

# The Holy Week Pilgrimage

## Welcomel

### Things to Know Before You Get Started...

1. This is self-guided (on your own) and a silent event.
2. Use this event to help you focus on God's Word by thinking and praying about God.
3. This event is made to help you feel closer to God!!!

### There Are SEVEN Displays

Each display has something to look at and touch (pay special attention to the one for Good Friday).

Take as much time as you want for each display.

Go in any order you choose.

Take a few seconds before walking up to a display so that you can better focus and pay attention to what the next display will show you. Take a breath - clear your mind!

Now, take in the scene. You can stand, sit, or sit on the floor to read and meditate..

Read the passage(s) of scripture. Feel free to touch things. Use your senses and imagination.

What does this display mean to you. What were your first reactions? What is God saying to you? Open your eyes, ears, heart and soul to God as you think about His story. When ready, move on to the next area.

## The Displays

**b** THE LAST SUPPER

**k** THE GARDEN

 **PIECES OF SILVER**

**I** CROWN OF THORNS

 **SPIKE & MALLET**

**r** HIS CROSS

 **THE CURTAIN**

## 1 THE LAST SUPPER **b**

### God's Word

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22: 19-21)

### Reflection

Jesus knew he would be soon parted from his beloved friends. As a sign of his love, he starts a whole new way of relating to him. Blood, represents life itself, belongs only to God and is not to be consumed—ever. But Jesus offers his blood, his life, to his friends. "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15.13) GOD'S LOVE for us is sealed by Jesus' decision to save us. He doesn't just write his name on a contract; he spills his blood to make it serious—and permanent—unmistakable. Not only does he give the life force within him, he gives his flesh—his body. His life is the sign of eternal forgiveness and through his blood he makes us family. This is a connection that we can count on, a relationship that will not be terminated on a whim. No escape clause here—this one's for keeps. In the Lord's supper we are re-membered to his body. We are nourished and strengthened for our own trials.

### Prayer

"Jesus, I choose to remember again what you did for me. Your body was broken, your blood shed to establish a permanent union between us. Thank you for your gift. Thank you for giving me something I can see, smell and taste to help me be with you. Amen."

## 2 THE GARDEN **k**

### God's Word

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done. (Luke 22:39)

### Reflection

In the garden, all seems plush and rich, as though God is not really needed. This is the source of sin. Adam (of Adam & Eve) was unable to trust and obey God. Adam chose the devil's lies over relationship with God. It was in another garden (Gethsemane) where Jesus turned things around as he said, "Not my will, but yours be done." In Jesus' words of acceptance, trust, and surrender, salvation was won for all people. Through his obedience, we all have a new opportunity to trust God for our lives and well being, no matter what good and bad things life may bring us.

### Prayer

"Jesus in your Father's strong love, you stood against the temptation to rely on yourself. Thank you for standing firm in the relationship and for being willing to undertake the work of your Father on my behalf. Help me, through God's spirit and grace, to surrender the temptations of life to God's will for me, that I might turn and seek his holy will. Help me to meet the challenges of this life trusting in God instead of my own wants and desires." Amen.

### 3 PIECES OF SILVER



#### God's Word

Then one of the Twelve - the one called Judas Iscariot - went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over. (Matthew 26: 14-16)

#### Reflection

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT times, the price of a slave was thirty pieces of silver. That's all it took for Judas to agree to hand over Jesus to his enemies.

A mere bag full of coins and the Son of God was traded away. What value do you put on Jesus? Have you been willing to sellout because you wanted something more than him? It's not hard to do. Every time we sin, we're really saying, "God, I know you want something different from me, but not this time. **My** way...not **yours**."

Whatever the trade you're making, it's not worth it. No fame, popularity, sex, or any other "deal" makes turning away from Jesus worth it. Your soul's healing and peace of mind is more precious than that. And he certainly is.

#### Prayer

"Jesus, examine me. Help me see where I trade you for the wrong things. The time for hiding is over. I realize this is how I sellout, how I fail to value you: \_\_\_\_\_. Take me as I am, and shape me into what I need to become." Amen.

### 4 CROWN OF THORNS

#### God's Word

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept saying, 'Hail King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face. (John 19:1-3)

#### Reflection

The way of the world is to get rid of trouble makers instead of taking them seriously. Jesus calls for justice and mercy, for help for the poor and broken hearted. The world calls for expediency and uses violence as a means of problem solving. When I turn from the poor and homeless, from the cries for justice, I turn from you Lord. Your kingdom requires sacrifice, sharing of resources, treating each person as my brother or sister. Your kingdom requires me to stand against violence and find another way.

#### Prayer

Jesus, my heart breaks as I watch you humiliated and abused. Like others I hide and am afraid. Help me to realize that you have prevailed over evil not by violence but by testifying to the truth, even when it cost your life. Give me the courage to stand in the faith when I want to run away. Amen.

### 5 SPIKE & MALLET



#### God's Word

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed (Isaiah 53:5)

See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands. ... (Isaiah 49:16)

#### Reflection

The strange thing about being Christian is that our new **life** comes out of Jesus' **death**; that suffering is somehow not the end; that whatever hell and human treachery throw at God, he somehow absorbs it and makes a new beginning out of raw evil.

That's how your new life was purchased. The terrible events of that Friday...called "Good". The scars on his hands from the nails...an engraving of love.

Pick up the spike and mallet. Imagine yourself driving the nails into Jesus' flesh. In a way, that's what happened, because all of our sin sent him there. But one of the miracles of that "good" day was Jesus saying, "Father forgive them." He didn't want that guilt to stick. Not to them, not to you.

#### Prayer

"Jesus, thank you for being pierced for me. Thank you for letting your wounds turn into markers of your love for me. I don't know how you can take evil and make good, but you do. Your pierced hands and feet assure me of your love. I hear your words of forgiveness. By faith, I again claim them as directed at me. Amen.

### 6 HIS CROSS

#### God's Word

Finally, Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the skull. Here they crucified him... (John 19:16-18) I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ..No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. (John 10: 11, 18)

#### Reflection

THE WOOD of the cross is not just the place Jesus was crucified. It is an altar where sacrifices are offered, where an ugly death makes ugly sin gruesomely apparent. The wood of this cross is also a signal. In the Old Testament, the children of Israel put blood on the door posts of their homes so the angel of death would pass over them (thus, Passover). That blood-soaked wood protected them from righteous judgment. **It protects you too.**

And, the wood of this cross is a door frame. It opens eternity to you. The forgiveness it provides brings you to heaven **and** heaven to you on earth.

Jesus loved you enough to go to the cross for you. There is no greater sacrifice of love.

#### Prayer

"Jesus I am so grieved by my sin. I sometimes get careless with my sins, but when I look at this cross, I am reminded of its cost. Thank you for loving me enough to show me without shaming me. Your love is so amazing. I can't heal myself. But you can, you did, and you are worthy of all my praise. Amen.

## 7 THE CURTAIN



### God's Word

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. (Matthew 27:50-51)

### Reflection

GOD IS HOLY AND JUST, and if sinful people were to wander unprotected into his presence, surely they would die. Yet God deeply wants to be with us. One solution would be for God to compromise—to give up being holy and just. But God is God. Yet in mercy God found a way. He sent his son, his heart, who remained holy and yet paid the price of human sin which answered the need for justice. When Jesus gave us this gift he opened a way for us to be with God.

In the Temple, a curtain separated people from God's holy presence. Only the high priest could go into the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year. But something happened the day Jesus died. His frayed flesh opened a "new and living way" to God. The separation was taken away, ripped from top to bottom—thus unmistakably indicating who did the ripping! Now we have direct personal access—not because God stopped being holy, but because God made a way for unholy people like us through forgiveness and cleansing, no matter how guilty or ashamed we feel. Now not just the "High Priest" has access through animal blood of sacrifice, but you and me, entering any time we want, walking right into the awesome presence of our holy God, because Jesus gave his blood.

### Prayer

"Jesus, you have opened a way I could never open myself. You traded your holiness for my sin, and now that holiness covers me. Thank you for giving me your robe of righteousness. I have a relationship with your Father, in all his purity, because of what you've done. Thank you for granting me access into the Holy of Holies, and for inviting me to live with you there forever. Amen."

**Please leave by passing through the veil, and remain in silence until outside the building.**

## Holy Week At A Glance

### Holy Week

Holy Week is the last week of Lent, the week immediately preceding Easter Sunday. It is observed in many Christian churches as a time to commemorate and enact the suffering (Passion) and death of Jesus through various observances and services of worship.

### Palm Sunday

This Sunday observes the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, that was marked by the crowds who were in Jerusalem for Passover waving palm branches and proclaiming him as the messianic king.

### Maundy Thursday

There are a variety of events that are clustered on this last day before Jesus was arrested that are commemorated in various ways in services of worship. These include the last meal together, which was probably a Passover meal, the institution of Eucharist or Communion, the betrayal by Judas (because of the exchange with Jesus at the meal), and Jesus praying in Gethsemane while the disciples fell asleep. Most liturgies, however, focus on the meal and communion as a way to commemorate this day.

### Good Friday

Friday of Holy Week has been traditionally been called Good Friday or Holy Friday. On this day, the church commemorates Jesus' arrest (since by Jewish customs of counting days from sundown to sundown it was already Friday), his trial, crucifixion and suffering, death, and burial. Since services on this day are to observe Jesus' death, and since Eucharist is a celebration, there is traditionally no Communion observed on Good Friday. Also, depending on how the services are conducted on this day, all pictures, statues, and the cross are covered in mourning black, the chancel and altar coverings are replaced with black, and altar candles are extinguished. They are left this way through Saturday, but are always replaced with white before sunrise on Sunday.

## Holy Saturday

This is the seventh day of the week, the day Jesus rested in the tomb. In the first three Gospel accounts this was the Jewish Sabbath, which provided appropriate symbolism of the seventh day rest. While some church traditions continue daily services on Saturday, there is no communion served on this day.

Some traditions suspend services and Scripture readings during the day on Saturday, to be resumed at the [Easter Vigil](#) after sundown Saturday. It is traditionally a day of quiet meditation as Christians contemplate the darkness of a world without a future and without hope apart from God and his grace.

## Easter Sunday

Easter or Resurrection Sunday is the day Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus the Christ from the dead. Even before theologians explained the death of Jesus in terms of various atonement theories, the early church saw his resurrection as the central witness to a new act of God in history and the victory of God in vindicating Jesus as the Messiah. This event marks the central faith confession of the early church and was the focal point for Christian worship, observed on the first day of each week since the first century (Acts 20:7; Sunday was officially proclaimed the day of Christian worship in AD 321).

Easter as an annual celebration of the Resurrection that lies at the center of a liturgical year has been observed at least since the fourth century. Even in churches that traditionally do not observe the other historic seasons of the church year, Easter has occupied a central place as the high point of Christian worship.

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<http://www.cresourcei.org/cyholyweek.html>

<http://www.cresourcei.org/cyeaster.html>