



4/25/2018 Mk. 14: 1-15:47 Is. 50: 4-7

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Link to [Beck](#) (paywall) other [Beck](#)

Stone, Naomi. [Love is the Peak of all Suffering](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Life's Key Question](#)

[New Melleray Monastery Sunday Homilies](#)

ENTERING THE SCENE:

Fr. Beck has us on the walk from entering Jerusalem into the city gates with all that ensues once we joyfully sing our way into what will come next. We are making a march on the temple to confront all the ways that of thinking about God has led us astray. Jesus has spent his entire ministry introducing us to the Father in ways that seem beyond anything we could hope or imagine. We are full of enthusiasm and ready to press on. The old ways die hard, and we will meet opposition head on after a night together at table. But for now I invite you to enter into this reading with the viewpoint of someone there those days. See if this gives you a deeper appreciation of the confusion, fear and despair that many felt as they confronted the force of evil's pushback.

Slowly read the text and then choose one of the following people to "talk" to about what was going on inside them as the arrest, passion, crucifixion and death unfolded. What questions do you want to ask your person?

DISCUSSION QUESTION: If you could talk to anyone who might have been there at the crucifixion what would you want to ask them and why?

PRAYER: Suffering Jesus, you come now to that moment that you knew would happen once you entered the waters of the Jordan. In many ways it seems like just yesterday that you knew just what you needed to do, but now things don't seem so clear cut. You even will ask if there can't be another way to do this, but this time there won't be any angels, doves or voices to assure you like before. Yet now as in the wilderness before, you press on with your faith in God's promise of eternal life. Help me as I too press on in spite of what I might have to say yes to on my way to you. Amen.

DISCUSSION: In order to enter into a deeper level of this Passion story from Mark's gospel, I invite you to consider taking the role of one of the following people from his gospel. My hope is by doing lectio this way you will find new connections with this gospel account of those last days and hours of Jesus' earthly life before the Resurrection.

In order to do this I suggest you think a moment about how your life has been affected since your encounter with Jesus. How have things gotten better? Have they gotten worse? Then imagine how you might feel and think and feel as you watch or hear about what is happening to Jesus.

Zebedee: Mk. 1: 19f. 19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. 20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Peter's mother in law: Mk. 1: 29f. 29 As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. 30 Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. 31 So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

Paralyzed man: Mk. 2:2f. 1 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralytic was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is

easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . ." He said to the paralytic, 11 I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Man with a withered hand: Mk. 3: 1f. Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. 2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. 3 Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone." 4 Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent. 5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. 6 Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Jesus' mother Mary: Mk. 3:31f. 31 Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. 32 A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you." 33 Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. 34 Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

Little girl raised from the dead: Mk. 5:35f. 35 While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?" 36 Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe." 37 He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. 38 When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. 39 He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." 40 But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. 41 He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). 42 Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. 43 He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Deaf man: Mk. 7:31. 31 Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. 32 There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged him to place his hand on the man. 33 After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. 34 He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!" (which means, "Be opened!"). 35 At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly. 36 Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. 37 People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Man with possessed son: Mk. 9: 17f. 17 A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. 18 Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not." 19 O unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me." 20 So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. 21 Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered. 22 It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." 23 If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes." 24 Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" 25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." 26 The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, "He's dead." 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up. 28 After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" 29 He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer."

Poor widow; Mk. 12:41. 41 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. [k] 43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything--all she had to live on."

Woman with alabaster jar: Mk. 14:3f. 3 While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. 4 Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? 5 It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly. 6 Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. 7 The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. 8 She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. 9 I tell

you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

OTHER TEXTS OF THE WEEK: Is. 50: 4-7; [Ps. 22:8-24](#); Phil. 2: 6-11; Mk. 14: 1-15:47
Revised Common Lectionary: Is. 50: 4-9; [Ps. 31: 9-16](#); Phil. 2: 5-11; Mk. 14:1-15:47;

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION:

Death is not a going out of existence so much as a going to the heart of existence. John S. Dunne

Death is not extinguishing the light but putting out the lamp because the dawn has come. Rabindranath Tagore

"As the body must be born after completing its development in the womb, so a soul, when it has reached the limit of life in the body allotted it by God, must leave the body." - St. Anthony the Great –

If I knew for certain that I should die next week, I would still be able to sit at my desk all week and study with perfect equanimity, for I know now that life and death make a meaningful whole. - Etty Hillesum, "An Interrupted Life

Death is the fundamental pillar on which all forms of injustice rest. They are established and their power is maintained by a technique which can be reduced to single phrase, "Do as I say or I'll kill you." This is the choice that Jesus was given, and it is the choice which each of the martyrs was given. Ivan J. Kauffman

His message and his public claim, finally his person itself, were indeed rejected by our world. According to all the rules prevailing at the time, he was executed. Nevertheless, even in his dying Jesus was not desperately concerned with his own identity and thus with self-survival. Edward Schillebeeckx – Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord.

To know God without being God-like is like trying to swim without entering water. Orest Bedrij

Willfulness characterizes the unharnessed human will, whereas willingness identifies the strong will of a person who is willing to go where he or she is called or led by a higher power. William May

...this Jesus of Nazareth did not die into nothingness, but into God. So trusting in this message, I hope as a Christian, like many people in other religions, not to die into nothingness, which seems to me to be extremely irrational and senseless. Rather, I hope to die into the ultimate reality, into God, which – beyond space and time in the hidden real dimension of the infinite – transcends all human reason and conceiving. Pg. 205-6. Kung, Hans. The Beginning of All Things: Science & Religion. Grand Rapids, MI. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 2007.

I'VE GOT TO GO: (Another take on Judas)

I don't know what's happening, but I've got to go. I've got to make something happen. I'm sick of being confused and feeling like an outsider. I've been with him all this time, and I still don't understand what he says, what he does -- washing our feet, him of all people.

I can still feel those hands of his on my feet. I can still hear him say, "He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me." Heel? Feet? What did he mean by that? I don't understand what he does and what he says. Then he said, "Truly, truly, one of you will betray me." Does he mean me? What does he know?

"Truly, truly!" How many times have I heard that! That's what they're all buzzing about, but I'm not like them. I caught what he said before that: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives any one whom I send receives me."

I heard that -- but what did he mean about "sending" and "betraying"? I couldn't get it all; the ones closest to him, that inner circle, they could hear. He might have been whispering just to them, for all I can tell.

Does he mean me? Is he sending me? Is this odd man out or something else?

Then he dipped that piece of bread into the sauce, gave it to me, and said, "What you are going to do, do quickly." You can see how hard it is to understand him. Was he honoring me or was something else going on? Was he singling me out? And for what? "What you do, do quickly!"

Do what? I don't know what I'm going to do, but I know something has to be done. I know I couldn't have stayed there another minute.

He'll never treat me that way again. No more meals, no more shame. "The poor you always have with you." Mary and her ointment and hair. No more singling out, no more shame, no more not understanding. I've had enough. No more cold, loneliness; no more dark. No more not understanding.

I understand this much. I feel more alive right now than I've ever felt. I feel something I've never felt before. I feel a surge of energy. I may not understand him, but I know what I feel.

Every sense is sharp:

- my feet still feel moist from washing
- my fingers still feel moist from the sauce on the bread
- my tongue still tasting the red wine
- I feel the cool night air on my skin
- I see the stars and the Passover fires
- I can even hear the coins jingle

Did they hear them? Did they guess? No, those clods were too busy whispering to each other, "Lord, who is it?" Is what? I despise them. They're so stupid that if they even noticed, they probably thought it was our money, not the money the others gave me. And they're the ones I'm going to. Something's got to be done. I understand that much.

"Quickly," he said. "Well, all right then, I'll give him 'quickly.'"

John Roberts

This is my enlightened, well-founded hope: dying is a farewell inward, and entry and homecoming into the ground and origin of the world, our true home, a farewell perhaps not without pain and anxiety, but hopefully in composure and surrender, at any rate without weeping and wailing, and without bitterness and despair, but rather in hopeful expectation, quiet certainty, and (after everything that has to be settled is settled) ashamed gratitude for all the good things and less good things that now finally and definitively lie behind us – thank God. Pg. 206. Kung, Hans. *The Beginning of All Things: Science & Religion*. Grand Rapids, MI. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 2007.

Life is a process of becoming / a combination of states we have to go through.

Where people fail is that they wish to elect a state and remain in it. / This is a kind of death. - Anais Nin

Do not seek death. Death will find you. But seek the road which makes death a fulfillment. 138 Hammarskjold

I am called here to grow. 'Death' is a critical point of growth, or transition to a new mode of being; to a *maturity* and fruitfulness that I do not know (they are in Christ and in His kingdom). The child in the womb does not know what will come after birth. He must be born in order to live. I am here to learn to face death as my birth." December 1, 1965, V.333-34

From *A Year with Thomas Merton, Daily Meditations from His Journals*, selected and edited by Jonathan Montaldo (HarperSanFrancisco, A Division of HarperCollinsPublishers, New York, 2004), P 31.

The three pilgrimage festivals—Passover, Shavuot (Weeks or Pentecost), and Sukkot (Booths)—brought crowds to Jerusalem and therefore heightened tension; the Romans consequently paid careful attention at the times of these events. Passover was especially explosive because of its association with the Exodus; each year at the festival the Roman governor moved troops to Jerusalem to discourage an uprising. Pg. 88. [The Jewish Annotated New Testament](#)

Death is not final, but an opening and a transition for ever new forms of life. An Infinite God necessarily creates infinite becoming. God is the one who "brings death to life and calls into being what does not yet exist" (Romans 4:17b). Richard Rohr

The knowledge that Jesus came to dress our mortal bodies with immortality must help us develop an inner desire to be born to a new eternal life with him and encourage us to find ways to prepare for it. It is important to nurture constantly the life of the Spirit of Jesus - which is the eternal life - that is already in us. Baptism gave us this life, the Eucharist maintains it, and our many spiritual practices - such as prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, and spiritual guidance - can help us to deepen and solidify it. The sacramental life and life with the Word of God gradually make us ready to let go of our mortal bodies and receive the mantle of immortality. Thus death is not the enemy who puts an end to everything but the friend who takes us by the hand and leads us into the Kingdom of eternal love. Henri Nouwen

SUGGESTED READINGS:

Mitchell, [The Enlightened Heart](#). Harper & Row. NY. 1989. TRUTH: TUNG-SHAN (807-869) Page 37.

William J. Bausch [Storytelling](#), Twenty-third Pub. Mystic. CT. 1984. WHERE IS GOD? Pages 20-1.

Grana, Janice [Images](#). St. Mary's College Press, Winona MN. 1976. NOT FOR THE HESITANT: Page 130 ENDINGS: Page 83