



MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

The Journey of Holy week continues. Today we focus on the village of Bethany on the outskirts of Jerusalem and the house of Martha and Mary and Lazarus.

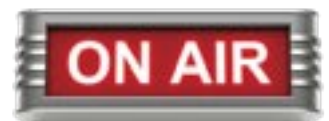
Scripture tells us

'Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead. [...] Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair. The House was full of the scent of the ointment.' (John 12:1-11)

Deepening our participation in the broadcast celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place a jar of olive oil (if you can, add other sweet smelling oils to it) in your sacred space.
- Light the candle safely.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- You will find that Mass is celebrated as normal today. The church **decoration is minimal** and following an old tradition you may notice holy pictures and crucifixes are covered in purple to heighten our sense of longing for the resurrection.
- In spite of impending doom, a sense of faith and trust in God emerges from the **Readings**. The Prophet Isaiah speaks of God upholding his servant, his chosen one and endowing him with his Spirit so that he may bring 'true justice to the nations'. The Psalm takes up this theme: 'Though an army encamp against me, my heart would not fear'. In the Gospel we see a composed Mary anoint Jesus' feet with expensive ointment as if preparing him for some great suffering. An indignant Judas moves ever closer to betrayal.
- At communion time make an **Act of Spiritual Communion**. Invite Jesus to visit your heart. Take some time to truly welcome his presence. Ask him how he felt during those days. Speak to him friend to friend.

A Prayer Ritual at Home

Gather with some members of your household, if you can. Place a small glass jar of olive oil in the sacred space.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, in your last days, Mary anointed your feet with the best of oil she could find. She sensed that a long and difficult road lay ahead for you. She was preparing you for the suffering of your passion and death. Lord, be with the whole world in these days of great suffering and death. Abundantly anoint us with your strength for the trials and tribulations of life. Ease our anxiety, comfort us in our sorrow. Amen.

Reading

'Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead. [...] Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair. The house was full of the scent of the ointment.' (From the Gospel of the day, full text John 12:1-11)

Reflection

The anointing of Jesus is deeply poignant. The custom at the time was to anoint the body of someone who had died with oils before they were laid to rest. Mary, without knowing it, was preparing Jesus' body for the suffering it was to undergo. Suffering and pain, sickness and death are a mysterious constant in life. For Christians, Jesus' journey through suffering, through pain and through death to the glory of the resurrection gives us hope. He shows us a

God who stands on the side of the sick, on the side of the suffering and on the side of the dying. We hope in a God who, although we may not fully understand it, ultimately brings goodness out of bad, health out of sickness, comfort out of fear, and even life out of death. That same God, we pray, is with us at this time of anxiety and suffering and that same God will lead us to a time where the dark clouds that loom over us are no more.

Ritual Action

Using an individual cotton bud or a piece of cotton wool dipped in the oil, each person makes the sign of the cross on their forehead saying:

May the Lord be my strength and my protection both now and forever. Amen

Intercessions *Light the candle*

As we light this candle we pray especially for all those who are sick from the Coronavirus and for all those who have died and their families. We pray for all those who are worried or anxious because of the effect the current crisis is having on their lives. *(Pause)* We remember in our prayer *(Bring your intentions to God)* **Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

Our Father ...

Prayer of St John Henry Newman

May the Lord support us all the day long,
till the shades lengthen and the evening comes,
and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over,
and our work is done.
Then in his mercy may he give us a safe lodging,
and holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross...

To do

If you have a Trócaire box, ask each one in the house to contribute something for those who are less well off – place the box in the sacred space. Watch a Holy Week film for example Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (not for younger viewers); *Jesus of Nazareth, The Greatest Story Ever Told, Risen.*