



In the current emergency, we are spending time apart, but we continue our journey in faith together. The materials that follow offer a chance to reflect upon the final week of Jesus' life as told in Mark's Gospel. For each day there is a Gospel reading, some reflective tasks and a prayer. Here are some suggestions for using these.

1. **Bible Readings.** Try to set aside some time each day to walk through the story of Jesus' Passion. You may find it helpful to read around the extract chosen for the day to see the words in their wider context. You could try to picture the readings in your mind's eye and imagine yourself at the scene. As you read, try to identify how you feel and what you think about as you read. Pray about the memories and emotions the readings invoke.
2. **Reflections.** There are several open-ended questions to ponder. There are no right answers to these questions. Sit a while with your thoughts and feelings and let God speak to you.
3. **Prayers.** These are offered as starting points. You may find that you want to offer other prayers. At the end of the booklet are the Collects (special prayers) for Holy Week. These will be prayed throughout the Church of England. Praying these words may help you to feel connected with the wider church.



Palm Sunday

Jesus enters Jerusalem from the East. The adoring crowds lay palms before him honouring him as a King. His arrival on a creature as meek as a donkey was in great contrast to the royal welcome he is offered. This is a week of great contrasts.



Mark 11: 1-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’”

⁴ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵ some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶ They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷ When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

“Hosanna!^[a]”

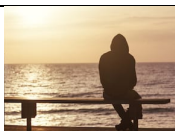
“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”^[b]

¹⁰ “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!”

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts.

Reflection



Think about a time when you have been made welcome. How did it make you feel?

Have you ever felt rejected by someone or unwelcome in a place? How did it feel?

Who might feel rejected in our society today?

How readily do you greet others as Jesus does?

Prayer



Lord Jesus, thank you that you daily invite us to share in the blessings of your kingdom.

Help us to model your love in the welcome we show to others.

Lead us we pray, to reach out to those who need to know you more.

Amen

Monday

Jesus enters the temple in Jerusalem and is horrified by the moneychangers and tax collectors in the Temple Courts. He reacts angrily to people being cheated.



Mark 11:15-19

¹⁵ On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. ¹⁷ And as he taught them, he said, “Is it not written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations’^[c]? But you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’^[d]”

¹⁸ The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

¹⁹ When evening came, Jesus and his disciples^[e] went out of the city.

Reflection

Is Jesus' anger righteous?



What parallels can you see between the scene in the temple and the current mood of the community?

What makes you angry and yearn for change?

Prayer

Father God, we pray that our world may be one that reflects your moral teaching.

We pray for those persecuted for their beliefs and for those who find it hard to show respect for one another.

Lead us we pray, towards justice and righteousness for all peoples.

Amen



Tuesday:

The local leaders are attempting to entrap Jesus into an act of treason.



Mark 12: 13-17

¹³ Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. ¹⁴ They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay the imperial tax[b] to Caesar or not? ¹⁵ Should we pay or shouldn’t we?”

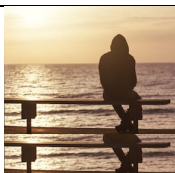
But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” ¹⁶ They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

¹⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.”

And they were amazed at him.

Reflection



Taxes help to pay for services like healthcare, education and local services. How do you feel about paying the taxes you have to pay?

What do you think Jesus meant by saying ‘give back to God the things that are God’s?’

What has God given to you that you are grateful for that money cannot buy?

Prayer



Heavenly Father, we pray for our public services and particularly the NHS.

We pray for wisdom and discernment for all in leadership with difficult decisions before them.

We pray that in our own way we may be thankful to God for his bounteous provision and generous in our sharing of ourselves in the service of others.

Amen

Wednesday:



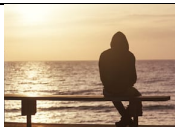
Jesus noticed how people gave varying amounts to the temple treasury. Jesus knew that whilst the poor widow could hardly afford her contribution, she still wanted to give her money to God.

Mark 12: 41-44

⁴¹ Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴² But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.

⁴³ Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴ They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”

Reflection



Sometimes you may feel that you don't have anything to give, but what do you have to offer to God?

Are there times that you hold back from giving – financially, time or gifts – and why?

What are the best gifts you can give to others at this time of national emergency?

Prayer



Generous God, we thank you for all your gifts: creation, life itself and your unending love for each of us.

Guide us we pray that we may be more generous in our sharing of our gifts and resources.

Remind us Lord, to pay forward all your gracious gifts.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

Maundy Thursday.

The Last Supper.

Jesus' last meal with his friends.



Mark 14: 12-25

¹² On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

¹³ So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. ¹⁴ Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' ¹⁵ He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there."

¹⁶ The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. ¹⁸ While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me."

¹⁹ They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely you don't mean me?"

²⁰ "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who dips bread into the bowl with me. ²¹ The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

²² While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."

²³ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

²⁴ "This is my blood of the ^[c] covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. ²⁵ "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Reflection



How do you think Jesus might have felt that evening?

What might the disciples have experienced as they heard Jesus' words?

How does receiving Communion make you feel?

The story of this last evening is in all the Gospels. Look also at Mark 26: 17-30, Luke 22:7-22 and John 13:18–30. How is the betrayal of Jesus described differently by each evangelist?

How do you feel after reading these different Gospel passages? How do they speak into your life?

Prayer



Lord God, we give thanks for the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Help us to know that we are in a constant spiritual communion with you. Let us offer ourselves each day, knowing that nothing can separate us from your love.

We pray that we will soon be able to share in the Eucharist gathering in your name in our churches; but until that day we ask that we know your spiritual presence in our hearts.

Help us we pray, to worship you our merciful redeemer, friend and brother. May we know you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day.

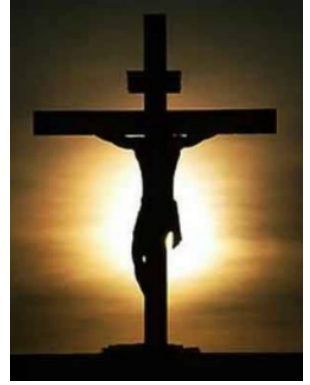
Amen



Good Friday

“Oh, to see the dawn
Of the darkest day:
Christ on the road to Calvary.
Tried by sinful men,
Torn and beaten, then
Nailed to a cross of wood....”

Stewart Townend, The Power of The Cross



Mark 15: 1, 15, 22-26, 33-34 and 37- 39

¹Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

¹⁵ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). ²³ Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. ²⁵ It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: The King of the Jews.

³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died,[c] he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

Reflection



The 15th chapter of Mark's Gospel details many who were present at Jesus' encounter with Pilate, the mocking crowd and the witnesses to his death. Imagine you are in the crowds that day. What do you experience?

Jesus is mocked and humiliated by baying crowds and authority figures. Reflect on a time when you have turned your back on someone and 'gone with the crowd.'

Prayer



We pray that all who are disciples of Jesus will be given the grace and strength they need to walk in the way of the cross, speaking words of love and truth in places of hatred and lies.

We pray for all those who are experiencing their own Good Friday darkness that all who suffer pain of body or mind will be held by the hands of Jesus which bear the marks of his pain.

Heavenly Father, at the foot of the cross on which Jesus died we offer you these prayers. Let your grace, mercy, love and peace surround us and all those for whom we have prayed in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



Holy Saturday

The Silence of the Tomb



Mark 15: 42-47

⁴² It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

Reflection



On this day we face the scary silence of the tomb. Jesus was alone yet didn't abandon us even in death.

Think of a past time when you have felt lonely. What has helped you?

In this time of social isolation and quarantine, how are you drawing closer to God?

What insights have you gained from this reflective time alone?

Prayer



Heavenly Father

We pray for those with no home or resting place and who face an uncertain future.

We lift to you those who feel alone, in pain or a sense of grief or abandonment this day.

As we await the sunrise tomorrow let us sit patiently in the darkness knowing that your love never ceases.

Amen

Easter Sunday

He is risen! On that first Easter morning the woman came to the tomb and found the stone had been rolled away. Because Jesus has been raised from death he can be with us now.



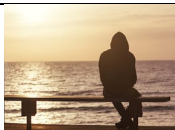
Mark 15: 1-7

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

Reflection



How do you think the women felt in this scene?

There is an Angel in the tomb. Angels are messengers from God. How does God speak to you in your daily life? How can you make space to hear God more?

The women left the tomb and became the first evangelists. How might you share the Good News of Christ this Easter and in the year ahead?

Prayer



Almighty and Eternal God whose goodness and grace overflowed when you raised Jesus from the dead, Let your goodness and grace continue to flow upon your people.

Roll away the stone of despair and hopelessness that the light of Jesus Christ may shine into the darkness to bring joy and warmth again.

Lord God roll away the stone that they might better see the path stretching out before them a path unused except for your footprints etched out in the morning dew

Amen

Collects for Holy Week

Palm Sunday

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you and
love you,
that we may be found beside you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory. **AMEN**

Maundy Thursday

God our Father,
you have invited us to share in the supper
which your Son gave to his Church
to proclaim his death until he comes:
may he nourish us by his presence,
and unite us in his love;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **AMEN**

Good Friday

Eternal God,
in the cross of Jesus
we see the cost of sin
and the depth of your love:
in humble hope and fear
may we place at his feet
all that we have and all that we are,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
AMEN

Holy Saturday

In the depths of our isolation
we cry to you, Lord God:
give light to our darkness
and bring us out of the prison of our
despair;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
AMEN

Easter Day

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity. **AMEN**