



REFLECTIONS FOR EACH DAY OF HOLY WEEK.

Holy Week is the most significant week in the Christian calendar. It is the week that changed the world and is full of ever changing events, emotions and experiences. Starting with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the Sunday, followed by confrontation and teaching about the things that are important as followers of Christ. On through an intimate meal, betrayal and denial which were followed by a mock trial, execution and death.

It is no surprise that with so much happening in this 7 day period that the Gospel writers each take about 1/3 of their writings about the events of this long week. It maybe , that in addition to these daily reflections you would like to read through at least one of the Gospels Passion narratives (Matthew chapters 21-28; Mark 11-16; Luke 19-25 or John 12-21).

Each day we will look at an event from the week, share a prayer and look at a Hymn. For most of the Hymns, one of the verses is printed, but if you are able, please read the whole of the Hymn.

During Holy Week this year, may we, as dispersed congregations around the circuit, be drawn together through these readings and prayers so that together we make the journey from Palm Sunday to Good Friday together.

The resources these reflections have been based upon come from the Iona Community who have given permission for them to be used in this way.

Every blessing

Deacon David

MONDAY 6TH APRIL 2020.

On this day, Jesus and his disciples stayed in the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus in Bethany – where Mary anointed Jesus' feet with perfume and wiped them with her hair.

Scripture reading: John 12:1– 7

Prayer

God of love,
In Jesus we see the true nature of your love –
Vulnerable, personal, costly, setting love's standards for all time.
Look in mercy on us, whose loving rarely even approaches the standard set by Jesus.
Forgive us,
And help us to be encouraged by the openness Jesus showed to Martha and to Mary –
As to all who loved him, even a little, in their own way.
Help us to love a little more like Jesus,
So that the scent of love may be detected in our lives. We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen

Hymn Verse 6, Singing the Faith 566 / Hymns & Psalms 705. Frances Riley Havergal

Take my love; my Lord I pour
At thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for thee.

TUESDAY 7TH APRIL 2020.

On this day, Jesus and his disciples returned to Jerusalem, where he entered the Temple and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, declaring the Temple to be again a place of prayer for all nations.

Scripture reading: Mark 11:15–19

Prayer

Loving God,
You know the need we have as human beings for things to taste and touch, to smell and feel.
You know we are never satisfied only with words –
You made us, body as well as spirit, flesh as well as soul.
Thank you then for the things of our religion that speak to us of our faith.
Cleanse our religious traditions of anything that would turn our faith into stone;
May they always speak to us of Kingdom values – the justice, the peace, the care for the poor,
The costly faith, that is never content unless it is walking in the footsteps of Jesus. We pray in his name.
Amen

Hymn Verse 1, Singing the Faith 253, Andrew Pratt.

Love inspired the anger
That cleared a temple court,
Overturned the wisdom
Which their greed and wrought.

WEDNESDAY 8TH APRIL 2020.

On this day, Judas Iscariot entered into an agreement with the Jewish leaders to betray Jesus to them.

Scripture reading: John 13:21–30

Prayer

How much are you worth to me, Jesus?
The Gospel tells us that to Judas, you were worth thirty pieces of silver.
Not much – a day's wages, hardly a reason for such a betrayal.

And to the others – the dozy eleven who fell asleep in the garden, who put on a brief show of bravado, then forsook you and fled?
They didn't value you all that highly either, it would seem.

And what about me?
What about me, concerned, like they were, far more with my own agenda than with yours, most of the time?
Do I really value you above my issues, my needs, even my understanding of the faith?

On this day, Jesus, help me admit, yet again, my need of your forgiving kiss,
And remind me that you value me far higher than I deserve or can ever repay. Amen

Hymn Verse 1 Singing the Faith 421 Nick & Anita Haigh

Empty, broken here I stand,
Touch me with your healing hand,
Take my arrogance and pride,
Wash me in me in your mercy's tide
Kyrie eleison Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison *

*(NB * Kyrie Eleison = Lord have mercy, Christe Eleison = Christ have mercy)*

THURSDAY 9TH APRIL 2020 – MAUNDY THURSDAY

On this night, Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples, and washed their feet, thus inaugurating the new covenant between God and all people, which he was to seal the next day with his blood. Then he was betrayed by Judas, deserted by his disciples and handed over to be crucified.

Scripture readings: John 13:1–15, Luke 22:14–20

Prayer

Loving God,
On this night you waited, in Jesus, for so much.
You waited for loyalty – and found betrayal.
You waited for support – and got, instead, desertion.
You waited for love – and received instead hatred,
misunderstanding, rejection, and a cruel death.

Loving God, still you wait for us.
We are no different from your first disciples.
We carry within us all the sin that can crucify you again and again.

Here on this night,
The night of the basin and towel,
Of the bread broken and the wine outpoured,
Help us to wait now on you.
Let your mercy and grace unite us in your forgiveness.
And make us one with all your suffering children who wait for your
reign of justice and peace to come and change their lives.
We pray in Jesus' name. Amen

Hymn Singing the Faith 266, Graham Kendrick

All the room was hushed and still,
And when the bowl was filled
He stooped to wash their feet.
And when it was complete, he said

*This is what I'm asking you to do,
This is why I'm kneeling here beside you,
This is what my Church to be,
This is what I want the world to see –
Who it is you follow.*

Let the room be hushed and still,
Let us go to where he kneels
And join him as he serves,
And learn his ways of love, he said

*This is what I'm asking you to do,
This is why I'm kneeling here beside you,
This is what my Church to be,
This is what I want the world to see –
Who it is you follow.*

FRIDAY 10TH APRIL 2020 – GOOD FRIDAY.

On this day, Jesus endured the mockery of a trial; he was condemned to death, tortured and executed; then his body was taken down from the Cross, and buried in a borrowed grave.

Scripture reading: Mark 15:16–39

Prayer

Lord Jesus, lifted high on the cross,
You look down on us in all our greatness, and all our sin.
And in your amazing love you sift out the good in us,
In both our greatness, and our sin.

Look in mercy on all who need you now;
Especially those who would not dream of approaching you,
Who feel themselves excluded from your love.
Live for them, we pray, as you died for them; and have mercy on us
Who go in danger of thinking ourselves good,
When you have taught us who alone is good, and shown us,
By your living and your dying, how we may honour Him.
We pray in your name. Amen

Hymn Verse 1, Singing the Faith 287 / Hymns & Psalms 180, Isaac Watts

When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

SATURDAY 11TH APRIL 2020 – HOLY SATURDAY.

On this day, as Jesus lay, dead, in the tomb, the disciples remained scattered in fear, and the women watched, and waited, for they knew not what ...

Scripture reading: Matthew 27: 57–61

Prayer

Living God, we are come, with Joseph and the Marys,
To the place of death and despair.
With them, we have seen the awful power of hatred, fear and greed,
Having its way with frail flesh and that once so fragrant hope.

With them, we have felt the shock of iron on bone, of state power on
puny mortals,
Of religious righteousness on the faint freedom of faith.

With them we have heard that well-loved voice go silent,
Seen that deeply desired face fall vacant,
The eyes grow dim, the flesh turn cold.

Death has had its way with all that they, and we, held most dear;
And we have felt the first fear,
The beginnings of the awful loneliness, the emptiness
Where fullness once was, ought still to be.

Dear God, you know that we have been here before.
Been here, not just with Joseph and the Marys,
But on our own, watching a loved one die; or with friends and
family,
Paying our last respects at the door of death to one who has gone
through ahead of us all.
We are not strangers to death,
We know its ways.

Dear God, help us, now as before, to hold our hand from any final action;
To hold our breath from any final word.
Teach us, once again, the truth of our creatureliness:
That we are not the masters of our fate; we are not the captains of our souls.

Keep us open to the possibilities of God throughout this watchful night;
And in the face of every dying
With which our lives are filled from our first cry to our final breath,
Help us to know that the final word lies with you,
And that that word is a resounding YES.
We ask this in the name of this same dead Jesus
In whom all the possibilities of God wait their time. Amen

There is no Hymn for today – we rest in silence as we consider what the events of this week means to us as individuals, as a community, and the world.

This material taken from "Prayers for Holy Week" by John Harvey. Published by Wild Goose Publications.

©Wild Goose Publications. Used with permission (www.ionabooks.com)

Hymns are from Singing the Faith and Hymns & Psalms