

# PALM SUNDAY

## HOLY WEEK



### Daily Offering

**An offering with ‘the owner of a colt’ (Mark 11: 1-10):** Sometimes I can’t understand why I have to give up this thing or that thing that I value, but Lord, if you need it for your service or someone else’s, then it’s yours - and so am I. I know you give me your very self in return. Amen.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

### Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY’S SCRIPTURE

### Luke 19: 28-40

**W**hen he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, “Why are you untying it?” just say this: “The Lord needs it.”’ So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, ‘Why are you untying the colt?’ They said, ‘The Lord needs it.’ Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, ‘Blessed is the king

who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven,

and glory in the highest heaven!’

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, order your disciples to stop.’ He answered, ‘I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.’





*Flevit super illam*  
 'He wept over it [Jerusalem]'  
 by  
 Enrique Simonet

## Image for the Day

How do you feel about this picture?

Can you imagine being there with Jesus, as he is about to enter Jerusalem?

How do you think the disciples felt?

## Food for Thought

Today, with the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, after the long journey up from Galilee through Samaria, we enter the solemn drama of Holy Week, the climax of the Church's year, as we move towards our greatest feast of Easter. He comes from the East, where the Messiah is supposed to appear; and he comes, not to the Temple but to the Mount of Olives, which in Luke's gospel functions as a kind of counterpoint with the Temple. Then, rather daring, and in accordance with a preordained code ("say, 'the Lord has need of it.'"), he mounts "a foal on which no one has yet ridden", which might have been expected to throw him off, but does nothing of the kind. Then there is a crowd, singing from Psalm 117, and repeating what the angels sang to the Christmas shepherds ("on earth peace, and glory in the highest") back at the beginning of the gospel.

## Suggestions for Prayer

One thing you might do is to watch the various characters who appear. There is, firstly, Jesus himself, effortlessly leading the way up to Jerusalem, giving coded instructions to his disciples, sitting on an untamed animal, greeted in Old Testament terms as "Blessed is the Coming One, the King in the Lord's name". Then, when his opponents rebuke him for the noise the crowds of disciples are making, he makes the opaque judgement that "if these shut up, the stones will cry out". Finally, the very next thing that Jesus does, which is not in our gospel, but is very much part of the story, is weep over Jerusalem for its failure to recognise "the things that lead to peace". The stones are, of course, the stones of the Temple, which will soon be destroyed...

Secondly, there are the disciples, who are not up to much beyond collecting the animal and repeating their instructions; but once the procession starts they put their garments on the beast of burden and on the road ahead of Jesus. They are in a position to rejoice as Jesus goes down from the Mount of Olives, and praise God "at the top of their voices about all the miracles they had seen". But how bright do you think they are?

Thirdly, there are the owners of the foal, who interrogate the disciples about what they are doing, and when they hear the message they let the animal go. What is their part in the story?

Finally, in the crowd there are some of Jesus' opponents, "some of the Pharisees", who want Jesus' disciples shut up. They will of course get their way next Friday. How do they feature in your prayer?

## How are you going to respond today?

One thing you might do, as you contemplate the list of characters, is to decide now, once and for all, which side you are on. There are the apostles, gallantly making the effort to cope, but shortly to abandon Jesus when things get tough; then there are the crowds, today shouting their joy, but a few days later baying for blood. There are the foal's owners: how do they look to you? Finally, there are Jesus' opponents. Do they win the battle, do you think? And what about you today?

## Examen (review of prayer)

Use any style of examen you prefer to review your prayer and your day.

# MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK



## Daily Offering

**An offering with Mary of Bethany (John 12: 1-11):** Lord, I was keeping this for a special occasion. I now offer it to you. Others may think I'm being overgenerous or foolish, but so long as you understand, I'm content. Amen.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

## Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

### 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.





There is a Praying with Art Video featuring this painting:

[pathwaystogod.org/praying-art](http://pathwaystogod.org/praying-art)

## Pathways TO GOD

### Image for the Day

How do you feel about this picture?

How do you feel about this act of humility and service?

How do you think that Jesus felt?

### Food for Thought

In today's gospel, we go deeper into the drama of Holy Week. We are actually given a date: 'six days before the Passover'; this is the third Passover in the Fourth Gospel, and there is a mounting sense of menace. Today's reading brings together several important characters: Lazarus, whom Jesus loved, and had raised from the dead; his sister Mary, also beloved by Jesus; Judas Iscariot, whom presumably Jesus also loved, but who was about to betray him, 'a great crowd of the Judeans', and, finally, the Chief Priests who have decided to kill not only Jesus but also Lazarus.

### Suggestions for Prayer

You might simply opt to 'be there', and gaze contemplatively at the scene, through the eyes of the characters involved. The heart of the story is an anointing; the setting is a dinner-party, apparently given to thank Jesus for having raised Lazarus. Lazarus himself is simply lounging about with the rest of the guests. Then there is his sister, Martha, who by contrast is 'serving' at the dinner-party.

The next character is Mariam, the other sister. What kind of person do you imagine her to be? You might observe the intimacy and the generosity of what she does: "a litre of myrrh, nard, the real thing, very precious" is generous; and for intimacy what do you think of her anointing Jesus' feet and wiping them with her hair? Then you might exercise your nose: "the house was filled with the scent of the myrrh". Does this say anything to you?

Then there is Judas Iscariot's angry response: "why was the myrrh not sold and given to the poor?", and the evangelist's sour comment that this was "because he was a thief".

Next the crowd, who "came not for Jesus alone, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead" (they were spiritual tourists, you see).

But the story begins and ends with Jesus; at the beginning he comes to Bethany (a safe place, as opposed to the threat posed by Jerusalem); at the end 'many Judeans came to faith in him'. In the middle he rebukes Judas for his hostility: "leave her alone, for her to keep it for the day of my burial".

As you pray, consider this question: which character(s) do you identify with in this story? Which would you like to identify with? What difference might that make to the way you live today?

### How are you going to respond today?

Think of a way in which you can show care and attention to another person like Mary did with Jesus.

### Examen (review of prayer)

Use any style of examen you prefer to review your prayer, or your day.

# TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK



## Daily Offering

**An offering with Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57-60):** Lord, I know I've been envied for my wealth, and I did wonder was I providing for myself too well, but I sense that these coming days will need me to be courageous and generous. May all I am and all I have be ready at your service. Amen.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

## Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

### John 13:21-33, 36-38

**A**fter 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. 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."'

Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, where are you going?' Jesus answered, 'Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterwards.' Peter said to him, 'Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.' Jesus answered, 'Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times.'





## Image for the Day

How do you feel about this picture?  
Can you imagine being there with Jesus?  
How do you think the disciples felt?

## Food for Thought

In today's gospel, we find ourselves at the Last Supper, the dramatic setting of some of Jesus' most powerful teaching in John's Gospel. It comes immediately after he has performed the extraordinary gesture of washing the feet of the disciples, and has explained his actions to them. Then, remarkably, we hear that "Jesus was disturbed in the Spirit". What is the source of the disturbance? It is that "one of you is going to betray me", an almost unimaginable outcome to such a meal!

## Suggestions for Prayer

Find yourself present in the room with them, and look around at the others, "puzzled as to who he was talking about". Then watch the signal between Simon Peter and the "Beloved Disciple", for the one who was "lying on Jesus' bosom, to find out who he was talking about". Listen to Jesus' answer, and see if you are as baffled as they obviously were, even when Jesus gives "Judas son of Simon Iscariot a morsel". Then there is the interchange with Judas: "what you are doing, do it quickly", and the evangelist's dark comment on Judas' exit: "taking the morsel that one went out immediately. And it was night".

But there is something else going on here: Jesus, apparently commenting on Judas' departure, five times refers to it as "glory", for the Son of Man and for God. As you pray, ask what is meant by that: how can it possibly be so?

And there is more, for Simon Peter is now sulking, "Lord – where are you going?" And when he is told "you can't come with me, he stamps his foot and asks, petulantly, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I'm going to lay down my life for you!" Then listen to Jesus' response: is it humorous or sad? "You're going to lay down your life for me, are you? Amen, amen I'm telling you: the cock is not going to crow until you deny me three times".

## How are you going to respond today?

Now ask: which character in this story am I most like? Have I betrayed others or been betrayed? Do I deny others in my life? How can I better follow Christ today?

## Examen (review of prayer)

At the end of your prayer or your day, whatever works for you, you can look back and ask:  
Does it have something to say to you?

How does it make you feel? Imagine how God might reply.

Conversation: When you come towards the end of your time of prayer, talk to God about what has come up for you.

End with a formal prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer/Our Father.

# WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK



## Daily Offering

**An offering with ‘So-and-so in the city’ (Matthew 26: 14-25).** Yes, Lord, I was expecting you but sometimes your timing takes me by surprise, or when you come I don’t recognise you. I’d like to be always at your disposal: prepare my heart. Amen.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

## Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY’S SCRIPTURE

### Matthew 26:14-25

**T**hen one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What will you give me if I betray him to you?’ They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?’ He said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, “The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.”’ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, ‘Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.’ And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, ‘Surely not I, Lord?’ He answered, ‘The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.’ Judas, who betrayed him, said, ‘Surely not I, Rabbi?’ He replied, ‘You have said so.’





## Image for the Day

What do you see in the picture?

Can you imagine what it was like for the disciples?

Imagine the scene.

## Food for Thought

Today is sometimes called “Spy Wednesday”, when Judas is thought to have offered to betray Jesus. Only in Matthew’s account does it mention that he actually asked for money; and the alert reader will notice that what he gets is the contemptible price, “thirty silver coins”, offered to the prophet Zechariah (Zechariah 11:12).

## Suggestions for Prayer

How are we to pray this grim moment? First, you might try and drink in the atmosphere that Matthew creates, “then comes one of the Twelve, the one known as ‘Judas Iscariot’, to the High Priests, and said, ‘What are you willing to give me? Then I’ll betray him to you.’” Then the evangelist comments “from that moment, he started to look for a window of opportunity to betray him”. You cannot get grimmer than that.

But it gets worse; rather belatedly, the “disciples” wake up to the fact that they should have done something about organising eating the Passover, and they are given a coded signal: “The Teacher says: my moment is at hand. I’m doing Passover at your place with my disciples”. You might be there with those disciples as they scratch their heads and wonder what they have got wrong.

Then the Passover meal, the moment of greatest joy in the Jewish year, turns sour as Jesus, “lying down with the Twelve” predicts that “one of you is going to betray me”, and in turn they ask, “It’s not me, is it, Lord?”; while last of all Judas calls him “Rabbi” (a title which has already been forbidden to Jesus’ followers, and which he will use again when he leads the arresting party), while asking “It’s not me, is it?” You might reflect on the mood created by Jesus’ response: “you said it”.

## How are you going to respond today?

How will you live through today? Feel the mood of this reading, and allow the Lord to speak to you through it. Reach out in prayer and perhaps ask “It’s not me, is it?” Then listen for the answer.

## Examen (review of prayer)

At the end of your prayer or your day, whatever works for you, you can look back and ask: Does it have something to say to you?

How does it make you feel? Imagine how God might reply.

Conversation: When you come towards the end of your time of prayer, talk to God about what has come up for you.

End with a formal prayer, such as the Lord’s Prayer/Our Father.



# HOLY THURSDAY



## HOLY WEEK

### Daily Offering

**An offering with St Paul (1 Corinthians 11: 23-26).** Lord, I offer you my heart and mind, praying that I may faithfully pass on the message of love that I have received from you in the Eucharist and the washing of feet. Amen.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

### Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Exodus 12: 1-8, 11-14; Psalm 115: 12-13, 15-18 r. cf. 1 Corinthians 10: 16; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26; John 13: 1-15

*Choice of readings: for the text of the other readings see your Bible, Universalis, or missal.*

**N**ow 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.'



*Jesus washes his disciples feet*

Mosaic, Monreale

## Image for the Day

What do you see in this image?

Can you imagine what it was like for the disciples to be there?

Imagine the scene.

## Food for Thought

Today we enter the Sacred Triduum, the climax of our Lenten journey, and the readings and the ceremonies are almost too rich to digest; tonight's service is a reminder of the institution of the precious gift of the Eucharist, which is a gift on more levels than we can easily grasp.

## Suggestions for Prayer

In your prayer today, you may find yourself led in several different directions. Here are four possibilities. First, the reading from Exodus takes us back to the greatest feast of the year for our Jewish forebears, and reminds us of that great act of deliverance from their oppressors. You might want to pray about what is currently oppressing you, and what you are asking the Lord to do about it. Secondly, the psalm is a song of praise for God's unshakable fidelity: "the Lord will bless the house of Israel...Praise the Lord". Here you might prayerfully reflect on what you and your community are giving thanks for, this evening; and make your own the line from Paul that is our response: "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in Christ's blood?"

Then, thirdly, there is the reading from I Corinthians; Paul is very cross because of their divisions, and to correct them he reminds them of what Jesus did on this very night, before he died, taking bread, giving thanks, and saying (with unmistakable reference to his death) "this is my body for you", and likewise with the cup "this cup is the new covenant in my blood". We hardly understand what he is saying, but dimly we grasp that this is for us, and that it is costly. "As often as you eat this loaf and drink the cup, you are proclaiming the Lord's death – until he comes". Does that give you a way into prayer on this rich night?

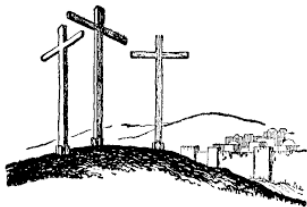
Finally, you might choose to gaze in astonishment at the acted parable with which John has chosen to begin his account of the Last Supper, not the institution of the Eucharist, but Jesus, to Peter's horror, performing for all the disciples, including Judas, an act that was thought too lowly even for slaves to do, the washing of their feet. And the evangelist explains what is going on: "having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end". The name of the game, you see, is love.

## How are you going to respond today?

How might tonight's rich liturgy affect the way you are going to celebrate these three days? Spend some time on reflecting how it would feel to have your feet washed, and consider opportunities to wash the feet of others. How will it change the rest of your life?

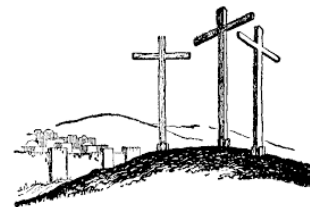
## Examen (review of prayer)

If you are going to Mass tonight you may take some time to reflect there instead of saying an examen at home, or you may prefer to pray the examen at some other time, as you feel works best for you.



# GOOD FRIDAY

## HOLY WEEK



### Daily Offering

**An offering with Simon of Cyrene (cf Mark 15:21).** Lord, that day when I was just going about my business I didn't expect you to choose me to help you with your cross. It's changed me for ever and it's been a joy to share with Alexander and Rufus and everyone I meet.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

### Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

### Isaiah 52:13-53: 12

See, my servant shall prosper;  
he shall be exalted and lifted up,  
and shall be very high.

Just as there were many who were astonished at him  
– so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance,  
and his form beyond that of mortals –  
so he shall startle many nations;  
kings shall shut their mouths because of him;  
for that which had not been told them they shall see,  
and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

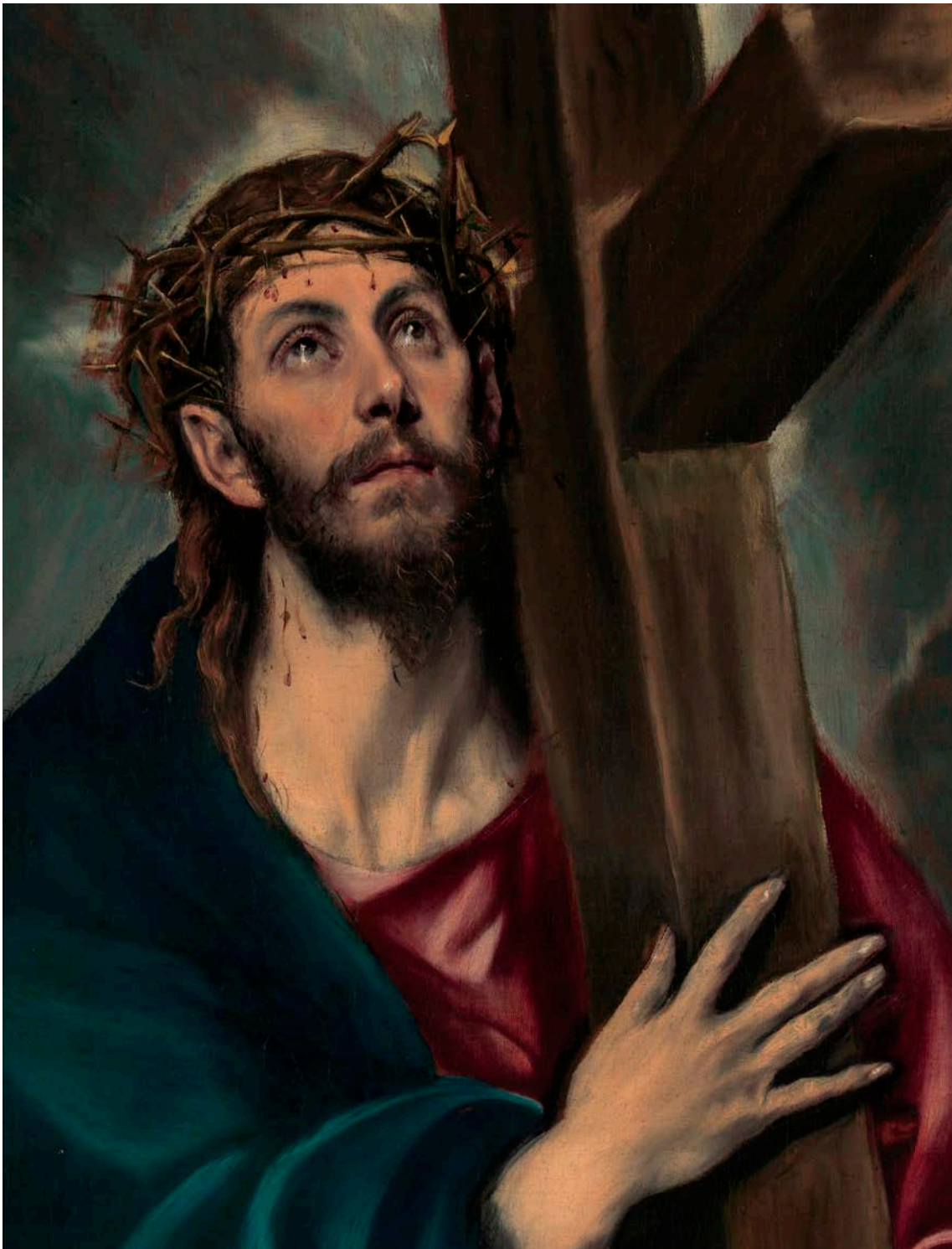
Who has believed what we have heard?  
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?  
For he grew up before him like a young plant,  
and like a root out of dry ground;  
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,  
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.  
He was despised and rejected by others;  
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;  
and as one from whom others hide their faces  
he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities  
and carried our diseases;  
yet we accounted him stricken,  
struck down by God, and afflicted.  
But he was wounded for our transgressions,  
crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,  
and by his bruises we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have all turned to our own way,  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.  
By a perversion of justice he was taken away.  
Who could have imagined his future?  
For he was cut off from the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people.  
They made his grave with the wicked  
and his tomb with the rich,  
although he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain.  
When you make his life an offering for sin,  
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;  
through him the will of the Lord shall prosper.  
Out of his anguish he shall see light;  
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.  
The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.  
Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,  
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;  
because he poured out himself to death,  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the transgressors.





*Christ carrying the cross*

El Greco



*Pieta*  
by  
© Andrew White

There is a Praying with Art Video featuring this painting:  
[pathwaystogod.org/praying-art](http://pathwaystogod.org/praying-art)

## Pathways TO GOD

### Image for the Day

What do you see in this image?

Can you imagine what it was like for Mary and the other disciples?

### Food for Thought

Today we have the solemn emptiness of Good Friday, and Jesus' appalling death. The gospel is the story of Jesus' Passion from John's Gospel; and as you listen or read it, you might like to notice how John makes it the cross a throne of glory, in contrast to the bleak account of Luke which you will have heard on Palm Sunday.

### Suggestions for Prayer

But it is the first reading that I suggest you might like to pray through on this momentous day; if you do this, you will be following the instincts of the very earliest Christians, possibly including Jesus himself, as they grappled to make sense of his death.

Our passage is the fourth of what are known as the "Songs of the Suffering Servant", which we find in that part of the Isaiah scroll that was written for the Jewish exiles in Babylon; the author is well aware of the suffering that can come with answering God's call (have you experienced this?), and is reflecting on it in the presence of God. We do not know who the author was, nor do we know who the "Servant" was, though there have been plenty of learned guesses. But this is a text to help us pray through the sadness of today.

There are several points that might help you go deeper into the mystery:

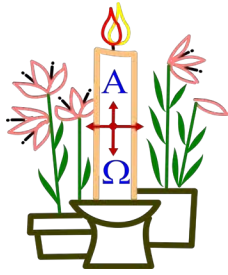
- First, we hear God speaking of "my servant". This tells us that the victory is won.
- Next, no punches are pulled in revealing what has happened to the "servant": "his appearance was disfigured...his form marred"
- The servant, whoever he was (but it fits Jesus very well) is "a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering"
- What happened to him was done for us "he took up our infirmities, carried our sorrows"
- Our part in it brings us no credit: "our transgressions, our iniquities...we have gone astray"
- The Servant (and here we must of course think of Jesus) did not resist: "did not open his mouth...a lamb to the slaughter",
- Even though he did not deserve what happened: "he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth"
- But God is in there ("it was the Lord's will") and therefore all shall be well: "he will see the light of life...therefore I shall give him a portion among the great".

### How are you going to respond today?

Today I suggest that you simply sit with this extraordinary passage, reading it slowly, several times over, and see what it says to you. The Lord will be there with you.

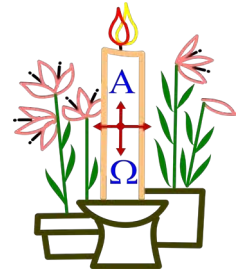
### Examen (review of prayer)

Choose an examen, or simply sit in silent reflection.



# HOLY SATURDAY

## HOLY WEEK



### Daily Offering

**An offering with Peter.** Lord, that Saturday is etched on my heart for ever. I would have been in total despair had not your Mother come and laid her hand on mine. Strengthen me to help others to rise from what seems like total failure and utter disgrace. Amen.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

### Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

### Luke 24:1-12

On the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.' Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.





## Image for the Day

What do you see in the picture?

Can you imagine what it was like for the disciples, for the women?

Imagine the scene.

## Food for Thought

Tonight's gospel reading is Luke's account of that first Easter Sunday. One of the striking things about all the Resurrection stories is the question-marks that hang over them: can it really be true?

## Suggestions for Prayer

We start our prayer by noticing the bravery of these women, who dare to come to the tomb "in the deep dawn"; but we also observe that they do not believe in the resurrection as yet, since they are intending to anoint a corpse.

But God is there, and someone has "rolled the stone from the tomb". Then we see that there are divine messengers, who address the women as they scratch their heads in puzzlement, and gently rebuke them: "Why are you looking for the Living One among the corpses? He's not here – no, he's risen"; and they have to be reminded that Jesus had predicted this turn of events.

But faith in the Resurrection does not stop there; it has to be shared: and the women, who are named ("Mary the Magdalene, and Johanna and Mary of Jacob, and the rest...") have to return "to the Eleven". That number, which should of course be Twelve, serves as a reminder that from its very beginning the Church has been deficient; Judas has gone his own way. (Have you gone your own way recently?)

And not only that: these Resurrection witnesses are not believed; for the male apostles thought that "these words were babbling, and they would not believe them". You might reflect that this has been the fate of women in the Church ever since.

But there is more; for Peter, always one to take us by surprise, "rose up and ran to the tomb". Now the urgency of his going tells us something: does he after all believe that the one whom he had denied only a few hours before might have survived death? It does not sound very promising, though, for all he found was an empty tomb, and some "grave-cloths on their own" (which means that it was not grave-robbers); but he has not quite got there yet, for, "he went off home, wondering what had happened".

## How are you going to respond today?

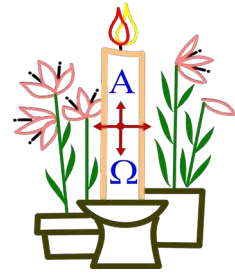
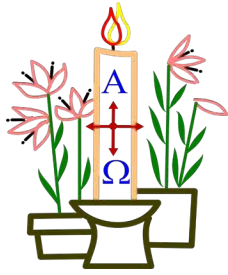
And what has happened, in your view? The Resurrection is the central doctrine of Christianity, according to Paul. What is the Lord telling you about it in your prayer today?

## Examen (review of prayer)

As you pray your examen today reflect on the meaning of the resurrection to you in your life of prayer and your deeds.



# EASTER SUNDAY



## ALLELUIA!

### Daily Offering

**An offering with Mary of Magdala (John 20:11-18)** Lord, you saw me desolate there, you read my heart, you spoke my name, you gave me a mission to tell the others. And my life was changed for the rest of my days and all eternity. If sometimes it feels like having to wait for ever, cherish our loyalty and give us living faith. Amen. Alleluia.

Tom Shufflebotham SJ

### Entering into Prayer

Choose a way to enter into prayer from earlier in Lent or any method that you prefer.

## TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

### John 20: 1-9

**E**arly on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.





*The Disciples running to the tomb*  
by  
Eugène Burnand

## Image for the Day

What do you see in the picture?

Can you imagine what it was like for the disciples?

Imagine the scene, and hold the resurrection in your heart.

## Food for Thought

Easter has come, the central feast of our year; we have been making ready for it since Ash Wednesday, six and a half weeks ago, with an increase in intensity over the last two weeks, and then the mounting drama of Holy Week, and especially of the Sacred Triduum, just ended. We shall be celebrating the feast for the next seven weeks, so we might in our prayer ask to be shown what it means.

## Suggestions for Prayer

Perhaps today's gospel is the way into the meaning of it. What you might do is to imagine yourself accompanying that brave woman, "Mary the Magdalene" on her lonely walk through the darkness to the empty tomb. Try to imagine what she is feeling as she sees that "the stone has been rolled away". Then notice that the next thing she does is to "run" (why is she doing that?). And to whom does she run? "Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved" (why does she go to them?); and she has a message for them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have put him". As you pray, you may notice that "we": were there other women with Mary?

Then the evangelist's camera, which is very restricted, with hardly ever room for more than two parties, focuses on "Simon and the other disciple"; and now you might watch them as they go; and at the same time, if you look very carefully, you can see that Mary is also running with them, though perhaps at a distance.

At all events "the two of them ran" (there is a lot of running in this story, you notice), but the beloved disciple got there first, which is why we all think of him as a younger man; courteously he does not go in, but "stooped and saw the grave-cloths lying". Next, watch Simon Peter reaching the place (is he out of breath?); and he actually goes in. And what does he see? "the grave-cloths lying", which we had already seen through the Beloved Disciple's lens; but there is an addition: "the sweat-cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the other grave-cloths, but rolled up, apart, in one place". Only then does the other disciple go in – "and he saw, and he came to faith". Now the evangelist adds an explanation: "for they did not yet know the Scripture, that it was necessary for Jesus to rise from the dead"

## How are you going to respond today?

Why did the Beloved Disciple come to faith at that moment? What do you believe about the Resurrection? What difference might it make to your life, do you think?

## Examen (review of prayer)

As you pray your examen today reflect on the meaning of the resurrection to you in your life of prayer and your deeds.



## CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY



### Reviewing your retreat

Take about 20 minutes for this prayer, longer if you wish, to look back over the days and weeks of the retreat at what God has been doing in and around you.

Take time to come to a still point using whatever has been helpful during Lent.

Ask God to show you whatever it would be most helpful to see. Ask for God's light as you review the days and weeks of the retreat. What does God want you to notice as you look back, and to take forward into daily life?

Read through the following passage. How has what St Paul speaks of been true for you in the retreat?

### Ephesians 1:17–19

**M**ay the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers.

Gently let the days and weeks of the retreat re-play before your mind's eye.

What do you notice?

Where did you feel closest to God? Where did you feel most challenged? Where did you feel yourself to be most fully alive, most completely the person that God has created you to be?

Are there any biblical passages, words or phrases, or images, which capture something important for you to remember from these weeks, things that you can come back to in your prayer in the coming days and weeks?

End by speaking to God, as one friend speaks to another, about all that you have seen and felt in this prayerful review. Let this part of the prayer go where it will, leading you into thanksgiving, or asking for further gifts that you need from God, or perhaps simply into a companionable silence.

*They decided to go  
to Jerusalem*  
by  
Vasilii Polenov



## General suggestions to follow up your retreat

- Be realistic
- Aim at praying 5–10 minutes every day. You may be able to do more. If so, fine – but if not, don't worry.
- Find a suitable time and place. Maybe a little corner in the house, somewhere very simple – a prayer corner with perhaps a statue, icon, bible, candle.
- Go to that place to pray.
- **Rosary:** Just one mystery: read it from the Gospel – pondering/searching. (This will cover 15 days.)
- **Stations of the Cross:** Can be prayed in the same way as Rosary. Walk around ... gazing ... just look ... no need for words. Be there with Jesus and Mary. (A way to pray for Lent and Fridays.)
- **Daily Mass/other service you can attend:** sometimes it just helps to spend time with God any way you can.
- **The Prayer of the Church:** available via an app like Universalis or with a breviary.

## Prayer resources

- [www.pathwaystogod.org](http://www.pathwaystogod.org) offers daily prayers, as well as resources to take your prayer deeper. This includes Daily Offerings and Examen which you can use every day.
- [www.pathwaystogod.org/my-prayer-life/Sunday](http://www.pathwaystogod.org/my-prayer-life/Sunday) Each week we publish a sheet of reflections on the Sunday readings suitable for praying in groups or at home.
- [www.pray-as-you-go.org](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org) offers audio reflections to help you pray based on scripture for every day – online, via the app or via the podcast. They also have audio retreats.
- <https://www.sacredspace.ie/> offers daily meditations on scripture.

## Retreats and other experiences of Ignatian Spirituality

- <https://www.pathwaystogod.org/courses-events-retreats> (includes residential retreat centre at St Beuno's as well as the Ignatian Spirituality Centre, Glasgow and the Mount Street Jesuit Centre, London.)
- <http://www.retreats.org.uk> (other retreats around the U.K.)
- Ongoing spiritual direction: in the London area please contact the Mount Street Jesuit Centre, and in Scotland please contact the Ignatian Spirituality Centre. Elsewhere in the country, please contact Sarah Young, Teams and People Coordinator: [syoung@jesuit.org.uk](mailto:syoung@jesuit.org.uk)

## Organisations in your area

The British Province works closely with the following organisations which provide links to spiritual directors and prayer guides but also may run faith sharing groups.

Christian Life Community of England and Wales [www.clcew.org.uk](http://www.clcew.org.uk)

Prego/St Beuno's Outreach in the Diocese of Wrexham <https://stbeunosoutreach.wordpress.com/>

Manresa Link (in the West Midlands) <https://www.manresalink.org.uk/>

The Epiphany Group (Scotland) <http://www.epiphanygroup.org.uk/>

Hearts on Fire (Sacred Heart, Boscombe)



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THIRD WEEK OF LENT – Prego Team, St Beuno's Outreach, North Wales

FOURTH WEEK – Brian Purfield, Mount Street Jesuit Centre, London

FIFTH WEEK OF LENT – Teresa McCaffery

HOLY WEEK – Fr Nicholas King SJ, Campion Hall, Oxford

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