

# THE FIRST 15

Monday, March 25, 2024

Today is Holy Monday, March 25 and this week is Holy Week. Each day we will journey closer to the cross with Jesus.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Holy and gracious God, I seek you in these moments of morning silence. As I read the account of Jesus' last week on earth, I listen for the particular message you have for me today. Speak to me through the power of your Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.*

***Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'" The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, 'From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise'?" And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night. Matthew 21:12-17***

## REFLECTION

Everyday during Holy Week we will read about the events of that same day on Jesus' last week on earth. Six days before the Passover Feast, Jesus arrived in Jerusalem with his disciples and came to Bethphage high on the Mount of Olives. His disciples went to the village and found a donkey for Jesus to ride. A large crowd gathered in anticipation, spread their cloaks on the road and cut palm branches from the trees welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem. Zechariah, one of the last Old Testament prophets, predicted that the Messianic King would someday enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9). This prophecy was fulfilled in the triumphal entry on the day we recognize as Palm Sunday. Jesus immediately went to the temple, entered the courts and was troubled by what he discovered.

The temple is the sanctuary where God's presence dwells. It is intended to be a holy place of prayer, yet it was being disrespected. I consider the sanctuary places in my life, where I seek God's presence. What are my houses of prayer? Where are the physical buildings, private rooms and special locations where I seek God's presence? There is also the temple of my heart where the Holy Spirit resides. Do I respect the holiness of these spaces - free from commercials, from the buying and selling of the world around me, void of distractions? The blind and the lame came to Jesus for healing - and in my places of rest I come to him as well. I seek healing for myself - for my body, mind, heart and soul. I seek a remedy for my blind spirit and a cure for my crippled Christian walk. I lift my voice alongside the children in the temple and shout Hosanna to Jesus, the Son of David! Hosanna!

**Ask:** Where is my sanctuary - the place where I lift up my prayers and sing praises to Jesus my Lord? What is the specific healing I seek from Jesus today?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Come, Lord Jesus, Son of David, enter the temple of my heart, drive out whatever is impure and overturn the tables of my sin. Overturn the wrong and set things right. Heal my blindspots and strengthen my spiritual legs to walk in the way that leads to life. Amen.*