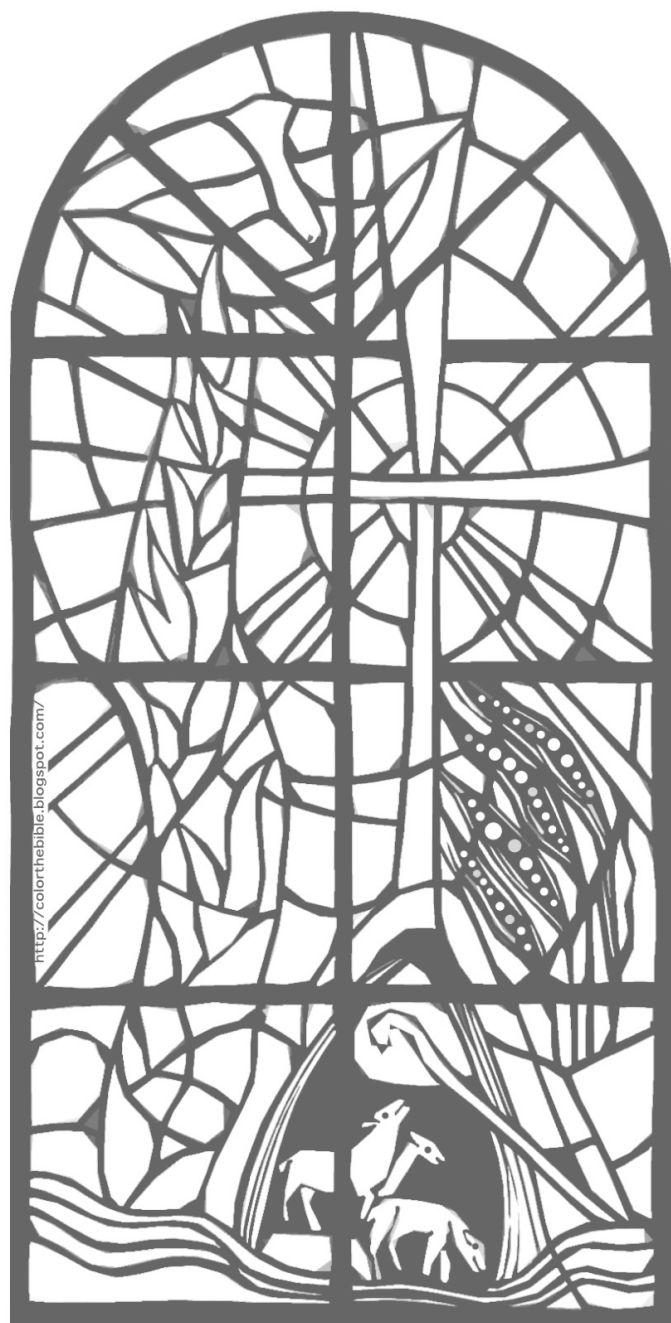


# HOLY WEEK

praxis devotional



**READ** the verses, quotes, content

**THINK** about the questions

**WRITE** your thoughts on the journal pages

**PRAY** using the verses and prompts however you like

**COLOR** while you prepare mentally for the day



# SUNDAY

Begin by centering yourself. Take three deep breaths and open yourself to God's presence.

**READ Matthew 21:1-11**

## **REFLECT**

This is the beginning of the end for Jesus. He knows what is coming. The people following Jesus have been seeking a king to overthrow the Roman rulers. They want victory. **What message does Jesus send by choosing a donkey as his mount for his big entry into the city?**

Sometimes, just like his followers then, we want Jesus to behave more like a world leader, backed by military might. We want Jesus to swoop in with power show us that he's in control and he's taking care of things. **Since that's clearly not God's plan for changing the world, what is?**

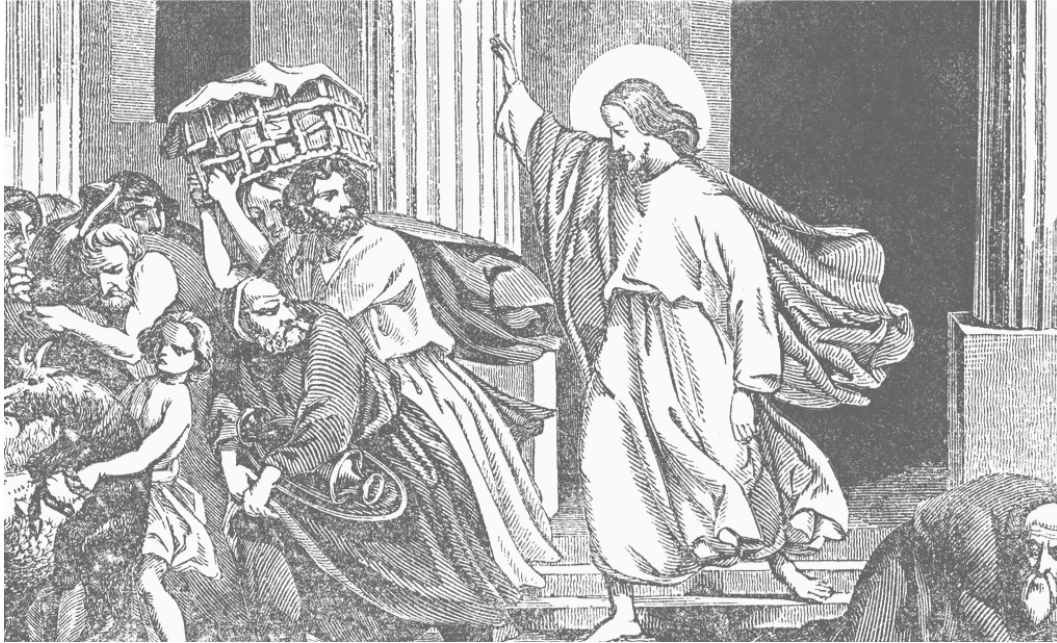
**How can you open yourself up to trusting that God's plan might look different than we want it to?**

**What things in your life and your world feel out of control right now that you want God to take care of?**



# MONDAY

READ Matthew 21:10-17



**REFLECT** The temple was the center of everything in Hebrew culture- and Jesus shut. it. down. **What sort of message was he sending? Why would he do that?**

**What is significant about the children in this passage? How does Jesus treat them? How did the religious leaders respond?**







# TUESDAY

**PRAY** Spend a few moments in silence before opening up the scriptures. How are you feeling? Are you tired? Anxious? Overwhelmed? Calm? Just notice how today feels for you without trying to change it. Be honest before God about how you're doing. Take a few big breaths and begin.

## **READ**

Matthew 27:11-26

Matthew 26:32-35 & 67-75

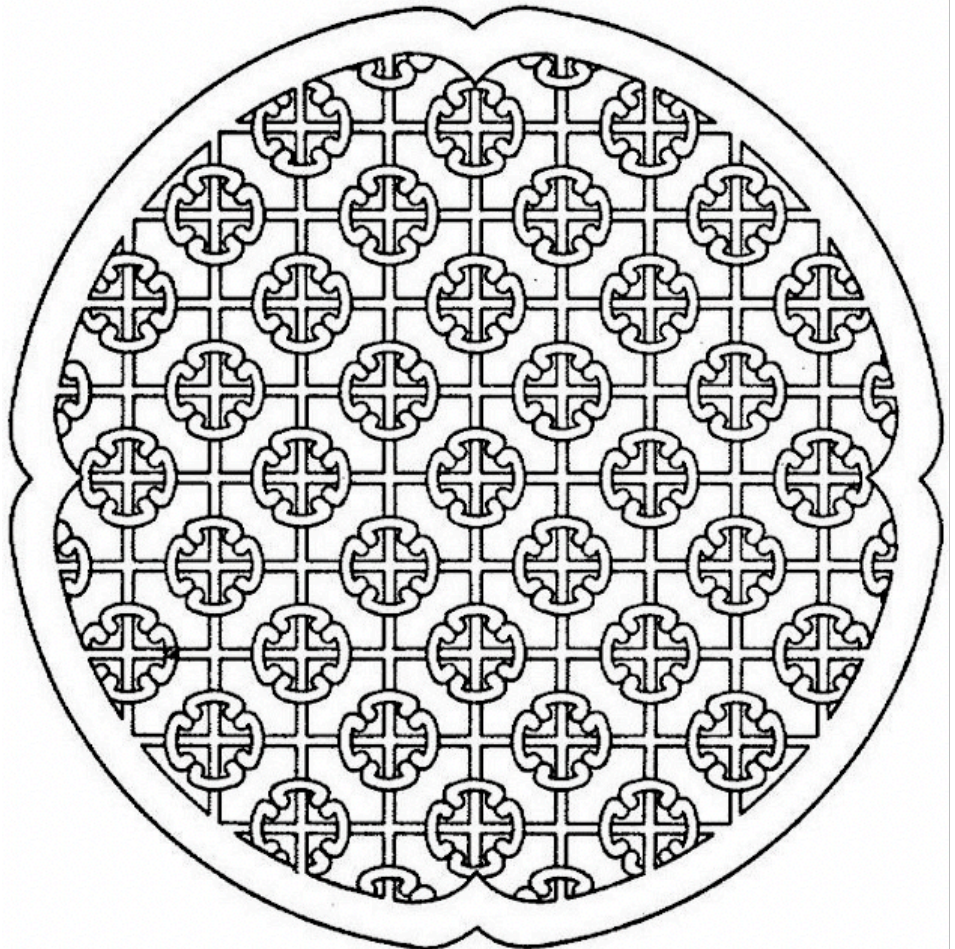
Matthew 26:20-25 & 27:1-5

**REFLECT** What do you think prevented Pilate from opening up to Christ?

**What about Peter? He was one of Jesus' closest friends. What held him back?**

And Judas? Judas spent years healing the sick, feeding the hungry and sharing the gospel. Why betray Jesus?

Finally... what about you? Do you see yourself in any of them? What things can make you shut down towards Jesus?



# WEDNESDAY

*Taste and see that the Lord is good. - Psalm 34:8*

*Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."  
- John 6:35*

Begin by centering yourself. Take three deep breaths and open yourself to God's presence. Call to mind your sense of taste. What was the last thing you tasted? Take a moment to close your eyes and recall it to your mind.

## **READ Matthew 27:14-30**

**REFLECT** Jesus goes straight from telling his friends about the betrayal that will lead to his arrest and death to leading them in the breaking of bread and sharing of a cup (what we call communion now).

*Holy Communion is offered to all, as surely as the living Jesus Christ is for all, as surely as all of us are not divided in him, but belong together as brothers and sisters, all of us poor sinners, all of us rich through his mercy. Amen.*

-Karl Barth

We celebrate communion as a symbolic acceptance of Jesus' body and blood given out of love for us. Judas and Peter both deny Jesus in different ways, and both are included in this shared meal.

**What does it tell you about Jesus' love, forgiveness and sacrifice that Judas and Peter are not excluded?**

**Do you still feel included in Jesus' love when you fail or feel like you aren't living as God intended for you?**

**When have you "tasted" the goodness of God?**

**What might Jesus mean when he says "I am bread of life?"**

*Let nothing disturb you, nothing frighten you, all things  
are passing, God is unchanging. Patience gains all;  
nothing is lacking to those who have God:  
God alone is sufficient. - St. Teresa of Ávila*



# THURSDAY

## **READ Matthew 26:36-46**

*Drinking the cup that Jesus drank is living a life in and with the spirit of Jesus, which is the spirit of unconditional love. The intimacy between Jesus and Abba, his Father, is an intimacy of complete trust...It is only love—pure, unrestrained, and unlimited love. Completely open, completely free. That intimacy gave Jesus the strength to drink his cup. That same intimacy Jesus wants to give us so that we can drink ours. - Henri Nouwen*

**REFLECT** Jesus says, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” **How does this prayer affect the way you understand Jesus’ humanity? What other parts of the passage do we get a picture of Jesus’ humanity?**

Jesus models a deep intimacy with the Father in this passage. He takes time to seek solitude and be radically honest. **How might you receive God’s invitation to be radically honest about what’s going on in your own life?** Take a moment to practice it right now. Put your phone away. Limit distractions. Maybe even go outside or somewhere you can be alone. Be honest with God about your struggles and your sorrows as if you’re talking to a friend or a loving parent.



# FRIDAY

**READ** Matthew 27:45-54

**REFLECT** Consider not only Jesus' humiliation, but also his anguish. His own people had demanded his death. His friends had deserted and betrayed him. Jesus even asks his intimately loving Father "Why have you abandoned me?"

**Why choose a path of humiliation, pain and death? Why not a satisfying military victory or a "win" that would be recognized by everyone?**

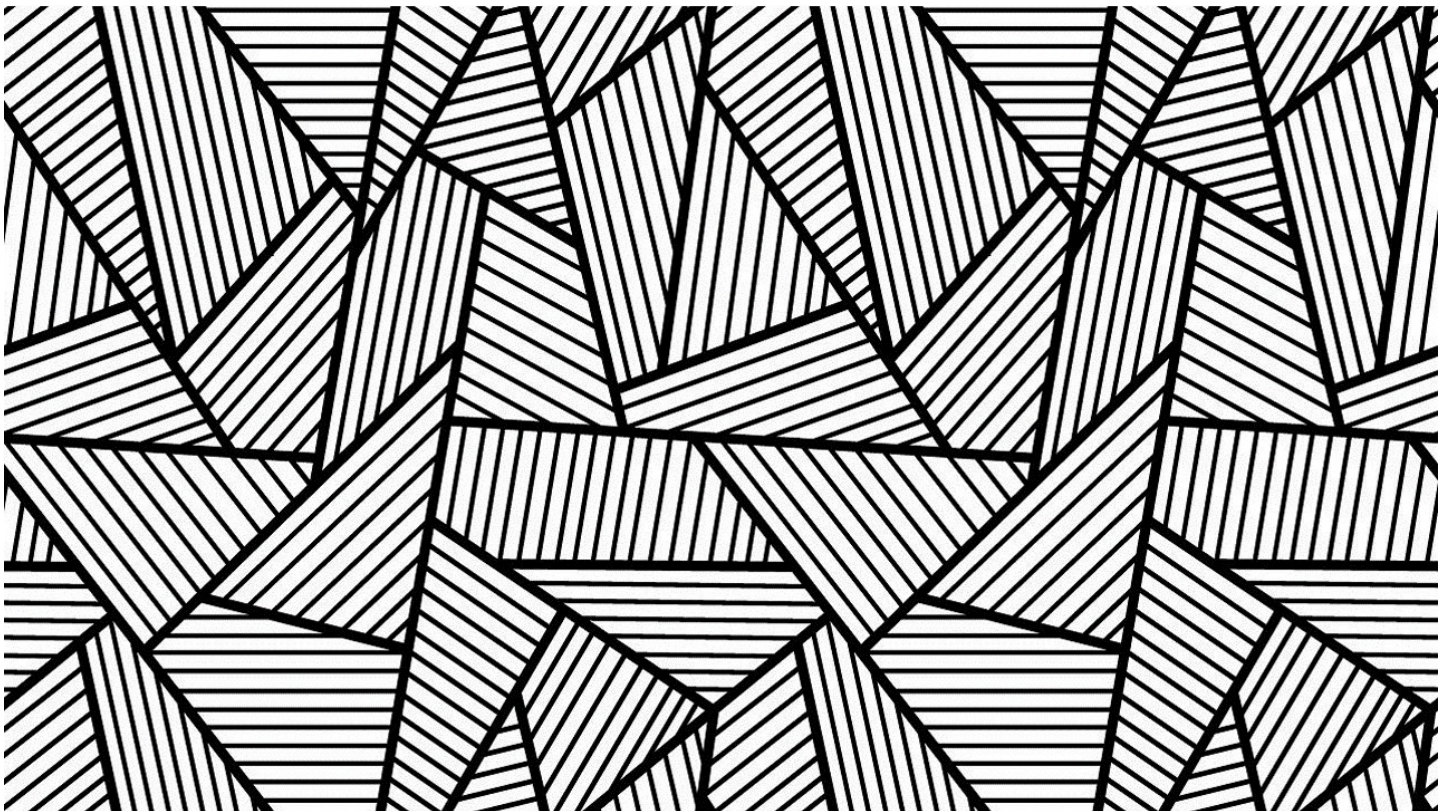
**What do you feel when you think about the death of Jesus? Grief? Wonder? Confusion?**





He bows his head, as if to kiss you. His heart is made bare open, as it were, in love to you. His arms are extended that he may embrace you. His whole body is displayed for your redemption. Ponder how great these things are. Let all this be rightly weighed in your mind: as he was once fixed to the cross in every part of his body for you, so he may now be fixed in every part of your soul.

- Saint Augustine



# SATURDAY

This Saturday in Jesus' story is painful. It's filled with fear, sorrow, confusion, grief, and pain. His friends and disciples don't fully understand what is happening. It is not unlike the world we are living in right now. We are in a state of unknown, uncertainty, and waiting. God feels quiet. Hope feels far away. Jesus' story still meets us in our story.

## **READ Matthew 27:55-61 & Psalm 130 (TPT)**

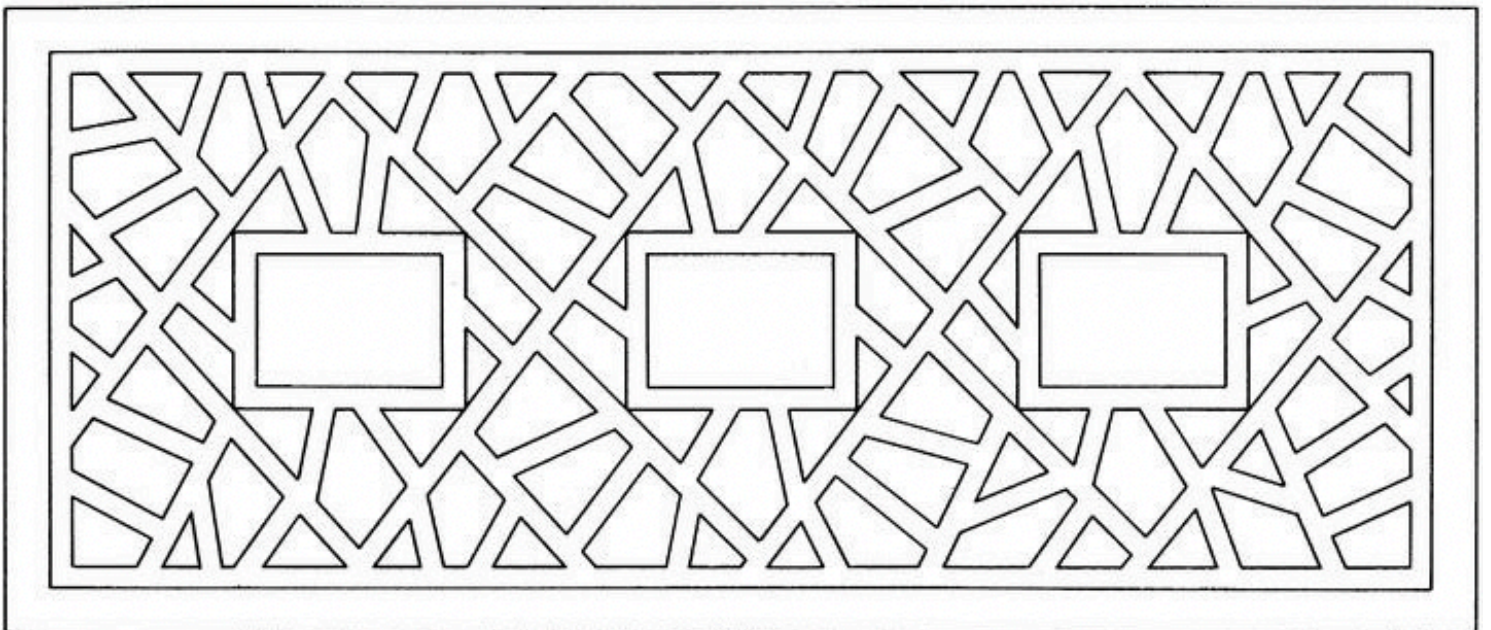
Lord, I cry out to you out of the depths of my despair!  
Hear my voice, O God!  
Answer this prayer and hear my plea for mercy.  
Lord, if you measured us and marked us with our sins,  
who would ever have their prayers answered?  
But your forgiving love is what makes you so wonderful.  
No wonder you are loved and worshiped!  
This is why I wait upon you, expecting your breakthrough,  
for your word brings me hope.  
I long for you more than any watchman  
would long for the morning light.  
I will watch and wait for you, O God,  
throughout the night.  
O Israel, keep hoping, keep trusting,  
and keep waiting on the Lord,  
for he is tenderhearted, kind, and forgiving.  
He has a thousand ways to set you free!  
He himself will redeem you;

**Who was present at the death and burial of Jesus? What does this say about his ministry and the people who were with him until the end?**

**Are there any areas of your life that God feels silent right now?**

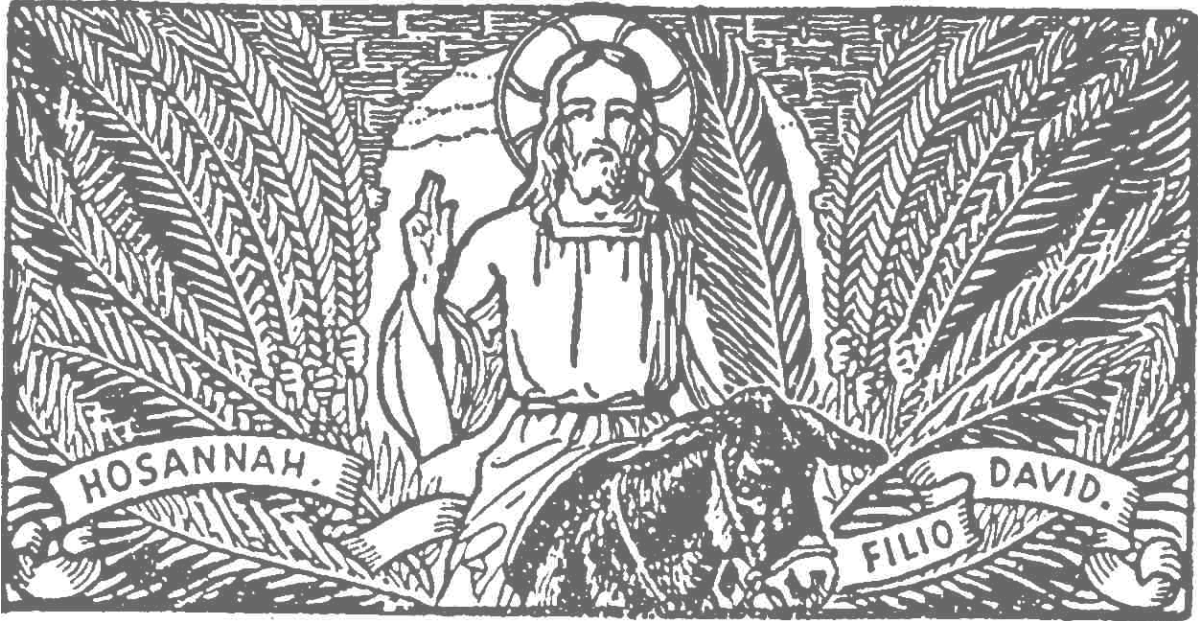
**Where in your life are you waiting? Waiting for answers? Waiting for hope? Waiting for change?**

Take some time today to sit with the discomfort of waiting, the anxiety of uncertainty. Spend some time in prayer, asking God for patience. Patience to endure this season. Patience because we cannot see the light. Patience because hope still feels far away. Patience because we know, despite it all, hope is still coming.



# SUNDAY

**READ Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20**



## REFLECT

Both the angel and Jesus offer the words, "do not be afraid" as he reveals himself in resurrected form. Sit with these words. Read them over a few times.

***Do not be afraid.***



**“If we don’t believe that every crucifixion—war, poverty, torture, hunger—can somehow be redeemed, who of us would not be angry, cynical, hopeless? No wonder Western culture seems so skeptical today. It all doesn’t mean anything, it’s not going anywhere, because we weren’t given a wider and cosmic vision of Jesus’ resurrection. Easter is not just the final chapter of Jesus’ life, but the final chapter of history. Death does not have the last word.”**

**- Richard Rohr**

HE IS RISEN  
*alleluia*