

HOLY WEEK IN THE HOLY LAND

A scenic view of Jerusalem, Israel, with a cityscape in the background and two men walking on a stone path in the foreground. The city is built on a hillside, with a prominent dome visible in the distance. The foreground shows a stone path leading down a hillside, with two men walking towards the camera. One man is wearing a hat and a blue shirt, and the other is wearing a white jacket and a brown shirt. The sky is a clear, light blue.

STUDY

Hallow

GUIDE

Hello and welcome to this Hallow study guide for **HOLY WEEK IN THE HOLY LAND!** We're excited to help you build a real, living, and vibrant life of prayer.

At Hallow, our mission is to help people pray. But we aren't meant to do this alone. We pray as members of the mystical body of Christ. Our prayer must lead to the Eucharist. We must pray as a Church.

That's why we've built this study guide intentionally in a way that allows it to be used for small group discussion, conversation around the dinner table with family or friends, or for personal study and reflection.

SMALL GROUPS offer an intimate setting where we can openly share our struggles, seek accountability, and pray with and for each other. These small communities of faith build divine friendships and provide a space for all of us to encounter God more deeply.

Whether you choose to use this guide for personal study or for discussions with your small group, parish, or family or friends, you'll find everything you need to **GET STARTED.**

SEEK GOD IN PRAYER

The goal of any study is to spend time with God and to encounter Him through prayer and Christian community.

Of course, we don't do any of this on our own. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us and teaches us to pray (**ROMANS 8:26**).

FOR PRIVATE PRAYER & STUDY

Before you begin any session, ask for God to guide you and to help you become more aware of His presence. After you listen to a session, spend time in silence reflecting on what stood out to you and where God might be drawing your attention.

LEADER TIPS

JESUS IS WITH YOU

Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) We pray that God will bless your time together and help you grow closer to Him.

HOW TO GET READY

Before leading a prayer or study group in discussion, spend some time with God in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit for attentiveness to His promptings and for wisdom in leading the discussion.

IT'S OKAY TO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER

It's ok to be nervous. It's ok to not have answers. None of us do! If a question or topic comes up that you can't answer, that's okay. Learn from others in the group, be bold in seeking understanding, and don't be afraid to take questions to your parish's pastor.

AFTER THE STUDY

The real fruit of journeying through something like this is the community of prayer that such intentional study can bring about. Make sure to stay in touch with your small group, to encourage one another in love, and to pray for one another!

(if using for group discussion)

SETTLING IN (5 MIN)

Before you begin, have participants share something from their week for which they are grateful to God.

PRAY (15 MIN)

Watch the day's Holy Week in the Holy Land session together on Hallow. To stream the content to a television or larger screen, check out our guide at HALLOW.COM/CAST.

DISCUSSION (25 MIN)

Discuss the session's questions in this study guide, and jot down things in your study guide that struck you while you were watching the session or participating in the discussion. After posing a question to the group, you may find it helpful to allow some time for silence, giving the group some time to think and reflect before sharing.

RECAP (5 MIN)

As your time with the group comes to a close, offer a few points for reflection that summarize some of the key points discussed over the previous thirty minutes. It's ok if it isn't perfect!

PRAYER (10 MIN)

Go around the room and ask participants how the group can pray for them. Ask for a volunteer to close the group in prayer, or enter into a time of communal prayer in which anyone can voice his or her intentions aloud.

Here is a sample agenda that you can use for a one hour community session. If you plan to meet with a group to discuss, feel free to pick one day that resonated with you, watch that session with the group, and then discuss. Don't worry if the group hasn't watched all the sessions yet. You can also continue to go through the sessions long after Holy Week. They can be watched at any time!

SAMPLE GROUP AGENDA

EPISODE 1

INTRODUCTION

"When they drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say anything to you, reply, 'The master has need of them.' Then he will send them at once." This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: Say to daughter Zion, 'Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'" The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them, and he sat upon them. The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. The crowds preceding him and those following kept crying out and saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest." And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds replied, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee." **MATTHEW 21:1-11**

FOR DISCUSSION

Have you been to the Holy Land? If so, what struck you about being there? If not, what would you most like to see?

Can you imagine what it must have been like to be a first century resident of Jerusalem and to see Jesus entering the city? Do you think you would have been one of the people waving palm branches? Or would you have been skeptical of Jesus' claims? Why?

EPISODE 2

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Then going out he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he arrived at the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not undergo the test." After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done." And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground. When he rose from prayer and returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping from grief. He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test." While he was still speaking, a crowd approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named Judas. He went up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" **LUKE 22:39-48**

FOR DISCUSSION

Jeff described to Jonathan how some of the trees in the Garden of Gethsemane have root systems that go back to Jesus' time. Our Lord isn't an apparition; he actually took on flesh and walked in that garden. How does this make you appreciate the world around you — a world that Jesus Himself walked?

Venerable Fulton Sheen said that the fear of dying is the most common fear in life. Is this something to which you can relate? Do you think that Jesus was afraid of dying?

What makes suffering so hard? Does it help to remember that Jesus is suffering with you and for you?

EPISODE 3

CAIAPHAS' HOUSE

After arresting him they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest; Peter was following at a distance. They lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter sat down with them. When a maid saw him seated in the light, she looked intently at him and said, "This man too was with him." But he denied it saying, "Woman, I do not know him." A short while later someone else saw him and said, "You too are one of them"; but Peter answered, "My friend, I am not." About an hour later, still another insisted, "Assuredly, this man too was with him, for he also is a Galilean." But Peter said, "My friend, I do not know what you are talking about." Just as he was saying this, the cock crowed, and the Lord turned and looked at Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly. **LUKE 22:54-62**

FOR DISCUSSION

Jeff said that on a previous trip to the Holy Land he suddenly realized that as Jesus was being led away, "He was thinking about me and He was thinking about you." How does that change your perception of Jesus' arrest?

Given the physical location of Caiaphas' house, it is possible that Jesus, while imprisoned in the basement cell, heard Peter's denial of Him. If that is the case, how do you think it must have felt for Jesus to be denied by one of his closest friends and disciples?

EPISODE 4

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

As they led him away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus. A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.' At that time people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?" Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed. **LUKE 23:26-32**

FOR DISCUSSION

When Jesus told the disciples, "pick up your cross and follow me," the cross was only known as a cruel Roman instrument of torture and death. What do you think the disciples must have thought when they heard this?

It was our sins that condemned Jesus. And it was for our sins that He died. How does this fact change your perception of His Passion?

EPISODE 5

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of the Skull), they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, [and] come down from the cross!" Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he wants him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" The revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way. From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Some of the bystanders who heard it said, "This one is calling for Elijah." Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said, "Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him." But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. **MATTHEW 27:33-50**

FOR DISCUSSION

As Jeff showed us in today's episode, the place of Jesus' Crucifixion is now a church. What does this say about how God can transform our brokenness by His grace?

EPIISODE 6

THE TOMB

What is happening? Today there is a great silence over the earth, a great silence, and stillness, a great silence because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages . . . He goes to free the prisoner Adam and his fellow prisoner Eve from their pains, he who is God, and Adam's son.

The Lord goes in to them holding his victorious weapon, his cross . . . And grasping Adam's hand he raises him up, saying: 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. For you, who left a garden, I was handed over to Jews from a garden and crucified in a garden.

Look at the spittle on my face, which I received because of you, in order to restore you . . . See the blows on my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image. See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon your back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you, who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one. I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you, who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from your sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you. But arise, let us go . . . the kingdom of heaven has been prepared before the ages. **FROM AN ANCIENT HOMILY**

FOR DISCUSSION

Jeff is right. Silence can be scary. But does silence mean that God is doing nothing? How can God work in silence? Do you have any examples from your own life of Him doing this?

EPIISODE 7

THE SEA OF GALILEE

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He then said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." [Jesus] said to him, "Feed my sheep. Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." He said this signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when he had said this, he said to him, "Follow me." **JOHN 21:15-19**

FOR DISCUSSION

Why do you think Jesus chose this spot—on the shore of the Sea of Galilee—to appear to His disciples? What does this choice tell us about Jesus?

Peter has just denied Jesus publicly while Jesus was enduring his Passion, and yet here Jesus shows his forgiveness. How does Peter respond? How do we respond to Jesus' forgiveness?

