

# Passion (Palm) Sunday

Matthew 21: 1-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66

## **We are heart-throbs for Peace with Justice**

We are all quite familiar with the events of Holy Week. Most of us have heard them, read them, prayed them for a long time, beginning even in childhood.

Our heart-beat is variously strong and weak! Together, as Dominicans, “watch dogs of the Lord,” the heartbeat shows its best, fruitful strength for the glory of our Creator whom we mirror in some mysterious way along with Jesus.



Triumph, Praise, Hosanna, Excitement, Joy, Unbridled Hope . . . beginning a week unparalleled, beginning a week filled with expectation. Jesus, the carpenter from Nazareth enters Jerusalem . . . We mirror this, as Gospel People with our enthusiasm for our Mission, as we PROCLAIM God’s WORD in season, out of season.

At the end of the week the curtain drops, the scenes are devastating, Faith lags!

Judas, needy, greedy, his faithfulness broken, silver speaks loudly, Gift betrayed. Are there betrayals in our lives, individually, collectively?

We reflect . . . We choose . . . .

The Eucharist, the BREAD BROKEN and offered, given then, given now.  
Healing, sharing SACRAMENTALLY, PERSONALLY... pure GIFT!

But the Judas in all of us is prone to question “Is it I, Rabbi? Surely, not I.”  
The truth is FAITHFULNESS. It is a life time endeavor. Our Dominican Heritage bespeaks utter faithfulness to the WORD.

Finally, the condemnation and its affirmation by a rabble of people, the crowd mentality, incited by those who heard the WORD, but whose blinded hearts throbbed no more.

We, too, remember our blind spots, OUR heartthrob lessens where we have been timid to speak truth of our Community Being. Thankfully the Word is not stifled, AND will not be stifled as we journey together, speaking and living boldly for the sake of the Good News as Dominicans committed to God’s TRUTH for PEACE with JUSTICE.

Marilyn MacDonagh, OP  
Tacoma Dominicans

April 17

# Monday of Holy Week

Isaiah 42:1-7; John 12:1-11

Tuesday of Holy Week April 18 Is 49:1-6; Jn12:1-11

Today, Monday, April 18, I began to review the week, called Holy in the Christian tradition. I began to recall the events that happened to Jesus and his disciples. The verse before the Gospel struck me: "He went to his crucifixion like an innocent Lamb." As I tried to reflect on non-violence, I found my thoughts drifting to another book, Tough Minds and Tender Hearts by William O. Paulsell. It focuses on six prophets for Social Justice: Martin Luther King, Jr, Dag Hammarskjöld, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dom Helder Camara, Dorothy Day, and Simone Weil. Through reflecting on this book, I am trying to become a follower of the gentle Jesus. My call to be disciple and follower has brought me to be advocate against the death penalty. The official Catechism of the Church is clear:

# 2267. Assuming that the guilty party's identity and responsibility have been fully determined, the traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude recourse to the death penalty, if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor. If, however, non-lethal means are sufficient to defend and protect people's safety from the aggressor, authority will limit itself to such means, as these are more in keeping with the concrete conditions of the common good and more in conformity with the dignity of the human person. Today, in fact, as a consequence of the possibilities which the state has for effectively preventing crime, by rendering one who has committed an offense incapable of doing harm—without definitively taking away from him the possibility of redeeming himself—the cases in which the execution of the offender is an absolute necessity "are very rare, if not practically non-existent."

Our Bishops have spoken against the death penalty. Go to their web site, [usccb.org](http://usccb.org).



Go also to the site for Sister Helen Prejean, [hprejean@dpdiscourse.net](mailto:hprejean@dpdiscourse.net). Find and say her beautiful prayer to abolish the death penalty so that we may work tirelessly "to renew our society in its very heart so that violence will be no more."

Eileen Walsh, OP and Kay Lewis, OP  
Tacoma Dominicans

April 18

# Tuesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 49:1-6; John 13:21-38

Today our Church calls on Isaiah, a major Old Testament prophet, to introduce the “Servant of the Lord,” called by God to be a “light to the nations and to bring the news of salvation to the ends of the earth.” This preaching of the most messianic of the Old Testament prophets was composed during the reign of King Ahaz, the weakest of Israel’s rulers. Fittingly, Isaiah prefaces today’s gospel account of Jesus’ announcement of His coming betrayal, Peter’s denial and Jesus’ subsequent departure from His disciples.

How tragic this information that John the Beloved inserts into his account of the Last Supper discourses where Jesus is to reveal His love for His own and His prediction of their planned service to the Church that is to come! Yet between these two painful utterances of betrayal and denial we find Jesus exulting in the fact that His hour of fulfillment was about to dawn. He would be lifted up and His plan for the salvation of the world thereby fulfilled. Reading the subsequent Passion account, we will also learn that the rest of the apostolic band were to abandon their leader. Such were the challenges for Jesus who had chosen these very men to bring his message of love to the world.

They had heard Him speak, watched His miracles, seen Him at prayer, been taught by Him to pray...and now!

Have there been times that we who through our baptism and years of sacramental life may have betrayed, denied or deserted the Lord or in some way fallen short of Jesus’ great love for us? How can we learn from today’s gospel account that Jesus remains the Savior of the world and will not give up on us?

What can we learn from today’s liturgy that will strengthen our faith? Let us consider the problems facing so many of our brothers and sisters across the world—loss of life and income caused by natural disasters, family instability, threats of terrorism, joblessness, problems with immigration, violence in our cities, world economic uncertainty, and lack of truth and trust in human relationships.

And Jesus will tell us that He “will be lifted up.”

Mary Paul Mehegan, OP  
Mission San Jose Dominicans



# Wednesday of Holy Week

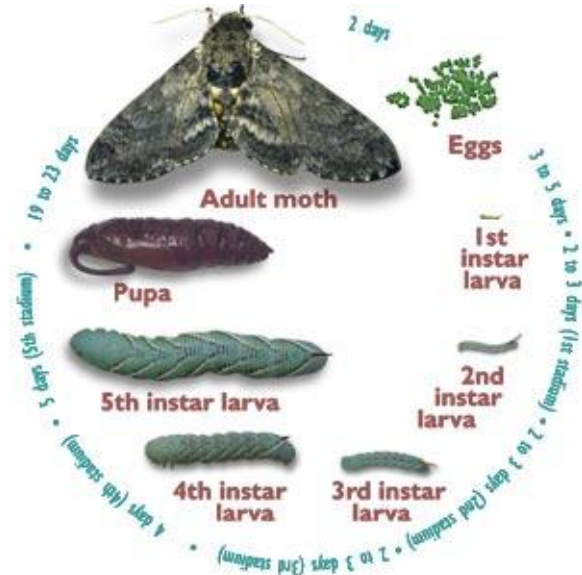
## Isaiah 50:4-9; Matthew 26: 14-25

***The Moth will live and you will triumph . . . You will not be abandoned!***

The Moth triumphs in the end and so will you! In today's readings we reflect on the experiences of life that we have lived. Betrayal, striking, plucking, rebuking, testing, spitting, insulting and the like are part of life. We can even tell about it! In the circle of life the lowly moth endures the same stages and a whole lot more. During the Lenten season it is easier for me to relate to the moth than the butterfly. When you think about the path from egg, to larva, to pupa, to adult that both insects go through . . . it's a wonder. Ponder all that you have been through on life's journey to this very moment! Wow . . . that's a lot!

We find in Isaiah, and in the familiar bad guy story of Judas Iscariot, the one who Jesus said, "it would have been better for that one not to have been born," the struggles of life we have all faced. Reflect on times when you have said to yourself, or others, "I wish \_\_\_\_\_ had never been born"! Oh boy, does that ever tell part of the stages of your journey. Yet we find in today's teachings hope and triumph, not only because you are still here, but because you have endured to this point. Why?

The Lord has given you a learned tongue to share, ears to hear and endurance . . . the endurance of the moth. We can't all be a butterfly, but we can be a moth, being what we are called to be. Moths end up as silk worms, sometimes as hosts for other insects, even lunch for trout but they are sustained for an infinite purpose by the Creator. Surely the "Helper" has sustained you, in your weariness. You have not been abandoned. The tongue of the teacher has lifted you with words . . . and most importantly you have heard them. Your spirit has been lifted at the precise moment that you needed it! Like the moth, somehow you have been lifted over, through the stages of life to now. You have not turned back . . . you have lived your life forward and you are continually called to be. Sustained by the bread, blessed and broken for you despite your struggles, in forgiveness toward the kin-dom that will come!



It is the lord God that helps you! All of your enemies, conscious and subconscious, will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up! The moth will live and you will triumph!

Kevin M. Laughlin  
Friend of the Tacoma Dominicans

April 20

# Holy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15

**“Do you realize what I have done for you?”**

Jesus asked this simple question of his disciples the night before he died. They had gathered to share the Passover meal. Jesus knew that the end of his time on earth was coming to a close. John, in his Gospel, does not include Jesus' words over the bread and wine. Instead he has Jesus doing something that is shocking in the society of his day. In one of the most significant moments of his life he turns the social order upside down.

Jesus, the guest of honor, dons the garb of a slave and stoops to the ground. He becomes a servant and washes the grime of Jerusalem's dusty pathways off the feet of his disciples. Washing feet! It was something considered so degrading in the culture of that time and place that even a master could not require it of a Jewish slave. It was too much for Peter; he protested vehemently. Jesus would never wash his feet.

But Jesus tells him that it is necessary. Unless Jesus can serve his friend in this way, Peter will be estranged from him. Peter relents and accepts this ministry of Jesus. Then Jesus, teacher, God's very Word, tells his disciples – and us – that “as I have done for you, you should also do.” It was a challenge then, and remains so today.

We must listen closely and hear the Word calling us to servant ministry in our own world. We must imitate Jesus' actions in the lives of those who have no place and no voice, in the lives of those who struggle, and in a world that cries out for peace. Our servant ministry is action on behalf of justice. It flows from a love rooted in the divine life as revealed by God's Word, Jesus. It reaches out and includes all so that as community we can truly celebrate Eucharist.

*Today let us ponder the question Jesus asked: Do you realize what I have done for you?  
How do I make Jesus' actions my own? Am I prepared for Eucharist?*

Ann Marie Lustig, OP  
Tacoma Dominicans

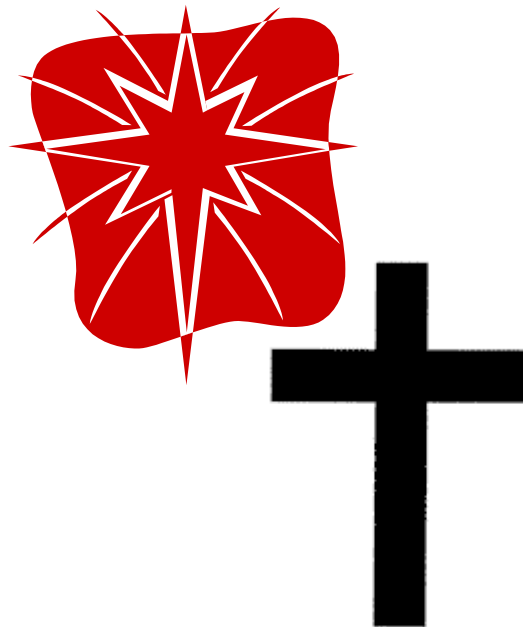
April 21

# Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12, Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9, John 18:1 to 19:42

Several years ago seventh graders in my religion class at Assumption, Seattle, engaged in a heated debate about which feast was more important, Christmas or Easter. Arguments for Christmas ran along these lines: 'If Jesus wasn't born, nothing would have happened.' 'Everyone knows Christmas is more important because we get more vacation and the stores and decorations are bigger.' The Easter side picked up on salvation, the importance of Good Friday, and the ultimate miracle of the Resurrection.

Perhaps there is no one answer given the many layers of meaning of each feast, but I have to agree with the latter team that Good Friday contains a hugely significant lesson which sheds light on all the arguments. Had Jesus lived a life, died a natural death, and then returned from the dead, that would have been a tremendous triumph over death, our most feared event of suffering. But would we humans have really understood that Jesus became FULLY human without his embrace of all the other versions of suffering such as humiliation and violence? These realities have confounded seekers since the beginning of human existence. Jesus learned obedience in a new way on Good Friday and, with confident trust in his "Abba," faced his passion and death which ultimately led to his glorification. Who would have believed it? Good Friday called Mary and the disciples to faith on the darkest day of their lives. We can expect nothing less in our quest to return to God except that we DO know the outcome. We do know that no matter how dark things look, Jesus has already guaranteed that, with hope, the outcome for us will be glorious. This day is not misnamed in the least.



Patty Morisset, OP  
Tacoma Dominicans

# Holy Saturday

## Genesis 1:11– 2:2; Matthew 28:1-10

As the women went to the tomb on the first day of the week, they were greeted by an angel whose message filled them with awe and great joy and they ran to tell the disciples. But alas, that is the story for the night of Holy Saturday. For today we remain in the darkness, in the tomb, in the waiting.

Years ago while on retreat, I was reflecting on the tomb, on the darkness of this quiet day. As I sat there I imaged myself in the tomb as a young girl, scared by the surroundings, cold and lonely. As I waited in the darkness and quiet of the tomb, I could hear my heartbeat and feel the loneliness of that place, even knowing that I was not alone as Jesus was with me. However, he was dead. For a long time I sat, not knowing what to do or how to feel. Sitting with the thoughts and remembrances of my own times of darkness and despair, of loneliness and abandonment, I felt that there was nothing left. All was lost.

I sat there for a long time; then with the sense of nothing left to lose, I reached out and took hold of the hand of Jesus. I cried, "Wake up, Jesus. Please wake up. I need to know you are with me and that there is still hope." To my astonishment the warmth began to return to his body and to the tomb. Jesus moved his hand and removed the bloody clothes from his face. He smiled and said, "It is not yet time. Wait." At that moment I knew the power of God, a grace of comfort that colors the darkness and fear. A ray of hope returned.

On this Holy day, may we spend some time in the quiet of the tomb, reflecting on the loss and despair that surround us daily in our lives and in our world. May we have the courage to be still and wait. For we believe that it is through and in darkness that new rays of hope emerge.

Cyndie Cammack, OP  
San Rafael Dominicans

