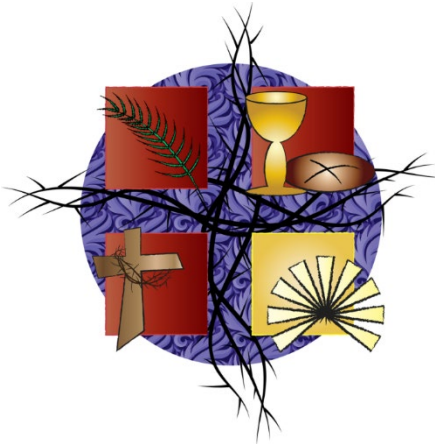


A weekly reflection by members
of the Precious Blood Community

April 16, 2025

Vicky Otto

“The Paschal Triduum, the ‘Three Days of Passover’, are for us days of death, rest, and resurrection. We march to the waters of baptism. We keep watch for light and for liberation. For three days we climb Mount Moriah, Mount Sinai, Mount Golgotha. Those who were lost are found, and those who are exiled come home.” Peter Mazar.



Tomorrow we enter the great Three Days of the Paschal Triduum. The Paschal Triduum is the centerpiece of our Easter celebration. We celebrate these three days as a mystery of the absolute opposites: death and life. Through Christ’s example, these opposites become complementary. Christ taught us by his death and resurrection that we are called to give ourselves over for the good of others, and in doing so, we find the only path to abundant joy and new life.

What are we called to do during these three days? Simply put, we are called to enter into the mystery ourselves through prayer.

Peter Mazar describes our actions in this manner, “Once the sun sets on Holy Thursday the entire church is swept into its Passover. Time stops: As wondrously strange as this may seem, we enter eternity. The Christian Passover will not be understood apart from keeping watch, waiting, and anticipating. The Paschal Triduum requires of us a liturgical piety that prods us to put everything else aside—even time itself—in the presence of this awesome mystery.”

I offer you these reflections from the Iona community as we gather in prayer in this special time.

[It was on the Thursday](#)

[It was on the Friday](#)

[It was on the Saturday](#)

[It was on the Sunday.](#)

This weekly reflection is made available to everyone in our Precious Blood family.

Feel free to share it with others. Would you like to write a reflection?

If so, please contact Vicky Otto at votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org

It was on the Thursday

Stages on the Way
Iona Community

It was on the Thursday
that he became valuable.

He hadn't anything to sell –
not since leaving his hammer and saw three years earlier.
Needless to say,
he could build a set of trestles
or hang a couple of shelves at the drop of a hat,
no bother at all.

But he wasn't into making things.
Not now.

He was into –
well – talking, I suppose.
And listening
and healing
and forgiving
and encouraging –
all the things for which there's no pay
and the job center has no advertisements.

So his work wasn't worth much.
Nor, indeed, was he.
For, not being well dressed
or well-heeled or well-connected,
he wouldn't have attracted many ticket holders
had he been put up for raffle.
But he had a novelty value –
like the elephant man or the fat lady
or the midget at the circus.
Put him on a stage and he might be interesting to look at.
Sell him to the circus
with the promise of some tricks
and there could be some money in it.

It was on the Thursday
that he became valuable.

It was on the Friday

Stages on the Way
Iona Community

It was on the Friday
that they ended it all.

Of course,
they didn't do it one by one.
They weren't brave enough.
All the stones at the one time
or no stones thrown at all.

They did it in crowds –
in crowds where you can feel safe
and lose yourself
and shout things
you would never shout on your own,
and do things
you would never do
if you felt the camera was watching you.

It was a crowd in the church that did it,
and a crowd in the civil service that did it,
and a crowd in the street that did it,
and a crowd on the hill that did it.

And he said nothing.

He took the insults,
the bruises,
the spit on the face,
the thongs on the back,
the curses in the ears.
He took the sight of his friends turning away,
running away.

And he said nothing.

He let them do their worst
until their worst was done, as on Friday they ended it all –
and would have finished themselves had he not cried,
“Father, forgive them.”

And began the revolution.

It was on the Saturday

Stages on the Way
Iona Community

It was on the Saturday
that he was not there.

Those who don't like corpses
can't stay away from graveyards,
unless there's some prohibition to stop them
revisiting the dead end
of their hopes and dreams.

It's as if they think
that should the voice speak again,
it will speak there
or a sunbeam will dance
or a flower will shoot
and give a sign of misinterpreted life.

But close the cemetery,
or confine, through custom or constraint,
the wailing ones to the house
and it looms larger – the loss, the lostness, the losers.

Men shiver in an upstairs room,
warm though the day is.
Women weep in an uncharmed circle.
Memory is forced on memory.
The mind's eye tries to trace
the profile and the face,
the smile, the gentle twitching of the nose-and fails.
And a panic sets in
because it seems he can't be remembered.
Was he ever known?

It was on the Saturday that he was not there.

It was on the Sunday

Stages on the Way
Iona Community

It was on the Sunday that he pulled the corn.

They arrived with flowers,
shuffling through the dawn
as the dawn snuffed out
the last candles of night.
Their faces betrayed their belief
that yesterday would always be better
than tomorrow, despite what he said.
He would not say it again,
so why bother to believe him on that score?

And the flowers,
they too were silent witnesses to disbelief.
Like the grass,
they were cut to be dried to death,
out off from the root,
the bulb, the source of life.
He was the flower they cherished,
the flower now perished
whose fate the lilies of the field,
now tight in hand
would re-enact.

So when they passed the crouched figure
at the edge of the road,
they thought little of him,
scarcely seeing his form through their tears.
Had they looked even a little
they would have seen a man
letting grain fall through his fingers,
dropping to the earth
to die and yet rise again,

It was on the Sunday that he pulled the corn.