

Spring 2023

# SPIRITUS • GLADIUS

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL MAGAZINE



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### On the Front Cover

Descent from the Cross by Carl Bloch, 1886.

Carl Bloch (1834-1890) was a Danish painter who studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Art where he received a traditional art education. Bloch was heavily influenced by Rembrandt and adopted his use of contrasting dark and light tones in his own work (Waite). This painting is one of his later works that utilizes dramatic lighting and a dark atmosphere to depict Christ's body immediately after being removed from the cross.

Waite, Nathan N. "The Master's Hand." Y Magazine, 2011, <https://magazine.byu.edu/article/masters-hand/>.



## Walking with Jesus

Suzanne Alexander

Senior Warden

Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature, O thou of God and man the Son;  
thee will I cherish, thee will I honor, thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.

Fairer are the meadows, fairer still the woodlands, robed in the blooming garb of spring;  
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer, who makes the woeful heart to sing.

Fair is the sunshine, fairer still the moonlight, and all the twinkling, starry host;  
Jesus shine brighter, Jesus shines purer, than all the angels heaven can boast.

Hymn 383, Hymnal 1982



This was my mother's favorite hymn; invoking awe and wonder for our Lord and Creator. As we enjoy the flowering of the earth with the onset of spring, this hymn reminds me that the annual rebirth of the earth is only one example of God's presence in our lives.

During the season of Lent, we walk with Jesus to Jerusalem and refuse to protest as he was tried and put to death on the cross. We hide with the disciples, with both hope and anticipation, that he would come again to walk among us. Lent also provides us with a season of personal discernment; a time to think inward on our own journey, as we ponder the road taken by Jesus. We are directed to contemplate how his life, teaching, and actions guide our own.

To that end, I encourage each of you to participate in at least one of the remaining Stations of the Cross at noon on Fridays to experience, in prayer and readings, Christ's journey to the Cross. If you cannot attend in person, I encourage you to look over the order of worship on our website. I also invite you to attend the many beautiful services we have during Holy Week as we observe Christ's journey from Jerusalem on Palm Sunday through to the celebration of his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

In the words of Rev. Sam,

“Easter comes! And it brings with it the beauty of spring. Festive colors, wonderful music, signs of new life. It all circles around us as we crawl out of the dark tomb of Lent and into the bright light of the Resurrection of our Lord.”

As we revel in the resurrection as the climactic point in the Christian faith, we must remember that the



*Christ Carrying the Cross* by Pieter Bruegel the Younger, 1579-1638.



A snapshot of the action at the 2023 Diocesan Council, taken by Fr. Brandon.

story of the Jesus doesn't end with the celebration of Easter; in the weeks that follow we will read and discuss how Jesus appears again to the Apostles and charges them in their mission to build his church.

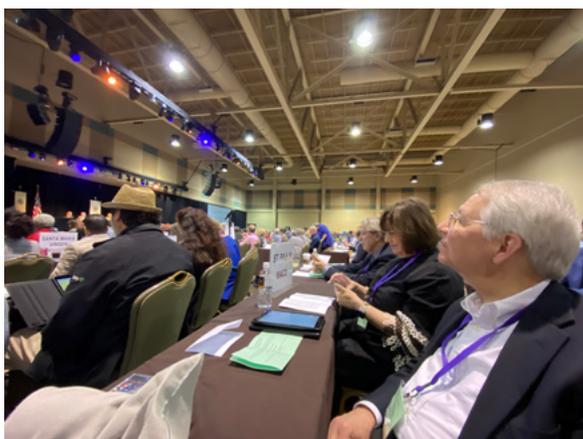
As a part of living into that call, the Vestry recently held our annual retreat, which was a wonderful time of fellowship and relationship building. We talked about our priorities for the year within the framework of the mission, vision, and values of Saint Paul's. In addition to our ongoing work to look after the finances, buildings/grounds, and policies of the parish, we have formed committees

focused on outreach and hospitality/increasing engagement. Stay tuned for future updates as these committees get to work!

As Episcopalians, we are a part of a broader diocese which is also focused on the mission to build the church. The week after the Vestry Retreat, a contingent from Saint Paul's represented the parish at the annual Diocesan Council in Galveston. Our time on the island was a great reminder of the strength and vitality of the Episcopal Church in this diocese. We stood and cheered as we welcomed our brothers and sisters in the former Diocese of Fort Worth into the Diocese of Texas and, a few hours later, welcomed two more parishes into our midst.

As we anticipate Easter Sunday and the celebration of our Risen Lord, please join with me in praying for God's guidance for the people of Saint Paul's, that we may continue to hear His call.

Peace be with you,  
Suzanne



Our council delegates watch as the Rt. Rev. Andy Doyle leads Diocesan Council.



# What is Going on in Holy Week

The Rev. Brandon S. McGinnis

Assistant Rector

Holy Week is the busiest and most solemn series of days in the Church's annual cycle of remembrance. Unlike all other weeks, Holy Week is actually comprised of eight days, from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday (which is often referred to as "the Eighth Day"). Over these eight days, the Church remembers the culmination of Christ's public ministry in Jerusalem, his torturous death on the cross, and his glorious resurrection from the grave. While not every day of Holy Week has a special liturgy included in the prayer book, each day is remembered and participated in through prayer, either within the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening prayer, a celebration of Holy Eucharist, and/or a special liturgy commemorating the day with a distinct ritual.

What follows is a brief survey of the themes of each day of Holy Week, a description of how these themes are remembered liturgically, and any details that this priest considers especially noteworthy.

It is important to begin by stating that Holy Week – like all fasts, feasts, and holy days of the Church – is a participation in the Paschal Mystery. The Paschal Mystery is the salvific event of Christ's death and resurrection. We are saved, not merely by recounting the historical events of Holy Week, but by participating in them directly. We participate in the Paschal Mystery through the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist, by which we ourselves enter into the reality of Christ's death and resurrection.

Furthermore, at no point in Holy Week are we merely "reenacting" the historical events of Holy Week. The eight days are not a prolonged passion play in which we dramatize the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion and resurrection. Christ is not in agony in the garden on Maundy Thursday. He is not suffering on the cross on Good Friday. And he is certainly not dead in the grave on Holy Saturday!

On the contrary, Christ lives and reigns in power as the crucified-and-risen Messiah over every day in Holy Week. We observe these most holy days of remembrance precisely because Christ is victorious and has transformed the cross – a human instrument of damnation and death – into God's instrument of salvation and life.

## The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday

On this day, the Church remembers two events: Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his passion. Palm Sunday gets its name from the gospel accounts of Jesus riding into the Holy City for the feast of Passover. Jesus's followers spread their cloaks on the ground and wave palm branches before him – symbols of victory meant to welcome the royal successor to David's throne. These signs are meant to hail Jesus as the long-awaited messianic king. But Jesus makes it clear that his kingdom is not like the kingdoms of the earth. Instead of riding in on a white war horse (like a Roman emperor or regional governor might do), Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey – a biblical symbol of peace (Zech. 9:9-10).

The Church participates in the victorious entrance of Christ into Jerusalem by marching in procession into the house of assembly bearing palm branches. But, as noted above, this is not merely a reenactment of what happened before Passover two thousand years ago; it is rather a visible declaration of Christ's post-resurrection victory and royal dominion over the earth today. By processing with palm branches, we are claiming our citizenship in Christ's heavenly kingdom.

After the liturgy of the Palms concludes, the service appointed for this day continues with the reading of the Passion Gospel. Just as Jesus's royal entrance into Jerusalem looked very different from that of Caesar and his ilk, so too will the victory by which he will assume the throne will look very different from theirs. Jesus's rule is inaugurated, not by kill-

ing his enemies, but by being killed by them; not by receiving a crown of gold, but of thorns; not by being seated on a throne, but my being nailed to a cross.

While it appears that Jesus is defeated by his human enemies, the cross is actually the means by which Jesus overcomes sin, death, and the demonic powers, thereby saving all humanity (even his enemies!). The Church hears the reading of the Passion Gospel knowing that Christ has already accomplished his saving work on the cross and now reigns over all nations in his glory.

## Holy Monday

On this day, the clock is set back to the events immediately following Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The Church remembers how Jesus was anointed for burial by an unnamed woman from the town of Bethany (Jn. 12:1-11). This event sets the stage for Judas's betrayal of Jesus and emphasizes the stark contract between the faithless apostle on the one hand, and the faithful woman of Bethany on the other.

## Holy Tuesday

On this day, the Church remembers how Christ predicted his imminent death by which he would draw all nations to himself (Jn. 12:20-36). While the authorities in Jerusalem and the representatives of Roman power will collaborate to execute him, Jesus makes it clear that his death is the very means by which "the ruler of this world," which is the devil, will be driven out.

## Holy Wednesday

On this day, often called Spy Wednesday, the Church remembers how Jesus was betrayed by a member of his own inner circle: Judas Iscariot. The title, "Spy Wednesday," alludes to how Judas conspires with Jesus's enemies: Judas agrees to spy on Jesus (Matt. 26:14-16). In the Gospel lesson appointed for this day, Jesus permits Judas to leave the last supper, initiating the plot to hand Jesus over to those who seek to kill him (Jn. 13:21-32).

## Maundy Thursday

On this day, the Church remembers two things. First, we remember the Last Supper and the institution of the meal that will become the Holy Eucharist after Jesus's resurrection from the dead. Second, we remember Jesus's new commandment to his disciples (the *mandatum novum* for which this day is named), to love one another as he loved them.

The Church participates in these things by washing one another's feet, according to the example Jesus set for us. Washing another person's feet was gross in Jesus's day and it's still gross in ours, which is the whole point! We submit to one another in love and humble service by kneeling down and literally washing the feet of our fellow Christians.

We also fulfill the command of Christ to share bread and wine in remembrance of his death and resurrection. Just as the Passover meal was established before the salvific event of the exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12), so too does Jesus establish the Eucharist before the salvific event of his death and resurrection. Both Passover and Holy Eucharist only become what we know them as today after the events they memorialize take place. Therefore, we are not play acting the Last Supper on this day, and we certainly are not appropriating the modern Jewish seder meal. The Holy Eucharist is the victorious meal of remembrance and, as such, is the Passover meal for all Christians.

Again, it is important to note that we are not dramatizing the eve of Christ's passion on this day. While some churches may strip their altar and set up a temporary altar of repose in the chapel, these are purely functional acts: the Church needs to be cleaned in preparation for Easter, so we remove the ceremonial objects in the church in order to do so. Likewise, the sacramental bread and wine need to be reserved if Communion is to be administered the following day, so we store the reserve sacrament in a dignified location overnight. Remember, even when the altar is being stripped and the blessed elements rest in the chapel, Christ is clothed in majesty and enthroned in heaven.

## Good Friday

On this day, the Church remembers Christ's passion and death. Unlike the remembrance of the passion on Palm Sunday, the emphasis of this day is not Christ's royal identity, but the repentance of his people. Traditionally, this is a day of profound confession and intercessory prayer. The prayers often appointed for Good Friday are called the *Improperia*, or the *Reproaches*, which are a series of dialogical prayers in which Christ speaks to his people, identifying the historic and perennial sins of those who bear God's name in the world. The Church, hearing the voice of Christ name all their sins, repents of their failures to live as Christ's Body in the world and pleads for the welfare of all people at the foot of the cross.

On this day the church also reverences the Holy Cross. There is a ritual in the service appointed for this day in which the clergy remove the Lenten veil from a cross so that they and the whole congregation may reverence it together. While not a literal piece of the true cross, the rugged wooden crosses often processed out to the congregation on this day function sacramentally and participate in the reality of the cross upon which Christ was crucified and our salvation was accomplished. So, when the faithful reverence the cross on Good Friday, they truly kneel before Christ and his victorious cross.

## Holy Saturday

On this day, the great Sabbath of Holy Week, the Church remembers how Christ's body was laid in the tomb. What is more, the Church also remembers that while his body lay dead, Jesus's spirit was very much alive, descending into hades, breaking down the gates of hell, and freeing all the righteous dead from the power of the grave (1 Pet. 4:6). In the quiet between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, Christ wages war on Satan and the realm of the demons, conquering them, and plundering the spirits of those they had taken captive in ages past.

On this day, the Church has the briefest of prayer services, containing only a few short readings and intercessions that allude to a profound mystery that defies verbal expression and is only ever hinted at in Holy Scripture. The still peacefulness of this

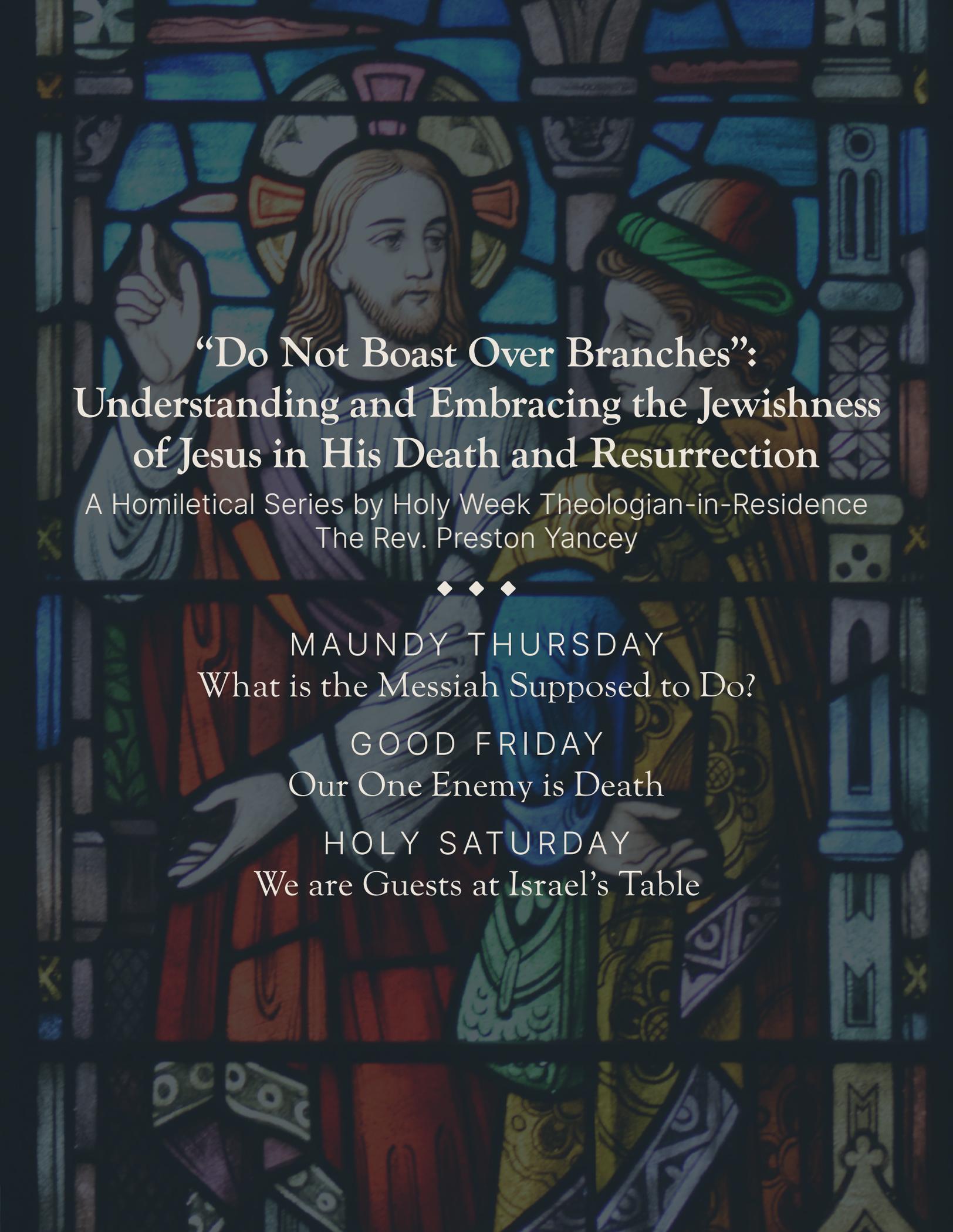
day is the Church's participation in the peace that Christ has established having already conquered his enemies in the unseen spiritual realm.

## Easter Sunday

As with all liturgical accountings of time, Easter Day actually begins at sundown the day before. The Great Vigil of Easter, therefore, begins in the dark on Saturday night. If kept in its fullness, the Vigil would carry on from sundown on Saturday to sunrise on Sunday.

On this day, the church participates in the Pass-over of Christ from death into resurrected life by lighting a new fire in the midst of darkness. The Pascal candle is lighted and the house of assembly is brightened. We hear the whole story of salvation from beginning to end. We baptize new converts to the faith, who die and rise with Christ in the waters of the font. And we celebrate the most festive Eucharist of the Church year.

The Great Vigil of Easter is the Church's Feast of Feasts. It launches a fifty-day festival that will last from this most holy night through the day of Pentecost. This is what the season of Lent has prepared us for. The prayer, fasting, and almsgiving were all in preparation for the celebration of Christ's bodily resurrection from the grave in the early hours of that first Easter morning, the great eighth day in which the new creation was begun. The totality of the Christian hope is embodied by the Church most fully on this day: Holy Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and the proclamation of the Gospel of the crucified and risen Lord who has conquered death.



“Do Not Boast Over Branches”:  
Understanding and Embracing the Jewishness  
of Jesus in His Death and Resurrection

A Homiletical Series by Holy Week Theologian-in-Residence  
The Rev. Preston Yancey



MAUNDY THURSDAY  
What is the Messiah Supposed to Do?

GOOD FRIDAY  
Our One Enemy is Death

HOLY SATURDAY  
We are Guests at Israel’s Table



# The Wages of Sin: Rethinking the Problem

The Rev. Preston Yancey

Campus Missioner & Holy Week Theologian-in-Residence

## The Origins of Sin

When we think about sin and its origin, we typically think of the narrative of the Garden of Eden as ending with God expelling Adam and Eve into the outside world because of their sin of disobedience and with their relationship with God irreparably ruptured. However, a close reading of the text might raise questions about it being that simple.

To begin with, God first shows tenderness and clothes Adam and Eve in preparation for life outside the Garden; and, when God sends them from it, the curses God places on them have nothing to do with their relationship with God, but rather to the difficulties of the world itself. Consider the curses to the woman and man in Genesis 3:16-19:

Neither curse mentions the relationship with God being in jeopardy. Further, a handful of verses later, To the woman [God] said,

“I will make your pangs in childbirth exceedingly great;  
in pain you shall bring forth children,  
yet your desire shall be for your husband,  
and he shall rule over you.”

And to the man he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife  
and have eaten of the tree  
about which I commanded you,  
‘You shall not eat of it,’  
cursed is the ground because of you;  
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;  
and you shall eat the plants of the field.  
By the sweat of your face  
you shall eat bread  
until you return to the ground,  
for out of it you were taken;  
you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.”

God appears to Cain and speaks directly with him about the murder of Abel, and Cain makes no comment of surprise at the presence of God (4:9). Earlier than that, Eve will say it is by God that she has children outside of the Garden (4:1). There is apparently still relationship with God of some kind.

Let’s reconsider the curses themselves.

In the curse placed upon the man, the reality of life outside the Garden is one of labor and toil. No longer will it be easy to bring forth food from the earth.



Detail from *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden*  
by Thomas Cole, 1828.

No longer will there be abundant trees to pick and feast from. Everything that is to be eaten will take work to produce. For this reason, recent scholarship on the Hebrew of Genesis has noted that our traditional interpretation of the curse on the woman may be incorrect. Whereas we tend to translate the verse as indicating pain in labor, the Hebrew itself more likely means that there is difficulty in conceiving. This reading works on two fronts. First, it parallels the curse put upon the man. Just as it will be difficult for the earth to be fruitful, so too for the womb. Second, it makes sense of the rest of Genesis, which is a narrative fraught with the issue of having children, who's having them, and if they will live to carry on the family name. Hence, when Eve says, "I have produced a man with the help of the Lord," her comment may be quite literal. (4:1) Only by divine intervention was she able to have a child. Again, there is no curse on the relationship with God.

## Rethinking Sin

What then are we to make of this? If sin does not remove the relationship with God, what is the problem of sin? I suggest that the problem of sin is death.

In the Garden, as presented to us, there is no death. In the world outside, death is everywhere. God kills first. God kills the animals to clothe Adam and Eve, because the world outside is a place where death necessarily exists. Adam knows death when the earth refuses to produce. Eve knows death when she struggles to conceive. Both know death when Cain murders his brother.

I want to suggest that we rethink sin and move away from a pattern in which we treat sin as incidents where we break a rule or moments where we violate a moral code. Rather, what would change in our understanding if we saw sin as introducing death into a relationship?

As Paul notes, "The wages of sin is death," (Romans 6:23a).

Adam and Eve introduce death between them and the natural world. I introduce death into my relationship with God when I do not follow God's commandments. I introduce death into my relationship with myself when I deny the goodness of God within me. I introduce death into my relationship with

my wife when I act out of anger. I introduce death into my relationship with my community when I violate their trust. I introduce death into my relationship with my world when I misuse its resources.

Sin brings death into our relationships.



*Resurrection of Christ and the Triumph Over Death and Devil* by Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1537.

## What Does Jesus Do?

I do not want to suggest that death and resurrection of Jesus are mere metaphors. Jesus literally died and Jesus literally rose again. At the same time, the physical realities betray spiritual ones as well. In his death, Jesus defeats death. In his death, Jesus takes the power away from sin. In his resurrection, Jesus gives that power to us. Jesus gives us the power to defeat death and to defeat sin.

What would change in our thinking if we understood sin on these terms? What would we change if we saw Jesus as giving us the power to defeat death? Death in ourselves, in one another, in the world?

Though we anticipate the day in which Death, capital D Death, will be completely defeated, in the interim we have been given power to do the work of the Kingdom of God here and now, to do the work of undoing the curses that sin brings. Where can you go today and pronounce resurrection over where death has festered? Where can you go today and proclaim, I have produced life with the help of the Lord!



# Lenten Practices to Explore at Home

Lisa St. Romain

Director of Children's & Family Ministry

Just as spring brings both the last bleak days of winter and the first green promise of summer, Lent brings a sea-

son of hope and simplicity to Christians. The 40 days of Lent call us to self-denial and self-discipline: a solemn preparation for the celebration of Easter.

## The Disciplines of Lent

The Book of Common Prayer invites us to the observances of a Holy Lent. The traditional disciplines of Lent include prayer, study, fasting, and outreach. Rather than simply thinking of what we can “give up” for Lent, we can consider these traditional areas and think of how we can engage them in new ways.

## Prayer

Your household could take on a family prayer discipline for Lent.

Gather as a family.

Light a candle.

Leader: Create in me a clean heart, O God,

Response: *and renew a right spirit within me.*

Read a Bible verse from the devotion “This is my body.”

Explore the activity page together.

Close with a prayer.

You could also look for opportunities to include prayer in your household life, such as saying grace before meals or sharing bedtime prayers as a family.

## Study

Reading Bible stories together is a great way for all family members to become more familiar with Holy Scripture. Perhaps younger children will enjoy a Bible with pictures while older youth can be introduced to stories in their own Bibles.

## Fasting

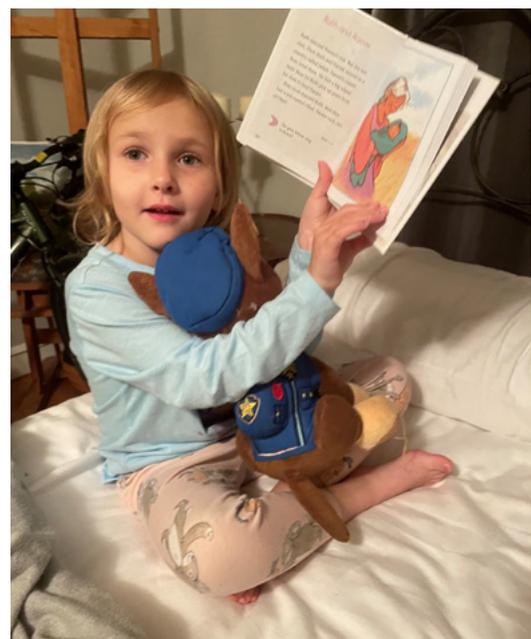
To fast does not always mean to go completely without food. It can mean to eat less or more simply. In some traditions, eating only one meal a day after sundown is considered fasting. Families may choose one night a week to eat more simply during Lent.

## Outreach

Why not take on the task of supporting an outreach ministry as a household during Lent? As a family you could collect food for a local food bank. You could also collect the money you would normally spend on treats and choose to donate it to mission work. Visit the Episcopal Relief and Development website, [www.episcopalrelief.org/1000DaysOfLove](http://www.episcopalrelief.org/1000DaysOfLove), to learn how you can participate in their ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE and make a difference in communities around the world empowering families and helping children to thrive.

Lent at Home activity bags are available in the Narthex. They include:

- a devotional from Illustrated Ministries titled “This is My Body.”



Eden reading her illustrated Bible before bed.

- Directions for pretzel making: a baking and prayer activity.
- Lent to Easter Prayer Poster (from Praying in Color) in which each day a shape is colored while you pray for someone or something.
- Let us Pray to the Lord – 40 days of Lent scratch off prayers that can be used as prayer starters to use with the Lenten calendar.
- Mite Box from Episcopal Relief and Development
- Tracing the Lord's Prayer Activity.
- An Alleluia poster for Easter

In whatever way we choose to participate, the Church gives us forty days to prepare our hearts and lives for the great miracle of Easter. How will you choose to learn more about yourself and about "...the One who is Easter?"



Jack and Hearon Harris play together while learning more about Lent.

## Get Ready to Answer the Call at Disciple Camp HERO HOTLINE



Disciple Camp Kick-Off for campers and families is Sunday, June 18th beginning at 5 PM and continues Monday, June 19th through June 22nd from 9 AM until noon!

In the depths of an underground cave is the beating heart of the Hero Community - the Hero Hotline headquarters - where everyone's gifts are valued. Each day at the Hero Hotline Headquarters, superheroes ages 4 years through adults answer the call and join the Professor and veteran hero Super Meer the Meerkat.

A \$40.00 registration fee includes a camp t-shirt, games, crafts, Science, storytelling, games, and music. "So let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up." Romans 14:19

Scan the QR code or visit [saint-pauls-episcopal-church.mycokesburyvbs.com](http://saint-pauls-episcopal-church.mycokesburyvbs.com) to sign up now!





## The Fruits of Sacrifice

M'Lissa Howen  
Head of School

Most people love the *idea* of fresh fruit. In the abstract, the crispness of an apple, the juice of an orange, or the sweet, sharp taste of a strawberry seem appealing and healthy to us. It should be a perfect match—dietitians peg the recommended daily fruit and vegetable intake at 13 servings. If we are going to have 13 daily servings of anything, it is nice for that thing to be tasty. And yet we live in a world that is much more chips and queso than fruit medley.

There is a scientific explanation for our junk food cravings (Yusuf). Stress, anxiety, and sleep deprivation (often from overcommitment) mess with our brain chemistry. The sugars in junk food and highly refined foods provide a *temporary* antidote to the chemistry imbalance. In short, ice cream really does make you feel better in the short term. In the long term, an inability to control those urges leads to difficult health and emotional challenges.

I think about that now for two reasons. First, while the pandemic was a stressful and challenging episode, for a while it offered the gift of time. I worked hard at making sure the school adapted to a strange environment, but after a day's hard work most of the normal time wasters were not there. Instead, we cooked home meals and exercised. I got healthier than I have been in a long time. All that is over, which I am thankful for. But now it is easy to be in overcommitment mode, and I find myself not as healthy.

Second, and this is probably burying the lead, it is Lent. Lent has become famous as “the give something up” season. We splurge on Fat Tuesday, deny ourselves through Maundy Thursday, and feast again on Easter Sunday. The traditional idea is that our denial period imitates Christ's forty-day fast and his rejection of worldly temptations. Truth be told, the common practice at Lent is as much self-improvement as it is religious exercise. Whatever the origin, we have the idea that we should presently be involved in some sort of personal sacrifice.

Here is the problem as I see it. Inherent in the idea of “giving up something for Lent” is the corollary that we will resume doing whatever we gave up after Lent. The apple pie *ala mode* after Easter dinner is proof positive of that fact. So, while reducing our sugar intake for 1/9th of the year may be good, the gesture will not overcome the harm we do to ourselves the other 8/9ths of the calendar. The part of the Lent story we fail to emulate is that even after his fast, Jesus never gave in to worldly temptations; he did not begin bad habits after his fast. (Do not worry—I am not advocating for never eating ice cream).

So, what is the point? What do we get—or maybe what should we get—from our temporary sacrifice? For me the hope would be that by removing the harmful we are making room for the positive. The resurrection offers a new way to look at daily life in which a healthy relationship with God guarantees our nourishment. In the words of the logician, being right with God is *sufficient* (meaning all that is needed) to have a calm soul. By giving up those things that stand in the way of that relationship we make room for that calmness in the hope the calmness is enough. Done right, the sacrifice leads us to a place we no longer depend on the sugar of the world to combat stress, anxiety, or unchecked ambition.



Fr. Brandon leads a group of school children in a service of Holy Eucharist.

It has taken me decades to arrive in this place of understanding. Part of my charge now is to see that the Pacers of St. Paul's Episcopal School have a way to calmness and fulfillment that might be a little more straightforward. And that is why I do not see Lent as a "season" for our children. Instead, we do daily chapel for our primary and upper school kids and weekly chapel for our youngest students. Through these regular Chapel sessions we hope to illustrate that the ultimate "safe space" comes from focusing our eyes and our actions on the guarantee God gave us through the resurrection.

I am so aware that today's children face stress and anxiety. Children feel driven to succeed in academics, sports, or the arts to the point of unhealthiness. On the other side, the world offers so much "sugar" for them to assuage their challenges. It may be food, but it is more often social conformity, consumer goods, or the fleeting approval of peers that release

a child's endorphins so he or she feels good-for a moment. The overarching message we try to get across is that none of that sugar is *sufficient*. A trust that God built our world, and that is the only nutrient they need along with a willingness to subvert our will to His. Apples, oranges, and strawberries abound at that table and the taste is all you can imagine.

Lent encourages me to redouble our efforts to teach that lesson. It is not a season of sacrifice solely for sacrifice's sake. Instead it is time to make room for the gift the resurrection brings.

Blessings,

M'Lissa Howen, M.Ed.  
Head of School  
St. Paul's Episcopal School  
*Educating the whole child in mind, body, and spirit.*



A student carries the school's banner during chapel.

Yusuf, Timaj. "The Scientific Reason Why We Crave Unhealthy Foods." Spoon University, 21 Oct. 2015, <https://spoonuniversity.com/lifestyle/scientific-reason-crave-unhealthy-foods>.

# Saint Paul's in Numbers



## 2023 Attendance

Average Sunday Attendance: 160

Communions Received: 1,552

Visitors: 75

Adult Formation Attendance: 128

Average EYC Attendance: 7

Average Children's Chapel Attendance: 10

## 2023 Finances

This report reflects the period from January 1, 2023 to February 28, 2023.

Total Pledged: \$116,684.36

Total Pledges Received: \$78,565.02

Unplanned Gifts: \$29,834.23

# Upcoming Dates



March 17, 24, and 31

Stations of the Cross at Noon in the Nave

March 22

Dinner and Outreach at 5:30 PM

March 26

Final session of Remember You Are Dust at 9 AM in the Parish Hall

April 2

Palm Sunday services at 8 AM and 10 AM

April 4

Ladies Night Out at Jon Lillie's Steakhouse at 5:30 PM

April 6

Agape Meal at 6 PM, Maundy Thursday service at 7 PM

April 7

Good Friday service at 12 PM

April 8

Easter Vigil service at 7 PM

April 9

Easter Day services at 6:45 AM, 8 AM, and 10 AM, Easter Egg Hunt at 9 AM

June 18 through 22

Saint Paul's Disciple Camp: Hero Hotline!



◆◆◆ Saint Paul's in Photos





SAINT • PAUL'S  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

601 Columbus Ave  
Waco, TX 76701  
contactus@saintpaulswaco.org  
saintpaulswaco.org

# WORSHIP SCHEDULE



8 AM Service of Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
10 AM Service of Holy Eucharist, Rite II\*†

\*indicates Livestreamed services  
†childcare available

You can find Sunday's order of worship at  
[saintpaulswaco.org/worship](http://saintpaulswaco.org/worship)

You can find our livestreamed services by visting  
[facebook.com/saintpaulswaco](https://facebook.com/saintpaulswaco)

## Saint Paul's Vestry

Suzanne Alexander, *Senior Warden*  
Ford Taylor, *Junior Warden*  
Pam Crow, *Treasurer*  
Gina Ford, *Clerk*  
K. Paul Holt  
Suzy Nettles  
Erika Jones  
Linda Bostwick  
Mike Indergard  
John Miller Mayfield  
Len Brown  
Kristi Carlile  
Kyle Deaver  
Felicia Goodman  
Pieter Sigtenhorst

## Saint Paul's Staff

The Rev. Samantha R.E. Smith, *Rector*  
The Rev. Brandon S. McGinnis, *Assistant Rector*  
The Rev. Al Melis, *Deacon*  
The Rev. John Wells, *Retired Priest Associate*  
The Rev. Preston Yancey, *Campus Missioner*  
Lisa St. Romain, *Director of Children's & Family Minsitry*  
Sara Allison, *Director of Youth Minsitry*  
Iona Easterwood, *Accountant*  
Brandi Goddard, *Parish Administrator*  
Sarah Martin, *Director of Communications & Membership*  
Craig Finley, *Facilities Director*  
Paul Hicks, *Sexton*  
Charles Watson, *Assisting Sexton*  
Willie Sergent, *Retired Sexton Emeritus*  
Dr. Jeffrey Peterson, *Organist and Interim Choir Director*  
M'Lissa Howen, *Head of School*



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