

## HOLY WEEK 2023

### WALKING WITH JESUS

#### The Speed of Love

The average walking pace is about 3 miles per hour, which means most people take about 20 minutes to walk one mile. For many of us who are accustomed to driving everywhere, this pace can feel excruciatingly slow. Why take 40-50 minutes to walk 2.2 miles from Colorado Blvd. in Old Pasadena to Mission St. in South Pasadena when driving takes 8 minutes? We may extoll the health benefits of walking and value walkability in our urban environments, but it's inefficient. It's slow. It's limiting.

Because of the Incarnation, God knows this inefficiency, slowness, and limitation. God knows and doesn't hold it in contempt. Japanese theologian Kosuke Koyama dwells on reality this in his book *Three Mile an Hour God*. He wonders about the Incarnation and the implications of an infinitely powerful God voluntarily taking on our human flesh in Jesus and experiencing our very limitations, including the limit of walking about 3 miles per hour. He concludes if God is love and God demonstrates his love through the Incarnation, then love has a speed that is slow. He writes:

"Love has its speed. It is a spiritual speed. It is a different kind of speed from the technological speed to which we are accustomed. It goes on in the depth of our life, whether we notice or not, at three miles an hour. It is the speed we walk and therefore the speed the love of God walks."<sup>1</sup>

A common frustration when it comes to God is his apparent slowness. Our life moves very fast and we want God to catch up with us. But if Koyama is correct, perhaps we need to slow down. Perhaps our task is to affirm God's speed and to match it.

#### Holy Week Invitation

This is the invitation of Holy Week: to slow down, to walk with Jesus through his final days as he walks to the cross for us and the world. As we slow down and ponder, may we find Jesus right next to us, revealing to us new depths of the God's love for us.

Slow down this week by sitting with the suggested daily passages. Each passage is a vignette of Jesus' week before his death. Read the passages slowly, paying attention to words and phrases the Holy Spirit draws you to; notice what these words and phrases stir in you. Then go on a walk for at least 15-20 minutes, or a mile. As you walk, continue pondering and consider the questions of the day. If you're unable to walk, fear not – Jesus is with you as you are! Simply spend a little more time sitting and lingering over the passage and questions.

#### Holy Week Passages & Questions

##### *Palm Sunday*

- Recall the joy and expectations of the crowd as it welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-11). What joy, hope, and expectations do you carry right now?

##### *Monday of Holy Week*

- In response to their trap, Jesus tells the Pharisees to "render to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:15-22). What is the Spirit asking you to render to God; how are you open or resisting?

##### *Tuesday of Holy Week*

- In response to the question about the greatest commandment, Jesus says the first is to love God, and the second is to love neighbor. (Matthew 22:34-39) What do you notice about the two commandments? To what aspects of love is the Spirit drawing your attention and energy?

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<sup>1</sup> Kosuke Koyama, *The Three Mile an Hour God: Biblical Reflections* (New York: Orbis, 1979), 7.

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*Wednesday of Holy Week*

- In Matthew 23:37-39, Jesus looks at Jerusalem and weeps and laments over it. What sorrows and laments do you carry for yourself, your neighbors, and the world at large? How is Jesus meeting you in your sorrow?

**NOTES:**

*Maundy Thursday*

- Today we remember Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and giving the Church the sacrament of Communion (John 13). Imagine Jesus washing your feet and sharing bread with you. What is stirred in you and how might you respond to the new commandment: "Love as I have loved you"?

*Good Friday*

- From the cross, Jesus looks at the crowds and says: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). What is stirred in you? Where are you longing to experience this kind of forgiveness?

*Holy Vigil*

- Today, we are between death and waiting for resurrection. The reality is that we spend much of lives in this place. Today, spend time revisiting a passage or two from the week and consider how these passages speak to what is dead in and around you and how God is meeting you there with signs of life and renewed hope.