



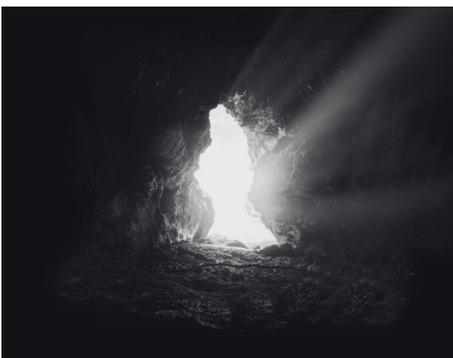
Holy Thursday



Good Friday



Holy Saturday



Easter Sunday

HOLY WEEK

2023

HOLY THURSDAY



Leszek Forczek, Washing of the Feet: Light to Darkness

“He Loved us to the End.”

Today we can begin our Easter Triduum by contemplating the last supper event where Jesus washed the feet of his disciples... a gesture of loving, respecting and putting power at the service of others.

Opening Song: [Lord I Come \(Wash my feet\) – David Brackenbury](#)

Imagine being among the disciples at the last supper. Unite with all that is happening at this event. As Jesus moves around washing each disciple's feet, **be aware of his invitation to wash your feet too**. Deeply examine yourself and surrender to Jesus what needs to be washed in your life.

Washing of feet is both an expression of vulnerability and Christ's compassion. It is an invitation for us to do the same, to serve and love our sisters and brothers.

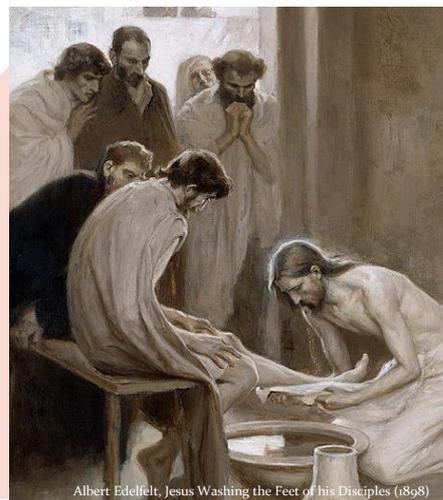
What does it mean to make ourselves vulnerable in community living and in apostolic service? Take some time to pray with our own vulnerabilities.

Jesus took off the outer garment before he started washing the disciples' feet. He invites us to wash each other's feet in our daily life. **Surrender the layers of your “outer garments that stand on the way of your washing of other people's feet.** Whose feet am I being invited to wash?

In my imagination, I move forward like Jesus, remove my outer garments, and wash the feet of the one I am invited to wash in my context.

Peter is scandalized.

To be served by Jesus is to be loved by him. Jesus invites Peter to allow him to express his love for him by washing his feet. Peter was shocked to see Jesus taking the position of a servant to wash the feet of all his disciples. Jesus asks us to imitate his attitude of humility, of allowing others to love us and to love them in return. Though most of the disciples were still dreaming of a powerful, glorious messiah who will restore the Kingdom of Israel, Jesus asks them to imitate him by going so far in humility, in loving, in being compassionate and in serving all, including those who betray them. This invitation is extended to us.



Are there people I find hard to wash their feet or to wash my feet? Pray quietly for each of them by name.

“Power affects the way we relate in our communities, live our vow of obedience, collaborate with people and groups in our ministries and how we value or hold on to the ministries entrusted to us.” (Artisans of Hope, p.8-9)

The feet of Judas are also washed.

*Watch Jesus wash the feet of Judas with pure love and compassion.
Spend time with Jesus as he washes Judas’ feet and imagine loving and praying for those who have betrayed you and others who need their feet to be washed.*

Concluding Prayer:

Jesus, how I yearn for you to wash my feet
I am longing to hear you call my name just as you did Peters’
You look for more than dust when you wash my feet
You have gazed deeply at me. You do not just wash my feet, you interact with me too.
You wash my feet lovingly that i can no longer resist.
Jesus, wash the whole of my being so that I can amend my ways
Wash me so that I can be as pure as snow
Grant me a humble heart that accepts the truth.

Thank you, Jesus, for washing my feet, my shame, my dust, and mud each time I come to you
Grant me what I need to promote washing of others’ feet
Grant me the courage to reach out to my neighbors and wash their feet.
Oh, wash me, Lord.

Closing song: [Wash Me, Lord - HYMNthusiast](#)

Margaret Mwarili rscj
Sacred Heart at the UN Representative
Uganda-Kenya



Good Friday

John 18:1–19:42



Mother House Pierced Heart of Jesus (Photo by Joy Luz)

Let us “remain in Jesus” this Good Friday. Let us “shadow” him as he walks the path to Calvary and surrenders his life in freedom. Focus on Jesus — his words, attitudes, and actions. We ask for the grace to experience the love and passion that enabled him to take up his Cross and commend his spirit into God’s hands.

In the Gospel
through His words, His attitudes,
His relationships with people,
His way of relating to all created things,
we discover His Heart
wholly given to the Father and to all people.

RSCJ Constitutions #19

John 18 - 19:16

Be with Jesus when he encounters Judas in the garden and is arrested there, brought before Annas and Caiaphas, disowned by Peter, and has an exchange with Pilate at the Praetorium.

Listen.... Learn from his heart.... Remain in him....

John 19:16-30

Walk the way with Jesus as he carries his own cross. Stay with him as he is crucified, and his garments divided. Be present when he meets his mother.

Listen.... Learn from his heart.... Remain in him....

John 19:31-42

Stay at the foot of the Cross when the soldier pierces the side of Jesus. “Look to the one whom they have pierced.”

Be there at the garden. Watch as Jesus’ body is laid in the “new tomb in which no one had yet been buried.”

Listen.... Learn from his heart.... Remain in him....

***How did Jesus reveal His Heart to me
as I remained in Him this Good Friday?***

***In our world today that is in so much need
of justice, peace, and care of creation,
how am I called anew to take up my cross and follow Him?***

***In the silence of our hearts, we renew our commitment
to take up our cross and follow him...
in whatever way this may mean for us today.***

SILENCE

Let this silence remain onwards to Holy Saturday...

We may end with this song: [God of Broken Hearts by Zack Stachowski](#)

Joy Luz rscj
International JPIC Coordinator
Philippines





HOLY SATURDAY

“With Mary in her Liminal Space.”

Opening Song: [Buried in the Grave - All Sons and Daughters](#)

***“Now the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden,
and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid...
They laid Jesus there.”***

(Jn 19: 41-42)

This tomb provides us with a pause in the story.

Between the darkness of Good Friday and the light of Easter Sunday, Holy Saturday hangs suspended. It’s a liminal space—neither here nor there.: things are not as they were, nor are they as they will be. There’s a tension between what we’ve known and what’s ahead. This was a situation of Mary on Holy Saturday. If we take the time to enter in, we’ll feel it too.

Joseph in prison. Israel in the desert. Jonah in the fish. David in the pasture. Mary with child. Jesus in the wilderness. These were not bridges, simply moving them from one place to another; these were transformative places and spaces and times—transformational encounters with God.



Image from Villa Lante

As we journey through life, we also have these in-between times. We walk into liminal space... Sacred moments of deep encounters with God.

Liminality is a chrysalis, a womb where we can grow into the life ahead. And sometimes, like Holy Saturday, liminality takes the shape of a tomb—dark, despairing, disorienting, but still: a place where new life is formed and birthed. Transformation happens in liminal spaces. Will you stay in the tension as long as it takes?

Take a pause (10 minutes) and recall a time in your life when you experienced the liminal space. A situation when you felt, like Mary, you were at the threshold. There was emptiness, and anguish and you had no answers. You did not know how long. You could no longer visualize what comes next. Perhaps your prayer became that of the Psalmist. *“How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long must I bear pain in my soul, and sorrow in my heart all day long?”* (Ps. 13:1-2)

Stay with this experience for a while:

***What made you sustain this moment?
What strengthened you at this moment?***

Spend time with Mary at the tomb in deep silence waiting, praying, deepening your faith and strengthening your discipleship.

In the storm of life, there are people/ groups who cry out to God all the time. In the depths of this silence bring them to Mary.



The cry of those born in poverty who die as yet another statistic in a roll call far too great for our hearts to bear.

The cry of those without work, whose dignity is lost, and whose lives so often spiral into despair.

The cry of those who live with constant pain as age and infirmity eat away at their lives.

The cry of those who suffer from a terminal illness as they long for a miracle.

The cry of those victims of natural disasters mourning the loss of their loved ones.

The cry of the victims of war and violence longing for peace.

The cry of our own lives as we look for a glimpse of the divine amid our joys and sorrows.

Add your own list...

Concluding prayer

***Lord, we give to you the times we have in own lives,
where all we can do is wait, when all we hold is hope.***

***We give you those times when all we have
is faith in new life, new beginnings and heavens call.***

***Be with all those who today wait in that cold,
uncertain place.***

References: Ruth Rosell, Director of Buttry Center for Peace and Nonviolence, Grace like Scarlet by Adriel Booker

Daphne Sequeira rscj
General Councilor and JPIC Link
India



EASTER SUNDAY

"The Resurrection Sprint!"

"Setting off in love's footsteps..."

On the first day of the week, at the break of dawn, the women went to the tomb, carrying the spices they had prepared. Love is what drives them. Let us go with the flow!

The light of the Resurrection has already pierced the night around them:

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it..."



Towards which people "*considered as dead*", am I being sent on the morning of this first day when all things new are possible?

With the spices of friendship and of faith, we can bring them to this moment of prayer and name them...

Proclaiming light in darkness

A priest on a mission at a Ukrainian refugee centre admits that celebrating Easter in a war context is a "great challenge". "But it gives the feast its full meaning: we proclaim light in the midst of darkness," he says. "The people we welcome have many reasons to remain in tears. We must support them and share their distress, while at the same time having a heart that shines with hope."

Song: ["Surrexit Christus" \(Taizé\)](#)

He saw, he believed. (John 20:8)

It is because John believed that Scripture became clear for him: until then, many things in Scripture had remained obscure to him; but because, all of a sudden, he believes, without hesitation: "Jesus had to rise again" (*John 20:9*)

"You don't have to understand in order to believe, but you have to believe in order to understand." (Saint Anselm)

To go to the tomb running, to leave with a renewed momentum... The disciples do not retrace their steps, but rather there is a real "reversal". The path to death was transformed on the way back into a race towards His presence.



Photo : Rachel Guillien – Arcabas – Open tomb

A symbolic gesture in communion with Ukraine and through the Ukrainian people, with all those who are longing for Peace.

Nadia, a 65-year-old Ukrainian refugee, recalls that as a Greek Catholic, what matters most is to "blessing the basket". The basket is that little wicker basket that the faithful fill with food to have it blessed on Easter Saturday and then eat its contents the next morning.

Maybe we can make our own basket... decorate it with words, meetings, events that have been "food" during our time of Lent and that we wish to offer to share. It can be used to adorn our oratory.



How do I hold on to this radical promise in all the circumstances of my life?

Let us be silent to let the Resurrection shine forth in our "Blessed and Broken" world.

*"Killed by the betrayal of those he loved.
Can a resurrection be born of this silence?
A new future?"*

This is the question facing humanity today. What is dying is the world as we have shaped it, and then damaged it since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. A hell where the sixth mass extinction of life is taking place. To liberate ourselves and invent a new world in a single generation, we must remain silent. We must consent to this simple truth: we have no other future than that shared with all humans and living things. Resurrection has a name: to create a world in common with the whole of life."

Time of silence: *Listen how the Lord calls us to bring this Resurrection?*

*-Gael Giraud SJ
(Director of the Environmental Justice Program at Georgetown University)*

Video: [Artisans of Hope](#)

The Resurrection Sprint!

The name and motto of the last probation can be a source of great inspiration: "God's love sets us free" and therefore, "Go forth and live the word of God".

This word is unmistakable on this day:



"Then, quickly, go and say to his disciples, 'He is risen from the dead, and behold, he precedes you in Galilee; There, you'll see him.' That is what I had to say. 'Soon they left the tomb, filled with both fear and great joy, and they ran to bring the news to his disciples.'" (Matthew 28:7-8)

The Lord is calling us urgently. Over and above our fears, there is the joy of His living, the active presence to be shared.

*"Let us sing as we go!
May our struggles and our
concern for this planet never take
away the joy of our hope."
Laudato Si n° 244*

It is now up to us to find the strength to see all the signs of the Resurrection in our lives and in the life of the world. The Spirit has been given to us for this. From now on, every "first day of the week", we run, with our sisters and brothers, to the mysterious encounter with the Risen One.

**"Let us live more than ever for Him who is our very life-
He will be our Resurrection!"**

Sophie Barat (Letter of 26.03.1853)

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