

April 2006  
**Holy Week Happenings**

Dear Theophilus,

Holy Week seems to be here more quickly than it came last year and I find myself lured into thinking that nothing changes, that I know the meaning of it all, and we reenact the story of Christ's final week as we always have.

Yet, there are new understandings and fresh perspectives from respected scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan in their recent book *The Last Week*, and by Jim Wallis, Harvard professor, Christian activist, and founder of Sojourners, in *God's Politics*. Here are a few of their ideas:

The Palm Sunday procession was not the only parade that day. While Jesus entered Jerusalem from the East, cheered by his followers, Pontius Pilate and his soldiers entered on the opposite side of the city in a show of imperial power. It was the standard practice of the Roman authorities to be present at Passover and other Jewish festivals to keep order and to remind the people who really ruled the world. Jesus, in what looked like a planned political demonstration, made a statement that counteracted the Romans, that he would banish war from the land and that his kingdom was not of power and violence but one of peace.

On Wednesday evening Jesus was with his followers in the home of Simon the Leper when a woman poured expensive oil over him. The disciples were outraged but Jesus showed appreciation. Why? While the disciples had not listened to or believed Jesus when he said that he must go to Jerusalem and be killed there, this woman did listen and did believe him. She showed her understanding by anointing his body extravagantly, lost in her devotion and in her worship. In Mark's gospel she was the first Christian and the first to believe.

There's more to say but little space to say it. Join us then the rest of the week. On Thursday, April 13, we are gathering in Bloomfield Hall at 7:30 p.m. for a Maundy Thursday Tenebrae service when we will gather around tables for communion, sing songs, and take part in the telling of the passion story.

At noon on Good Friday, April 14, we are hosting the community-wide service focused on the Seven Last Words. Seven area churches are participating. A choir from these congregations will provide the music. This is one of the only times we come together as a community and I hope you will be able to join us.

Then Easter morning: Sunrise service at 6 am, the Wellspring service at 9 am and another opportunity to worship at 11 am.

I hope you will join us during Holy Week and gain some new insights and perspectives on the person, message and ministry of Jesus.

Grace and peace,

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