

Journey in the Desert



Week Seven
Finding the Oasis—Jesus Christ

As you begin this season of Lent, reflect on this passage.

When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it again until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you (that) from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

Luke 22: 14-20

God has blessed you with many gifts this Lenten season. What has God given you this Lenten season? Why do you think he gave this gift to you and how has it changed your life? What has it allowed you to do that you could not do before this Lent started?

Sixth Week of Lent

Daily prayer: Each morning as you begin your day, light a candle and say the following prayer:

God our Father, by raising Christ your Son you conquered the power of death and opened for us the way to eternal life. Let this day renew my hope through the Spirit that is within me. Let your Spirit open my eyes so that I may know him in the Eucharist and follow him in his risen life. We ask all of these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What are you hoping for this day? What can Jesus Christ offer you this day? What can you offer Jesus Christ?

Daily meditation: Following is a portion the daily Gospel for each day this week. Read this scripture passage each morning, then reflect on the questions.

Sunday—They proclaimed: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” He said in reply, “I tell you, if they keep silent, the stones will cry out!” (Luke 19:38-40)

What is Jesus trying to get across when he says that the stones will cry out?

What does that say about our silence?

What will it take for us to cry out? What will you cry out?

Monday—The large crowd of the Jews found out that Jesus was in Bethany and came, not only because of him, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too, because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him. (John 12:9-11)

We often want to see the miraculous things that God can do just like the Jews wanted to see Lazarus after he was raised from the dead. What can you do to see the little miracles in the ordinary routine of your day?

The Jews were believing in Jesus because of the raising of Lazarus. Why do you believe in Jesus?

Tuesday—Simon Peter said to him, “Master, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, though you will follow later.” Peter said to him, “Master, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Amen, amen, I say to you, the cock will not crow before you deny me three times.” (John 13:36-38)

Are you ready to follow Jesus now? If you said yes, where do you think Jesus would lead you? If no, why not and what will it take to say yes?

What would it mean to “lay down your life for Jesus?”

Wednesday—One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on he looked for an opportunity to hand him over. (Matthew 26:14-16)

Judas said, “What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?” Have you ever considered that every time you sin, you have exchanged Jesus Christ for the pleasures of this world? Yet, you don’t reach the despair that Judas did when you sin. What has Jesus offered to you that keeps you coming back to him?

Thursday—So when he had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, “Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me ‘teacher’ and ‘master,’ and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.” (John 13:12-15)

What is the model that Jesus has given us to follow?

The washing of feet was only to serve as the example and to inspire us. Can you list at least ten ways that you can model your life after Jesus?

Friday—After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I thirst.” There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, “It is finished.” And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit. (John 19:28-30)

When Jesus said “I thirst” he obviously was referring to something more than a physical thirst. Have you ever imagined that Jesus thirsts for you?

What did Jesus mean when he said, “it is finished”? Obviously if something finished, there must also be a beginning. What is that beginning?

What have you handed over to Jesus?

Saturday—But Peter got up and ran to the tomb, bent down, and saw the burial cloths alone; then he went home amazed at what had happened. (Luke 24:12)

Peter ran to the tomb. Do you run to Jesus? How? When?

Peter obviously believed without having to have actually witnessed the resurrection. How often are you amazed at what God has done in your life even though you have no tangible proof? When was the last time you were amazed?

Journey Check Point

This is Holy Week...let's do a quick check up on the three main components of our Lenten journey. What are you doing differently now than you did before Lent started? Make some brief notes in each of the areas below. Look back at your workbook from week one if you need more suggestions.

Prayer—

Fasting—

Almsgiving—

If you chose to adopt a virtue, reflect more on that virtue this week. Imagine being Simeon of Cyrene, and carrying the cross for Jesus. In just one gaze, Jesus thanks you for not only carrying the cross, but also for being _____? List all of your virtues that Jesus finds pleasing.

If you are working at losing a vice, how far have you come since Lent began?

Jesus is ready to take this vice to the cross for you. How do you feel about letting it go for good?

Take a few minutes before attending Mass this weekend to read over the words to this song which we will be singing as one of the Easter Communion songs.

The Strife is O'er

The strife is o'er, the battle done;
Now is the Victor's triumph won;
Now be the song of praise begun: Alleluia!

Death's mightiest powers have done their worst,
And Jesus has his foes dispersed;
Let shouts of praise and joy outburst: Alleluia!

He closed the yawning gates of hell;
The bars from heavens high portals fell;
Let hymns of praise his triumph tell: Alleluia!

On the third morning he rose again,
Glorious in majesty to reign;
O let us swell the joyful strain: Alleluia!

Just looking at the first verse...what was the battle and how was it finished? What does this mean to you? (Use additional paper as needed.)

And finally...

Look at your workbook from week one again. So, how did it go? What have these past six weeks been like? Are you ready for Easter? How do you know?

Did you enjoy this Lenten series? Do you have any suggestions or critiques? What did you like about it, what can we improve on? Send your thoughts to feedback@epiphanymn.org. Thanks!