

THE WINDING ROAD

AN ARRABON DEVOTIONAL

"What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light." John 1:3-5

We live in a moment marked by disorientation, division, injustice, and pain. Amidst the darkness, there are glimmers of light and hope. As Christ-followers, we live in the liminal space between love & loss, injustice & wholeness, and grief & joy. We trust in the goodness of God, and long for all things to be made new (Revelation 21:5). But if we're honest, the road can feel long, lonely, and arduous. The truth is- we're not alone, we are empowered by the Spirit of God to become more like Christ alongside a global community.

Throughout church history, the season of Lent has been an opportunity to be formed by Jesus' journey to the cross. It is a liturgical season marked by repentance, sacrifice, and generosity.

The road to reconciliation and healing necessitates the people of God to be formed by our cross-bearing, enemy-loving, and liberating Christ. This Lent, in partnership with The Porter's Gate, we invite you to join Christ-followers across the country as we pursue spiritual formation for the glory of God and the sake of our neighbor.



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"WE ARE CAUGHT IN AN INESCAPABLE NETWORK OF
MUTUALITY, TIED IN A SINGLE GARMENT OF
DESTINY. WHATEVER AFFECTS ONE DIRECTLY AFFECTS
ALL INDIRECTLY."

- REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
'LETTER FROM BIRMINGHAM JAIL'



HOLY WEEK REFLECTION

Throughout this Lenten journey, we've held the tension of the beauty and brokenness all around us. This is the work of spiritual formation— to participate in becoming more like Christ, by the power of the Spirit, for the glory of God and the sake of our neighbor. This season of Lent has provided space for this ongoing process of formation. We have cultivated a posture of compassionate curiosity for complicated emotions of fear, anger, shame, and grief that arise amidst the work of racial healing and reconciliation.

We started this journey with a desire to center our call to collective solidarity. As Dr. King puts it in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", we are "caught in an inescapable network of mutuality." What would it look like for Christ-followers to heed this reminder? We truly do belong to one another.

It is our prayer that this devotional has provided space for honest prayer, reflection, and curiosity. Eugene Peterson describes the Christian life as a "long obedience in the same direction." We hope that this devotional has been helpful for your own formation journey.

As we close this journey, we invite you to let your imagination be shaped by a selection of passages depicting Jesus' final week, death, and resurrection.

Throughout church history, Christians have described this as "Holy Week", starting with Palm Sunday and culminating in Easter Sunday. As you follow Jesus' final days, may your curiosity be sparked and your imaginations stoked for how you might be continually formed along this winding road of reconciliation.

JOURNEYING THROUGH HOLY WEEK WITH JESUS

As you engage with these passages, we invite you to read and reflect through a Lectio Divina practice. We've also provided you with a Breath Prayer for each day rooted in the themes of the passage.

What is a Breath Prayer?

Our breath is both a sign of our livelihood and God's provision. Just as God breathed life into Adam (Genesis 2:7), God breathes life into us each day. Breath Prayer is a simple practice of bringing our attention to God's presence through a few key steps:

Choose a Phrase: It can be a verse from the Bible or a line of praise and petition. It can be as simple as a word which represents what you are longing to pick up and release.

Breathe In and Breathe Out: As you inhale, speak the first part of your prayer. As you exhale, speak the latter half of the prayer.

Continue Your Prayer: Repeat at least 5 times noticing God's presence with you as you breathe in and out.

Palm Sunday: Luke 19:29-40 (NIV)

29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

30 saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.

31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'

32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them.

33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

34 They replied, "The Lord needs it."

35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.

36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

40 "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

INHALE

Donkey-riding Christ

EXHALE

Disrupt our expectations

Monday: Mark 11:15-19 (NIV)

15 On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there.

16 He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves,

17 and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts.

18 And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"

19 The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

20 When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

INHALE

Christ of Turned-Over Tables

EXHALE

Turn over tables in our hearts

Tuesday: Mark 12:28–34 (NIV)

28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

32 "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.

33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

INHALE

Christ of Love

EXHALE

Shape me into a lover of all

Wednesday: John 12:44-50 (NIV)

44 Then Jesus cried out, "Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me.

45 The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me.

46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

47 "If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day.

49 For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken.

50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

INHALE

Christ of Light

EXHALE

Lead us out of darkness

Thursday: John 13:1-15 (NIV)

1 It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

2 The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;

4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

10 Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."

11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them.

13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.

14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

INHALE

Foot-washing Christ

EXHALE

May we follow in your footsteps

Friday: John 19:1-37 (NIV)

1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.

2 The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe

3 and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they slapped him in the face.

4 Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him."

5 When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

6 As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

7 The Jewish leaders insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

8 When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid,

9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer.

10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

12 From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

13 When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha).

14 It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews.

15 But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus.

17 Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).

18 There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

19 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

21 The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

24 "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it."

This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said,

"They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment."

So this is what the soldiers did.

25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son,"

27 and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

28 Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31 Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.

32 The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other.

33 But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.

36 These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken,"

37 and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

INHALE

Christ on the Cross

EXHALE

It is finished

Saturday: John 19:38-42 (NIV)

38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.

39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

40 Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

41 At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid.

42 Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

INHALE

Buried Christ

EXHALE

We long for resurrection

Sunday: Matthew 28:1-10 (NIV)

1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.

3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.

6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.

7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

9 Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.

10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

INHALE

Resurrected Christ

EXHALE

Give us Resurrection Life

LECTIO DIVINA

ADAPTED FROM SACRED RHYTHMS BY RUTH HALEY BARTON

PREPARATION (SILENCIO)

Take a moment to come fully into the present moment. With your eyes closed, let your body relax and allow yourself to become consciously aware of God's presence with you. Express your willingness (or your willingness to be made willing) to hear from God in these moments by using a brief prayer, such as "Come Lord Jesus," "Here I am," or "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." Then read the chosen passage four consecutive times, each time asking a slightly different question that invites you into the dynamic of that move. Each reading is then followed by a brief period of silence:

READ (LECTIO)

Listen for the word or the phrase that is addressed to you. Turn to the passage and begin to read slowly, pausing between phrases and sentences. You may read silently or you might find it helpful to read the passage aloud allowing the words to echo and resonate, sink in, and settle into the heart. As you read, listen for the word or phrase that strikes you or catches your attention. Allow for a moment of silence, repeating that word or phrase softly to yourself, pondering it and savoring it as though pondering the words of loved one. This is the word that is meant for you. Be content to listen simply and openly without judging or analyzing.

REFLECT (MEDITATIO)

How is my life touched by this word? Once you have heard the "word" that is meant for you, read the passage again and listen for the way in which this passage connects with your life. Ask, "What is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word?" Allow several moments of silence following this reading and explore thoughts, perceptions, and sensory impressions. If the passage is a story, perhaps ask yourself, "Where am I in this scene? What do I hear as I imagine myself in the story or hear these words addressed specifically to me? How do the dynamics of this story connect with my own life experience?"

RESPOND (ORATIO)

What is my response to God based on what I have read and encountered? Read the passage one more time listening for your own deepest and truest response. In the moments of silence that follow this reading, allow your prayer to flow spontaneously from your heart as fully and as truly as you can. At this point you are entering into a personal dialogue with God “sharing with God the feelings the text has aroused in us, feelings such as love, joy, sorrow, anger, repentance, desire, need, conviction, consecration. We pour out our hearts in complete honesty, especially as the text has probed aspects of our being and doing in the midst of various issues and relationships” (Robert Mulholland, *Invitation to a Journey*, p. 114). Pay attention to any sense that God is inviting you to act or respond in some way to the word you have heard. You might find it helpful to write your prayers or to journal at this point.

REST (CONTEMPLATIO)

Rest in the Word of God. In the final reading you are invited to release and return to a place of rest in God. You have given your response its full expression, so now you can move into a time of waiting and resting in God’s presence like the weaned child who leans against its mother (Psalms 131). This is a posture of total yieldedness and abandon to the Great Shepherd of our souls.

RESOLVE (INCARNATIO)

Incarnate (live out) the Word of God. As you emerge from this place of personal encounter with God to life in the company of others, resolve to carry this word with us and to live it out in the context of daily life and activity. As you continue to listen to the word throughout the day, you will be led deeper and deeper into its meaning until it begins to live in you and you “enflesh” this Word in the world in which you live. As a way of supporting your intent to live out the word you have been given, you may want to choose an image, picture, or symbol that you can carry to remind you of it.



REFLECTIONS



WEEK 6 | GOOD FRIDAY

Our final audio reflection is a meditation on the significance of Good Friday. The reality of Christ on the cross holds profound meaning for the Christian life. Along with Christians all around the world and across generations, we declare: Thank you Christ!

This reflection was produced in partnership with The Porter's Gate. Listen on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.



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