



The Shepherd

March 15, 2024 newsletter

Shepherd of the Springs Lutheran Church,
Missouri Synod, Colorado Springs, CO

A Chronology of Holy Week

Most Christians are well aware of what happened on Palm Sunday and from Holy Thursday through the Day of Resurrection! However, they are not so familiar with the events of Holy Monday through Holy Wednesday, which set the stage for our Lord's Passion. Below is a summary of the first half of Holy Week:

Fig Monday (Holy Monday)



After His Triumphal Entry (Palm Sunday), Jesus travels to Bethany (about 2 miles) to rest and pray. He, and His disciples, return to Jerusalem on Monday morning. On their way, they come across a fig tree, which Jesus curses (St. Matthew 21:18-19; St. Mark 11:12-14); which is why Holy Monday is also known as Fig Monday. The cursing of the fig tree serves as an object lesson regarding all fruitless works, especially those being done in the Temple. Faith without works is dead! However, it is equally true that works without faith is also dead! That's the lesson, which Jesus "drives" home further when they get to the Temple later in the morning, when He takes up a whip and "drives" out the money-changers and vendors. The zeal for His Father's House consumes Jesus (Ps. 69:9). It is to be a House of Prayer and they have turned it into a den of robbers. The Jewish religious leaders are very upset about Jesus cleansing the Temple,

since the activities of the money-changers and vendors are under their authority and are enriching them. Yet, due to the great crowds, they do not publicly oppose Him this day, but secretly plot how they might destroy Him. After teaching in the Temple most of the day, Jesus and His disciples return to Bethany in the evening to rest and pray.

Confrontation Tuesday (Holy Tuesday)



Holy Tuesday is a day of great confrontation! Jesus and His disciples head back to Jerusalem in the morning. On their way, they pass the fig tree that Jesus had cursed the previous morning – it is withered and dead! When they get to the Temple, the Jewish religious leaders directly confront Him. They ask Him where He gets the authority to cleanse the Temple! Jesus holds nothing back! He goes after the scribes, Pharisees, and the elders, with a vengeance, accusing them in parables and in direct language, calling them hypocrites and a brood of vipers. Jesus riles up the Jewish religious leaders to such hatred for Him that they actively begin to seek how to put Jesus to death. This is the last day of our Lord's public teaching, so He spends a good part of the day teaching His disciples and the people in several parables, many of which are focused on the End Times (cf. St. Matthew 21:23–26:5) In the evening, He and His disciples return to Bethany once again to rest and pray.

Silent or Spy Wednesday (Holy Wednesday)



Holy Wednesday is known as Spy Wednesday or Silent Wednesday, the former title being due to the fact that Holy Scripture is silent regarding our Lord on this day, except for the account of Jesus' head being anointed by an unnamed woman at the house of Simon the Leper (St. Matthew 26:6-13). It is assumed that Jesus spent this day resting from the activities of the previous two days and prayerfully preparing for His work of His Holy Passion.

It's also known as Spy Wednesday since it was on this day that Judas made the deal with the Jewish religious leaders to betray Jesus (St. Matthew 26:14-16). Judas takes the initiative, sneaks off and seeks out the religious leaders. It may be that the woman anointing Jesus' head with expensive ointment was the final straw for Judas, who thought it to be a waste. Just a few days earlier, Mary of Bethany had anointed Jesus' feet with expensive ointment, and Judas then had also complained. This second anointing may have been too much for him. Whatever the case, we know that Judas was under the influence of Satan and his actions are in fulfillment of Holy Scripture (Psalm 41:9).

A Blessed Holy Week!

Pastor ✝



Catechetical Kernel

The Sermon

March 2024



St. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:11-16, that the Church receives gifts from her ascended Lord: *Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastor/Teachers*. You have heard readings from the Prophets (Old Testament), Apostles (Epistle) and Evangelists (Gospel); now you hear from your very own “pastor and teacher” in the sermon.

But as the Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists’ together work toward “*building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God,*” your pastor and teacher does the same! He is to attend to preaching—not of his own word or ideas, but attending to “*the gift that is in [him] by the laying on of hands,*” taking “*heed to [him]self and [his] teaching...for by doing so [he] will save both [him]self and [his] hearers*” (1 Tim 4:13-16).

The pastor and teacher is charged with teaching the “*whole counsel of God*” (Acts 20:27), which means that he must not incessantly harp on his pet themes. Therefore, the arrangement of the liturgical year, with assigned readings, from which the sermon is to be developed, helps the pastor in covering this “*whole counsel.*” At the same time, it is not enough to just make sure everything is said at some point. The preacher must “*rightly divide the Word of Truth*” (2 Tim 2:15), or give to God’s servants “*the proper food at the right time*” (Luke 12:42) and so prove a faithful and wise steward.

This idea of “*rightly dividing*” God’s Word or “*giving the proper food at the right time*” suggests that preaching is concerned with Law and Gospel. This is not to say that each sermon must have a two part outline! However, within each sermon, Law and Gospel are the forces at work, and should be clearly identifiable. Each sermon needs to preach the Law. Sinners, such as us, need to hear God’s Law, to rebuke our sin, to identify our sins and wickedness, and to correct our self-righteous

notions of what God would have us do. The Law preached must cut us to the heart, bringing us to repentance (Acts 2:37).

Then the Gospel must flow forth, that sweet Word which, unlike the Law, “*is the power of God for salvation*” (Rom 1:16)—the Good News that, for Christ’s sake, on account of His death for us, and as assured by His resurrection, God forgives us our sins and gives us life and salvation. The Law is necessary, or the Gospel will be lost or ignored; yet, the preaching of the Gospel is the ultimate aim and charge of the Christian preacher (Mark 16:15). Law and Gospel make a sermon! Without them, it’s just empty, vain talk!

“The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7).

The Peace of the Lord be with you,

Pastor ✝



From Dr. Steven A. Hein...

DEATH: ONE OF LIFE’S CERTAINTIES

We all know the old saying: *There is nothing more certain in life than death and taxes.* Reflecting on this adage, the popular view is that taxes are always with us, but death is future, something we anticipate unfavorably at some point up the way. As to what physical death brings, there is a basic divergence of belief. The naturalistic view is that human beings are merely biological creatures and physical death marks the end of one’s existence. In death, you are no more. The old beer commercial expressed a sentiment flowing from this view: *You only go around once in life so grab for all the gusto you can.* Another in the same vein is the familiar advice: *Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die.*

Christianity is not sympathetic with this view. It regards human existence as forever. Life has a beginning at conception but has no end. Physical death is just a passage to another realm of existence beyond the grave. That existence may be quite wonderful or a real nightmare depending on how you relate to your Maker, the author of life and death. While understanding your tax burden can sometimes be difficult to determine, the Scriptures are quite clear about our death burden which is understood in a two-fold sense.

Yes, they use the term *death* in the popular sense of the cessation of physical life as in the report, “Joseph died, being 110 years” (Genesis 50: 26). As a judgement on Adam’s sin, God cursed the ground and all that comes from it. As our bodies come from the ground, so they shall return (Genesis 3: 17, 19). Moreover, the curse of the ground has brought toil, tears, and hardship to our temporal existence. Our days in this fallen world are numbered by the Author of life and death. He gives life, and he takes it away (Job 1: 21). This is both a judgement of sin and an act of mercy by our Creator and Redeemer. We do not have to endure the pain and suffering of this fallen existence forever, just for a little while.

Using a more profound sense of the term, *death*, God’s warned Adam that *in the day* that he should eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would surely *die* (Genesis 2: 17). His wife also, and we know the tragic story. At the Devil's suggestion (through the serpent), Eve chose to believe (falsely) that she could become like God; self-governed and in control of her own existence (Gen. 3:5-6a). No longer trusting God, her depraved desire longed to be the master of her own life. Motivated by this rebellious and perverted goal, she ate of the forbidden fruit. Notice how her fall into sin did not begin with external behavior. It began in her mind and heart. Her corrupted beliefs, desires, and then motives led to her sinful external behavior. Eve's death to sin was caused by her rebellion against God and distrust of His Word and these realities occurred before she ever got to the tree.

Adam acted on his own lack of trust and idolatry as he joined in Eve's rebellion. From Eve’s disobedience, he could stand with God or his wife, but not both. Adam refused to trust in God, and in rebellion he chose to make his wife his ultimate concern. From that idolatrous commitment, he also partook of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3: 6b). Their rebellion and lack of faith corrupted the spiritual and personal dimensions of their human nature resulting in the destruction of their original righteousness. In other words, they died, and the term *death* describes the condition of being unrighteous and alienated from our Maker.

The Apostle Paul explained to the Romans the dire consequences of Adam’s fall. “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through

sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned” (Romans 5: 12). This means that the root of sin is death, and it now reigns in all descended from Adam. Consequently, all born of Adam are under God’s condemnation (Romans 5: 17-18, 21). All have inherited death from the moment of our conception (Psalm 51: 5). This means that we sin because we are sinners, not the other way around. From the fall of Adam, humans have been brought into the world with a compulsive rebellion against God. We would love and trust any other person or thing in life but Him for our own well-being.

Our inherited dead condition is characterized by alienation, loneliness, moral and spiritual bankruptcy, loss of identity, and meaningless existence. Luther described this as a bondage to sin that includes an imprisoned slavish love of ourselves. This does not mean that we cannot love others or do anything right. Rather again as Luther emphasized in his catechisms, it means that we are incapable of ordering our life and our loves around an all-embracing fear, love, and trust in God. Our loves have become disordered and flow from selfish human pride that places the self at the center of reality. Distorted love and sinful pride have imprisoned us in death.

The Good News is that in this deeper sense of death, the Scriptures declare that Jesus *died* for our sins. “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6: 23), meaning separation and alienation from God. This is what Jesus experienced on the cross around the ninth hour when he quoted Psalm 22:1: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me” (Matthew 27: 46). Again, the Apostle Paul explained, “God made him who knew no sin to become sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God” (II Corinthians 5: 21). As Augustine commented on Psalm 51.1 (WSA III/17, p. 14): “For in dying Christ became death's slayer, and death died in him rather than he in death” Out of the death that Jesus died to sin, we have received *life* by faith in him. Life, in this sense, means a restored loving fellowship with our Maker and Redeemer. The Apostle John declared: “He who has the Son has life, he who does not have the Son does not have life” (I John 5: 12).

About our death problem we can lament with the Apostle Paul: “Wretched man that I am. Who will deliver us from this body of death?” (Romans 7: 24). But then we can also rejoice with him: “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! . . . There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 7: 25a, 8: 1). So, about our death problem, we can either die to sin with the crucified Christ in our baptism (Romans 6: 3-11) and live, or we can just die. There is no other choice and of that we can be certain.



Shepherd of the Springs Calendar

For

March 15—31, 2024

Sat, Mar 16: 9:00 AM Men of the Shepherd (LC – The Prayer)

We are now entering into “Passiontide (in the Christian liturgical year) is a name for the last two weeks of Lent, beginning on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, long celebrated as Passion Sunday, and continuing through Holy Saturday. It commemorates the suffering of Christ (Latin passio = “suffering”).” Drapes on the crosses are now black and the paraments are a deeper red. The entire service is spoken except for hymns, reflecting the deepening of the penitential season.

Sun, Mar 17: 9:00 AM **Divine Service:**
Judica (Presentation of the Our Father)

Wed, Mar 20: 6:00 PM **Soup Supper**

7:00 PM **Vespers a. *Judica***

Holy Week Schedule

Sun, Mar 24: **9:00 AM** **Divine Service**

Palm Sunday/Palmarum

Thur, Mar 28: **7:00 PM** **Holy Thursday**

Fri. **Mar 29:** **7:00 PM** **Good Friday**

Sat.  **Mar 30:** **7:00 PM** **Holy Saturday**

Sun, Mar 31: ***Easter Sunday***

8:00 AM **Easter breakfast**

9:00 AM Divine Service



**Vigil of the Resurrection of Our Lord
Confirmation of Arryana Kay Kueter**

**Please join in the
Annual Easter traditions
At Shepherd**

An array of Easter Lilies will be placed at the altar preceding the Holy Saturday Service. If you would like to bring a plant, please bring it **Saturday** before the service. Plants can be taken home after the Easter morning service or left at the altar until their blooms are finished. **Sign up space on Narthex white board. Thank you.**

Breakfast on Easter morning is also a SSLC tradition. It is **potluck** so **everyone** can contribute to the food table and/or help with set up and clean up. Grace will be said at 8:00AM. **Sign up on the Narthex white board and confirm with Carol Ross. Thank you.**



“Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection, not in books alone but in every leaf in springtime.” – Martin Luther



*Shepherd of the Springs Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
A Confessional, Evangelical, Sacramental, and Liturgical Congregation
of the Lutheran Confessions*

Where the Lutheran Reformation Lives!

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