



LGC Daily Devotion Guide 2010

Week 16
April 18-24

I. Adoration

1. Invocation Prayer

“Give unto us, O Lord, we humbly beseech Thee, a wise, a sober, a patient, an understanding, a devout, a religious, a courageous heart; a soul full of devotion to do Thee service, strength against all temptations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

(William Laud, Bishop of Canterbury, 1573-1645)

2. Adoration through Psalm 16

(We'll use this Psalm, not for today's Bible reading, but for the sake of focusing our thoughts on God)

- Read slowly this Psalm at least three times and each day gather one thought about the goodness of God and translate it into a prayer of adoration.

II. Confession

Pause now and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to your sins and ask for forgiveness.

III. Thanksgiving

List, one by one, things that you should give thanks for.

IV. Scriptural Reflection: Based on the Gospel of John

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day:

April 18 John 11: 17-32

- (1) What did Martha expect Jesus to do, even though Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days? Why? And why did she appear to be a little disappointed at what Jesus said in v.23? What did she expect Jesus to say?
- (2) Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” What does it mean? What are the implications?
- (3) Martha and Mary said the same thing to Jesus. What was it and what was the message behind what they said? Have you ever felt or said similar things to the Lord?
- (4) What have you learned about the love of God today?

April 19 John 11: 33-46

- (1) Observe in this passage all the words that depict Jesus' emotion. What can you learn about Jesus? Why, especially, did Jesus weep?
- (2) Look at what Martha said in v.39. What did she mean and what would you have said, if you were Martha?
- (3) List down the things (or actions) that Jesus did in raising Lazarus. What did Jesus try to achieve? What important lesson can you learn from His actions?
- (4) What have you learned about the love of God today?

April 20 John 11: 47-57

The Pharisees represented a political establishment that tried to gain favor with the local Roman authority in order to secure peace and the ongoing maintenance of their religious freedom. “Our place” in v. 48 is normally interpreted to refer to the temple.

- (1) In as much as the Pharisees genuinely put the freedom of worshipping God as a top priority, how did they treat Jesus and why? Is there a message for us today?
- (2) What was Caiaphas' conclusion of the matter, and how did John interpret his “prophecy”? What can we learn from John's perspective about God's plan in general?

- (3) We are about to enter into the last week of Jesus' life on earth, and the last Passover he observed. Try to describe the atmosphere of Jerusalem—the people, the religious leaders, the disciples and Jesus.
- (4) What have you learned about the love of God today?

April 21 John 12: 1-11

Now Jesus returned to Bethany, the town fairly close to Jerusalem and where Lazarus was raised. Perhaps, it may be helpful, if you can read also the same account from Matthew 26: 6-13 & Mark 14: 3-9. Your understanding will be enriched.

- (1) All commentators basically agree that the perfume was very expensive, about a year's wages. A woman would definitely cherish such a collection, as Jesus remarked in the other gospels that her story should be told wherever the gospel is preached in memory of her:
 1. What was her motive in anointing Jesus with such expensive perfume?
 2. Why did she choose such an occasion?
 3. If "it was intended to be saved for his burial", why did she pour it out now? What difference did it make to do it now and doing later at his burial?
- (2) The other gospels indicate that Judas was not alone in his opinion. Honestly, if this jar is worth say, C\$30,000 today, would you not have the same opinion?
- (3) "You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me" appears to be a statement of comparative values. We can be sure that Jesus did not say that the poor were not important. What then was he telling us? How can we apply it today?
- (4) What have you learned about the love of God today?

April 22 John 12: 12-22

- (1) Read Zechariah 9:9. Should it not be clear to the disciples what happened was the fulfillment of this O.T. prophecy? Apart from the fact that they were slow in their understanding, can you picture someone riding on a donkey and claim himself to be a king? What kind of a king would he be?
- (2) Read Psalm 118: 25-26. If you were the disciples, seeing the

crowd's enthusiasm and the crowning of Jesus with palm branches (with which the people greeted Simon Maccabee upon his successful insurrection in BC 168) what would you expect to happen next? What did the Pharisees expect to happen next?

- (3) John was the only evangelist who told of the visit by the Greeks. Why did he bother to add this little insert into the gospel? What might be the message or implication?
- (4) What have you learned about the love of God today?

April 23 John 12: 23-36

- (1) Why did Jesus choose this interview of the Greeks to announce that "the hour has come"?
- (2) We all know that Jesus had to die as a kernel of seed in order that it would produce many seeds. But how should it apply to us? Why loving our life will mean losing it? Why hating our life in this world will allow us to keep it for eternal life?
- (3) Why was Jesus' heart troubled? And how did he deal with his troubled heart?
- (4) Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine." How could it not be for His benefit?
- (5) Jesus urged the crowd to "walk while you have the light". How did he explain what was meant by walking in the light in v.36?
- (6) What have you learned about the love of God today?

April 24 John 12: 37-50

- (1) Please refer back to your devotion materials of April 16; did you jot down all the miracles of Jesus according to the best of your recollection? If you did, look at your list again; if you did not, try to do it now. After that, reflect on John's comment of the people in v.37.
- (2) John gave the reason for their unbelief in v.40 which is a difficult verse to understand. Try not to get around what is clearly written in the scripture, but ask yourself the following questions:
 1. Based on God's character, would he not want to heal them of their unbelief?

2. If “He” has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, with what has he done it?
 3. Tom Rees once said, “The same sun that melt the wax, hardens the clay”. What then was the difference between these people who would not believe upon seeing “all these miracles”, and “the many even among the leaders” who believed (v.42)?
- (3) Was John’s comment on these leaders who believed in v.43 too harsh? Since it is really not John’s comment, but the Holy Spirit’s, how should we be warned?
 - (4) Reflect on v.48. How might it help you when what you share or proclaim is biblical and yet is greeted with cynicism?
 - (5) What have you learned about the love of God today?

V. Meditative Reflection

As we finish our daily reflection based on “Calvary Road”, I would like to introduce you to short reflective pieces, both modern and ancient, beginning with the Celtics this week.

April 18

We are all asked to do more than we can do. Every hero and heroine *of* the Bible does more than he would have thought it possible to do, from Gideon to Esther to Mary. Jacob, one of my favourite characters, certainly wasn't qualified. He was a liar and a cheat; and yet he was given the extraordinary vision of angels and archangels ascending and descending a ladder which reached from earth to heaven.

In the first chapter of John's Gospel, Nathaniel is given a glimpse of what Jacob saw, or a promise of it, and he wasn't qualified either. He was narrow-minded and unimaginative, and when Philip told him that Jesus of Nazareth was the one they sought, his rather cynical response was, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' And yet it was to Nathaniel that Jesus promised the vision of angels and archangels ascending and descending upon the son of man.

Madeleine L'Engle, Walking on Water

April 19

EVERY HOUR A KINGDOM

Every hour a *kingdom* is coming in your heart, in your home, in the world near you, be it a kingdom of darkness or a kingdom of light.

THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY

The Bible does not say that everybody who is not a Christian is a notorious sinner; but it says that the one who lives outside that is wasting their life. They may not be doing wrong, but their life is lost.

NO SMALL SIN

There is no such thing in the world as a great sin, but there is no such thing as a small sin. The smallest sin is a

fall, and a fall is a fall from God, and to fall from God is to fall the greatest height in the universe.

Henry Drummond, A Mirror Set at the Right Angle

April 20

So, precisely because I am a sinner, I have fled to Thee; since there is nowhere I can flee from Thee save to Thee, Thou dost stretch out Thine arms to receive me and bend down Thy head to kiss me; Thou dost bleed that I may have drink, and open Thy side in Thy desire to draw me within.

What then shall separate me from the love of Christ, and prevent me from casting myself into His embrace, when He stretches out His hands to me all day long? Shame at the sinfulness and impurity which defile me? No, indeed; a shame that would separate me from my Lord would be fatal. I will rather run to Him as He beckons me to come, and by touching Him I shall be cleansed from all impurity of body and soul. Should I fail to do so I would hear the words of Wisdom reproaching me: 'I stretched out my hand and thou didst not look; thou hast despised all my advice, and I shall laugh at thy destruction.' No, Lord, not so! I will gladly run to Thee albeit a sinner, albeit unclean, for with Thee there is merciful forgiveness; Thou wilt wash me in Thy blood, and I shall be made whiter than snow. I will enter into Thee and not stay without, for outside Thee there is no salvation.

The Monk of Fame

April 21

YES

Yes, I deal with guilt every day. What counts is my heart's desire, only that my heart's motives be pure, and that I strive for that... day after day.

The devil must know guilt is my most vulnerable place. Some days he is most successful in destroying my creative energy and vitality-just in that very way.

Yes to the fact that Jesus understands it all.

He has never willed me to carry guilt.

Yes to realizing that carrying guilt is a greater sin than the failures that caused it...that it negates all Christ paid to set us free.

Yes to surrendering this area of my life to God, and not picking it up... over and over again.

Ann Kiemel

April 22

How easy it is to denounce structural injustice, institutionalized violence, social sin. And it is true, this sin is everywhere, but where are the roots of this social sin? In the heart of every human being. Present-day society is a sort of anonymous world in which no one is willing to admit guilt and everyone is responsible.

Because of this, salvation begins with the human person, with human dignity, with saving every person from sin. Individually there are among us here no two sinners alike. Each one has committed his or her own shameful deeds, and yet we want to cast our guilt on the other and hide our own sin. I must take off my mask; I, too, am one of them, and I need to beg God's pardon because I have offended God and society. This is the call of Christ.

How beautiful the expression of that woman upon finding herself pardoned and understood: 'No one, Sir. No one has condemned me.' Then neither do I, I who could give that truly condemning word, neither do I condemn; but be careful, brothers and sisters, since God has forgiven us so many times, let us take advantage of that friendship with the Lord which we have recovered and let us live it with gratitude.

Oscar Romero of El Salvador

April 23

In Your presence there is an absence silencing my greatest fear.
It is with You that I know the essence of what is life, now that
You're near.
It is in the absence of Your presence that I rekindle my desire;
and it is when I am without You that I burn, an inextinguishable
fire.
In Your presence there is an absence of all that preys upon my
mind; for my heart's desire's before me, and I leave all else
behind.
It is in the absence of Your presence that I have learned to be apart.
It is without You that I am with You; for You are Joy within my
heart.

Janet Rimmer

April 24

I still believe in the power of the priesthood,
where sinful men are helped by sinful men.
I believe in an authority that stoops to wash a
poor man's feet.
I believe in a banquet where sinners learn to love,
eating in company with their God.
I believe in parents who teach their children the
beauty that is life.
I believe in the words that God has left for man,
words that can fashion hope from darkness and
turn bitter loneliness into love.
And I believe in man, fashioned in mystery by
God.
I believe in the beauty of his mind, the force of
his emotions, the fire and loyalty of his love. I
know his weakness, his cowardice, his treachery,
his hate. But I believe in him and his thirst for
acceptance and love.
Most of all I believe in God and the power of His
victory in Christ. I believe in a Resurrection that
rescued man from death. I believe in an Easter
that opened man to hope. I believe in a joy that

no threat of man can take away. I believe in a
peace that I know in fleeting moments and seek
with boldness born of God. I believe in a life that
lingers after this, a life that God has fashioned for
His friends.

I believe in understanding, in forgiveness, in
mercy, in faith. I believe in man's love for woman,
and hers for him, and in the fervour of this
exchange I hear the voice of God. I believe in
friendship and its power to turn selfishness to love.
I believe in eternity and the hope that it affords.

James Kavanagh,

A Modern Priest Looks at his Outdated Church

VI. A Time for Silence

You have mediated much today with your intellectual faculty today. Now have a moment of silence (the length is up to you, 5 or even 30 minutes), and ask God quietly, “Lord, is there any important message from you today that I might have missed? Show me, your servant is listening?”

VII. Supplication

Use the following chart to cover people and ministries that you want to remember before the Lord:

	Your family	Other people	Church Ministries	Other Ministries	City & World	Others
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wed						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

VII. Benediction

“Pray like a child today, stammering, simple and unadorned, and our Father in heaven will be honored today. Amen.” (Adapted from an unknown desert father)