

“A Year with Jesus”

Week 13, March 28th, Holy Week

//This is Holy Week, the time between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. It is traditionally marked by a solemn look at the crucifixion of Jesus. This week I've included three different shorter devotions taken from our recent Easter Journal project. You can choose to work through any or all of them as you examine Jesus and the cross.

//Devotion #1

Read Matthew 26:14-16.

This sets in motion the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, one of his 12 closest companions. Take a moment and share in the hurt Jesus might have experienced from the betrayal by this beloved friend (maybe drawing on your own experiences of betrayal).

Judas had a price for his betrayal. We all betray Jesus with our words and actions at one time or another. What tempts you to turn away from Jesus; what are your “30 pieces of silver?”

//Devotion #2

This devotion is a look at the torture and crucifixion of Jesus. There is no question to ask of yourself, no self-examination, no challenge to grow.

Take a moment, be aware of your own sinfulness, and know that it is for you, for everyone, that Jesus travels this path of sacrifice that defines God's love and provides our forgiveness.

When you are ready, read Mark 15:16-39. As you read, do nothing but observe, follow, and imagine the story of Jesus' sacrifice. When you are finished, sit quietly with God, take note of what you are feeling, and offer thanks.

//Devotion #2

Metaphorical images in the arts and nature can provide some of the most moving and memorable pictures to teach and remind us of larger truths. Can you think of any that stick with you?

Read Mark 15:37-39, describing the final scene of Jesus' death.

The curtain described here is that which separated the room called the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple. This room held the Ark of the Covenant, could only be entered by the High Priest at certain times, and was believed to contain the presence of God. This was a picture of separation.

Read Hebrews 10:19-23.

This passage unlocks the metaphor of the torn curtain at Jesus' death. Separation is destroyed, and we are welcomed into God's presence.

Take time and slowly, prayerfully, read through the Hebrews passage again. What words or images speak to you? Write or underline them. For each one, take time and reflect on what each word or image means to you. Close by offering thanks to Jesus who welcomes us in!