



Monday, March 26, 2012

READ- The Old Testament: Isaiah 50:4-9a

The prophet speaks here of a servant who is faithful to God, even in the face of great adversity and suffering. The servant listens for God's will, is obedient to God's direction, and is confident that God will have the last word in spite of what may happen to him. Jesus exemplified this role of suffering servant in his obedience to God's will in his last days.

REFLECT-

- Do you listen for God's direction in your life? That direction may come through scripture, circumstances, the words and actions of other people or through a deep knowledge in your heart you gain through prayer. Are you listening? If so, are you being obedient?

PRAY-

Lord, help me to know your will for my life and to be obedient as Jesus did, confident that my faithfulness will glorify you. Amen.

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

READ- The Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11

Paul expresses here the essence of Jesus' sacrifice for us. Though he is God in flesh, he chose to live humbly and die in a horrific way so that the sins of the whole world might be taken away. Paul reminds the church at Philippi that they must emulate Jesus' humility, love and obedience in the way they live and treat one another.

REFLECT-

- Letting go of ego, pride and selfish desires is something with which we all struggle. Paul says Jesus "emptied himself" (vs. 7) and took the "form of a slave". We must empty ourselves of all the things that keep us separated from God; then find ways to serve God and one another. What must be cleared away in your life for you to do that?

PRAY-

Father, teach me how to clear away the things that prevent me from doing your will. Give me the insight, strength and courage to let them go. Amen.

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

READ- The Gospel: Mark 14:1-11

This passage begins with the plot among the Pharisees and scribes to kill Jesus, then tells of Jesus eating in the home of a leper and his anointing by an unnamed woman. He foretells his death by expressing his gratitude to that woman for preparing his body for burial. In response, Judas seals the deal with the Jewish authorities to betray Jesus for money.

REFLECT-

- Jesus routinely ate with sinners and the unclean, healed on the Sabbath, and confronted the hypocrisy of Jewish authorities. Compassion and love were his priorities. In what ways do our established religious rules and customs keep "sinners" and the "unclean" out of our churches today?

PRAY-

Loving God, help me to share Christ's love with all whom I encounter today – especially those who are on the margins of society. Amen.

Thursday, March 29, 2012

READ- The Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

The words of the psalmist "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" would be shouted by the people as they joyfully welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem riding on the back of a colt. Jesus, however, would turn out to be "the stone" (vs. 22) who was rejected by the Jewish people; yet he is the cornerstone of our salvation.

REFLECT-

- This psalm expresses thanksgiving and joy to God and foreshadows the way in which God would make our salvation possible through Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Have you taken the time to express your gratitude and love to God? Do it now.

PRAY-

Loving God, thank you for all the blessings of life, for sending your son Jesus so that my sins might be forgiven. Amen.

Friday, March 30, 2012

ACT-

Disciplines for Lent:

• **Gratitude**

Today I am most grateful to God for _____.

• **Fasting**

Today I will give up _____ in solidarity with those who are in need.

• **Repentance**

Today I ask forgiveness for _____ and ask God's guidance in turning away from that sin.

• **Giving**

Today I set aside \$_____ from my abundance to give to someone who is suffering or in need through _____.