

Hopes and Dreams

The Story of Palm Sunday

1. Be still

*Sit at the beginning of the road, facing the cross.
Think about your hopes and dreams.*

In Jesus' time, people were dreaming of a time when they would be free from the Roman soldiers who ruled their lives. They were hoping for a leader who would help them overthrow their enemies.

2. Question & Reflect

We all dream sometimes about how things could be different and how our lives could be better. As you read the following words, think and reflect about your hopes for the future. Take these thoughts to God and listen to what he has to say to you.

3. Read

When Jesus came into the great city of Jerusalem, the crowd was excited and restless. Many had heard of Jesus' teaching and miracles. They longed for a leader who would help them drive the Romans from their land so that they could live in peace and prosperity. As Jesus rode through the city gates on a young donkey, the people cheered and praised God.

"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord," the crowd shouted, and people began to throw their cloaks and palm leaves onto the ground to pave the way for Jesus, their hearts full of expectation. Some of the religious leaders grumbled at Jesus but he told them that even if the crowds were silent, then the very stones would cry out their praise.

4. Respond

Choose a "stone" and draw a symbol or picture of your hope for the future. Place it in the cairn beneath the cross at the end of the "road" as a symbol that you trust your future; your hopes and dreams into the hands of God.

*Servant King
Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet*

1. *Be still*

Sit on the cushions around the station. Think about the words "servant" and "king". These words normally make us think of different sorts of people, but in Jesus they are used together. In the stillness, think of Jesus in his role as servant, and again, as King.

2. *Question & Reflect*

Jesus lived in a hot and arid land. Most people travelled from place to place on foot. It was the custom to welcome visitors by washing their feet in cool, clean water but normally a household servant would do this task. When Jesus invited the disciples for supper in the upper room, they were surprised at what followed. As you read, imagine that you too are in the room with the disciples and that Jesus washes your feet too. What is your response to Jesus? How do you react? What do you say to Jesus? What does Jesus say to you? Take time to take in all that Jesus is showing you. What do Jesus' words mean for you?

3. *Read*

Jesus takes off his outer clothing and wraps a towel around his waist. After this, he pours water into a basin and begins to wash his disciples' feet, drying them lovingly with the towel.

(Pour a little of the water from the jug into the basin)

When Jesus has finished washing their feet, he puts on his outer clothing and returns to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asks. "You call me teacher and Lord; and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you"

4. *Respond*

If we are to follow Jesus' example, what is Jesus asking of you today?

Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body now on earth but yours:

Yours are the only hands, with which he can do his work,

Yours are the only feet with which he can go about the world,

Yours are the only eyes through which his compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

How does this make you feel? Bring these concerns to Jesus

Dip your finger into the water and make the sign of the cross on the palm of each hand, as you ask God to help you serve others in a special way this Easter.

Remember Me
Last supper

1. *Be still*

Take your place at the "table" and be still. As you look at the items on the table, imagine yourself as part of the Passover meal sharing bread and wine with Jesus.

2. *Question & Reflect*

Remember a significant time in your life or a time that you wish to bring before God. It could be a painful memory or a time of great happiness. Share it now with the Lord, who longs to share our sorrows and joys. Know that he can bring comfort and healing into any situation.

3. *Read*

On the night before he died, Jesus had supper with his friend. He took some bread, and thanking God for it, he broke it.

Jesus gave the bread to each of his disciples and said "Take, eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this to remember me"

4. *Respond*

If you would like to, take a piece of bread and as you eat it, close your eyes and bring to mind something you know about Jesus. Remember him healing the sick, feeding the hungry, telling wonderful stories or something else that comes to mind. Be there; in the picture that you have before you and see Jesus look at you. What does he say?

*Alone
In the Garden Of Gethsemane*

1. *Be still*

Find a place to sit in the "garden".

Often, people feel most alone after darkness falls and when it is very quiet. Sometimes people can feel alone even when there are many people around. Remember a time when you felt alone.

2. *Question & Reflect*

Bring your feelings of being alone, to Jesus. Let him speak to you in the quietness as you read the words below.

Know that he too, has experienced feelings of intense loneliness and abandonment by those he loved; feeling of not being able to go on, yet trusting himself into the hands of Father God.

Know too, that Jesus says to you "I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20b)

3. *Read*

Jesus knew that the soldiers would come soon to arrest him and that he would be sentenced to death. He went with his friends to a garden, called Gethsemane, and asked that they would keep watch with him, whilst he prayed to God to help him. But his friends were weary and fell asleep. In the darkness of the night, Jesus felt anguished; alone and abandoned, but yet trusted himself into God's care.

4. *Respond*

If you wish, with the clay or dough, create a shape- maybe a heart or a cross to remind yourself that even in the darkest times, God is with us.

As you hold the shape in your cupped hands, read the following verses.

God says to you:

"I have called you by name and you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1)

"I have loved you with an everlasting love..." (Jeremiah 31:3a)

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27)

"Even if you go through the deepest darkness, do not be afraid, for I am with you" (Psalm 23:4)

Either place your shape in the garden or take it with you as a reminder that God is with you.

At the Cross Forgiveness

1. *Be still*

Either sit or stand as you look at this scene. Think about what you see and how it makes you feel.

2. *Question & Reflect*

Be present to the moment. Think of the enormity of what Jesus has done for us; for you- of the pain and sacrifice that he made for each one of us, so that we could be forgiven and draw close to God.

The cross reminds us of the death and love of Jesus for us. It is a place where we can bring our suffering, sorrows and pain; the things that we have done wrong in our lives and ask God to help us make a difference; to be forgiven and changed

3. *Read*

Jesus was unfairly tried and the people had shouted out for him to be crucified. Then soldiers led Jesus outside the city walls of Jerusalem to Golgotha, which means "the place of the skull".

The crowd taunted Jesus whilst a crown of thorns was placed on his head as a mock crown and a notice fastened to the cross that read "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews". Jesus was cruelly nailed to the cross, and whilst they waited for him to die, soldiers cast dice to see which one would have Jesus' robe to keep for themselves.

People laughed at Jesus, and yet he prayed for them as they were hurting him, saying "Father, forgive them, for they do not understand what they are doing." When Jesus became thirsty, soldiers offered him a sponge soaked in vinegar. Then at three o'clock in the afternoon, Jesus died.

4. *Respond*

Look at the empty cross again and see it as a symbol of hope for yourself; for anyone who is suffering or sad. Remember and believe that Jesus did not stay on the cross but came back to life so that we could be friends with God.

Take a piece of crumpled newspaper, symbolic of the rubbish and burdens that we so often carry. Sit or kneel quietly, thinking of something you would like to say sorry for and ask God for forgiveness. Then after a moment, place your "sin" and burdens at the foot of the cross, knowing that you are forgiven, because of what Jesus has done.

*"I bring to you
my anger and my pain
and beneath your feet
I nail them to the tree
with splinters of my hope.
Forgive me, for I have sinned.
Love me, for I have nothing else. (Liz Knowles)*

*Resurrection
The Empty Tomb*

1. *Be still*

Sit down and try to put yourself into the shoes of the women who discovered the empty tomb.

What must they have been feeling? Apart from great sorrow and confusion- were they thinking through the events of Jesus' amazing life- from the first proclamation by angels of Jesus' birth to Mary and the shepherds through to the miracles...the stories...the healing...how they would miss him- not to mention the great loss that they must have felt?

2. *Question & Reflect*

There are many times when we feel lost and confused by events that happen in our lives. These are times when we ask God "why?". There are times when our grief or anger overwhelms our ability to watch for what God is doing through these events.

As you read the following words, ask God to help you see through your tears and pain to the new thing that God is doing, just as Mary's eyes were opened to Jesus as he spoke her name.

3. *Read*

After the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and two other women set out at dawn to visit the tomb where Jesus had been laid. As they reached the entrance, they were startled by the dazzling figure of an angel, who said "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."

Mary turned around and saw someone standing there, yet she did not know that it was Jesus.

"Why are you crying? Who is it that you are looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener and so she said to him, "If you took him away, then please tell me where you have put him so that I may go and get him".

Jesus then said to her "Mary". At once she recognized him and turning towards him, replied "Teacher!"

4. *Respond*

In the stillness, hear Jesus speak your name, and in return, turn to him in your heart and whisper words back to him that you would like to say.