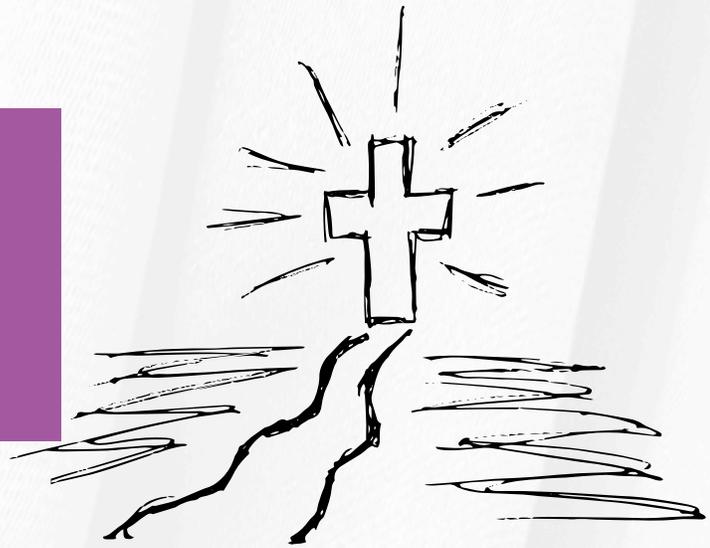


JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Daily Lenten Scriptures and Prayers
March 15-21



SUNDAY, MARCH 15, JOHN 18:33-40

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?' Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.' Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.' Pilate asked him, 'What is truth?'

QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What questions do you want to ask Jesus?

PRAYER

The questions Pilate asks are antagonistic. They are not meant to be fair. They are intended to get some sort of rise out of Jesus. If Jesus were before me, they are not the questions I would ask. But I would still have questions. *What is there beyond this life? Why don't you come and fix it all? Do you really have a plan for all of this?* I'm not sure that my questions are fair either. But I know that they are true, O God. And I know that sometimes they keep me up at night. And I know that Jesus can handle them. Amen.

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

MONDAY, MARCH 15, JOHN 15:8-11

My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

Where does your heart abide?

PRAYER

Often, I find that a hymn has already said it better than I ever will. "Abide with me: fast falls the eventide. The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide! When other helpers fail and comforts flee, help of the helpless, O abide with me." Remind us, O God, that abiding is a two-way street. As much as we long for you to abide with us, you long for us to abide with you. No one abides alone. Is that even possible? And as much as we rejoice when you choose to dwell with us, you also rejoice when we choose to dwell within you and your commandments. Help us to choose to stay with you. Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 17, JOHN 15:12-17

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

How does it feel to be chosen by Christ?

PRAYER

Equals? With Christ?! Hard to believe that they had earned that. Especially since one was about to betray him, another about to deny him, and the rest were preparing themselves to hide their little lights in a room for a few days. Still, Jesus says they are servants no longer, but friends. Some friends. It is a role they will have to grow into. It is a calling they will have to learn by moving two steps forward and one step back each and every day. This is the way of it for those who desire to be Christ's friend, to be the ones who bear good fruit in the world. None of us is worthy of it. None of us can earn it. Each of us will have to learn to love others with the love we have received by moving two steps forward and one step back each and every day. Amen.

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, JOHN 15: 18-21

'If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, "Servants are not greater than their master." If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.

QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

Where do you find yourself at odds with the forces of the world?

PRAYER

Jesus was always clear: following him puts you at odds with the world around you. Economies don't tend to run on loving one another. Militaries aren't built on forgiveness. You don't gain power by giving it away. And the goal of life is to get ahead. It is not to spend your life in service to others. God, I'm not sure that the world hates us, but it does seem pretty indifferent to us. It ignores our calls for peace among the nations. It disregards our pleading for food for every stomach. It steps right around our insistence that our priority should be to care for the vulnerable among us. In the midst of such passive and active resistance, help us to carry on, to continue to follow Jesus' commands and bear as much good fruit as we can. Amen.

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, JOHN 15: 22-27

If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not have sin. But now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. It was to fulfill the word that is written in their law, “They hated me without a cause.”

‘When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.’

QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What work of Jesus stands out in your mind?

PRAYER

We, too, O God, have seen all the things that Jesus has done. He helped a family avoid shame at the wedding in Cana. He sat with an outcast at the well in Samaria. He turned over tables, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and revived the dead. He lowered himself to wash feet and soon will lower himself even more by taking on the cross. And through it all, he has proclaimed that your love knows no bounds, that our lives must be shaped and formed in response to your unending and redeeming love. We, too, have no excuse. We have seen the works and acts of Jesus. Help us to believe. Amen.

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, JOHN 16: 1-4A

'I have said these things to you to keep you from stumbling. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God. And they will do this because they have not known the Father or me. But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you about them.

QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

Over what are you tripping?

PRAYER

We will not face the same challenges that the disciples faced. Due to our belief in Jesus, we will not be exorcised from our communities. We will not face trial. No one will threaten our lives. But we are no less at risk of stumbling in our attempts to follow Jesus. Only our stumbling will be caused by our refusal to forgive. We'll trip over our tendency towards greed. We'll lose our footing not because we were threatened but because we got distracted by envy or impatience or simple apathy. The disciples faced outside threats to their faith, but the biggest challenge to our own faith is often ourselves. Help us, O God, so that we don't end up putting ourselves out of the synagogue. Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, JOHN 16: 4B-7

'I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, "Where are you going?" But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What fills you with sorrow? In what is God asking you to trust?

PRAYER

A quick refresher of the things Jesus has just said to them: 1. Wash one another's feet. 2. Love one another as I have loved you. 3. Keep my commandments, and you will abide with God. 4. Keep my commandments, and you will draw the ire and rebuke of the world. 5. There is even a good chance that they will kill you. 6. I'm leaving. Which, 7 is good for you, actually. That is a lot to take in. The season of Lent is a lot. As we study Jesus closely, we become intimately aware of his presence; we hang on every word and action. We rarely feel closer to him, which means that we feel the sorrow of his absence and the tragedy of his death all the more keenly. It is a season of mixed emotions filled with tender acts of love and brutal depictions of betrayal and disappointment. It is, in many ways, a reflection of our own lives, which are also filled with moments of faithfulness and of wandering. In the midst of all of this, O God, help us to cling to you and to your promises of mercy, forgiveness, and love. Help us to embrace the moments of tenderness and let them be enough to carry us through all the times of sorrow. Amen.

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Holy Week 2026

3/29 Palm Sunday

Contemplative Service: 8:30 a.m. in Chapel
Traditional Service: 10:30 a.m. in Sanctuary
with kids and youth choir and bells at 10:30 a.m. service

4/2 Maundy Thursday

6 p.m. Table Fellowship & Service in Memorial Room

4/3 Good Friday

7 p.m. Service in Sanctuary

Good Friday - Easter morning

Easter Prayer Vigil in Chapel

4/5 Easter Sunday

8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Services in Sanctuary
with Cathedral Brass, Chancel Choir, and Chancel Bells at both services

