

Holy Week Thursday



Beloved Friends – Above, our „Virtual Acolyte” Nick Johnson lights the way into the four days of contemplation, introspection, mourning and celebration we know as Holy Week. In Judaism this year, as it did at the end of Jesus’ life, the days of Passover are the same as those we now know as Passiontide and Eastertide. So there is an even deeper resonance with our spiritual roots. And because these sacred traditions coincide with the wrenching and frightening strangeness of the coronavirus pandemic we are experiencing, this moment is perhaps the most significant, ever to mark our common life. Which makes it all the more grievous that we can’t spend it together in body as well as in spirit. Nevertheless, our determination to allow ourselves to be formed and nourished by the Holy Spirit shall not be extinguished, nor even daunted by today’s challenges. Like Nick in the photo above, we are being called upon to offer up creative and simple ways to double down on compassion, connectedness and love. As one Rabbi reminds her congregation,

“It’s every generation’s responsibility to tell the story, so we can’t give up now. We should be telling it even stronger, with more intensity and more faith. During the pandemic, Passover’s theme of moving from a time of darkness to light offers a powerful message of hope and redemption, as

well as a reminder of the struggles overcome by previous generations. This story doesn't end in darkness; there will be another chapter, and we will live through this period to get there. The Passover holiday is all about God's presence in the world. The message is God's hand in our lives. The important thing, is to learn from the experience, by reflecting on relationships, especially with family members. It is a wasted opportunity and a wasted moment in time if we don't allow ourselves to take this forced exodus and grow from it."

For a Maundy Thursday observance, I encourage you to take the recipe from Tuesday's *Pebble* and indulge yourself and/or those with whom you live in a soothing foot bath. Alternatively, as you care for yourself, take a moment or two to be mindful of the gift of life, and thankful for the body in which you have been privileged to live it. We are so used to speeding through our ablutions and criticizing or bemoaning our flaws, aches and pains, a little gratitude and compassion for ourselves is sorely needed.

Prayers for Maundy Thursday

Begin by lighting a candle.

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom should I live in dread?

When those who do evil draw near to devour my flesh,

It is they, my enemies and foes, who will stumble and fall.

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, only this do I seek:

To live in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life,

I will sing and make music for the Lord. O Lord, hear my voice when I call.

It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.

You will not abandon or forsake me, O God, my strength and my savior!

I believe I shall see the Lord's goodness, here in the land of the living.

So I say, "Wait for the Lord; be strong; be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord!"

Prayers for Maundy Thursday

In the name of God, the Creator, the Redeemer, the Spirit. We are gathered in God's name. In different places, but at the same time. To remember Jesus' last meal with his disciples, to meet God, and to pray together: for the weak, for the strong, for ourselves and for others.

Holy One, we stand before your face.

We ask your strength for the people who need you especially now.

We pray for the sick, (especially those we remember by name).

We pray for everyone who cares for the sick: for doctors, nurses, rescue workers and medical assistants, for those who never tire of caring for others. We pray for everyone who works now to ensure our care and safety.

We pray to you for loved ones with whom our thoughts now rest:

And we pray for ourselves: Take our worries and our fear. Give us courage, imagination and confidence.

Help us find ways to offer help. Give us your spirit so that we will not feel helpless, but know we are held by you.

We pray that panic does not seize us, but rather level-headedness, calm and reassurance. Because you watch over us and remain by our side; in that we trust.

Our Creator, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

And so God blesses us.
With the love of a mother.
With the wonder of a child
And with the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Ladysmith Black Mambazo - King Of Kings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9go7LF84Vk>

The Triduum



Christ Washing the Feet of the Apostles by Meister des Hausbuches, 1475

The Paschal Triduum is the period of three days that begins with the liturgy on the evening of Maundy Thursday, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes on the evening of Easter Sunday. It recalls the Passion, Crucifixion, Death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus, as portrayed in the canonical Gospels. Known as “the still days,” this time is set aside in the Christian year for silence, prayer and heightened recollection of the meaning of Jesus. All are encouraged to set aside the things and voices of the world and find more awareness of deeper things. One suggestion is to set aside one of these evenings for time without electronics or media to just be with God.

O Lord, Hear My Prayer

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer;
When I call an - swer me, O Lord, hear my prayer, O
Lord, hear my prayer; Come and lis - ten to me, O

Good Friday

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew, continued...

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?" They answered, "He deserves death." Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, saying, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?"

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!"

So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and

put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.

And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way. From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. Now when the centurion and those with him, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!" Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

Let us pray,

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world

see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Hymn 168

O sacred head, sore wounded, defiled and put to scorn;
O kingly head, surrounded with mocking crown of thorn:
What sorrow mars thy grandeur? Can death thy bloom deflower?
O countenance whose splendour, the hosts of heaven adore!

Thy beauty, long-desired, hath vanished from our sight;
thy power is all expired, and quenched the light of light.
Ah me! for whom thou diest, hide not so far thy grace:
show me, O Love most highest, the brightness of thy face.

In thy most bitter passion my heart to share doth cry,
with thee for my salvation upon the cross to die.
Ah, keep my heart thus moved to stand thy cross beneath,
to mourn thee, well-beloved, yet thank thee for thy death.

What language shall I borrow to thank thee, dearest friend,
for this thy dying sorrow, thy pity without end?
Oh, make me thine for ever! and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never, outlive my love for thee.

My days are few, O fail not, with thine immortal power,
to hold me that I quail not in death's most fearful hour;
that I may fight befriended, and see in my last strife
to me thine arms extended upon the cross of life.

Let us pray,

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we walk the Stations of the Cross with Jesus at our side. [View this special video from St. Andrew's Saratoga](#), with contributions from El Camino Real clergy.