

Midweek Lenten Prayer

April 1, 2020 + Mount Olive Lutheran Church

These things are written ...

John's Gospel declares that what is written there is written so that you "may come to trust that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through trusting you may have life in his name." (John 20:31) The evangelist tells encounter after encounter with Jesus in hopes of helping us, the readers and hearers, to meet Jesus for ourselves and, if we can put ourselves in the shoes of those in the story, perhaps come to that faith, that trust, and find the life Jesus offers.

On the Sundays in Lent, starting with 2 Lent, we see Jesus through the eyes and ears of Nicodemus, an unnamed woman at a Samaritan well, an unnamed man who was born blind, and through the siblings from Bethany. On Wednesdays we will meet Jesus through other people whose story of encountering Jesus John beautifully narrates.

This week: Mary Magdalene waits in pain and finds home

Today we see Jesus through the long-suffering love of Mary Magdalene. Luke tells us she was healed of demonic possession by Jesus, and she is his most faithful disciple. All four Gospels place her at the empty tomb, and she is one of the few who go to the cross. Facing unimaginable loss at Jesus' death, she waits in the garden and is blessed to be first to see him risen from the dead, and is first called to be apostle.

FOR YOUR MIDWEEK LENTEN PRAYER AND DEVOTION:

Feel free to print this document, or keep it open on the screen, to aid in your devotion today. The links are in the email, so you'll want to keep that open as well.

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

O God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your grace and love and mercy, and strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

PSALM: Psalm 116:1-14

I love the LORD, who has | heard my voice, * and listened to my | supplication,
for the LORD has given | ear to me * whenev- | er I called.

The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave | came upon me; *
I came to | grief and sorrow.

Then I called upon the name | of the LORD: * "O LORD, I pray you, | save my life."
Gracious is the | LORD and righteous; * our God is full | of compassion.

The LORD watches o- | ver the innocent; * I was brought low, | and God saved me.

Turn again to your rest, | O my soul. * for the LORD has dealt | well with you.

For you have rescued my | life from death, * my eyes from tears, and my | feet from stumbling;

I will walk in the presence | of the LORD * in the land | of the living.

I believed, even | when I said, * "I am great- | ly afflicted."

In my dis- | tress I said, * "No one | can be trusted."

How shall I re- | pay the LORD * for all the good things God has | done for me?
I will lift the cup | of salvation * and call on the name | of the LORD.
I will fulfill my vows | to the LORD * in the presence of | all God's people.

READING: Romans 8:31-39

Paul writes: ³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² God, who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will God not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through the One who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

READINGS: John 20:1, 11-18

20 ¹ Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.

¹¹ Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' " ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

REFLECTION

Home

Pr. Joseph Crippen

Click the link in the email to watch; text is online at www.mountolivechurch.org/worship/sermons/

HYMN: ELW 757, "All My Hope on God Is Founded" (from 5 Pentecost, lect. 14 A, July 9, 2017)

Click the link in the email to listen and/or sing with Mount Olive.