

Church of the Divine Love

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

APRIL 6, 2025 10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Please observe silence

Alleluias are omitted during Lent

A Morning Prayer – on insert

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation for Lent

page 351

The Decalogue

page 350

The Confession

page 352

THE WORD OF GOD

Kyrie

page 356

Collect of the Day – lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Isaiah 43:16-21**

Psalm 126

Second Lesson: **Philippians 3:4b-14**

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **John 12:1-8**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze – printed on insert

The Nicene Creed

page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV

page 388

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)

Hymn during Consecration – printed on insert

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn #

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace (on insert)

Prayer for the Parish page 817

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday April 6, 2025

Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

When was the last time you did something for someone else without any expectations, with no strings attached, without any conditions or preconditions? There was no why to what you were doing. You were just doing what you were doing because that's what you were doing. Someone says: "The rose has no why; it blossoms because it blossoms. It pays no attention to itself, nor does it ask whether anyone sees it."

What if we were to live like the rose, without a why? What if we blossomed simply because we blossomed. What if there was no motive or seeking to our blossoming; to be noticed, to be praised, to accomplish? What if we fragrant the world because we couldn't do anything but fragrance the world? The rose is going to do what it's going to do regardless of whether anyone sees or smells it. It's beauty and fragrance are not means to an end. It has no why. I want to live without a why. I want to give and do unconditionally, at least that's what I want on my better days. I think that's often how we see ourselves and how we want to be and live, to live unconditionally and without strings attached, but it's harder than it sounds. We live in a world of economy, exchange, and transaction. You scratch my back; I'll scratch your back. We live in a world in which you pay for what you want. There is, as the saying goes, no such thing as a free lunch. We're expected to return the favor, pay off the debt, or reciprocate in some way. In short, you get what you pay for. And we pay in all sorts of ways.

Think about all the ways that happens and how commonplace and acceptable it is. We exchange our time for money, sacrifice our families for success, and trade our dreams for the practicalities of making ends meet. Have you ever received a gift and felt indebted, obligated to return the favor, or at least send a thank-you note? Even the best-intentioned gifts can leave the recipient with an unintended debt of gratitude. And how did you feel when you did not receive a thank-you note or other acknowledgment after giving a gift, or did not receive an invitation to dinner at their house after you had them to dinner at your house. Have you ever sent flowers after an argument? Have you ever argued over the lunch bill? You paid the last time, it's my turn or I'll get it today, you can get it next time. Regardless of what side of the campaign finance issue you're on everyone knows that big time donors expect big time returns. And it's not just in politics, sometimes it's in college admissions. If your charitable gifts are charitable enough you get rewarded with a tax deduction. Have you ever said or done something as a means to an end? Have you ever wondered why somebody was doing something for you, wondered what was in it for them? It's even in church and our faith. Theologians call it "the economy of salvation." Believe in Jesus, follow his way, and you too can have salvation. Sometimes we believe that our prayers and good behavior are the currency that pays for God's favor.

I say none of that as a criticism or judgment but simply as an observation that there are thousands of ways in which we daily transact the business of life. We can't escape that. It's hard, maybe impossible, to give a pure gift. Economies are a part of our world and our lives. As much as I love being a priest and say that I am not in it for the money, I still want and need to be paid. I am not suggesting economies are inherently wrong or that we need to rid ourselves of economies, but maybe we need to be more aware of them and the power and influence they have. Maybe we need to lessen and loosen the stranglehold they tend to have on us. We cannot always do everything for the payoff, and sometimes we don't. There are times when we do or need to do something simply for the sake of doing it; things like love, forgiveness, truth, hospitality, justice, compassion. In those times something is being affirmed for itself

not for what it might achieve or accomplish. There is no why. I think that's what's going on with Mary in today's gospel (**John 12:1-8**). She loves because she loves. She anoints because she anoints. She fragrances because she fragrances. There is no why. It is gift, "grace upon grace." There is nothing in it for her. It is unconditional, without measure or calculation. And it looks reckless and irresponsible. She is not invested in a result or seeking a particular outcome. She's just doing what she's doing because that's what she's doing. She breaks the chains of means and ends. And it makes no sense to Judas or any other economist.

Gift stands in contrast to economy, even as Mary stands in contrast to Judas. "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" I don't know what Judas' real motive was. Maybe he was, as our text says, a thief and wanted it all for himself. Maybe he really did care about and want to help the poor. Or maybe our gospel writer was seeking paybacks and revenge another economy and portrayed him in a negative light. There are multiple ways of interpreting what Judas says. In any event Judas is calculating and practical. He knows the market. He's an investor looking for a return. He wants to turn Mary's gift into a profit. Judas has a why. He's aligned himself with a means and an end. In the economies of our life everything has a why, life is calculable, and we become calculating, expecting a return on our investment whether that investment is money, time, love, or a good deed.

What if they are not two opposite lives or people but two aspects of our lives, two ways of living and relating? What if we hold both Mary and Judas within ourselves? What if they are images of ourselves, images of our charitable self and our economic self, images of our unconditioned life and our conditioned life? When have you been Mary and when have you been Judas? What's your experience of the two? In what ways have they shaped or misshaped your life? I don't think it's a question of choosing one over the other, gift or economy, Mary or Judas, but of living in the tension of the two. That tension is what sometimes keeps us up at night, calls us into question, awakens us to how we truly want to live. That tension is the call to be discerning and thoughtful about how we respond to others and engage life. That tension pushes us to look within ourselves at our motives and desires. That tension reveals that Mary and Judas, gift and economy are interwoven, and each has the possibility of the other. It reminds us that the fragrance of life can be neither bought nor sold. It's priceless.

Look at the poverty of your life and then take a deep breath. If you are not smelling the fragrance of beauty, why not? What might you need to do, change, or let go of? Breathe deeply. Embrace the beauty. Let it fill you to overflowing, give you courage to love and hold nothing back, and inspire you to risk vulnerability and intimacy. Let the beauty of your life anoint the life of another and waft through this world. **Amen.**

Easter flower memorial envelopes are at the back of the church.

Please return by April 13th. Please make checks payable to The Church of the Divine Love Altar Guild.

All baptized Christians, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church.

5 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
	1:00 PM	BROWNIE TROOP MEETING
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
TUESDAY		NO BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
FRIDAY	7:00 PM	IMPROV GROUP
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP

THE SUNDAY OF THE PASSION/PALM SUNDAY

10:15 AM	LITURGY OF THE PALMS
	(in the parish hall, with procession to the church)
	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Roe Prosser	Anthony Giordano
Coffee Hour	Prossers	Janet Croft

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Jess
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Art
Chris Dickson	John Rocco	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Lynette
Manetta Family	Robert Hosey	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Dorothy	Del
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Vincent & Barbara	Ciara
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Sophia
Michael & Family	Kristen	Mo
Michelle & Baby	Christopher	Annie
Jerry & Family	Shannon & Family	Donna A.
Moises Parra	Misael Varas	Joseph

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.
The homeless and food insecure.
Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email
Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

A Morning Prayer

Father in heaven, I stand ready to receive Your wisdom and guidance. In each decision, big or small, lead me to discern your will and to act accordingly. Help me to understand the depth of Your wisdom, finding guidance in Your word and through prayer. Teach me to be patient as I wait for Your direction, trusting that Your timing is perfect. May I navigate this day with the assurance that Your wisdom is a treasure far greater than any earthly knowledge. Guide my thoughts and actions, that they may be a reflection of Your discernment and love. In Your guidance, I find the path to a life of purpose and peace.
Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,

Lay my life before you,

How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus

And third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn

but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that

all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince

of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions

and glory, now and for ever. Amen

