

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday—*The Cross Is Before Us*

Isaiah 50:4–7; Philippians 2:6–11; Luke 22:14–23:56

The cross is before us now with its wordless challenge to love beyond death. Take some time this week to think about events in your own life that have given you an experience of Jesus's command to pick up your cross and follow him.

Monday—*True Concern for the Poor*

Isaiah 42:1–7; John 12:1–11

Judas's question in today's Gospel can generate nearly endless debate about the role of almsgiving and charity in the Christian life. Judas, the keeper of the communal purse, can never see beyond the question of finances. For Jesus, the answer is always love.

Tuesday—*Love of Money*

Isaiah 49:1–6; John 13:21–33, 36–38

Jesus knows that he will be betrayed and he knows who his betrayer is. Yesterday, we heard Judas challenge him over the jar of ointment used to anoint him. Today, Jesus tells Judas to go about his errand. The other disciples assumed he was going to purchase something for the feast. Money is a necessary part of our lives. The Gospels remind us to keep it in its place.

Wednesday—*Betrayal*

Isaiah 50:4–9a; Matthew 26:14–25

Each of the Twelve questioned Jesus's prediction of betrayal: "Surely it is not I, Lord?" Each one may have suspected that he might be capable of it, that his faith wasn't as strong as it might be. Do we always end up betraying Jesus at some point? We are all sinners. We all need salvation, again

and again and again. And so we come to the paschal mystery, the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Holy Thursday—*As I Have Done*

Exodus 12:1–8, 11–14; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; John 13:1–5

Perhaps no action by Pope Francis has generated as much astonishment in the press as his washing the feet of prisoners—men, women, Christian, Muslim. A ritual that has, at times, become an honor for the elite once again returns to what Jesus intended: As I have done, so you must do.

Good Friday—*By Your Holy Cross*

Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Hebrews 4:14–16; 5:7–9; John 18:1–19:42

The Passion According to St. John is always read on Good Friday. It gives us a perspective on the death of Jesus that reminds us that it wasn't simply a tragic occurrence in the life of a good man. It was the culmination of the earthly ministry of the Son of God, his hour of glorification, that moment when heaven and earth are joined and the life of Christ became the ongoing life of the Church.

Holy Saturday—*This Is the Night*

Genesis 1:1–2:2; Exodus 14:15–15:1 Romans 6:3–11; Luke 24:1–12

The Easter Vigil may be the grandest experience of liturgy in the Catholic Church. Through readings and chant, psalms and hymns, we relive the entire story of God's covenant with us, from the story of creation through the Exodus of the Hebrew people, to the resurrection of Jesus and into our own lives. During the Easter season, pay attention to the way God's plan is unfolding for you.

EASTER SUNDAY

Easter Sunday—*The Empty Tomb*

Acts 10:34a, 37–43; Colossians 3:1–4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6b–8; John 20:1–9

At the heart of the Easter story is the empty tomb. The stories of the appearances will come later, unfolding the mystery of the resurrection. But the first message to the apostles is that the tomb is empty. Somewhere in the darkness of our Easter Vigil, each of us must confront the empty tomb and discover for ourselves the Risen Christ.

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