

Lenten devotionals: Holy week

Monday

How soon after Jesus rides into Jerusalem, the crowds shouting and honouring him, do the leaders, scribes and Pharisees become tired and afraid of the following Jesus has.

They begin to scheme against him, wanting to discredit him and turn the people against him.

Jesus appears to be on a mission and enters the temple, noticing the extortion of the money lenders and the sellers of sacrifice birds and animals, no doubt charging greater rates to those wanting to offer sacrifice for the coming Passover.

Was Jesus angry? Yes, and disappointed and sorrowful and bowed down with the ordeal he knew was approaching.

Did Jesus show mercy and love? Yes, for those abused by the system and power. Yes for those out into a position of obedience to mans interpretation of the law, rather than the law of compassion and understanding.

Did Jesus show divine authority? Yes, as he pronounced judgement on those having disrespect for the place of worship. Authority that amazed the crowd as they listened to his teaching. Authority that frightened the teaches of the law as they saw the crowds gathering to hear Him and witness His miracles.

John, the writer who gives more of the depth of Jesus' teaching, goes on to provide Jesus talking about his death. Jesus calls himself the light. The light that soon will be hidden in the darkness of sin and death.

Soon the darkness will descend. But the best is yet to come.

Words of comfort

Hear also what Saint Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15.

Lenten devotionals: Palm Sunday

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

Luke 19:28-40 New International Version (NIV)

²⁸ After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ³⁰ “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!”^[a]

“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.”*

Apologies for not posting yesterday. To be honest I struggled with things I wanted to write. After starting several times I relaxed and gave it up to God.

Reader, just read and pause. The best is yet to come!

In His own time, as always happens, He whispered to me this morning, “Sue, It’s already written down. Just post, and read.”

Lenten devotional: day 31

“At any given moment, within a certain undefinable radius of your sorry body or soul, there will be something that can

lift you. The trick is knowing where to look."

If I die before i wake

Emily Koch

The above quote is taken from the book I am presently reading. To put it in , the words are spoken in the mind of the main character of the book. He is hospitalised after a climbing accident, lying in an induced coma. As he lies there, he recognises his visitors, longing to communicate with them but frustrated because they cannot grasp that he is hearing their conversation. He brings us into his world, sharing the little acts of kindness that bring him relief. The depth of meaning within that sentence has been with me all day. How many times have we been in need of a lift, not knowing to whom or where to turn?

Jesus gives us words of comfort.

These are regularly used in many church services. To continue extending our creed studies in keeping with the season, they will feature during the next few posts.

Hear what comfortable words our Savior Christ speaks to all who truly turn to him."

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus comforts us, but he also demands action.

Come: He will never enforce himself upon us. If we want the rest that he promises, we have to bring our problems, our grief, our desires before him. The person weary of carrying fear, disappointment, loss and sorrow, must actively give them up to Jesus.

Take: why does Jesus promise comfort and rest by asking us to take up his yoke? With the sacrifice Jesus bore for us, the yoke of the old law ended. Jesus is the perfect sacrifice. Now we live under his grace rather than the binding rules and regulations of the law. He has paid the dues in full and His love and gentleness offers respite from the cares of the world.

Learn: Jesus lived as man in this world. He has been tempted as we are and experienced loss and pain and death, when even his closest friends turned away from him.

When we face betrayal, can we learn to say, forgive them?

When we lose friends, family, those that are dear to us, can we say, Lord, I believe and trust you.

Even in despair, can we look at the cross and shout, Father, your will be done?

Connect tomorrow for more words of comfort.

Connect today by sharing your faith.

In peace and love.

Lenten devotionals: day 30

As we approach the final days of Lent I am asking your indulgence for a little bit of humour.

This evening I made Yorkshire puddings for the family to go with the beef pot roast. Not being British born, my grandson wanted to know how they were made, and I quote, "what makes them puffy"?

I answered in age old tradition, "because they are made with love". Which reminded me of the Stanley Holloway monologue entitled Yorkshire Pudding. So may I present to you, courtesy of you tube, The tale of the first Yorkshire Pudding"

Made with love

For any readers, unfamiliar with Yorkshire's , 'national,' dish here is the recipe.

A Yorkshire tradition discusses Yorkshire traditions.

So, where am I going with this?

Lent follows, pancake Day, when traditionally, all fat and eggs are used up prior to the period of frugal eating of the Lent fast. Shrove means to be cleansed or absolved; starting with Ash Wednesday Lent becomes a time of self examination, for some, perhaps, even a period of denying oneself, a way of remembering and participating in a 40 day fast as Jesus did.

Yorkshire Pudding batter is made from similar ingredients to pancake batter, so as I was making them today, and enjoying sharing them with my family it seemed fitting to share with you.

Remembering the story also brought to mind that we are all made with love. It is the perfect love of Christ that enables us to be filled with joy and peace.

Father God, thank you that we can find pleasure in the simple things. Thank you for the joy of sharing family meals and family traditions. As Christ was welcomed into homes during His time on earth, may He also be welcome in our homes today, in the meals we enjoy with family. May we never take for granted the importance of family time, of sharing together and supporting one another. As we enter into these last few days of Lent, may we continue to diligently seek out ways to share our faith and the wealth we enjoy; "[outdoing](#) each other in showing honour"

Lenten devotionals: day 29

I believe Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

It is because Jesus completed the work of salvation that He can now sit at the right hand of God. He can claim this place of equality with God, as our high priest, the way in which we approach God.

*^tWho is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—^uwho is at the right hand of God, ^vwho indeed is interceding for us. [1](#) *Romans 8:34*.*

Does this make us want to seek Him in higher places? Of course! In my quiet times, when I am away from temptation I can focus on Christ, seated with God, and know His love and strength to persevere in this race we call life.

His words and teaching and the inspiration of scripture encourages me to think lofty, to find love on a higher level. I can resolve to show kindness and mercy. I can live in joy and peace in a world of hatred and fear. I can dare to be generous, patient and kind-hearted, in a world of intolerance and greed.

Above all I can be faithful, gracious and in control of my desires, through the grace of my redeemer.

Lord, because I can look up and experience the love of God through your sacrifice, allow me to live a worthy life until such time you return in power to claim us for your own. May I seek to love more each day, to give more of myself to others and forgive any harm to myself and others. I honour you and proclaim your holy name.

Keep the faith.

Lenten devotionals: day 28

I am delighted to find this ASL version of the apostolic creed, especially as it is spoken also.

Many years ago, when I lived in Canada I completed an introduction to ASL course. I have not had occasion to use it much, but pleased that I was able to follow along. Perhaps some of you use, understand or have experience with ASL or BSL or Makaton.

Again, mixing it up a little to fit in with Lent and Easter, today we start,

I believe Christ sits at the right hand of God

Picture the scene. As a full time stay at home parent, you have risen before your family to prepare a nutritious breakfast, ensured all have clean clothes to wear, a healthy lunch and snacks, homework checked and all places in school bags.

Then the school run, pick up groceries and home to do the laundry, make beds, tidy away cluttered toys and clothes from bedroom floors and made advance start on dinner. A care visit on an elderly neighbour takes you through to the afternoon, when you can have a short breather, before the afternoon school run. What do you do?

Sit in your favourite chair with a cup of tea or coffee and rest, assured that you have fulfilled tasks for the day.

Or as a full time professional, you have risen early to beat the rush hour traffic, in order to get to work in plenty of time to prepare for that morning meeting in which you have to present recent figures. Then, there are emails to answer, phone calls to make, jobs that require attention and bosses that want everything yesterday, not when you can possibly deliver. Finally, just before end of day, you have five minutes to yourself, to sit at the desk with the lunch you didn't have time to eat and feel good about the empty in tray, the full out box, the neatly written planner for tomorrow and the cluttered desk cleared.

Sitting and resting after a good days work is satisfying. Time to review and rest with tomorrow planned.

After Jesus had finished his ministry on earth. When the debt for sin had been paid, and the work of salvation complete, He returned to the father, God and sat down on the right hand.

The significance for us His people lies in the deeper, better approach we enjoy to our God, through the spirit of Christ. The way that Jesus told us, we would have through Him.

Because Jesus cried, "It is finished"

Because he was triumphant over death

Because we have access to the Father

Jesus sits to signify completion until the bride is prepared, waiting for her to join Him in heaven.

Whatever prosperity or defeat may occur in our space, whatever may become and pass away, there is one constant, one thing that remains and continues, this sitting of His at the right hand of God the Father. [\[16\]](#)

Lenten devotionals: day 27

For our weekly round up, I chose this Psalm.

In Matthew 26:38 Jesus says, “My soul is sorrowful even to the point of death,” perhaps quoting from this Psalm.

Just prior to this, after celebrating Passover with His disciples and giving them a new feast of remembrance, as was the custom, Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn.

Music raises the spirit and is a natural release of praise and gratitude as well as calming a troubled soul.

This Psalm, has always been one of my ‘go to’ Psalms. I find in it both comfort and hope. Comfort knowing that Jesus, too, felt sorrow, grief and pain. Hope, because in the midst of trouble, God is our rock, our stability and our future.

Psalm 42^{[a][b]}

For the director of music. A *maskil*^[c] of the Sons of Korah.

¹ As the deer pants for streams of water,

so my soul pants for you, my God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?

³ My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”

⁴ These things I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I used to go to the house of God
under the protection of the Mighty One^[d]
with shouts of joy and praise
among the festive throng.

⁵ Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.

⁶ My soul is downcast within me;
therefore I will remember you
from the land of the Jordan,
the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.

⁷ Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.

⁸ By day the Lord directs his love,
at night his song is with me—

a prayer to the God of my life.

⁹ I say to God my Rock,
 “Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning,
 oppressed by the enemy?”

¹⁰ My bones suffer mortal agony
 as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long,
 “Where is your God?”

¹¹ *Why, my soul, are you downcast?
 Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
 for I will yet praise him,
 my Savior and my God.*

Have a wonderful weekend everyone.

Lenten devotionals: day 26

I believe in life everlasting...

John 17:3 (TYN) This is lyfe eternall that they myght knowe the(e) that only very God and whom thou hast sent Iesus

Christ.

Reading this Tyndale version of John 17 gave me a fresh view of the verse.

Here Jesus reminds us that God, all three, exists outside of time. Eternity is, was and shall be. When we accept the gift of life through the redemption of Christ we become independent of time. Plainly speaking our eternal life is now, was before sin and will be in each moment.

I hope that you are reading this in your quiet space. Stop. Be still. Focus. This may be scary, but become outside of time. There is no regret, lamb of God, paid the debt. There is no care or worry for tomorrow. Abba, father, provides. There is only now. Energy, strength, hope, love and faith, spirit filled life.

Are you thirsty? Drink the cup of salvation

Are you hungry? Feed on the bread of life.

Are you tired? Rest in the promise, "come unto me, "

*Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.*

I will turn their mourning into joy;

I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ *I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance,*

*and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness,
declares the Lord.” Jeremiah 31:13-14*

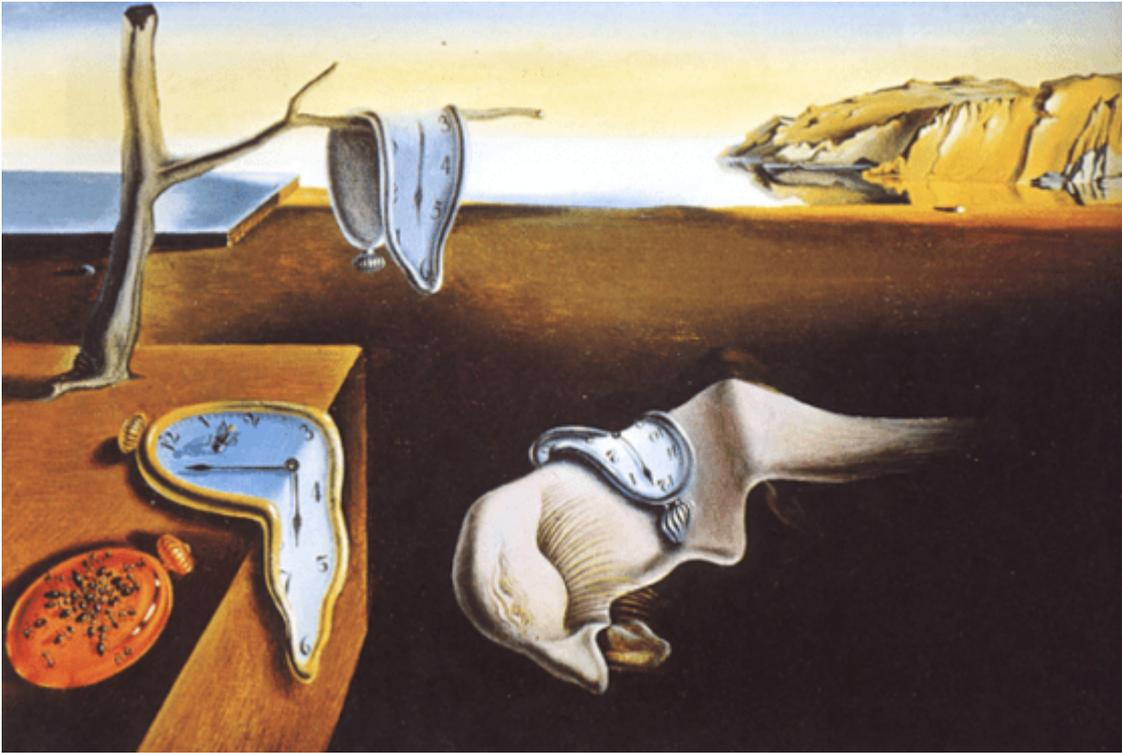
Take as long as you need in quiet meditation. Open your heart, ears, soul to the eternal and feel the strength. Empty yourself of all but love and absorb the enormity and [silence of eternity](#).

Turn the sound down or even off for 5 minutes silent meditation.

Go in peace.

Lenten devotionals: day 25

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.



Salvador Dali
Persistence of Memory

*There's no time for us
There's no place for us
What is this thing that builds our dreams
Yet slips away from us?*

*Who wants to live forever?
Who wants to live forever?*

Brian May famously poses this question.

Philosopher John Gray writes

Only creatures that live in passing time can know moments of undying value. There are no such moments in a life that can never end. In such a life there's nothing to treasure, nothing

that has value because it cannot come again. Our lives have meaning because they are bounded by death.

As humans we are bound by time. Our bodies work well when we keep to a natural rhythm. Our lives are dictated by work schedules, family activities and community commitments.

As the years roll by the frailty of human life becomes more evident. It seems like only yesterday our children were learning to walk, talk, cutting their first teeth and then attending school for the time. Now we watch them become independent, leave home, learn responsibility living their own lives.

Whereas when we were younger, we wanted everything now. We rushed through our days impatient to learn, grow, get, have and control. Now we wish time would just stand still allowing us to appreciate the beauty of a sunset, the dawn chorus, a rainbow arched across the sky or the luxury of that last balmy, fall evening before winter sets in.

Yet, we enjoy these moments because we know that they are transitory. The same physical body that rebels at the passage of time, that tires too easily, that aches after strenuous exercise, and struggles with failing faculties, learns to value each and every moment we exist.

In those timeless moments of sheer delight in experiencing the unexpected our souls soar. There is a glimpse through the earthly realm to the eternal home. We hear the perfect chord. We taste ambrosia in the bite of fresh bread and sip of clear stream water. The iron smell of earth during a storm is the

perfect bouquet to the sight of pure light flashing across the dark sky preparing us for the crash boom of the thunder. In these we witness the power of God. Who wants to live forever?

On this earth with its limitations no.

Existing out of time and space in a reality that we as yet only experience in flash bursts of spiritual insight?

Come Lord quickly.

Lenten devotionals: day 24

I believe in the resurrection

Previously in Judea,

**Lazarus entombed
Mindful of sin Jesus wept**

Grace for all mankind

A disciple continues the narrative

We followed in funereal quietness to the place where Lazarus was buried. A stone sealed the mouth of the cave.

“Roll away the stone” Jesus said.

“But Lord,” Martha protested, “by now there will be an odour. My brother has been dead for four days!”

“Martha, only believe and you will see the glory of God”

Once the stone was rolled away Jesus prayed and then commanded

“Lazarus! Come here!”

There was no earth shattering quake, no thunderclap, no blinding light. Just a moment of not deathly but living vibrancy as Lazarus obeyed the voice of his Lord and master.

In a moment of normality that wasn't Jesus simply said,

“Help him take off the death robes”

When I was dead to sin, buried in watery baptism, Jesus called and said, "Sue, come to me. You are burdened with many things. Bury them here, for I have already dealt with them. Take off the rubbish garb and wear these designer robes of purity, truth, innocence and life. I love you. Believe, and you will be given a path of rightness. Live to die no more. "

That is why I believe in the resurrection. Why do you believe?

Same hymn this time with words.

As I was debating which hymn to close with I found an otherwise unknown piece to me which is quite delightful, however not quite fitting for the meditation here so I have posted it on my music page. If you want to check it out follow the link.

[Carman Lazarus](#)