

Holy Week



Easter Sunday

An Open Door

I see the light,
For the door has been opened.

It warms my skin,
Seeps into my soul.

Breeze rushes in like the Holy Spirit,
Making the separated whole.

I see the light,
For the door has been opened.

The veil has been torn,
It lies on the floor.

The face of God once covered with shadows,
Now clear and bright for all to adore.

~Katie Knight

Palm Sunday – The Celebration

Passion Sunday – The Preparation with Anticipation

Palm Sunday is the celebration of Jesus as he rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. The image of people celebrating with smiles and shouts of “Hosanna!” The children running around, people laying down their coats and laying palms on the ground for the procession and give honor to Jesus returning as the Savior and King. All of this foretold in the Old Testament and the energy around this event that had been building. THIS CELEBRATION! The contrast of the procession and Jesus proclaimed as King while arriving on a donkey. The donkey that was used for work, for “everyday” people and to represent peace. Jesus riding in to this celebration on an animal of peace understanding what his return to Jerusalem means for himself, those that support him and those that do not.

The image of the celebration continues in a blur as the undercurrents change to preparation and anticipation. Jesus is preparing himself and his disciples for the week ahead and the many years ahead. He prepares his heart and his mind for the daunting task that will be his journey to the Cross. A journey he knows is coming and yet he can only share this preparation with few, as it was not the right time for them to understand. This time will come through the week, with the Last Supper, the Seder meal, and with the trip to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus’ preparation in contrast to the preparation, conspiracy by others, others who see Jesus as a threat and not as the Savior coming in Peace. Preparing to betray and trap him, to demand imprisonment and crucifixion, to anticipate an end to the momentum and energy around Jesus. For them, this peace will not come even after Jesus’ physical death.

With all this as our backdrop, we celebrate Palm Sunday with music and color and children waving palms. We celebrate the greatest Sacrifice our Savior made for our Salvation and we prepare to prayerfully be present through this week. To anticipate the end that is only the Beginning. This Gift given so willingly for our salvation. Celebrate and wait on this Palm Sunday for our Savior, our King. Jesus.

~Meredith Kerr

Monday of Holy Week

Generosity given freely,
Time on a porch
With a pitcher of tea
Tears of pride for a child's success
A compliment because
Your eyes look especially blue today
A steady hand on a shaky day
An impromptu play date complete
With red lipstick, strings of pearls, sparkly high heels
And no reprimand
Warm blankets fresh from the dryer and ready for bed
Flowers given just because
No score card
No expectations
Simply love for love's sake
Like expensive perfume
Dabbed between toes
On an ordinary Monday

~Dawn Kemp

Holy Saturday

The Body in John 19

To ask a prefect for a body was strange--
to ask *this* prefect for *this* body,
this battered remnant of a threat,
this broken promise lolling lifeless;
oh, Joseph, what did you say?

Having washed his hands of this body
and the Man it had been, this Roman waved
away the problem it became; take it
and go somewhere, anywhere else.
Oh, Pilate, what have you done?

Stepping furtively into the day-long twilight
a secret disciple met a secret disciple and
secretly wrapped the Teacher they'd loved
in the myrrh of His birth, wrapping their hopes in death.
Oh, Nicodemus, what will you become?

Sorrowing, they left, these men doing women's work
in the grief that turned everything upside down
over the Man Who never did the expected
now lying in a tomb new as the confusion they felt.
Oh, Jesus, when will You rise?

Jenaba Waggy

Good Friday

Barred windows, walls, fences, barricades, locked doors

We work to keep people out, away, separate or alone

We put up walls for ourselves. We put up walls for others.

The excuse of safety and security

We are forever separating us and them and others

God created this awesome thing called life and we seek to cage it or deter it, separate it to right and wrong, conservative or liberal, he or she, they or them, You or me

I am right therefore you are wrong. Conversations that don't happen because I am right and you are wrong

I'm searching for the grace, the forgiveness

Where is the love? Jesus told us to love. Jesus is Love

He is also the door. And the window. And the curtain

I want so much to open them. We need to open them

Tonya Boot

Tuesday of Holy Week

Words on Words of Protection from Psalm 71

*Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress,
to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.*

Rock

Play upon

Contemplate

To imagine shapes like dogs in clouds

Formidable in large and small, gargantuan
and tiny

Tumble to shine

Piled for protection, formidable as

Fortress

Protectant

Strategically connected rocks

Safety in numbers

Crafted for quality

Withstanding tests and time

Shut in and shut out

This week

between

hosannas and horror

move us

to seek rock and refuge

stone and stability and certainty

In you, Adonai, my rock, I find
refuge

~Barry Petrucci

Wednesday of Holy Week

Hebrews 12: 1-2

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...”

The faithful who have gone on before us have gifted the faith to us. If it were not for them, we would not believe. And future saints will believe because we keep the faith; we bear witness as we follow Jesus Christ.

Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, goes before us and shows us what to do and how to be. He asks us not to dwell on our shortcomings, but to put them aside in order to become more faithful, to persevere and to follow him in leading a life that is not always easy.

There is a great cloud of witnesses that surrounds all of us at Chapel Hill whose faithful lives have inspired us to stay strong in our faith. We have been given their gifts of courage, love and justice to pass on to those who will come after us.

As Good Friday nears and our hearts turn to Jesus' sacrifice for all of us, I invite you to think about the depth of your faith and the legacy of faith you will pass on.

~Pat Catellier

Maundy Thursday Devotion

Kneeling in the garden, I sacrifice the best tulips
cut down to adorn a table set for twelve
Tender petals brush my arm, soft as a baby's foot
freshly washed and oiled
Their perfume mixes with the smells of dinner
drifting through the open window
Lamb, slaughtered impersonally, roasting in the oven
a feast served on mismatched china
A day spent in preparation, forfeiting my time to
menial tasks
hiding the imperfections of normal life
A final moment spent in cleansing, waiting,
remembering
Spring, a time of birth
bringing little deaths
All to provide a blessing of belonging.

~Amy Helmuth