

HOLY WEEK REFLECTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Walking The Way

WITH REFLECTIONS TO
CHRISTUS VIVIT



OFFICE OF
Youth Ministry
DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

A JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK



During this week, a lot happens. Our faith tells us this is the **holiest of weeks**. Jesus walks into Jerusalem and ultimately to his death. As a young person, **set aside time this week to walk with Jesus**. In his last week of life here on earth, he surrounded Himself with his friends. **You are a friend of Jesus**, stay close to Him in these days. Put yourself in His shoes and see how the virtues of hope, generosity, courage, humility, love, patience, and joy were given and received in these Holy days.

As you enter into prayer each day, read the readings. Sit with them and see where the **Holy Spirit takes you** during this walk with Christ.

Access *Christus*
Vivit Here



In 2018, Pope Francis wrote a letter to young people in the form of an Apostolic Exhortation, called “Christus Vivit”. Pope Francis has a lot to offer young people in this letter. Reflect on how you are **walking through life knowing you are loved by Christ**. It is also an invitation to love and serve others you encounter in your daily walk.

There are **three great messages** Pope Francis wants you to hear:

- God Loves You! (§, 112-117)
- Christ Saves You! (§, 118- 123)
- He is Alive! (§, 124-129)

The walk you take with Jesus this week will remind you of these three great messages and how much you are loved! **Jesus suffered because He loves You!**

HOPE

PALM SUNDAY



Readings of the Day

Gospel for Blessing of Palms:

Matthew 21:1-11

1st Reading: Isaiah 50.4-7

2nd Reading: Philippians 2.6-11

Gospel: Matthew 26:14-27:66

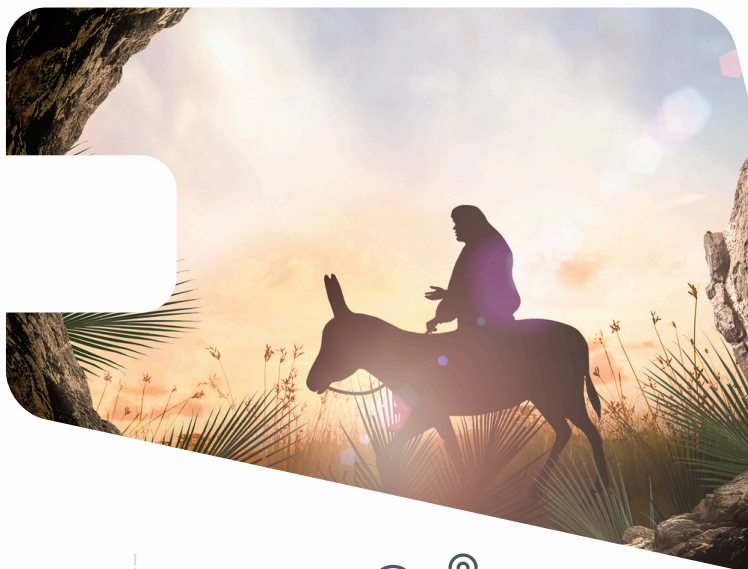


Slow Down to Pray

Pray with today's readings.

What brings you hope?

How can you bring hope to those who are suffering?



Where are we Headed Today?

Palm Sunday begins Holy Week. The readings today focus on the hope and humility of Jesus. He enters into Jerusalem on a donkey; He is not in a royal convoy. The crowds that await Jesus, await Him with hope and anticipation. You are reminded that He has come to serve us and bring hope into the world.

The Gospel reading tells us about the events leading up to the Crucifixion. This week as you walk with Jesus in His final moments, be hopeful of what He has done for you. Walk with Him as a close friend or someone He has recently encountered.

Be like the crowds. Rejoice in what Jesus has done for you! **Walk** with Jesus.



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, the first truth Pope Francis shares is, “**God loves you.**” Never doubt this, whatever may happen to you in life. At every moment, you are infinitely loved.” (§, 113)

Holy Week reminds us of this truth. As you **walk** with Jesus this week, know that you are loved and He did this for **YOU!**

Think of how you make an entry; down a school hallway or as you enter a store or your home. **Do you create a sense of peace and calmness?** Do you bring hope to those who you encounter?

Do you share the truth that God loves everyone, through your actions and words? Are you a messenger of hope?

Journal Entry #1



Walk with Another

Think of someone who needs hope brought to them. Send them a text, DM, or give them a call.

GENEROSITY

MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK



Readings of the Day

1st Reading: Isaiah 42.1-7

Gospel: John 12.1-11



Slow Down to Pray

Pray with today's readings.

How are you preparing for His death?

What are you offering Him this week?



Where are We Headed Today?

The Gospel of John who shares how Mary anointed Jesus. Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to visit Mary, Martha and Lazarus. We hear about **Mary's generosity and friendship**. Chief priests and others were after Jesus and his supporters. Mary knew there may have been a cost to her being an ally of Jesus. Jesus was worthy of her friendship and service.

Mary ultimately was preparing Jesus for His burial. Instead of turning away from Jesus and running away, she sat with Him and **spent quality time with Him** before He gave up His life for us.



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, Pope Francis characterizes friendship as “no fleeting or temporary relationship, but one that is stable, firm and faithful, and matures with the passage of time. A relationship of affection that brings us together and a generous love that makes us seek the good of our friend.” (§, 152) As a friend, Mary found comfort in anointing Jesus and preparing Him for his burial.

Reflect on your friendships.

How do you support your friends in time of crisis? How do you help them prepare for a life changing event? How do you walk with others who you call a friend?

Be like Mary. Mary recognized the importance of quality time. Are you fully present with your friends? Or are you distracted by your phone or your own life?

Journal Entry #2



Walk with Another

Reach out to a friend today. Spend time doing something you enjoy doing together. Give them your time and offer to help them with something they need help with.

ACCEPTANCE

TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK



Readings of the Day

1st Reading: Isaiah 49.1-6

Gospel: John 13.21-33, 36-38



Slow Down to Pray

Pray with today's readings.

Who do you need to accept?

How has Jesus accepted you in your failings and faults?

Have you felt left behind by Jesus?



Where are We Headed Today?

In today's Gospel, Jesus foretells Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial. Imagine if two of your friends who you have chosen to be at your side, let you down in this way. **Would you accept them?**

Jesus accepted Judas and Peter for who they were. He showed them the way, despite how they were going to treat Him in His final moments.

As we get closer to His death. How will you accept Jesus this week? **Walk with Him and think about the ways you will remain close** to Jesus, even when others deny His friendship.

What have you said or done that has betrayed or denied Jesus?



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, Pope Francis reminds us that “Friendship with Jesus cannot be broken. He never leaves us, even though at times it appears that He keeps silent. When we need Him, He makes Himself known to us; He remains at our side wherever we go. He never breaks his covenant. He simply asks that we not abandon Him: ‘Abide in me’.

But even if we stray from him, “he **remains faithful, for he cannot deny Himself.**” (§, 154)

Jesus never abandoned His friends. He accepted them the way they were and embraced their struggles. He will never abandon you either.

Be a disciple. Accept others. Give second chances. Walk with those who have hurt you.

Journal Entry #3



Walk with Another

Who is not accepted in the world today? Find someone who is alone and spend some time with them. Or find a cause you can promote on your social media and attention to a group of people who are persecuted or alone.

COURAGE

WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK



Readings of the Day

1st Reading: Isaiah 50.4-9a

Gospel: Matthew 26.14-26



Slow Down to Pray

Pray with today's readings.

Where are you hurting today?

Who has let you down recently that needs forgiveness?

How can you leave your struggles at the foot of the cross?



Where are We Headed Today?

Today is also known as **"Spy Wednesday"**. It is the day that Judas agrees to betray Jesus and hand Him over to the authorities. The Gospel then gives Matthew's account of what Jesus said about betrayal as they prepared themselves for the Passover meal.

Judas betrayed Jesus' love and friendship. We all have moments of betrayal and deceit in our lives. It is a part of life that we must accept and learn from. When you feel betrayed or let down, remember that Jesus had those feelings and experiences too. Bring your pain to Jesus' Cross and ask Him to help heal you, opening your heart to mercy and forgiveness.



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, Pope Francis provides short details about young saints from paragraphs 49 to 63. Each of these young Saints and many others are examples of how they have faced difficulties.

"May these and so many other young people who perhaps in silence and hiddenness lived the Gospel to the full, intercede for the Church, so that she may be

full of joyous, courageous and committed young people who can offer the world new testimonies of holiness." (§, 63)

What do the experiences of these young Saints teach you about the meaning of suffering?

Be like the Saints. Accept life's difficulties and grow in holiness to make the world a better place.

Journal Entry #4



Walk with Another

Choose a saint from the list provided by Pope Francis in *Christus Vivit*. Learn about the struggles they faced as a young person. Share it with someone this week. You are not alone in your journey of faith.

HUMILITY

HOLY THURSDAY



Readings of the Day

1st Reading:

Exodus 12.1-8, 11-14

2nd Reading:

1 Corinthians 11.23-26

Gospel: John 13.1-15



Slow Down to Pray

Pray with today's readings.

What is the connection between the Eucharist and the Passover?

How can I serve as Jesus did?

What can I do to put others before me?



Where are We Headed Today?

Today's readings focus on the Passover. In the Gospel, the account of Jesus washing His disciples' feet is told. It has been a **long walk to get to this point of the week**. You are exhausted, but you know there is still much more to come. Jesus invites you to sit with Him to celebrate the Passover meal.

Today the Church celebrates the institution of the Eucharist. Jesus gives us His body and blood so you can receive Jesus each time you attend Mass.

When Jesus washes the disciples' feet, He teaches us that **no one is above service to others**. Through His humility, we are given the example **to serve and love others** as He did. Jesus, even in His final moments, provides for those He loves.



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, Pope Francis refers to young people as courageous missionaries. Jesus sends young people everywhere. He states, "Wherever we are, we **always have an opportunity to share the joy of the Gospel**. That is how the Lord goes out to meet everyone. He loves you, dear young people, for you are the means by which **He can spread his light and hope**.

He is counting on your courage, your boldness and your enthusiasm." (§, 177)

It takes **humility and courage to think of others** before yourself. You are called to serve others and share the Good News with all who you meet.

Be a Missionary. Serve those who need love the most.

Journal Entry #5



Walk with Another

As we conclude Lent and Holy Week, what else can you do to serve those in your community. What kind of charity and support can you offer?

LOVE

GOOD FRIDAY



Readings of the Day

1st Reading:

Isaiah 52.13–53.12

2nd Reading:

Hebrews 4.14–16; 5.7–9

Gospel: John 18.1–19.42



Slow Down to Pray

Pray with today's readings.

What kind of emotions are brought up?

How do you feel knowing that God had His only Son crucified for our sake?



Where are We Headed Today?

Today we walk to the cross. We **arrive at Golgotha**. The scene of Jesus' crucifixion and death. **Tension** fills the air. It is that moment that the disciples have been hearing about. Jesus is physically and emotionally **beaten by those who feared Him**.

The account of Jesus' final moments from the Gospel of John summarize the **betrayal, denial, humiliation and suffering**. Place yourself at the scene of those final moments. Are you a friend who has witnessed this happen? Are you Mary, close to your son? Are you one of those who allowed this to happen?

He did this because He loved us!

It is finished.



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, Pope Francis reminds us, **"Christ Saves You!"** He states, "[t]he second great truth is that Christ, **out of love, sacrificed Himself completely in order to save you.** His outstretched arms on the cross are the most telling sign that He is a friend who is willing to stop at nothing: 'Having loved his own who were in the world, He loved them to the end' (Jn 13:1)." (§, 118)

He died for you! He believes you are valuable and priceless. "Keep your eyes **fixed on the outstretched arms of Christ** crucified, let yourself be saved **over and over again....**" (§, 123)

He saved you because He loves you! Always remember that!

Be Loved. Let Christ love you for who you are.

Journal Entry #6



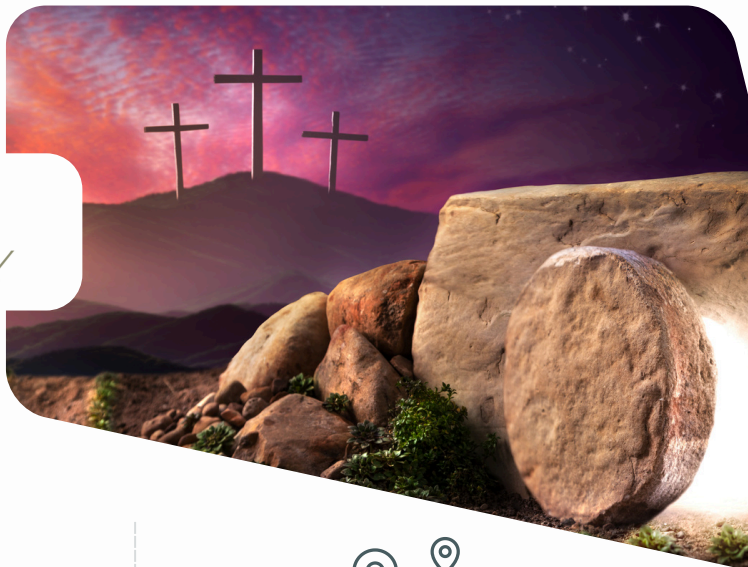
Walk with Another

Good Friday is a day to reflect on how Christ loves you so much. Attend a Good Friday liturgy at your local parish. Venerate the Cross, the symbol of love.

PATIENCE

HOLY

SATURDAY



Readings of the Day

**The Easter Vigil has seven Old Testament Readings, and the Epistle.*

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 28:1-10



Slow Down to Pray

Pray with today's readings.

How do you wait for Jesus? Are you patient for what is to come?

Do you embrace the risen Lord, or do you run in fear?

Do you reflect/mourn Jesus' death often?



Where are We Headed Today?

Today is a **day of rest**. Jesus' disciples were Jewish, and Saturday in Jewish tradition is the Sabbath Day - a day of rest. The followers of Jesus would have been in mourning about the death of their Lord the day before. They rested in the confusion and fear of the last few days.

The Gospel for the Easter Vigil tells us how the women went to the tomb with spices to prepare for a Jewish burial. However, when they arrived there, the stone was removed and they were informed that Jesus was raised from the dead. **Imagine their surprise!** They ran from the tomb afraid of what they saw and heard.

On **today's journey... rest**, it has been a long week full of emotion. Take it all in and wait patiently for the Lord, He is no longer in the tomb.



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, the final truth that Pope Francis shares is **Christ is Alive!** “Alive, He can be present in your life at every moment, to **fill it with light** and to take away all sorrow and solitude. ... He fills your life with his unseen presence; wherever you go, **He will be waiting there for you**. Because He did not only come in the past, but He comes to you today and every day, inviting you to set out towards ever new horizons.” (§, 125)

According to Pope Francis, “ [i]f in your heart you can learn to appreciate the beauty of this message, if you are willing to encounter the Lord... **you will have a profound experience capable of sustaining your entire Christian life**” (§, 129).

Be like the Women. They left the tomb in fear and amazement. But they knew what He promised. Encounter the Risen Lord!

Journal Entry #7



Walk with Another

Encounter the Risen Lord. Sit with someone who needs to hear the message of God. Use social media to share the Good News of Jesus!

JOY

EASTER SUNDAY



Readings of the Day

1st Reading:

Acts 10.34a, 37-43

2nd Reading:

Colossians 3.1-4 or
1 Corinthians 5.6b-8

Gospel: John 20.1-18++



Slow Down to Pray

What does the Resurrection have to do with you?

What in your life has died and is in need of reviving?

What is your reaction to the three great messages Pope Francis shares about God's love?



Where are We Headed Today?

Jesus is **Risen from the Dead!** In John's Gospel, we hear a different version from yesterday's account. Mary Magdalene did not run in fear or amazement. She sat **weeping**, then Jesus appeared to her and gave her comforting words. Notice how John uses the word weeping, not crying. Weeping is an overpowering emotion, a mix of sadness and joy.

Take a pause from your week long walk and **sit with Mary Magdalene**. It has been a week-long journey. Now that Jesus has appeared to her/you what do you want to say to Him? What do you need from Jesus today?

Jesus **was always there** and will always be there. He will never leave you on your journey; just call out to Jesus through prayer and develop a strong relationship with Him.



Life's Direction

In **Christus Vivit**, Pope Francis states that the three great messages **cannot happen without the Holy Spirit**. “[The Spirit] is the one who quietly **opens hearts** to receive that message. He keeps alive our hope of salvation, and He will help you grow in joy if you are open to his working. The Holy Spirit fills the heart of the risen Christ and then **flows over into your lives**.

When you receive the Spirit, he draws you ever more deeply into the heart of Christ, so that you can grow in his love, his life and his power.” (§, 130)

Pope Francis reminds you that the Holy Spirit is essential for being a follower of Jesus.

Be Open to the Spirit. Christ is Risen! It is a time to be joyful and celebrate the love of Jesus. Spread this message while using the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Journal Entry #8



Walk with Another

Attend an Easter Mass. At the end of Mass, the priest dismisses you “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.” Bring your peace into the world. Walk with others with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Francis. (2018). Christus Vivit. Retrieved from
https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20190325_christus-vivit.html



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