

PASSION/PALM SUNDAY



Promise of Life

Lord God,
you entered Jerusalem in triumph,
and we shouted, "Hosanna!"
As the Lenten journey closes,
may I continue to remember
your sacrifice and love.

Give me the strength
to follow your cross.
May my heart find serenity
and joy in your promise.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 24, 2024

Never Alone



Today's readings: Gospel at the procession Mark 11:1–10 or John 12:12–16; Isaiah 50:4–7; Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; Philippians 2:6–11; Mark 14:1–15:47. Today's readings leave us much to ponder. During the Gospel at the procession, a crowd welcomes Jesus to Jerusalem, singing, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" At the end of the Gospel from Mark, Jesus was not hailed but reviled as passersby taunted, "You who would destroy the temple in three days, save yourself by coming down from the cross."

In the last verses from Mark's Gospel, we witness the faith of the steadfast disciples, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of younger James and Joses, and Salome. These women had followed Jesus in Galilee, stood by until his

death, and watched where he was laid in a tomb. Apparent, too, is the faith of Joseph of Arimathea, who wrapped Jesus in linen and laid him in the tomb.

Also obvious in the Gospel is the wavering faith of those who had followed Jesus for three years. Not only did Judas betray Jesus, but Peter could not stay awake with him as he prayed in the garden, and later Peter denied him three times. The Gospel proclaimed today does not record the apostles' presence at the crucifixion.

During Holy Week, Christians have the opportunity to be with Christ as his last days are recalled. Take to heart Jesus' words to the apostles in Gethsemane: "Remain here and keep watch."



Holy Week at Home

Monday, March 25

A precious offering

In today's gospel we see how Mary, Lazarus' sister, takes a very precious possession and uses it to anoint Jesus' feet. We are also given opportunities to give the very best of ourselves. Today, examine whether you have gifts within you that you hold back. Who would benefit from those gifts? *Today's readings: Isaiah 42:1-7; Psalm 27:1-3, 13-14; John 12:1-11.*

Tuesday, March 26

Judas Is humanity

Imagine how Jesus would have felt knowing that Judas was about to betray him. He surely was troubled but also hurt. Let us also imagine what may have been in the mind and heart of Judas. In Judas we can see all of humanity reflected: the emptiness of greed and envy, the alienation and loneliness of sin. However much we strive to be like Jesus, we will always meet our flaws and shortcomings. In Christ, however, we are strengthened to do good in the world despite our failings. As we approach the celebration of the resurrection and prepare for the renewal of our baptismal promises, resolve to let the new life that Christ gives to well up within you. *Today's readings: Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalm 7:1-6, 15-17; John 13:21-38.*

Wednesday, March 27

Second chances

Much can be learned from Judas' betrayal. Perhaps by examining Judas' actions, we can grow ourselves. Consider how you can explore and acknowledge what keeps you from God. This week reflect on the times you preferred a path other than God's. How did following another way disturb your relationship with God and others? Trust in God's promise of forgiveness for all who turn toward God, in other words, repent. *Today's readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 69:8-10; 21-22, 31-34; Matthew 26:14-25.*

Maundy Thursday, March 28

Serving others

Tonight, with its evening Lord's Supper, the Great Three Days begin. Humbling himself, Jesus washed and dried the feet of the disciples. Just as he washed their feet, by his resurrection, he washed away our sin. Perhaps you have an elderly parent, neighbor, or relative who is somehow impaired or limited. How can you humble yourself and be of service to another? *Today's readings: Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; Psalm 116:12-18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15.*

Good Friday, March 29

Symbol of love

During the adoration of crucified one in today's liturgy, the faithful are invited to process to the cross and offer a sign of reverence. Even when you are unable to attend this service, spend time in quiet contemplating Jesus' surrender of himself on the cross. How are you asked to surrender yourself to the crosses in your life? *Today's readings: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22 or 31:2, 6, 12-17, 25; Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42.*

Holy Saturday, March 30

Becoming the Story we tell

Jesus has died and descended to dead but the darkness surrounding us is only temporary. This is the night! The light of the world will shine brightly once more, and soon enough it will defeat the darkness. This is the Story we tell. Our God saves!: *Today's readings: Genesis 1:1-2:4 Creation; Genesis 7-9 Flood; Genesis 22:1-18 Testing of Abraham; Exodus 14:10-31; 15:1-13, 17-21 Deliverance at the Red Sea; Isaiah 12:2-6, 55:1-11 Salvation freely offered to all Ezekiel 36:24-28 A new heart and a new spirit; Ezekiel 37:1-14 Valley of the dry bones; Zephaniah 3:14-20 The gathering of God's people; Jonah 1:1-2:1-9 The deliverance of Jonah; Isaiah 61:1-4, 9-11 Clothed in the garments of salvation; Daniel 3:1-29 Deliverance from the fiery furnace; Romans 6:3-11 Dying and rising with Christ; John 20:1-18 Seeing the risen Christ.*