

St. Louis Catholic Church

Monday of Holy Week

Isaiah 42:1-7

John 12:1-11

Chapters 40-55 of Isaiah center on a "servant of the Lord" and are distinct from the perspective of Isaiah 1-39. Commentators argue that Second Isaiah lived 150 years after the First Isaiah, during the time of the 50 year Babylonian Exile. These chapters offer hope and promise in the form of a "servant" who is sent by God to a dispirited nation to reveal God's will despite suffering and opposition.

Prophets are helpful when people are prosperous and prone to become complacent. In the Bible they warn the people that they might be slipping away from faith and justice. During the time of suffering, Isaiah speaks to the people of God's promise of redemption and hope. A servant will appear who will act in a way different from the military force used by many leaders. Just recently Cyrus, King of Persia helped conquer Babylon and liberate the people. The servant will be a hope not only for Israel, but for the coast lands.

He will be life-giving, powerful and victorious. Called a chosen one with whom God is pleased, upon whom I have put my spirit. He will bring justice. Of course we know that this servant will be en fleshed by the coming of Jesus. He is a suffering servant who lays down His life for His friends. He will take our sins upon His shoulders. He will become the sacrificial lamb slaughtered as an innocent victim. This week we will commemorate His passion. First He will wash feet as a sign of enslavement to people whom He serves. He will be arrested, humiliated, convicted, scourged, mocked, ridiculed, spat upon and hung on a cross. All as a servant for you and me. He will feel abandonment even from His Father. He will thirst and be filled with pain. He will ultimately resign Himself to death--death on a cross. No greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

This week we have an awesome chance to thank, praise and worship this servant. Mary, the sister of Lazarus, anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair. She was so grateful that the servant had given her brother back to her and their sister, Martha. Described as costly perfumed oil, it reminds me that there is no cost too much to express gratitude to Jesus. He gave life back to one man who would die again. To all of us He gives the life of faith today and the promise of life eternal. He provides that because He was that suffering servant who paid the price for our sins.

How can we not be drawn to the Holy Week Liturgies? We can relive our redemption won by His sacrifice. How can we not spend some time daily in prayer, weekly in adoration and express our gratitude. How can we not keep His day holy by attending Mass and receiving the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity or Our Servant? We share in the unbloody sacrifice, made present on the altar of sacrifice. Christ is not confined to time and space but is present at every Mass. How can we not hunger to receive the food that gives life and life eternal. Why not imitate Mary and be extravagant in our praise, adoration and worship?

Too often we imitate Judas who made an excuse not to lavishly anoint Him. He chose to find something else to do rather than show gratitude and worship to the Servant.

This week is to remember and relive what God has done for us. Since we are involved in 24 Hours for the Lord, let us imitate Mary who anoints, worships and serves the servant. Options are plentiful. First plan on Holy Thursday and Good Friday services. These are "High Holy Days". Yet they are not days obligating us to attend. Yet, they cry out reminding us what the servant did for us.

St. Therese of Lisieux noted that, as humans, we can do no great deeds, we can only do small deeds with great love. Like Mary we can be extravagant in just a simple gesture. The servant has done the most lavish and generous service of all. He died for you and me.

God Bless,
Msgr. John McArthur

Key Events This Week:

1. Holy Week Confessions
Monday 5:00-6:00 p.m.
Thursday 5:00-6:30 p.m.
Friday 5:00-6:30 p.m.
Saturday 2:30-4:30 p.m.
2. Holy Thursday Mass of Lord's Supper
Washing of Feet
Eucharistic Procession and Prayer before Eucharist till midnight
3. Good Friday--Stations of the Cross--3:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m. Passion of Lord Service
Veneration of Cross and Communion
4. Holy Saturday--8:00 p.m.
Easter Vigil and Mass of Resurrection
5. 24 Hours for the Lord--Opportunities--Click here
Come deliver a flower to shut-ins and senior parishioners
6. CBC/CBU graduates--please contact the church office with your contact information by emailing jan.odonnell@stlouis.cdom.org or calling 682-6606.
7. Bishop's Annual Appeal
Let's reach 100% participation
Let's reach financial goal--still need about \$75,000.00