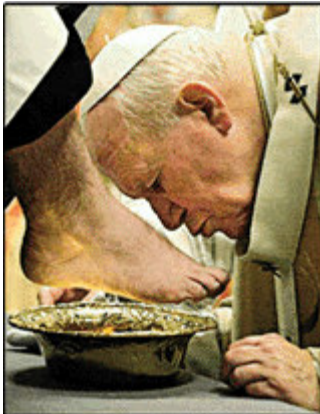




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## ***Celebrating the Lord's Passover (The Triduum): SUGGESTIONS for PERSONAL AND FAMILY PRAYER***

*by Marcellino D'Ambrosio, Ph.D.*



*Sundown on Holy Thursday marks the beginning of three sacred days (Triduum) that changed the destiny of the human race. Few of us have sufficient time to make use of all the following prayer suggestions during these holy days, but it would be a tragedy to let this season of grace go by without taking some time for extended prayer and reflection. So steal away for as much time as you can and let the Spirit help you pick and choose which devotions will best help you make the most of this special time. See also the other Triduum readings, prayers, and resources in the Lent and Holy Week sections of *The Crossroads Initiative Library*.*

### **HOLY THURSDAY**

***Jn. 13:1-18:27*** deals with the words and deeds of Jesus on the evening of Holy Thursday, including the washing of feet of the disciples and the Last Supper discourse and priestly prayer of our Lord, Jesus arrest in the Garden of Gethsemani and Peter's denial. Prayerfully read as much of this as you can--these are some of the most powerful and moving chapters in the entire Bible.

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## GOOD FRIDAY MORNING

### **1) Repentance for Complicity in Christ's Betrayal**

(approx. 60 min) Read **Lk. 22:39** through **Lk. 23:26**, but only after asking the Holy Spirit to answer these questions in the course of your reading:



1. In what way am I an accomplice in the betrayal and execution of the Lord?
2. Whom in the gospel narrative do I most resemble: the disciples asleep in the garden? the cowardly Peter? the irresponsible Pilate? someone else?
3. Write down the answers in your journal, if you keep one.

In response to the Spirit's prompting:

1. Pray a prayer repenting of the particular sins in your life that have made you an accomplice in the Lord's betrayal and execution.
2. Confidently ask the Lord to help you to root these sins out of your life.
3. Engage in any spiritual warfare necessary to dislodge the Enemy from the area of your life under consideration.
4. Finally, seal this process by a slow, prayerful reading of **Psalm 51**. You might even feel led to memorize a portion of it.

### **2) Putting on the Mind of Christ** (approx. 30 min.)

Now that we have cast off the "mind" of darkness, we can put on "the mind of Christ."

1. Read **Phil. 2:5-11** and consider how Jesus' humble self-offering on the cross was the perfect manifestation of his "mind."
2. Read **Phil. 2:1-5, 14-15** and see how St. Paul commands us to have the same mind as the Lord.
3. Ask the Lord what particular characteristics of his mind he wishes to impart to you in a new way during these special days: humility? obedience? a new degree of service love? some other? Ask Him to show you how this is to be worked out concretely and practically in the present circumstances of your life. Write in your journal whatever the Lord tells you.
4. Say yes to what He wants to do in you and ask Him to make it happen by the power of His Spirit.
5. Use **Psalm 116**, one of the "Hallel" Psalms prayed by Jesus at the Last Supper, to express your gratitude to the Lord for freeing you from sin through his death and for bestowing upon you his mind.

## GOOD FRIDAY AFTERNOON

The most solemn time of the whole Christian year is from noon to 3:00 PM on Good Friday since that was the time of the Lord's agony on the cross according to the Gospel of John. During this time, we should strive to honor the death of the Lord in the most personal and heartfelt way possible.



1. Meditate slowly and deeply upon **Isaiah 52:13** through **Is. 53:13**. This is the song of the Suffering Servant.
2. Read **Zech. 12:10** and respond with silent prayer of mourning and adoration. You may want to make use of "the Jesus Prayer" which consists of the following petition repeated over and over: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner."
3. In Jesus' time, the way to refer to a Psalm was not by its number but by its first line. Jesus' cry from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me," is the first line of **Ps. 22**. Read the entire Psalm slowly as if the whole thing were Jesus' prayer from the cross.
4. Meditate on **Hebrews 9:11-28**. This scripture relates how Christ the High Priest, by the shedding of his own blood, enters the sanctuary once and for all.
5. Read the [selections from Melito and Ephrem](#) found as a pdf download in the Holy Week/Triduum Library of [www.dritaly.com](http://www.dritaly.com). Use the thanksgiving prayer on the same sheet to help you express gratitude for what the Lord did for us through his suffering and death.

## HOLY SATURDAY

Today is a day of waiting, a day of silence. Most Christian churches allow no celebrations on this day, including burials, weddings, Eucharist or Lord's Supper, etc. In some churches, communion is only offered to those in imminent danger of death! All this is a tremendous reminder of salvation by grace working through faith (waiting). Our Christian life is completely dependent upon the Lord's resurrection, but there is absolutely nothing we can do to make this happen. So we wait and meditate on the statement of the Apostles Creed: "He descended into hell."



1. Ponder **Psalm 16** and **Ps. 24**. The "gates" mentioned in the latter psalm can refer to the "gates" of hell, which Jesus, the man with

clean hands and pure heart, enters after his righteous death in order to liberate those who are held captive there.

2. Meditate on **Romans 6:3-11**.

3. Read the [amazing Holy Saturday homily](#) preserved from the days of the early church as found in the Lent-Holy Week library of [www.dritaly.com](http://www.dritaly.com)

## EASTER WEEK

The Resurrection of the Lord is too great of an event to celebrate for only one day! Following the Jewish practice of celebrating the Passover for eight days (an "octave"), the early Church celebrated Easter in high gear for an entire week. One great way for us to continue this tradition is to read a different resurrection Scripture each day of Easter week and attend the Eucharist daily, or at least on as many days during the Easter octave as we can.

Mon. **Mt. 28: 8-15**  
Tues. **Jn. 20: 11-18**  
Wed. **Lk. 24: 13-35**  
Thurs. **Lk. 24: 35-48**  
Fri. **Jn. 21: 1-14**  
Sat. **Mk. 16: 9-15**  
Sun. **Jn. 20: 19-31**

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### ***The Meaning of the Passion***



As we ponder The Passion of the Christ, the movie and the events it depicts, we can't help but ask why it had to happen this way. Why did Jesus have to pass through such horrible torture to redeem us? Could not forgiveness and salvation have been obtained in some other way? Why does the Devil figure so prominently in the movie? And why does Mary play such an important role? This talk, a perfect complement to the film and [The Guide to the Passion](#), will help you get the most out of the movie and the most out of the season. 45 minutes, followed by questions and answers.

***Retail - \$8.95***