

Day by Day through Holy Week (6<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020)

**Rostherne with Bollington,  
St John High Legh  
and St Paul Over Tabley**

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# Day by Day through Holy Week



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## Day by Day through Holy Week (6<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020)

### REFLECTION FOR MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

*You may like to spray a tissue or cotton wool with perfume and keep it near to you, to help you to feel the reality of this story.*

Then read John 12: 1 – 8

1 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 2 There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. 3 Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 5 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' 6 (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) 7 Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. 8 You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

The following meditation is taken from a service for Holy Week called "Love Wastefully"; Copyright © Sally Foster-Fulton with Ruth Burgess

She'd used spikenard, a whole pound of it ... it wouldn't have just filled the room, or even the house – the scent would have clung to all of those present – it would have hung on their clothes, it would have settled in their hair, it would have permeated and overwhelmed their senses. That much pure essential oil would have been so powerful, you would almost have tasted it. And it wouldn't dissipate quickly or easily, but would remain.

Mary's hair would have held that fragrance for a long time – after he was gone, the memory would stay with her, more alive because her sense of smell would have brought it flooding back. And so every time she moved or walked, tossed in her sleep or put her head in her hands, she would have been reminded of him – of what he had meant to her, done for her – what she had done for him.

Some had told her that her extravagant act had been wasteful, but she didn't agree. I mean, really, how can you waste love?

I wonder how long the scent stayed with him – when they waved their palm branches in the air, did the fragrance waft through the crowds, did it stir some deep-seated emotion in them? Would they have understood its significance? And would he have felt a bit more determined because of this lingering anointment?

Before the disruption started in earnest, when his soul was troubled, did it ease him? I am certain that it hung in the air in the upper room as the feet were washed and the supper eaten.

And then, when the trouble came so rapidly and his friends fell away and there was betrayal and denial, I wonder if he was comforted ... upheld ... affirmed by the fragrance that still surrounded, embraced him. When he was marched and dragged all over Jerusalem, I wonder if the oil still soothed his feet. When they drove the nails

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in, did the sedative effects calm him, the scent reassure him. And at what everyone else thought was the very end, I wonder if he looked down and saw her face, remembered her gesture when the breeze sent the aroma to him.

She'd used spikenard, a whole pound of it ... it wouldn't have just filled the room or even the house on the night he was anointed – the scent would have clung to all of those present – it would have hung on their clothes, it would have settled in their hair, it would have permeated and overwhelmed their senses. That much pure essential oil would have been so powerful, you would almost have tasted it. And it wouldn't dissipate quickly or easily, but would remain.

Some had told her that her extravagant act had been wasteful, but she didn't agree – neither did he. I mean, really, how can you waste love?

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“Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were an offering far too small;  
Love so amazing so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all”

Love – like the scent of perfumed nard – doesn't easily dissipate. Who knows how long your gifts of love, no matter how costly, will cling and linger, comfort and reassure? Love does not dissipate quickly or easily but remains. Think of those who gifted you with love – how those gifts have held you! At this time of crisis how might you absorb and share the costly love of Christ?

Lord, you give us life, you give us love, you give us yourself; help us to give our lives, our love, ourselves to you; through Jesus Christ who died and rose again for us and reigns now in our hearts. Amen

You may like to listen to this beautiful hymn “O love that will not let me go”. You may also join in.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGAPkKXBQKI>

Revd Trish

### REFLECTION FOR TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

John 12: 20 - 36

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ 22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23 Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

27 ‘Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—“Father, save me from this hour”? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it

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again.’<sup>29</sup>The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’<sup>30</sup>Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.’<sup>31</sup>Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.<sup>32</sup>And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’<sup>33</sup>He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.<sup>34</sup>The crowd answered him, ‘We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains for ever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?’<sup>35</sup>Jesus said to them, ‘The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going.’<sup>36</sup>While you have the light, Believe in the light, so that you may become children of the light.’

### Reflection

Visitors to St Mary’s Church on a Sunday afternoon sometimes come to see the three monuments sculpted by three generations of the Westmacott family. Perhaps the most well-known is the one to Lucy Beatrix Egerton who died in 1845 aged 21 years. On the same monument are listed several children who died either in infancy or at a young age, and a clergyman, the Revd Thomas Egerton. He died of scarlet fever in 1847 at the age of 37, ‘caught in the discharge of his parochial duties’. I wonder what that gentleman would have made of the Archbishops’ advice to the clergy in the current pandemic that they should stay home and stay safe? I suspect he would have heard it with disbelief. At times of national crisis, either through war or disease, the clergy have always understood their duty to be alongside those who are suffering, to bring them spiritual comfort and strengthen their faith in the God whose Son Jesus Christ came into the world to defeat death and offer new life and salvation to those who trust in him.

In our reading this Tuesday of Holy Week, while Jesus was determined to fulfil the purpose of his heavenly Father, unsurprisingly he was also tangibly distressed at the prospect of his own imminent suffering and death. The attempt of some Greek converts to Judaism to see him, prompted a discourse on the cost of discipleship. His words about how a grain of wheat has to be planted and die in order to multiply and produce much fruit are well known and form one of the suggested texts for funerals. When he said, “Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also”, those words were preceded by some about how following him would sometimes involve hard choices. Even the choice between staying alive and risking the possibility of death. At the moment, hospital chaplains are facing an extremely testing time as they minister to those who are suffering the effects of the coronavirus. They are not just the patients and their families but also includes the staff who are under tremendous pressure, particularly in London. When I was serving a placement in a hospital chaplaincy team as part of my training I was told by one of the full time members that when I visited a patient I did not bring Jesus with me and at the end of the visit take him away with me. Jesus was there before I arrived and stayed when I left. Chaplains are called to be where Jesus already is, with the sick and suffering, the fearful and exhausted, and in a situation such as this country is presently experiencing there is always an element of risk, even with full PPE and taking all reasonable precautions.

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As we walk with Jesus through this Holy Week, we follow in our imaginations a man whose words were mirrored faithfully by his actions. The warnings he gave about the cost of discipleship might have been addressed to himself as much as to his disciples. Jesus weighed up the consequences of following the will of his Father and accepted the cost as the price he had to pay to redeem the world out of love.

Revd Philip

### REFLECTION FOR WEDNESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

#### ***John 13: 21-32 Jesus Foretells His Betrayal***

21 After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." 22 The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. 23 One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; 24 Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. 25 So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" 26 Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. 27 After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." 28 Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. 29 Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. 30 So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

Most of us could tell a story about betrayal whether it is a family member, a friend, an employer, a pension fund provider or a politician. When this betrayal is by someone close to us the pain is often too deep for words and after years of healing the scars are still visible.

Maybe we have done the betraying. Most of us have a streak of self preservation within us and when it is put to the test, we will sometimes abandon our promises, loves and loyalties to look after ourselves.

The guilt runs deep. Just as being betrayed leaves scars so does being the betrayer. Both betrayed and betrayer identify with these final moments in the upper room. Many have been where Jesus is, and many have been where Judas is. Perhaps the most painful aspect of betrayal is that one nearly always bears it alone. It is difficult for those around us to see it coming and even when they do, they are often too paralysed by it to respond on our behalf.

It is not surprising then that the disciples had difficulty in figuring out what was going on. They were familiar with the ritual of the Passover meal and Jesus' words did not at first seem to be out of place.

They couldn't imagine that between them there could ever be a betrayal and especially not of Jesus. When Jesus told Judas to do quickly what he was going to

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do, the disciples probably thought that he was being sent on an errand maybe to buy some provisions.

Even though Jesus was surrounded by his disciples he bore the burden of betrayal alone. Judas also had burdens to bear. He left the upper room alone - no crowds cheering him, just a few customers whose only interest was in what he had to sell. Judas and Jesus recognised that their time together was over. With the other disciples they had preached and healed their way through Galilee. Judas had seen and done a great deal as a companion of Jesus, but Satan had entered him.

When Jesus told him to act quickly those words might have been his last words of love for Judas. Jesus knew that betraying him would not be easy for Judas, though we will never know what Judas's motive was, and that the sooner it was over the sooner Judas would be able to see that the saving embrace of the cross included everybody, even him.

Chris Stanisstreet (Reader)

### REFLECTION FOR THURSDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – MAUNDAY THURSDAY

Over the last few years, we have invited people from all over the United Benefice to join together for a Meal and Holy Communion on this evening. It is a very special time, beginning with a party atmosphere where we have drinks and take part in a game or other activity as we arrive before sitting down to a three-course meal, together during which we hear readings from the Bible recalling the way God acted in power to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, and how God used this special occasion to bring in the new covenant whereby we can come to Him and are set free from sin and death, able to live in forgiveness and freedom. We commemorate that Last Supper that Jesus ate with his disciples but remember that it was also the first Communion service. Sadly, we are unable to be together this year. However, you may like to follow the readings and the pattern of the meal. Philip and I intend to have our meal at 19.00 and if you wish to join with us from your own homes please do. Otherwise use the readings as you wish, perhaps at different times during the day.

*The evening begins with a party atmosphere so maybe have your pre-dinner drinks and nibbles first! Remember, the disciples were celebrating the Passover.*

*(If you are having three courses for your meal the first course is served now, followed by the reading below.)*

Today we are going to look at the story of our redemption. First, we will look back to the Old Testament and the instructions for the first Passover.

**Reading: Exodus 12 v 1 - 13**

**12** The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: <sup>2</sup> This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. <sup>3</sup> Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a

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lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. <sup>4</sup> If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. <sup>7</sup> They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. <sup>8</sup> They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. <sup>9</sup> Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. <sup>10</sup> You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. <sup>11</sup> This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the Lord. <sup>12</sup> For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the Lord. <sup>13</sup> The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

*(The Main Course is served at this point.)*

During the evening the mood changed. Firstly, a little as Jesus ignored one of the customs and took on the role of the servant washing the disciples' feet. From this point onwards this Passover would be different.

### **Reading: John 13: 1 - 15**

**13** Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup> The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper <sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup> got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' <sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' <sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet<sup>l</sup> but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

<sup>12</sup> After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.'

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*(The Dessert Course is served, and the meal is finished.)*

*Towards the end of the meal the mood became more solemn as it is at this point, when the fourth cup would have been shared that Jesus changed the custom again, spoke of His impending death and inaugurated the communion.*

### **Reading Matthew 26: 26-30**

<sup>26</sup> While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' <sup>27</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; <sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

<sup>30</sup> When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

### *Prayers of Intercession*

Leader In the power of the Spirit let us pray to the Father through Christ the saviour of the world.

Father, on this, the night he was betrayed,  
your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet.  
We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service.

Lord, hear us  
**All and humble us.**

Leader On this night, he prayed for his disciples to be one.  
We pray for the unity of your Church.

Lord, hear us  
**All and unite us.**

Leader On this night, he prayed for those who were to believe through his disciples' message.  
We pray for the mission of your church.

Lord, hear us  
**All and renew our zeal.**

Leader On this night, he commanded his disciples to love, but suffered rejection himself.  
We pray for the rejected and unloved.

Lord, hear us  
**All and fill us with your love.**

Leader On this night, he reminded his disciples that if the world hated them it hated him first.  
We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith.

Lord, hear us.  
**All and give us your peace.**



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Leader        On this night, he accepted the cup of death  
and looked forward to the new wine of the kingdom.  
                  We remember those who have died in the peace of Christ.  
                  Lord, hear us  
All             **and welcome all your children into paradise.**

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father which art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those that trespass against us;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory  
for ever and for ever. Amen.**

**Matthew. 26:30:** When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

### **Hymn        When I Survey The Wondrous Cross**

*Say or sing the words or follow this link to hear it sung and sing along.*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_fvFfPqjO4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_fvFfPqjO4) or you may prefer to join the  
Choir of Kings College Cambridge by following this link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDkuxElcpdl>

When I survey the wondrous cross  
on which the Prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss,  
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast;  
save in the death of Christ my God:  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,  
sorrow and love flow mingled down:  
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were an offering far too small,  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.

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**Reading: Matthew 26: 36 - 38**

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. stay here and keep watch with me."

**Music:** Stay With Me - Taize Community.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCr2tn4yYKY>

*One of the most special things for me about Holy Week is that following the Meal and Holy Communion that we have had in the last few years, we are invited to go silently out into the night just as Jesus and the disciples left the Upper Room and went out into the night that evening. If you have a garden or outside area go out now (weather permitting) 'into the night' and be still there for a while.*

Revd Patricia

### **REFLECTION FOR FRIDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – GOOD FRIDAY**

*Before you begin to read, you may like to find something such as a nail, a piece of wood, a small jug of wine or wine vinegar to help you to feel the brutality, pain and humiliation of crucifixion. I am going to focus on verses 23 & 24 so you may like to hold a piece of fine cloth to represent the seamless tunic which the soldiers cast lots for.*

Reading: John 19: 16 - 30

16 Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; 17 and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19 Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews", but, "This man said, I am King of the Jews."' 22 Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.' **23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. 24 So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.'** This was to fulfil what the scripture says,

**'They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.'**

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25 And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' 27 Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' 29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

### Reflection

Whilst all the gospels refer to the soldiers casting lots for the clothes of Jesus, only John specifies the "seamless" tunic. I wonder why John added that detail. Only the High Priests wore such a fine robe and it may be that, for John, it signified Jesus as our Great High Priest.

However, it seems rather strange that Jesus – who for three years of ministry had relied on others to feed and clothe him, to provide a bed for the night and a roof over his head – would have a fine robe seamlessly created – a much more time-consuming process and therefore a more expensive garment. It was clearly a prize worth winning for those Roman soldiers.

But why would a penniless Jesus have such a valuable garment? We cannot be sure, but we know that various women supported his ministry out of their own assets – Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Susana (Luke 8:13) – so perhaps one of them made or commissioned its making for him. And if so, then Jesus accepted it as a gift. Just as he accepted Mary's gift of anointing with precious oil of Nard, Jesus accepted this gift of a seamless tunic. Or was it perhaps from his own mother, Mary? Had she lovingly created it, knowing that it would be fit for a son whom the Angel Gabriel had told her would be the Son of God (Luke 1:35)?

We can only ponder its origins in the same way that "Mary pondered all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:19). That was then, when her first son was born. This is now at his cruel and degrading death.

Of course, it would need washing and perhaps mending; it would be blood-stained from the beatings and that crown of thorns thrust upon his head and perhaps torn too as he stumbled on his way to Golgotha. Yet it was worth keeping whole. So much easier for the soldiers to take a sword and slash it down the front and tear it off him – yet further humiliation usually dispensed to prisoners before execution. But this garment was worth taking some trouble over, worth keeping whole.

I wonder was this the same robe touched by the woman who needed healing (Luke 8:43-48). Is this seamless robe part of the healing process of crucifixion – part of the

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process that redeems us and makes us whole again with God, that makes possible our restoration in his image, that heals the divisions between ourselves and God?

Being seamless means being whole. It is a phrase used by the Roman Catholic pacifist Eileen Egan describing an holistic philosophy that holds all life as sacred. "The protection of life", said Egan, "is a seamless garment. You can't protect some life and not others." The Seamless Garment Network promotes integrity, truth and wholeness within life.

And if – at this point of the death of Jesus – we look back on his life, we see that it was seamless; that he was true to God's nature; that he was wholly at one with God. His birth, his thirty years with a growing sense of his special relationship with God and a distinctive vocation beyond carpentry, his baptismal awakening, his three years of ministry and finally this – agony in the garden of Gethsemane and now – Golgatha. His whole life was seamlessly interwoven with God's life.

As we gaze upon Jesus whilst his life ebbs away, let us pray for determination make our lives seamlessly interwoven with God's.

### Prayer

Lord Jesus you came to make us all whole, to mend broken lives to restore damaged people. Forgive us the denial of God's image set within us. Pour your grace on our sorrow that we may find the courage to change. Teach us to walk in your light and to follow where you lead that we may find our wills seamlessly aligned with God's. Amen

You may wish to listen to this Passion hymn or to use one of your own choosing:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XppXi\\_jZKWk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XppXi_jZKWk)

Revd Trish

## **EASTER VIGIL READINGS FOR SATURDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

*On Holy Saturday we usually gather in the Churchyard at Holy Trinity where we sit, for about an hour, around a fire (in a fire pit) with hot drinks and Hot Cross Buns to read a selection of the Bible readings set for the Easter Vigil. We plan to do this ourselves this evening in our own garden from 19.00. Do join in where you are if you would like to. Otherwise read the passages during the day either all at once or at various times. (If you do light a fire please consider your neighbours!)*

Revd Patricia

### **1. Genesis 1:1-2:4 (NRSVA)**

**1** In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, **2** the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. **3** Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. **4** And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light

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from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' <sup>7</sup> So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup> Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' <sup>21</sup> So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' <sup>23</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

<sup>27</sup> So God created humankind in his image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' <sup>29</sup> God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. <sup>31</sup> God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

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**2** Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. **2** And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. **3** So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation. **4** These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

### **Psalm 136: 1-9; 23-end**

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

*His love endures forever.*

**2** Give thanks to the God of gods.

*His love endures forever.*

**3** Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

*His love endures forever.*

**4** to him who alone does great wonders,

*His love endures forever.*

**5** who by his understanding made the heavens,

*His love endures forever.*

**6** who spread out the earth upon the waters,

*His love endures forever.*

**7** who made the great lights—

*His love endures forever.*

**8** the sun to govern the day,

*His love endures forever.*

**9** the moon and stars to govern the night;

*His love endures forever.*

**23** He remembered us in our low estate

*His love endures forever.*

**24** and freed us from our enemies.

*His love endures forever.*

**25** He gives food to every creature.

*His love endures forever.*

**26** Give thanks to the God of heaven.

*His love endures forever.*

### **2. Genesis 7:1 – 5; 11-18; 8: 6-18; 9: 8-13**

**7** Then the Lord said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. **2** Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; **3** and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. **4** For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.' **5** And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

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<sup>11</sup> In the six-hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. <sup>12</sup> The rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup> On the very same day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons, entered the ark, <sup>14</sup> they and every wild animal of every kind, and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind—every bird, every winged creature. <sup>15</sup> They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. <sup>16</sup> And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in. <sup>17</sup> The flood continued for forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. <sup>18</sup> The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters.

**8** <sup>6</sup> At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made <sup>7</sup> and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; <sup>9</sup> but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. <sup>10</sup> He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; <sup>11</sup> and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. <sup>12</sup> Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

<sup>13</sup> In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying. <sup>14</sup> In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. <sup>15</sup> Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup> 'Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. <sup>17</sup> Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.' <sup>18</sup> So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives.

**9** <sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' <sup>12</sup> God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: <sup>13</sup> I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

### Psalm 46

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present [\[a\]](#) help in trouble.

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<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult

<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.

<sup>5</sup> God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.

<sup>6</sup> The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter;  
he utters his voice, the earth melts.

<sup>7</sup> The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge. [🔊Selah](#)

<sup>8</sup> Come, behold the works of the Lord;  
see what desolations he has brought on the earth.

<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;  
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with fire.

<sup>10</sup> 'Be still, and know that I am God!  
I am exalted among the nations,  
I am exalted in the earth.'

<sup>11</sup> The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

### 3. Exodus 14: 10 -end; 15:20-21 and Canticle Exodus 15: 1b-13, 17-18

<sup>10</sup> As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> They said to Moses, 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? <sup>12</sup> Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, "Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians"? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.' <sup>13</sup> But Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. <sup>14</sup> The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.'

<sup>15</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. <sup>16</sup> But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. <sup>17</sup> Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. <sup>18</sup> And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers.'

<sup>19</sup> The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. <sup>20</sup> It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

<sup>21</sup> Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. <sup>22</sup> The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall



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for them on their right and on their left. <sup>23</sup> The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. <sup>24</sup> At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. <sup>25</sup> He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.'

<sup>26</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' <sup>27</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. <sup>28</sup> The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. <sup>29</sup> But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

<sup>30</sup> Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup> Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

**15** <sup>20</sup> Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. <sup>21</sup> And Miriam sang to them:

'Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;  
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.'

'I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;  
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.'

<sup>2</sup> The Lord is my strength and my might, <sup>[a]</sup>  
and he has become my salvation;

this is my God, and I will praise him,  
my father's God, and I will exalt him.

<sup>3</sup> The Lord is a warrior;  
the Lord is his name.

<sup>4</sup> 'Pharaoh's chariots and his army he cast into the sea;  
his picked officers were sunk in the Red Sea. <sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The floods covered them;  
they went down into the depths like a stone.

<sup>6</sup> Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power—  
your right hand, O Lord, shattered the enemy.

<sup>7</sup> In the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your adversaries;  
you sent out your fury, it consumed them like stubble.

<sup>8</sup> At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up,  
the floods stood up in a heap;  
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

<sup>9</sup> The enemy said, "I will pursue, I will overtake,  
I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them.  
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them."

<sup>10</sup> You blew with your wind, the sea covered them;  
they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

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<sup>11</sup> 'Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods?

Who is like you, majestic in holiness,  
awesome in splendour, doing wonders?

<sup>12</sup> You stretched out your right hand,  
the earth swallowed them.

<sup>13</sup> 'In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed;  
you guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

<sup>17</sup> You brought them in and planted them on the mountain of your own possession,  
the place, O Lord, that you made your abode,  
the sanctuary, O Lord, that your hands have established.

<sup>18</sup> The Lord will reign for ever and ever.'

### 4. Isaiah 55: 1-11 & Canticle: Isaiah 12: 2-end

55 Ho, everyone who thirsts,  
come to the waters;  
and you that have no money,  
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without price.

<sup>2</sup> Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,  
and delight yourselves in rich food.

<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to me;  
listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
my steadfast, sure love for David.

<sup>4</sup> See, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and commander for the peoples.

<sup>5</sup> See, you shall call nations that you do not know,  
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,  
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup> Seek the Lord while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near;

<sup>7</sup> let the wicked forsake their way,  
and the unrighteous their thoughts;  
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

<sup>8</sup> For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

<sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

<sup>10</sup> For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,  
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

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<sup>11</sup> so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

**12** <sup>2</sup> Surely God is my salvation;  
I will trust, and will not be afraid,  
for the Lord God is my strength and my might;  
he has become my salvation.

<sup>3</sup> With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. <sup>4</sup> And you will say on that day:

Give thanks to the Lord,  
call on his name;  
make known his deeds among the nations;  
proclaim that his name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup> Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;  
let this be known in all the earth.

<sup>6</sup> Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

### 5. Romans 6: 3-11 & Psalm 114

<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup> For whoever has died is freed from sin. <sup>8</sup> But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup> The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

### Psalm 114

<sup>1</sup> When Israel went out from Egypt,  
the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,

<sup>2</sup> Judah became God's <sup>[a]</sup> sanctuary,  
Israel his dominion.

<sup>3</sup> The sea looked and fled;  
Jordan turned back.

<sup>4</sup> The mountains skipped like rams,  
the hills like lambs.

<sup>5</sup> Why is it, O sea, that you flee?  
O Jordan, that you turn back?

<sup>6</sup> O mountains, that you skip like rams?  
O hills, like lambs?

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<sup>7</sup> Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord,  
at the presence of the God of Jacob,  
<sup>8</sup> who turns the rock into a pool of water,  
the flint into a spring of water.

### 6. Matthew 28: 1-10

**28** After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he<sup>[a]</sup> lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has been raised from the dead,<sup>[b]</sup> and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." This is my message for you.' <sup>8</sup> So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

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