

# St. Mark's Lenten Journal

A week by week spiritual guide for  
the season of  
Lent and Holy Week

## Practicing Our Spirituality

February 17 – April 4, 2010

# Introduction

## The Season of Lent

Lent is the period of 40 days, excluding Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes with the Easter Triduum (Maundy Thursday through Easter Day). It is a time of personal examination and collective transformation through spiritual practices such as prayer and self-examination, study, personal retreat, fasting, and almsgiving. Lent is a time when we assume a more contemplative stance in worship, dropping the use of “alleluia” in our responses and reducing the musical and visual elements of worship to create a more austere and solemn tone. By employing such practices, the return of the alleluias, festive music, and ornate décor in the sanctuary contributes to the joy of the resurrection celebration and the understanding of its transforming power.

At St. Mark’s we seek to engage all parishioners in the Lenten observance in one way or another. From mid-week suppers and special outreaches to Bible study and sacramental offerings, we invite everyone to take part in *Practicing Our Spirituality*. This Lenten Journal is designed to be one tool to help us engage in the season of Lent both individually and collectively as a parish.

## Using this Journal

Members of our parish have created reflections, based on the lectionary readings for each Sunday in Lent. The journal is meant to provide a guide for daily personal quiet time. In addition to a reflection on each week’s scripture lessons, our writers have provided questions or exercises for you to contemplate or engage in throughout the week leading up to the appointed Sunday’s readings. If daily devotions are new to you, we recommend spending 10 – 15 minutes each day, reading, thinking about the daily question or exercise, and praying. Do your best to set aside time everyday for this practice, but if you get off track, don’t give up! Just keep trying!

Space has been provided for responses or personal notes for each day. A column labeled “Putting My Faith to Work” is included for you to log ways you are living out your faith on a daily basis. The list below provides a few suggestions for spiritual practices, and you are invited to add others as the season progresses.

At the end of this booklet you will find the entire schedule for Lent at St. Mark’s. We hope you will commit to trying one or more new habits or practices during this season.

## A few suggested Lenten Spiritual Practices

- Pray the Daily Office (from the Book of Common Prayer, p. 37 Rite I or p. 75 Rite II) or online at [www.dailyoffice.org](http://www.dailyoffice.org)
- Sign up to host a coffee hour
- Participate in at least one special Lenten opportunity at St. Mark's each week
- Join the prayer shawl knitting group
- Attend a new Sunday School class
- Make offerings to the United Thank Offering and the School Uniform appeal.
- Sign up to help at a PADS evening or bring food for PADS lunches
- Take advantage of all of the sacraments offered at St. Mark's – attend a Wednesday Noon Eucharist or Friday 7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross
- Help serve a Wednesday Lenten supper
- Attend the Tuesday 6:00 a.m. or Wednesday 11:00 a.m. prayer groups

## Lenten Missions

**United Thank Offering** – the little blue boxes. Take a box home and fill it with change as you give thanks for the blessings God has bestowed upon you. By participating in this offering, we participate in the worldwide reach of the Episcopal Church and assist others around the world in a myriad of important missions, from Africa to Haiti to poverty stricken areas in America.

**School Uniform Drive** – Bishop Lee has challenged every member of the Chicago Diocese to make an offering of \$12 to purchase a school uniform for impoverished children whose access to education is hampered only by their lack of ability to purchase a uniform. This appeal responds to the Diocese's Second Millennium Development goal to provide universal access to primary education for all.

## Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2010

### Joel 2:12-13

*Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.*

This excerpt from the Joel reading for the day provides appropriate instruction for us at the onset of this Lenten season. While Joel is telling the people that they must repent, he also assures them that God is abounding in steadfast love. As you approach this Lenten season, I hope you will take time to not only practice penitence, but more importantly, to reflect on those characteristics of God that Joel affirms: gracious and merciful; slow to anger; steadfast love. As you accept the ashes from last year's Palm branches, contemplate the ways you will commit to Practicing your Spirituality throughout these upcoming 40 days.

### Ash Wednesday Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Week of February 15 ~ 21

Scripture Readings for the First Sunday in Lent:

- Deuteronomy 26:1-11
- Psalms 91:1-2, 9-16
- Romans 10:8b-13
- Luke 4:1-13

It rained for forty days and forty nights as Noah waited out the flood, trusting in God’s word.

Moses was on the mountain with God for forty days, returning with the Law and the reminder of gratitude for all that God provided.

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil” (Luke 4:1-2). Jesus fasted for forty days in the wilderness, and facing Satan with faith and the knowledge to “worship the Lord your God and serve him only” (Luke 4:8).

As we enter this season of Lent, our forty days, we have the opportunity to intentionally choose to stand against that to which we are tempted, against that to which we place our faith, against that which distracts us from our efforts to serve in God’s name.

What will you do with these forty days of Lent?

Consider the readings for this first full week of Lent. Consider the words of Moses in Deuteronomy, David in the Psalm, Paul to the Romans, and Jesus as recorded in Luke. Consider devoting this Lenten season, your forty days, not to resisting the temptations created by denial, but to trusting and thanking God through serving, serving others and, in doing so, serving Him.

Trust God and thank God by serving Him as He serves you: unannounced, unconditionally, and unwrapped. Give God your forty days.

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Monday <span style="float: right;">February 15</span>                      Deuteronomy 26: 7-10                      Moses reminds the Israelites of the rise of their nation due to the fact that God heard their cries, saw their misery, and brought them out of the oppression. When has God heard and responded to your cry for help?</p>	
<p>Tuesday <span style="float: right;">February 16</span>                      Deuteronomy 26:2                      Moses reminds the Israelites to give the first fruits to God in gratitude. What are God’s gifts to you today and how will you thank him?</p>	

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Wednesday <span style="float: right;">February 17</span>  Psalm 91:2  David says of God that “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” In what way do you give up control and trust God?</p>	
<p>Thursday <span style="float: right;">February 18</span>  Psalm 91: 9-10  David says that “If you make the Most High your dwelling . . .then no harm will befall you.” Reflect upon a time when God has kept you safe.</p>	
<p>Friday <span style="float: right;">February 19</span>  Romans 10:11  “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” Paul writes to the Romans about the contrast between the life dictated by the whims of the flesh and the life dedicated to the will of God. To what degree is/was your day dictated by the flesh or dedicated to God?</p>	
<p>Saturday <span style="float: right;">February 20</span>  The wilderness in which Jesus spent forty days mirrors in many ways your walk through Lent. What temptations have confronted you and threatened your trust in God, your thankfulness toward God, or your acts of service for God?</p>	

Sunday: How have you practiced your spirituality this week?

The Week of February 22 ~ 28

Scripture Readings for the Second Sunday in Lent:

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm 27

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 13:31-35

The themes of covenant, faithfulness, and trust run through this week’s readings. In the reading from Genesis, Abraham makes a covenant with God. Abraham offers to God a number of animals and God gives Abraham and his descendants a wide swath of land. It must have taken some faith for Abraham to give up those animals without quite knowing what he would get in return. Paul talks in his letter to the Philippians about how it can be difficult to stay true to our covenant with God. There are so many distractions and other priorities that get in the way and lead us off course. It’s all too easy to allow ourselves to be distracted than to do what we need to keep ourselves in relationship with God, even though we know that it sustains and nurtures us. Our relationship with God is a two-way relationship, just as it is with anyone we know and love.

Another thing that strikes me in these readings is the imagery of God as protector. He is a shield in Genesis and a light, shelter, and helper in the Psalm. My favorite, though, is the image in Luke’s Gospel of Jesus as a mother hen that gathers her chicks up under her wings. All of us easily distracted little birds, and a woman working to keep us safe under her wing!

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Monday <span style="float: right;">February 22</span> How do you imagine God as your protector?</p>	
<p>Tuesday <span style="float: right;">February 23</span> What do you offer God in your Covenant?</p>	

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Wednesday <span style="float: right;">February 24</span>            What do you expect from God?</p>	
<p>Thursday <span style="float: right;">February 25</span>            How do you cultivate your relationships with others?</p>	
<p>Friday <span style="float: right;">February 26</span>            What distractions prevent you from tending to your relationship with God?</p>	
<p>Saturday <span style="float: right;">February 27</span>            What distractions prevent you from tending to your relationships with those you love?</p>	

Sunday: How have you practiced your spirituality this week?

# Reflection

Edna Heatherington

## The Week of March 1 - 7

Scripture Readings for the Third Sunday in Lent:

- Exodus 3:1-15
- Psalms 63:1-8
- I Corinthians 10:1-13
- Luke 13:1-9

Moses turns aside from his shepherding to behold the bush burning with fire and not consumed encounters the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Lord gives him his astonishing task, to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, saying "I will be with you." Here the Lord gives the mysterious Name, I AM THAT I AM.

Despite the earthiness of this encounter, the great mystery of the Creator of the Universe is expressed in this Name. In the Psalm, David calls on God from the wilderness, "a dry and weary land where there is no water." Yet he finds God in the sanctuary: "I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name." (Psalm 63:1,4)

In our passage from Luke, Jesus tells his followers that suffering and death are not meted out as punishment for special sins and then also tells the parable of the fig tree, which may be allowed to stand if, with water and food, it will after all produce fruit. Paul reminds the church at Corinth that although our ancestors led by Moses were baptized in the Red Sea and fed with spiritual food (manna), they nevertheless sinned, and the story is written to instruct us. "No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone," he says. "God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength." (I Cor. 10:13)

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Monday <span style="float: right;">March 1</span> Our ancestors in the desert couldn't wait for Moses to return with the Word of God and turned to an idol. The people at Corinth were also tempted to join in some other practice, as though the Lord's table were not sufficient. What in our time and place tempts me to neglect my own calling?</p>	
<p>Tuesday <span style="float: right;">March 2</span> If you read the story of Moses' life before he led his sheep to Horeb, you will find that he took action against injustice, not only of an Egyptian against a Hebrew, but also of a Hebrew against a Hebrew and of Midianites against Midianites. The Creator of all cares for all of humanity. Am I looking beyond my own family and friends?</p>	

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p style="text-align: right;">March 3</p> <p>Wednesday</p> <p>In our spiritual practice, we do not decide whether God exists, but decide how to participate in existence, the great I AM. Prayer, meditation, an hour at Noon Eucharist may refresh your awareness of God who will be with you.</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">March 4</p> <p>Thursday</p> <p>Growing in faith and branching out: The fig tree is a traditional image of the People of God. Jesus teaches both in parables and admonitions, and by his example, how to bear fruit: Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, help the vulnerable, heal the sick. And just as I will not be tested beyond my strength, I will fulfill the task by taking it up with my heart and strength. Are you doing what you can?</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">March 5</p> <p>Friday</p> <p>All the weeks of Lent lead to Holy Week and Easter. Will you take part today in the 7:00 p.m. evening Stations of the Cross?</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">March 6</p> <p>Saturday</p> <p>In the Psalms, David calls on God from the wilderness, "a dry and weary land where there is no water." Yet he finds God in the sanctuary: "I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name."</p>	

Sunday: How have you practiced your spirituality this week?

## The Week of March 8 ~ 14

Scripture Readings for the Fourth Sunday in Lent:

Joshua (4:19-24): 5:9-12

Psalm 34 or 34:1-8

2 Corinthians 8:17-21

Luke 15:11-32

One of the beauties of the lectionary is that the readings, all from different parts of *The Bible*, have a common thread running through them. As you read the passages above, you will quickly identify the themes of deliverance and redemption woven throughout. In Joshua, we find the people of Israel, having escaped the tyranny of Egypt 40 years earlier, finally cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land. Finally, the promise God made to Moses is fulfilled. Finally, they can eat actual food instead of manna. Finally, they have arrived in the land of milk and honey. They have been delivered!

In Psalm 34 we listen to David, “I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.” Again, God delivers. David continues, “When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.... The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.” We aren’t promised a life without difficulties, trials, and obstacles, but David assures us that the Lord hears our cries for help and will rescue us.

I know that when I face difficulties, I want to be rescued from them immediately, but I am reminded that the Israelites spent 40 long years wandering in the wilderness before they were able to enter the Promised Land. Maybe the wait makes the honey sweeter.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul tells us “...if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new.” Paul tells us that through Christ we are delivered from our selfish, sinful selves and become new. I admit that I don’t often feel that I am a new creation, but I believe that when God looks at me, he sees someone who has been redeemed through Christ. It seems abstract and mysterious, but as I reflect back on the People of Israel written about in Joshua, I can see there was a process involved in their deliverance. It takes time. God is working out his redemption in each of us daily.

The familiar story of the Prodigal Son also echoes the themes of deliverance and redemption. The younger brother squanders all that his father has given him, and yet his father welcomes him home with celebration and rejoicing. His son has been delivered. The Prodigal Son is a new creation, just like that spoken about in 2 Corinthians. The father tells the older brother, “...this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”

There is much rejoicing when we can recognize that God hears us, redeems us, and delivers us. This week, spend time reflecting on God’s promises of deliverance and redemption. How have you seen God at work in your own life?

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Monday <span style="float: right;">March 8</span>            Thank you, God, for delivering me from my fears.</p>	
<p>Tuesday <span style="float: right;">March 9</span>            How can I be an “ambassador for Christ” this week? ( 2 Cor.)</p>	
<p>Wednesday <span style="float: right;">March 10</span>            Help me, Lord, to seek peace, and pursue it this week. (Ps.34)</p>	
<p>Thursday <span style="float: right;">March 11</span>            Let me be a new creation through whom the world can see God’s love.</p>	
<p>Friday <span style="float: right;">March 12</span>            Help me, Lord, keep my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking deceit.</p>	
<p>Saturday <span style="float: right;">March 13</span>            Thank you, Father, for delivering me and redeeming me.</p>	

Sunday: How have you practiced your spirituality this week?

The Week of March 15 – 21

Scripture readings for the fifth week of lent:

- Isaiah 43:16-21
- Psalm 126
- Philippians 3:4b-14
- John 12:1-8

*Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and a river in the desert. (Isaiah 43:18-19 )*

*When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced. (Psalm 126: 1-3)*

*Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14)*

The readings this week seem to call us to let go of the past so we can receive what God has for us today and in the future. How often in our lives are we hampered by what has happened in the past? Sometimes bad experiences keep us living in fear, unable to trust God or see his hand at work in our lives. We may have regrets over mistakes we have made, wrongs we have perpetrated. At times, these regrets can induce feelings of guilt that leave us mired in shame and self-loathing. Other times, as Paul reminds us, we may rest on past achievements or status and cannot see our need of God. If we don’t examine ourselves and let go of the past, we may miss what God has for us today. Lent is a time for self-examination and repentance – let us take this opportunity to start fresh and be made new.

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Monday <span style="float: right;">March 15</span> Spend some time reading this week’s scripture. Take note of any imagery that is especially meaningful to you. Has God ever made a way for you through the wilderness?</p>	
<p>Tuesday <span style="float: right;">March 16</span> Consider difficult times from your past. Ask God to help you recall ways he has met you in those difficulties and brought you through to where you are today.</p>	

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p data-bbox="186 184 1003 218"><b>Wednesday</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>March 17</b></span></p> <p data-bbox="186 222 1003 289">Spend some time in prayer, asking God to help you identify any ways you are hampered from experiencing His healing and growth.</p>	
<p data-bbox="186 531 1003 564"><b>Thursday</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>March 18</b></span></p> <p data-bbox="186 569 1003 636">Ask God to help you let go and open your hands for what He has for you at this season in your life.</p>	
<p data-bbox="186 882 1003 915"><b>Friday</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>March 19</b></span></p> <p data-bbox="186 919 1003 1020">Think about God's character as it is revealed in the parable of the vineyard owner. Is this an example of God putting the past behind him in order to pursue a deeper relationship with his people?</p>	
<p data-bbox="186 1266 1003 1299"><b>Saturday</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>March 20</b></span></p> <p data-bbox="186 1304 1003 1472">Consider Paul's position as he relates it in Philippians. Are there any ways you are resting on your laurels and not stepping out to experience new ways to participate in God's work? Be "like those who dream" and imagine what God can do in and through you now that you are free from your past.</p>	

Sunday: How have you practiced your spirituality this week?

The Week of March 22 – 28

Scripture Readings for Palm/Passion Sunday

Luke 19:29-40, 22:39-71, 23:1-49 (50-56)

Psalm 118:19-29, 22:1-21

Isaiah 45:21-25 52:13-53

Jesus comes to us on a donkey half the size of a horse. He is not pushing military power but to claim publicly that he was the chosen Son of David, the one of whom the prophets had spoken. He offers peace that is not fragile like the peace the world gives, so that we may not be afraid. It might feel more like a mirroring affirmation than an idealization moment. As he rides down into the Mount of Olives, we find a sense of self held through this interaction. Perhaps he enters and opens the gates of the Lord (Psalm 118:19) in our internal world. Indeed, the prince of peace holds our experience through perfect atonement. We cry out “I will give thanks to you, for you answered me (Psalm 118:21)”. We say “you are he who took me out of the womb and kept me safe upon my mother’s breast (Psalm 22:9).” There is much celebration and when the Pharisees demand that he reprimand his disciples for singing aloud, he answered, “I tell you, if my disciples keep silence the stones will shout aloud.” He even affirms our celebration.

In his hours of darkness, we know that Jesus is true God and true man not in the exploits of a superhero but in the story about us. “Father if it be thy will, take this cup away from me. Yet not my will but thine be done,” he says while praying (Luke 22:42). After suffering under Pilate he comforts the criminal, “I tell you this: today you shall be with me in Paradise.” He said this to the man as if he were the stone that the builders rejected soon to become the chief cornerstone (Psalm 118:22).

Only Luke gives us the seventh word from the cross—“Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” We experience the intimacy of this relationship that everything from the beginning depended on his doing the Father’s will. He really is the Word of God incarnate and one of us. Everything is done. Now we go home to the waiting father.

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p>Monday <span style="float: right;">March 22</span>                      Begin a breathing meditation and if it feels right, visualize Jesus riding through the Mount of Olives and into Jerusalem. Notice sensations in your body and identify feelings experienced. See if you could picture Jesus coming into your heart or somewhere in your soul.</p>	
<p>Tuesday <span style="float: right;">March 23</span>                      Read Luke 19:30 and then refer to 1Kings 1:33 to reflect on what Jesus was claiming by being mounted on a donkey. Work this through intellectually, during the day.</p>	

Reflection	Putting My Faith to Work
<p style="text-align: right;">Wednesday <span style="float: right;">March 24</span></p> <p>Read Psalm 118:24 and write the verse down in a safe place. Repeat “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” before closing your eyes for a short meditation and visualize the triumphant entry. Repeat this exercise three times during the day.</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">Thursday <span style="float: right;">March 25</span></p> <p>Read Luke 23:42-43 and imagine what the criminal might look like and what he was feeling when he said “Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Then read Psalm 118:22 and make any intellectual or emotional connections between the criminal and the stone the builder rejected.</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">Friday <span style="float: right;">March 26</span></p> <p>At the end of your evening prayers, close your eyes and try to get centered; open you palms face up, while repeating: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” Notice and then write what you are experiencing.</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">Saturday <span style="float: right;">March 27</span></p> <p>Read Luke 19:29-40, 22:39-71, and 23:1-49. After reading try to create a mental image of the Passion:Palm Scripture passage.</p>	

Sunday: How have you practiced your spirituality this week?

Holy Week Reflection .....David Fletcher  
March 29 – April 3

We have been working through Lent, walking with Christ the rugged path of discipline and self denial. We have opened our lives to the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit and have engaged in some difficult self scrutiny. The nearer we get to Good Friday, the more urgent the task seems. Lent culminates in Holy Week, the most dramatic part of the Lenten season, which brings us face to face with the events surrounding Christ's betrayal and execution on our behalf and for our sake. In Holy Week we do not simply remember; but we experience anew the sufferings and abandonment experienced by our Lord on our behalf. Holy Week is the most important and most significant time of the Christian year.

**March 29 Holy Monday**

**Rite II Eucharist at Noon**

Read and Reflect on one or more of the appointed scriptures for the day:

Isaiah 42:1-9

Hebrews 9:11-15

John 12:1-11

Psalm 36:5-11

Collect for the day:

*Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

**March 30 Holy Tuesday**

**Rite II Eucharist at Noon**

Ready and Reflect on one or more of the appointed scriptures for the day:

Isaiah 49:1-7

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

John 12:20-36

Psalm 71:1-14

Collect for the day:

*O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

**March 31 Holy Wednesday****Rite II Eucharist at Noon**

Ready and Reflect on one or more of the appointed scriptures for the day:

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Hebrews 12:1-3

John 13:21-32

Psalm 70

Collect for the day:

*Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

**April 1 Maundy Thursday****Agape Feast at 6:15 and Liturgy at 7:30 p.m.**

Maundy Thursday continues the gathering dramatic intensity begun in our Palm Sunday liturgy, as the Lord moves inexorably towards his execution. The central theme of this day is the institution of the Holy Communion, or Holy Eucharist, by the Lord himself at the Last Supper. The Maundy Thursday communion marks the beginning of the *Triduum*, a three day period that ends the evening of Easter Sunday. These are the holiest three days of the Christian year. "Maundy" refers to the mandatum, or command, given by Christ as he washed his disciples' feet: "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another even as I have loved you." (John 13:1-5) A common Maundy Thursday custom was for abbots to wash the feet of monks and for kings to wash the feet of peasants. Even after the Reformation, English royalty "kept the Maundy" by washing the feet of poor people. In recent years, the practice of foot washing has been revived in the Episcopal Church.

The thought of foot washing can be uncomfortable for many. Contemplate what other acts of service one might do in today's culture that would be similar to foot washing. Go and perform such an act of service.

At St. Mark's we begin our Maundy Thursday observance with an Agape Feast at 6:15 p.m. In the early church, the Eucharist was preceded by a simple meal as a celebration of Christian fellowship. In our Agape Feast, we will share bread, cheese, dried fruits, wine, and other foods. So fellowship, enjoy yourself, partake fully in all of the foods that the church provides for you, and prepare your hearts for the Maundy Thursday liturgy at 7:30 p.m.

Upon leaving his last dinner with his disciples, Jesus brought them to the Garden of Gethsemane, asking them to spend the night in prayer with him. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me," Matthew 26:38. You are invited to reenact this time of earnest prayer at the Prayer Vigil. You will have an opportunity to sign up for a period of time during the night to pray in the presence of the sacrament that has been placed in the chapel. Our goal is to fill every time slot so that we can offer constant prayer through the night as we prepare for the Good Friday service.

**April 2**

**Good Friday Services at Noon and 7:30 p.m.**

On Good Friday we follow our Lord Jesus Christ up to Golgotha to suffer Crucifixion, as He Himself predicted he must do. This is a day of holy sorrow and solemnity as we enter in silence and rehearse the incomprehensible suffering that our Lord suffered at the hands of sinful humanity for our sakes. The most ancient Good Friday customs included veneration of a wooden cross to represent the cross on which Christ died. We will observe the Stations of the Cross, a series of meditations on Christ's sufferings on the way to his death, in services at Noon and 7:30 p.m.

**April 3**

**Easter Vigil Service 7:30 p.m.**

On Holy Saturday until sundown, we do not celebrate the Eucharist. On this day we keep vigil over his tomb. This is the most intense day of Lent and of Holy Week, the day in which we must face the full reality of Christ's death on the cross for our redemption and in our place. On this most somber day of the church year, hope seems to have died with our Lord, but we are not left in despair. The somber reflection of Holy Saturday is not a defeat; it is a preparation for the explosive joy of the Easter celebration. Today pray the collect from the Book of Common Prayer (p. 283):

*O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

The first celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord will be the Easter Vigil, where we can now again proclaim the Resurrection. The sun has set, and in liturgical time it is now Easter Sunday. The vigil has a number of special elements: the blessing of the new fire, the lighting of the paschal candle, a service of lessons detailing God's mighty acts of salvation in both the Old and New Testaments and Baptisms. We pray at this service, "*This is the night when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life. This is the night when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell and rose victorious from the grave.*" (Book of Common Prayer, p. 287).

### **2010 Lenten and Easter Calendar**

#### **Ash Wednesday – Service of Ashes**

February 17, 2010 7:00 a.m., Noon, 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary

#### **Evensong with Bishop Lee**

Sunday, March 14, 2010

6:00 p.m. Evensong service, followed by a community meal

#### **Mid-Week Programs throughout Lent**

Every Wednesday, Rite II Eucharist at 12 noon.

Brown bag lunch and exploration of scripture follows on select Wednesdays (February 24<sup>th</sup> ; March 10<sup>th</sup> , 24<sup>th</sup>)

Stations of the Cross, Fridays at 7:00 p.m.

February 19<sup>th</sup> , 26<sup>th</sup> , March 5<sup>th</sup> , 12<sup>th</sup> , 19<sup>th</sup> , 26<sup>th</sup>

Wednesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> – Hunger Banquet 6:15 – 7:45 p.m.

Wednesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – Spiritual Practices  
6:15 – 7:45 p.m. Soup supper followed by a program about Spiritual Practices

Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> – The Messiah  
6:15 – 7:45 p.m. Soup supper, followed by a program featuring selections from Handel's Messiah

Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> – Labyrinth  
6:15 – 7:45 p.m. Soup supper, followed by the opportunity to walk a portable labyrinth set up in Mahon Hall

Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> – Seder Meal  
6:15 – 7:45 p.m. Instructed Seder meal in Mahon Hall.

## Holy Week

March 28 <sup>th</sup> 8:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Palm Sunday Rite I Eucharist Procession of the Palms and Rite II Eucharist begins in the lower parking lot, weather permitting.
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March 29 <sup>th</sup> 12:00 noon	Monday in Holy Week Rite II Eucharist, Chapel
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March 30 <sup>th</sup> 12:00 noon	Tuesday in Holy Week Rite II Eucharist, Chapel
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March 31 <sup>st</sup> 12:00 noon	Wednesday in Holy Week Rite II Eucharist, Chapel
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April 1 <sup>st</sup> 6:15, 7:30 p.m. 9:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.	Holy Thursday Agape meal, followed by Rite II Eucharist Watch in the Chapel
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April 2 <sup>nd</sup> 12 noon 7:30 p.m.	Good Friday Service for children, led by Pastor Robin Stations of the Cross followed by Eucharist from reserve sacrament.
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April 3 <sup>rd</sup> 7:30 p.m.	Easter Vigil The Great Vigil of Easter, with reception to follow.
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April 4 <sup>th</sup> 9:00 and 11:15 a.m.	Easter Day Rite II Eucharist. Egg hunt for children follows both services
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