

## PRAYERS FOR HOLY WEEK

*Will you take this cross:  
made from the palms waved in  
my praise,  
waved by the people who  
couldn't stop proclaiming who  
I was?*

*Will you take this cross:  
a sign of the pain that is real,  
pain that cannot be ignored?  
Will you take this cross:  
and carry it this week of all  
weeks,  
this week they call 'Holy',  
this week when Hosanna  
stops,  
and joy becomes sorrow,  
when welcome becomes fear  
and tables are turned over,  
when words are spoken  
and cannot be taken back?  
Will you take this cross?*

(Anne Sardeson)

### Monday

#### Song:

Travelling the road to freedom,  
who wants to travel the road with  
me?

Feted with noise and branches  
and banners hanging from every  
tree;  
cheered on by frenzied people,  
puzzled by what they hear and  
see:

travelling the road to freedom,  
who wants to travel the road with  
me?

Travelling the road to freedom,  
Who wants to travel the road  
with me?

Tipping the scales of justice,  
Setting both minds and captives  
free;

Suffering and yet forgiving,  
Ev'n when my friends most  
disagree:

Travelling the road to freedom,  
Who wants to travel the road  
with me?

Travelling the road to freedom,  
I am the way, I'll take you there.  
Choose to come on the journey,  
Or choose to criticize and stare.  
Earth's mesmerising evil  
Only a traveler can repair.  
Travelling the road to freedom,  
I am the way, I'll take you there

### Mark 11: 15-19

They arrived at Jerusalem.  
Immediately on entering the  
Temple Jesus started throwing  
out everyone who had set up  
shop there, buying and selling.  
He kicked over the tables of the  
bankers and the stalls of the  
pigeon merchants. He didn't let  
anyone even carry a basket  
through the Temple. And then he  
taught them, quoting this text:  
*My house was designated a  
house of prayer for the nations;  
You've turned it into a hangout for  
thieves.*

The high priests and religion  
scholars heard what was going  
on and plotted how they might  
get rid of him. They panicked, for  
the entire crowd was carried  
away by his teaching. At evening,  
Jesus and his disciples left the  
city.

(The Message)

**Consider:**

What is there in my life that Jesus won't put up with? – that wants clearing out? What is there in the world that is corrupt and unjust? Am I standing against it like Jesus or ignoring it?

**Prayer:**

*Almighty God,  
you loved the world so much  
that you sent your Son  
not to condemn the world  
but that through him the world  
might be saved.  
We who are quicker to judge than  
to bless  
fall silent at the extravagance of  
your grace.  
As we are confronted again  
with the depth of human  
wickedness  
and the greater depth  
of your divine compassion,  
may we not remain unmoved.  
As Christ's arms are stretched out  
and his body lifted up, May  
we confess our part in the sin of  
the world, repent of it, know the  
reality of your forgiveness  
and be transformed. Amen*  
*(Common Order)*

**Tuesday:****Song:**

O Jesus Christ, in human flesh,  
you practiced heaven's care,  
besieged by need, betrayed by  
greed, sustained by faith and  
prayer.

Before you spoke, before you  
healed,  
before you broke the bread, in

crowds,  
as in the quiet place,  
you felt for where God led.

Not to escape, but to prepare,  
to fathom and fulfil,  
you let your heart and hands be  
tuned,  
in silence, to God's will.

So we, responding to your call,  
to walk your chosen way,  
admit our need to learn from you  
to love and work and pray.

Then send your Spirit to inspire  
our cautious hearts and hands,  
till work and prayer are rooted  
deep  
in love which understands.

**Mark 12: 28-34:**

One of the religion scholars came up. Hearing the lively exchanges of question and answer and seeing how sharp Jesus was in his answers, he put in his question: "Which is most important of all the commandments?" Jesus said, "The first in importance is, 'Listen, Israel: The Lord your God is one; so love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy.' And here is the second: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment that ranks with these." The religion scholar said, "A wonderful answer, Teacher! So lucid and accurate—that God is one and there is no other. And loving him with all passion and intelligence and energy, and loving others as well as you love

yourself. Why, that's better than all offerings and sacrifices put together!" When Jesus realized how insightful he was, he said, "You're almost there, right on the border of God's kingdom." After that, no one else dared ask a question. (The Message)

**Consider:**

What would my life look if my love for God was full of passion and prayer and intelligence and energy?  
And if I truly loved others as I love myself?  
How is God asking me to obey these commandments *now*?

**Prayer:**

*God of love,  
through your Son  
You gave us a new  
commandment,  
To love one another as he loved  
us.  
In his Spirit we ask you  
for a mind forgetful of past injury,  
a will to seek the good of others,  
and a heart full of love for all;  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

(Common Order)

**Wednesday:**

**Song:**

Lay down your head, Lord Jesus Christ,  
fast falls the night,  
Close follow those who crave your end  
blinded by sight.  
God give you rest, strength for your task,  
light for our way.  
Lay down your head and, by your side,  
we'll sleep and stay.

**Mark 14: 3-9**

Jesus was at Bethany, a guest of Simon the Leper. While he was eating dinner, a woman came up carrying a bottle of very expensive perfume. Opening the bottle, she poured it on his head. Some of the guests became furious among themselves. "That's criminal! A sheer waste! This perfume could have been sold for well over a year's wages and handed out to the poor." They swelled up in anger, nearly bursting with indignation over her. But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why are you giving her a hard time? She has just done something wonderfully significant for me. You will have the poor with you every day for the rest of your lives. Whenever you feel like it, you can do something for them. Not so with me. She did what she could when she could—she pre-anointed my body for burial. And you can be sure that wherever in the whole world the Message is preached, what she just did is going to be talked about admirably."

(The Message)

**Consider:**

Try living this scene in imagination, as though you are the woman who loves Jesus so much. Capture the scene, the sounds, the smell and the feelings of the woman as she honours him in this way. Offer your own love to Jesus.

**Prayer:**

*Lord God,  
maker and love of all,  
as we contemplate again  
the pageant of the Lord's betrayal,  
suffering and death,  
may neither the history, ritual nor  
sentiment of this season  
in themselves fascinate us.  
Rather may our souls be grasped  
by what our minds alone cannot  
contain –  
that this was all for us.  
And so, Lord, may we be all for  
you. Amen.*

(Common Order)

### **Thursday:**

Song:

Word of the Father,  
COME, LORD, COME  
AND TAKE OUR FEAR AWAY,  
AND TAKE OUR FEAR AWAY,  
REPLACE IT WITH YOUR LOVE.

Firstborn of Mary,

Healer and helper,

Servant and sufferer,

Jesus, redeemer,

Christ, resurrected,

Maranatha,

### **Mark 14: 12-16:**

On the first of the Days of Unleavened Bread, the day they prepare the Passover sacrifice, his disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations so you can eat the Passover meal?" He directed two of his disciples, "Go into the city.

A man carrying a water jug will meet you. Follow him. Ask the owner of whichever house he enters, 'The Teacher wants to know, Where is my guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?' He will show you a spacious second-story room, swept and ready. Prepare for us there." The disciples left, came to the city, found everything just as he had told them, and prepared the Passover meal. (The Message)

### **Consider:**

As Jesus was ready, and the room was ready, am I ready to stand by him through betrayal, suffering and death? How am I going to keep focused on Jesus as Bank Holiday draws near and the world goes into holiday mode?

### **Prayer:**

*Lord Jesus Christ,  
in this sacred and solemn week  
when we see again the depth and  
mystery  
of your redeeming love,  
help us to follow where you go,  
to stop where you stumble,  
to listen where you cry,  
to hurt as you suffer,  
to bow our heads in sorrow when  
you die,  
so that when you are raised to life  
again  
we may share your endless joy.  
Amen.*

(Common Order)

### **The Grace**