

Douglas Union with Frankfield

Biblical Byways

The Path to the Cross



A Daily Lent Course

Written by Archdeacon Adrian Wilkinson

Holy Week and Easter

Since the beginning of Lent, we have been reading some of the less familiar parts of the Bible and exploring some of the less prominent women who feature in scripture. Now inevitably the focus must change as we enter Holy Week. The biblical passages for this week are being read by all Christians across the globe who see Holy Week as the most important period in the church calendar. They, along with the Nativity passages, are among the most familiar readings we encounter.

I hope you will take time to read them, and also if possible, join us for the services online. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we are meeting on Zoom for services of Morning Prayer at 11.00am. At these the Revd Hazel Minion will provide a short reflection on these passages, so I have not written one here.

On Maundy Thursday the focus is as always on the Last Supper and the command Jesus gave to all his disciples, including us, to 'love one another as I have loved you.' A recorded service of Holy Communion will be available on the parish YouTube Channel that day. It is one of the most moving services of the year and I hope you will make it a priority to join us if you can.

On Good Friday, a service of readings, music, meditations, imagery, and prayers will be available on the Parish YouTube Channel from midday. Traditionally the hours between noon and 3pm on Good Friday are particularly sacrosanct as it is the time when we recall Jesus' last hours on the cross. Also, on Good Friday at 8pm I will read the service of Compline from the Rectory. It is a very special evening service in traditional language and is particularly appropriate for Good Friday. You can join me on Zoom for this service and I will share the text of it on screen for you to follow so you don't have to worry about not having a Book of Common Prayer at home. The Zoom link will be sent to all parishioners on my email list earlier that day for your convenience.

Looking ahead to Easter morning, unfortunately our churches will remain closed under the Level 5 restrictions. However, a recorded service full of joy and resurrection hope will be available on the Parish YouTube Channel for you to watch. The fact that we cannot meet again this year in person for worship in Holy Week and on Easter morning is a great privation. I for one will miss not seeing those devoted parishioners who attend services at this most important time of the year. However, I am reminded of a phrase I heard recently where someone described the church in these times of COVID-19 restrictions as 'a community divided but not undimmed'. I hope that has been your experience to date and will be as we look forward to Easter and beyond. *Adrian Wilkinson*

Day 40 – Sunday 28th March

Collect – 6th Sunday in Lent (Palm Sunday)

Almighty and everlasting God,
who, in your tender love towards the human race,
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
Grant that we may follow the example
of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Psalm 31:9-16

Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am in trouble;
my eye is consumed with sorrow,
my soul and my body also.

For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing;
my strength fails me because of my affliction,
and my bones are consumed.

I have become a reproach to all my enemies
and even to my neighbours,
an object of dread to my acquaintances;
when they see me in the street they flee from me.

I am forgotten like one that is dead, out of mind;
I have become like a broken vessel.

For I have heard the whispering of the crowd;
fear is on every side;
they scheme together against me, and plot to take my life.

But my trust is in you, O Lord.
I have said, 'You are my God.

'My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.

'Make your face to shine upon your servant,
and save me for your mercy's sake.'

Mark 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!" Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.



Holy Week

Day 41 – Monday 29th March

Collect – Monday in Holy Week

Almighty God,
whose most dear Son went not up to joy,
but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:
Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of his cross,
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

John 12:1-11

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.



Day 42 – Tuesday 30th March

Collect – Tuesday in Holy Week

O God,
who by the passion of your blessed Son made
an instrument of shameful death
to be for us the means of life:
Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ,
that we may gladly suffer pain and loss
for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

John 12:20-36

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light."

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

Day 43 – Wednesday 31st March

Collect – Wednesday in Holy Week

Lord God,
whose blessed Son our Saviour
gave his back to the smiters,
and did not hide his face from shame:
Give us grace to endure the sufferings
of this present time,
with sure confidence in the glory that shall be revealed;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

John 13:21-32

After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.



Day 44 – Thursday 1st April

Collect – Maundy Thursday

Almighty God,
at the Last Supper your Son Jesus Christ
washed the disciples' feet
and commanded them to love one another.
Give us humility and obedience to be servants of others
as he was the servant of all;
who gave up his life and died for us,
yet is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

John 13:1-17, 31b – 35

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in

him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."



Day 45 – Friday 2nd April

Collect – Good Friday

Almighty Father,
Look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ
was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

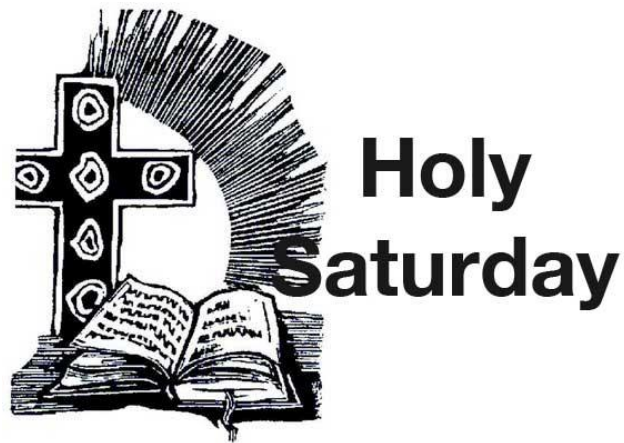
John 18:1 – 19 – 42 can be read during the day. Please read your own Bible.

John 19:38-42 in the evening.

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.



Day 46 – Saturday 3rd April



Collect – Easter Eve

Grant, Lord,
that we who are baptized into the death
of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
may continually put to death our evil desires
and be buried with him;
and that through the grave and gate of death
we may pass to our joyful resurrection;
through his merits, who died and was buried
and rose again for us,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Matthew 27: 57-66

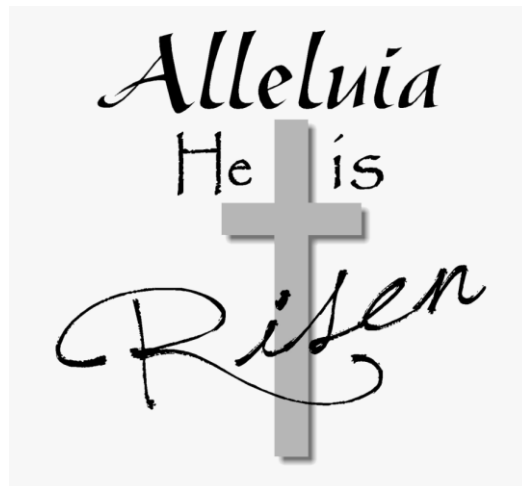
When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which 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.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

Day 47 – Sunday 4th April

Collect – Easter Day

Almighty God,
through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
you have overcome death
and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
Grant that, as by your grace going before us
you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.



Mark 16:1-8

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.