of emotions, watching her son die. I wonder if she was remembering the mystery of her faithful journey. An angel had told her she was a favored one of God. She would conceive and bear the Son of the Most High. And while she did not understand how this could be she replied in faith, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” And now this. What would you remember standing there looking up at someone you loved now dying? Then Jesus speaks, and in compassion, cares for his mother. Jesus speaks.... And in compassion, cares for us in our times of grief and sorrow.

Let us pray: Heavenly Father, today we remember the depth of your love, shown to us through the gift of your only Son, Jesus Christ. You pour out your compassion in our times of grief. Empower us to be the means of bringing your compassion to others through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Saturday April 3, 2021 - The Tomb

Text: John 19:38, 41-42

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus... Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. ⁴¹Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

They laid Jesus in the tomb. Grief, hopes dashed, their world was turned upside down. They had heard the promises Jesus had spoken ... but now it seemed ...

It was three days before I would be leaving to enter seminary. My whole future lay ahead and I was packed and ready. Then we received the news. There was nothing the doctors could do. My father and mother insisted I still go. Now seven weeks later I stood at my father's graveside, my mother and brothers beside me. True, I had heard the promises of God, the promises Jesus had spoken ... but now it seemed ... We have all stood by the graveside of a loved one or loved ones and been filled with grief. If this were the end of their story, if this was the end Jesus' story we would be lost ... but ...

Let us pray: Lord, we have heard the promises for those who follow you in faith. Empower us daily to trust in these promises. Bless us with your grace daily that we may entrust our lives to you. Amen.

