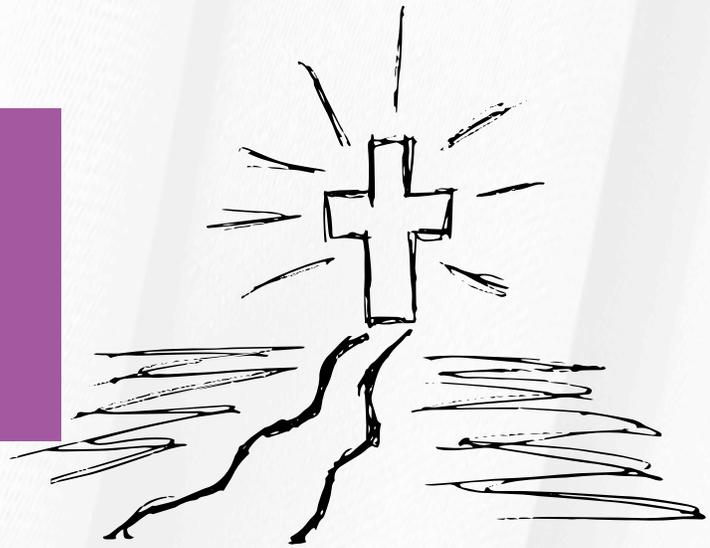


# JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Daily Lenten Scriptures and Prayers  
March 22-28



## SUNDAY, MARCH 22, JOHN 19:1-16

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.' So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.' The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law, he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.'

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?' But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, 'Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and power to crucify you?' Jesus answered him, 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.' From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, 'If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.'

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, 'Here is your King!' They cried out, 'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!' Pilate asked them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but the emperor.' Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

# JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

## QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

Which of these words would you shudder to hear yourself say?

## PRAYER

We have to ask ourselves, O God, 'Who are we in this story?' And we are probably not Jesus. That doesn't leave us a lot of great other options. Are we Pilate, flogging the innocent and abdicating our responsibility to do what is right? Are we the religious leaders, unwilling to hear the truth and shouting out for the death of others? Are we the ones who abandon our principles in the name of safety, security, and comfort? In this season of confession, help us to be honest, O God, about who we are and what we are up to. Amen.

## MONDAY, MARCH 23, JOHN 16:8-12

And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.'

## QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What else do you think God would say the world is wrong about?

## PRAYER

Jesus is speaking here about the Spirit of Truth, the Advocate whom you sent, O God, following Jesus' ascension. Thank you, O God, for the gifts you give us to discern your ultimate Truths from the partial truths and outright lies we are so often asked to believe. Thank you for the gift of scripture that shows us your principles. Thank you for the faith and actions of those who came before us who have passed your Truth on to us. We thank you for our own reason and intellect, which help us identify the right and the wrong. Keep us, O God, in your wisdom so that we may continue to grow in you. Amen.

## TUESDAY, MARCH 24, JOHN 16:13-16

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason, I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me.'

## QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What things of Jesus are still being declared? What things of Jesus need to be declared?

## PRAYER

Through the mystery of faith, O God, we continue to be entwined with Jesus. Through the blessing of the Holy Spirit, the words that Jesus spoke continue to enliven our hearts and bring meaning and purpose to our lives. We rejoice to know that the things of Jesus have not been forgotten and that his message of love and service to others has not been allowed to fall silent. It has been declared from generation to generation. May we, O God, continue the declaration of the things of Jesus. May the words, "Love your God and love your neighbor," never cease to come forth from our lips and our lives. Amen.

# JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, JOHN 16: 17-22

Then some of his disciples said to one another, ‘What does he mean by saying to us, “A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me” and “Because I am going to the Father”?’ They said, ‘What does he mean by this “a little while”? We do not know what he is talking about.’ Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, ‘Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, “A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me”? Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labor, she has pain because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.’

## QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What pain has God turned into joy? What defeat has God changed into celebration?

## PRAYER

God, you do not promise a life free of heartbreak, disappointment, or tragedy. You promise that such pain will not last. You assure your followers that your joy runs deeper than any pain, that your peace overwhelms our chaos, and that your love is bigger than our bitterness. The disciples, in a few short hours, would know that their friend and teacher had been killed. They would fear that all of their hopes and dreams had died with them. We offer our praise that Jesus returned to them to carry them through. Remind us, as well, that in our darkness there is always your light. Amen.

# JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

## THURSDAY, MARCH 26, JOHN 16: 23-28

On that day, you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now, you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask, and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

'I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will tell you plainly of the Father. On that day, you will ask in my name. I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father.'

## QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

Slow down, breathe, and think deeply; what does it mean that God loves you?

## PRAYER

Ultimately, Jesus returns to his source. He draws himself back to you, O God. We began this season with ashes on our foreheads, having heard the words, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." We, too, will return to our source. Creatures of clay, our bodies will go back to where they came from. Our sinews, our bones, muscles, and organs will all return to the ground. But our breath, O God, our breath comes from you. It is you who animate us. It is you who makes us come alive. Through your breath, you have made us your children. And even though our bodies will return to the ground, our spirits will be drawn back to you, the true source of our being. Amen.

# JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

## FRIDAY, MARCH 27, JOHN 16: 29-33

His disciples said, 'Yes, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure of speech! Now we know that you know all things and do not need to have anyone question you; by this, we believe that you came from God.' Jesus answered them, 'Do you now believe? The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. I have said this to you so that in me you may have peace. In the world, you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!'

## QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What sorts of things continue to scatter Jesus' disciples?

## PRAYER

I am reminded, somehow, of the end of worship. A blessing is offered. Voices are raised in unison one last time and then... the disciples scatter, each to their home, each back out into the world. When we gather together, we know very well the presence and heart of Christ, and we hope to hold on to that, to live by, until we are drawn back together once more. Of course, O God, we know we are never truly on our own, but we often feel ourselves separated from your presence and from the spirit of Christ. As we continue to move toward the cross, help us to hold on to your presence no matter how we may be scattered. Amen.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 28, JOHN 17: 6-9

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me, I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours.

## QUESTIONS FOR DAILY REFLECTION

What, do you suppose, is Jesus asking on their behalf? What would you like for Jesus to ask on your behalf?

## PRAYER

"And they have kept your word." Well, we have tried, at least. We have, O God, done our best (most of the time) to keep your word and to tend to your commandments. We have tried to be honest, to be faithful, to put our trust in you alone. We have tried to honor our neighbors and our strangers. We have striven to live in right relationship with all that is around us. We do, indeed, know that Jesus came from you. We do trust that he spoke and lived and was your Word. We have not done so perfectly, but we will try to keep to the Word you offered us. 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

