

## Easter Sunday (John 20: 1-9)

Life is about to change dramatically for Jesus' disciples.  
They are going to be witnesses to an event that will change the world for ever.  
Despite everything that Jesus has said and done,  
they are not prepared for just what this empty tomb  
and grave-clothes laid aside means.  
So, the disciples hear the news—but only two of them run back to the tomb.  
Peter and John go together—  
and can assure each other of the reality of what they saw.  
Mary remains—  
waiting  
and watching  
until she is joined by the Lord himself.

On this Easter day,  
spend some time imagining the scenes around the time of the resurrection...  
What was it like in the upper room where the disciples were hiding—  
and the difference between before and after Peter and John's visit to the tomb?  
And in the garden as people came and went until Mary was alone...  
Record any insights in your journal—  
especially anything that seems to resonate with your own life experience.



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# Journeying Together

## HOLY WEEK



**Accompanying Jesus  
in the last days of his earthly life**

During this Holy Week,  
we accompany Jesus during the last days of his earthly life.

We are obviously doing this spiritually  
but will look at those who were able to do this physically  
and reflect on what they can teach us about being alongside someone —  
particularly someone going through difficult times.

Start by **lighting a candle**.

**Read the Gospel** for the Day (the reference is given)

Spend a (few moments) **thinking about the place** it would have happened—  
build up the scene as well as you can.

Imagine the people—what they are wearing, perhaps;  
what their expressions are.

(Then, **imagine the gospel account unfolding** before your eyes—and ears  
(and, sometimes, touch or taste or smell).

**Allow the place, the people and the gospel to speak to your mind and heart.**

Don't look for major revelations or grand words.

This is about joining Jesus and those who are accompanying him  
during that last fateful week.

Close with a **short prayer of thanksgiving** or a "Glory be..."

Record any insights—however small in your journal.

## Holy Saturday

Today is an empty day.

There are times like this in every life—  
when there is emptiness—barrenness—loss of hope.  
It can be tempting to run away from the situation  
but we often find that either we cannot—  
or it continues to haunt us.

Spend time today praying for the grace to face times like these—  
trusting that our emptiness  
can create space that God can fill.

You might like to look back over the journal you have kept during Lent  
and ponder anything that seems particularly significant to you today.

What difference has this Lent made to your faith life?

## Good Friday: Jerusalem (John 18: 1-19: 42)

The Gospel has many people with Jesus.  
The Stations of the Cross that many people pray today  
also remind us of others who were alongside Jesus.  
Some were heartless and cruel.  
Some were broken-hearted by what they saw and heard.  
Many would have gone about their business,  
uninterested in the fate of yet another criminal heading to Calvary.  
Choose one or two of the characters we know accompanied Jesus—  
who tried to help  
or who inflicted pain.  
Imagine a conversation with them -  
about how they were feeling during the course of events—  
and how they might have felt after the resurrection.  
Record any insights that deepen your own experience  
of the events we remember today.



## Palm Sunday: (Mark 11: 1-12 and Mark 14: 1-15, 47)

Jesus draws near to Jerusalem with his disciples  
and sends a couple of them along to someone who, it seems, is waiting with a colt.

Today is a very strange day for Jesus

He is still surrounded by his disciples  
and others coming up to Jerusalem for the Festival.

There is great enthusiasm and excitement around—at least at the beginning.

When we move into the Passion account, we see the crowds in a very different mood.

They range now from those who still passionately want to believe in Jesus—  
through the indifferent—  
to the downright hostile.

Spend a few minutes today reflecting on the two events—  
creating them as clearly as you can in your imagination.

Notice whether you seem to get involved  
or stay as an observer of the scenes unfolding before you.

How did Jesus avoid getting caught up in the wild excitement of Palm Sunday?

How did he deal with the viciousness of those who called for his death?

Where did Jesus' strength and resilience come from?

Who were the people who most helped Jesus?

What did they do or say that made a difference?

Dot or sketch any insights you gain from praying alongside Jesus.

## Monday of Holy Week: (John 12: 1-11)

Jesus leaves Jerusalem and joins his friends in Bethany.  
He is still with the disciples but we will focus on the three friends  
who have welcomed him into their home.

Perhaps they have listened to Jesus' fears about what is to come  
and responded in their different ways.

Lazarus—who joins Jesus at the table and chats and listens.

Martha—whose reaction is to prepare and serve food.

Mary—who offers a very precious and appropriate gift.

Reflect on the reactions of these great friends of Jesus.

Which is the one closest to the way you usually deal with family and friends facing pain or other difficulty in their lives?

Jot or sketch any insights you gain from praying alongside Jesus, Martha, Mary and Lazarus

### Tuesday of Holy Week: (John 13: 21-33, 36-38)

Jesus is with some of the closest friends he made on earth but the account of the meal they are sharing makes uncomfortable reading.

Jesus announces that one of those gathered at the table will betray him.

Understandably, everyone looks at everyone else and wonders which of them it will be.

Simon Peter—who surely knew Jesus very well is unable to ask Jesus directly who it is—asking John to do it on his behalf.

And then Jesus makes it clear—the one who takes the bread will be the one to betray him.

And he gives the bread to Judas...

Spend time imagining this difficult meal.

Perhaps it raises echoes of similar meals you have endured.

What is Jesus' expression as he gives the bread to Judas?

What is Judas' as he receives it?

Does Jesus stop loving Judas?

Record any thoughts from your prayer—especially anything that seems new or different from what you have previously thought or felt about this.

### Wednesday of Holy Week: (Matthew 26: 14-25)

Here is Matthew's account of the meal when Judas leaves to betray Jesus

In this version, Judas has already made the decision and approached the chief priests and been paid for his information.

Even knowing this, Jesus continues the preparations for the meal of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

He draws on the friendship of "so and so" - whose name we do not know but who provided the room.

He tells the disciples about the impending betrayal but it is clear that they are not really listening.

They are too eager to insist that Jesus assures them that it is not them: "Not I surely, Lord?"

Even Judas seems to be looking for reassurance that what he is doing is not betrayal.

Reflect today on those conversations.

Imagine yourself at the table—listening and watching.

What would you want to offer to the conversation?

What would you want to say or offer to Jesus?

Record your thoughts or insights—your feelings and the words or actions you would like to offer.

### Holy Thursday: (John 13: 1-15)

Jesus knows the weakness and frailty of every one of his disciples.

He knows the one who will deny him.

He knows the one who will betray him.

He knows the ones who will scatter and leave him to die almost alone.

He knows the ones who will go into hiding after his death.

He knows that they will have trouble believing in his resurrection.

And yet, he kneels at the feet of each one and washes them.

Spend time today with the disciples and Jesus watching and listening to the events as they unfold.

What effect does watching Jesus washing the disciples' feet—knowing what he knows about them—have on you?

How do his actions speak of the unconditional love of God?

Later this evening, you might join the Watching with the Lord in church.

Spend time reflecting on his agonised prayers in the Garden—his arrest—and the night of torture that lies ahead.

There is nothing you can say—or do to change the events, simply offer your presence as a sign of wishing to support the Lord in his suffering.

