

**Sunday, Apr 02, 2023**

### Duty calls

Catherine de Hueck Doherty founded Friendship House to foster interracial understanding. Her spirituality was centered on the “duty of the moment,” which she described as “what you should be doing at any given time, in whatever place God has put you. . . . If you have a child, your duty of the moment may be to change a dirty diaper. So you do it. But you don’t just change that diaper, you change it to the best of your ability, with great love for both God and that child. . . . [T]he duty of the moment is the duty of God.” This Passion Week, do your duty.

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

TODAY’S READINGS: Procession: Matthew 21:1-11 (37); Mass: Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14—27:66 (38). “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.”

**Monday, Apr 03, 2023**

### Final accounting

The seventh corporal work of mercy is to bury the dead. Everyone deserves a dignified burial, and anyone who has lost a loved one knows how many arrangements go into caring for the body of the deceased until they are interred and making sure their soul is commended to God. The process is an act of love. It can go beyond the burial too—ongoing prayer for the deceased, visiting the gravesite, and even disposing of their material things. If you’re skilled with numbers and transactions then helping to sell a person’s home and volunteering for the stressful task of settling their finances—which can take months or years—can be a special kind of charity.

MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 42:1-7; John 12:1-11 (257). “Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair.”

**Tuesday, Apr 04, 2023**

### Practice extreme love

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. died this day in 1968. On the night before his assassination, King gave his famous “I Have Been to the Mountaintop” speech. But it’s King’s words in “Letter from Birmingham Jail” that provide a lens to the Lord’s Passion this week. “Though I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist,” King wrote, “I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love: ‘Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you.’” How will you acknowledge God’s extreme love this week?

TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 49:1-6; John 13:21-33, 36-38 (258). “Jesus answered him, ‘Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, though you will follow later.’”

**Wednesday, Apr 05, 2023**

### Keep moving toward justice

On this day in 1968, the Catholic mayor of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, infamously authorized his police department to use lethal force in the riots following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. the previous day. The event would lead to a national uproar and also to the founding two weeks later of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, an organization that persists to the present day. The organization’s leaders would play a pivotal role in what is now known as the “Black Catholic Movement,” integrating black spirituality into

their liturgies and practice of the faith. As we remember the life and legacy of Dr. King and so many other freedom fighters, let us also make use of our faith in the holy struggle for justice and solidarity.

WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Matthew 26:14-25 (259). “Who disputes my right? Let him confront me. See, the Lord GOD is my help; who will prove me wrong?”

**Thursday, Apr 06, 2023**

### Break bread together

The Eucharist, instituted at the Last Supper, which we commemorate today, is called the “source and the summit of Christian life” (*Lumen Gentium* 11). The idea is that we become what we eat, that we take on the characteristics of Jesus by consuming his body. Because of the centrality of the Eucharist—and to uplift its unifying force—the U.S. bishops have organized a Eucharistic Revival that includes a Eucharistic Congress this July, to be followed by a “year of mission.” As these sacred days unfold, allow the Eucharist to unite you to Christ and your sisters and brothers.

THURSDAY OF HOLY WEEK (HOLY THURSDAY); EVENING MASS OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

TODAY’S READINGS: Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15 (39). “If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet.”

**Friday, Apr 07, 2023**

### Words count

“It is finished” is among the final phrases of Jesus found in the four gospels, collectively known as the “Seven Last Words.” The others are “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” “Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” “Woman, behold your son. [Beloved disciple], behold your mother.” “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” “I thirst.” “Father, into your hands I commend your Spirit.” Taken together these words tell us everything about who Jesus was, why he lived and died, and what he calls his disciples to do. “Who will we be if we listen to the lessons of the Last Words of Jesus?” Alice Camille asks and answers in her brilliant little book *Seven Last Words*. “People of love and joy, ready to forgive, buoyed by hope.” May we be such people.

FRIDAY OF THE LORD’S PASSION (GOOD FRIDAY); DAY OF ABSTINENCE

TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 52:13—53:12; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1—19:42 (40). “When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, ‘It is finished.’ And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.”

**Saturday, Apr 08, 2023**

### Silent emptiness

Christ has died. The church is empty. The altar is bare. The tabernacle is vacant. The Real Presence feels like the Real Absence. Following an ancient tradition, the church does not celebrate the sacraments on this day. For that reason, Holy Saturday is a great time to visit your church and meditate on the emptiness and silence of the building. Our experience of God often seems empty and silent, with no outward sign of the divine help we always need. All we have is our faith, hope, and trust in God’s abiding attendance in our lives.

HOLY SATURDAY

TODAY’S READINGS: Vigil: Genesis 1:1—2:2; Genesis 22:1-18; Exodus 14:15—15:1; Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18; Isaiah 54:5-14; Isaiah 55:1-11; Baruch 3:9-15, 32—4:4; Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28; Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-10 (41). “His appearance was like lightning and his clothing was white as snow.”

*Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time*



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