

8 Prayers to Pray Each Day of Holy Week

• Rachel Marie Stone 2016 Mar 18



I'm embarrassed to admit it, but this year I've been thinking of Holy Week less in terms of the passion of Jesus Christ and more in terms of "spring break."

It's not that I've got any spectacular vacation plans. It's just that my children and I will be off from school (I'm a teacher), the days will grow longer and warmer, and the bulbs I planted in the garden last year will poke their green leaves out of the earth and blossom to the sun.

So I'm approaching Holy Week feeling unprepared, and not just because I have no idea what I'm going to make for **Easter** dinner. I've spent more Sundays in Lent at home sick – or home with sick children – than I've been in church. I'm soul-weary after months of winter and darkness and stress.

But perhaps this isn't such a bad way to enter Holy Week – tired and unprepared, hungry for a new beginning, eager for the light to shine in the darkness. Even if, like me, you feel you haven't quite lived into the penitential season of Lent, it's not too late to begin walking toward resurrection morning.

Here are eight prayers to take you – and me – through Holy Week. There's one for each day, beginning with Palm Sunday, and each of them is based on one of traditional Scripture readings given to that day in church lectionaries.

Palm Sunday Prayer

[Matthew 21:1-11](#); [Psa 118:1-2](#); [Psa 118:19-29](#)

Lord God,

I give you thanks, for you are good, and your mercy is endless.

Here I stand, at the start of this holy week,

This week in which your church remembers Jesus' passion and death,

And I am distracted by many things.

Turn my eyes now to the One who comes in your name

The one who opens the gates of righteousness

The one who answers when we call.

I bless you, Lord, for shining your light upon me,

And for sending your son to us, in human frailty.

To walk the road we walk.

Open my eyes that I may see him coming,

And may praise him with a pure heart.

And may walk in the way of his suffering,

And share also in his resurrection.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Amen.

Monday - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 21:10-17](#); [John 12:1-8](#)

Lord God,
Six days before his death, your son sat with Lazarus,
Whom he had raised from the dead,
And ate dinner with his friends.
Once again, your gospel tells us, Martha served,
And Mary knelt at Jesus' feet
To anoint them with costly perfume.
The disciple who was about to betray him
Said that it was a waste.
He didn't care about the poor, really –
He just wanted to fill his own pockets
And make Mary feel ashamed.
Lord God,
Often we cannot discern what is best:
When to pour out costly perfume for your sake,
Even if the world thinks it a waste.
When to be busy serving,
Or when to rest at your Son's feet and learn.
Give us ears to hear you and eyes to see.
For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Tuesday - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 26:36-46](#); [Hebrews 5:7-9](#)

Lord God,
The message of the cross is difficult to take.
How can death give way to life? How can weakness be strength?
Yet your word says that Jesus, being God,
Took on human flesh
And suffered the worst kind of death.
How can this be?
This message is indeed difficult to take.
But your foolishness is wiser than our wisdom.
Your weakness is greater than our strength.
Help us to know that none of us can boast before you.
It is only in Christ Jesus that we can boast.
In his name, we ask you to help our unbelief.
That we may love you, and walk in the way Jesus taught us.
In his name,
Amen.

Wednesday - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 26:27-56](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18](#)

Lord God,

We tremble to think

That it was one of Jesus' own friends who betrayed him.

One who sat by him, who broke bread with him.

Give us strength, we pray,

To walk faithfully with Jesus,

Even when the road we walk is rocky

Even when the message of the cross seems like foolishness

And even when we feel betrayed.

You, Lord, are always faithful.

We stumble, we become lost,

But you are steady and sure.

Give us the grace to endure our troubles,

And reveal to us the glory of your kingdom,

Through your son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Thursday (Maundy Thursday) - Holy Week Prayer

[John 13:1-17](#); [John 13:34-35](#)

Lord God,

You sent your Son into the world,

And before his hour had come,

He washed his disciples' feet.

You had given all things into his hands.

He had come from you, and was going to you,

And what did he do?

He knelt down on the floor,

And washed his friends' feet.

He was their teacher and their Lord,

Yet he washed their feet.

Lord God, help us learn from his example;

Help us to do as he has done for us.

The world will know we are his disciples

If we love one another.

Strengthen our hands and our wills for love

And for service.

Keep before our eyes the image of your Son,

Who, being God, became a Servant for our sake.

All glory be to him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

One God, now and forever.

Amen.

Friday (Good Friday) - Holy Week Prayer

[John 18:1-40](#), [John 19:1-42](#); [Isaiah 52:13-15](#); [Isaiah 53:1-12](#); [Hebrews 10:16-25](#); [Psa 22](#)

Lord God,

Jesus cried out to you on the cross,

“Why have you forsaken me?”

You seemed so far from his cry

And from his distress.

Those who stood at the foot of the cross

Wondered where you were,

As they saw Jesus mocked and shamed and killed.

Where were you then?

Lord God,

We, too, ask where you are,

When there is trouble and suffering and death,

And we cry out to you for help.

Be near to us, and save us

So that we may praise you for your deliverance.

Lord God,

We wait, on Friday, for the resurrection of Sunday

And sometimes our lives seem a succession of Fridays

And we cannot see what is “Good.”

Teach us to call your name

As Jesus did.

Make us to trust in you like little children.

In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Saturday (Holy Saturday) - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 17:1-6](#); [Lamentations 3:1-9](#), [Lamentations 3:19-24](#)

Lord God,

On the Sabbath,

Jesus rested.

He was in the grave.

He had finished his work.

To most people’s eyes,

It looked as if it were all over.

He was dead and buried.

But only as a seed dies when it is planted in the earth,

Not to decay, but to spring to new life.

Teach us to take refuge in you when we are afraid

Teach us that death is not our end

Teach us to hope always in you

And in the resurrection, the making of all things

New.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen.

Sunday - (Easter/Resurrection Sunday) - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 28](#); [Revelation 5:11-14](#); [Psa 118:1-2](#); [Psa 118:14-24](#)

Lord God,

You loved this world so much,

That you gave your one and only Son,

That we might be called your children too.

Lord, help us to live in the gladness and grace

Of Easter Sunday, every day.

Let us have hearts of thankfulness

For your sacrifice.

Let us have eyes that look upon

Your grace and rejoice in our salvation.

Help us to walk in that mighty grace

And tell your good news to the world.

All for your glory do we pray, Lord,

Amen.