

Lay Preachers' Bulletin – April 2019

April's lectionary notes have been provided by The Ven. Noel Wygiera, incumbent of St. Luke, Red Deer and Archdeacon of Rocky Mountain.

April 7, 2019 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

John 12:1-8

Jesus has dinner with Lazarus in Bethany. Mary anoints him. The author of this Gospel, John, as he often does, includes interesting details that are likely significant. How do these details help the reader enter more deeply into the account of the interaction between Jesus and Mary?

- There is a pound of nard.
- Nard is costly.
- Mary anoints Jesus' feet.
- Mary uses her hair to wipe Jesus' feet.
- The house is filled with fragrance.

April 14, 2019 – Palm/Passion Sunday

Luke 19:28-40 and Luke 23:1-49

In the Liturgy of the Palms, past and future converge in one great event: the one who was prophesied has arrived to claim his throne. How do the various details of this account confirm that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah and King?

Questions to consider:

- Is it significant that Jesus approaches Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives?
- What is significant about riding on the colt?
- Cloaks on the colt? Cloaks on the road? Why would Jesus' disciples loudly proclaim his mighty deeds?
- How does Jesus' response to the Pharisees reveal the divine nature of

these events?

Liturgy of the Passion:

The passion narrative in Luke 23:1-49 (or the fuller Luke 22:14 – 23:56) presents a very interesting contrast to the account of Jesus' triumphal entry that we encounter in the Liturgy of the Palms. If both the Palm and Passion accounts are used on the Sunday preceding the Sunday of the Resurrection (Easter), there is opportunity to explore both the fickleness and frailty of human nature (the shouts of the crowds change dramatically between these two events) and God's way of working outside of, and even contrary to our expectations. If you distribute palm crosses, explain the visual imagery present in them. The palm reminds us of the excitement and expectation present in the triumphal entry, and the cross reminds us of the shame and pain of the crucifixion. Both reveal Christ.

April 21, 2019 – Easter Sunday

John 20:1-18

Once again, John's narrative is full of interesting details that beg exploration. However, be careful not to get too distracted by them and forget to point out the Good News and whole point of this story; "He is risen!" What does that mean? John's details serve to make this reality all the more real and profound.

The Resurrection is at the heart of Christian belief and doctrine. When we proclaim Jesus, we do not proclaim him as great teacher or compassionate example. He may have been these, but so have a lot of other people throughout history. We proclaim Jesus as Risen Lord; he rose from the dead and because of that, sin and death are defeated, and we have the hope of eternal life.

Some of the details you might want to consider as you proclaim that He is Risen:

- Mary arrives in the dark before the sun rises.

- The stone is rolled away and Jesus' body is gone.
- Peter and the "other disciple" race to the tomb.
- The grave clothes are still present, and the head covering is neatly set aside.
- The other disciple "saw and believed."
- Mary is greeted as "Woman" by the angels and then by Jesus. It is not until she hears her name that she recognizes Jesus.
- Jesus gives Mary a message to deliver to the disciples.
- Mary reports, "I have seen the Lord."

April 28, 2019 – Easter 2

John 20:19-31

"But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name."

Jesus appears to the disciples, and then later to Thomas. In both instances, he gives them the evidence they need to believe. Thomas has often been called "Doubting Thomas" because of his reaction to the news of the other disciples, but Jesus meets him where he is and shows him the same signs as he did the others. Thomas' response is one of the most explicit declarations of the divinity of Jesus that we find in the Gospels; "My Lord and my God." He moves quickly from doubt to belief.

This narrative presents an excellent opportunity for the sharing of "evidence."

- In what ways does Jesus meet us now where we are?
- What evidence does he show us so that we too might move from doubt to belief?