



SHUTTERSTOCK

## SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2017

### PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD Acknowledge your state of denial

The palms used in the rituals of Palm Sunday signify victory over one's enemies; yet the scripture reading for today offers an account of Judas' treachery toward Jesus. How odd. Somehow we're saying that despite being betrayed, tortured, and murdered, Jesus is our hope and our salvation. That is the outrageous truth of Christianity. Jesus draws life from a source that conquers death. And consider this: Many of Jesus' most beloved disciples denied and deserted him before his death, but only one is called a traitor. The reason: All but one repented. In your own Christian discipleship, remember that it is your willingness to acknowledge your failings and undergo conversion again and again that is most important.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Procession: Matthew 21:1-11 (37); Mass: Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66 (38).* "Blessed is the he who comes in the name of the Lord."

## MONDAY, APRIL 10 MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK Let's prep for this

The motto of the Boy Scouts, "Be prepared," seems almost quaint in our contemporary world of instant communication. How can we possibly find the time to be ready for anything that might happen, good or bad, in our lives? As we begin Holy Week, the most profound mysteries of our faith are about to unfold. Mary prepares Jesus for his death by anointing his feet with oil. At the same time she is preparing herself for his redeeming love. There is time before Holy Thursday to prepare ourselves. Take some time today and reflect on what has happened to you this Lent and what awaits you this week.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 42:1-7; John 12:1-11 (257).* "Mary took costly perfume, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair."

## TUESDAY, APRIL 11 TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK Mirror, mirror

Unlike the disciples, we don't have to ask, "Who is it?" when it comes to learning the name of the Lord's betrayer—a quick glance in the mirror will do. But can we who are the betrayers of Christ also be the ones who believe in him? If we are not faithful to him, will he still be faithful to us? Thankfully, that's what Christianity is all about. We are not worthy to receive Jesus. He is a gift given out of love.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 49:1-6; John 13:21-33, 36-38 (258).* "Simon Peter, while reclining next to Jesus, asked him, 'Who is it?'"

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12 WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK Betrayal never pays

When we read the daily headlines, we might get the impression that crime definitely pays. Drug lords drive enviable cars and flash diamonds. White-collar criminals live in multiple mansions. Even Judas got paid handsomely for his betrayal: 30 pieces of silver for one little kiss. But Judas got more than a bag of silver. He got the anguish of watching his friend suffer and the burden of self-loathing. Money couldn't buy him free of that.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 50:4-9a; Matthew 26:14-25 (259).* "Judas Iscariot went to the chief priest and said, 'What will you give me if I betray him to you?'"

## THURSDAY, APRIL 13 THURSDAY OF HOLY WEEK (HOLY THURSDAY); EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

### Wash up for supper

Tonight Lent ends, and the church enters into three holy days, the Triduum, with the celebration of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper. Tonight's liturgy is a Mass, but with a significant difference: the rite of foot-washing, which involves water and service. It ritualizes for us the fact that we are baptized into Jesus, and we live out this Baptism in giving ourselves to one another. It's a pattern we see throughout these three days. It's also one we repeat in every Mass. Union with Christ and service: Make it the pattern for your whole life.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15 (39).* "For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you."

## FRIDAY, APRIL 14

### FRIDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION (GOOD FRIDAY); DAY OF FAST AND ABSTINENCE A day to be cross

Solemnity, prayer . . . and delicious baked goods? It must be Good Friday. There are many ways that people throughout the world honor this sacred day of remembering the death of Jesus. A custom in England, Ireland, and in other countries is to bake hot cross buns. These sweet pastries are typically scored or iced with a cross. Whatever you do this day—bake, work, pray, fast, care, smile, mourn—remember that you and all of creation are blessed with the sign of the cross.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42 (40).* "Let us confidently approach the throne of grace."

## SATURDAY, APRIL 15 HOLY SATURDAY

### Tonight's the night

"This is the night!" exclaims the Exultet, sung this evening at the Easter Vigil. Indeed this is the night we have been waiting for through these long weeks of Lent. This is the night toward which we have aimed all our preparations, our efforts to be more prayerful, generous, and focused on God. On this night the many readings of scripture bring us from darkness to light, bondage to freedom. This is the night we welcome new members of the Body of Christ—and rejoice in our own membership. This is the night: Exult!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Vigil: Genesis 1:1-2:2; Genesis 22:1-18; Exodus 14:15-15:1; Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18; Isaiah 54:5-14; Isaiah 55:1-11; Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28; Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-10 (41).* "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. . . so we too might walk in the newness of life."



Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

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