

Holy Week

The Beginning of Everything

Monday of Holy Week

And God came as a baby, born to a peasant woman and laid to sleep where animals ate, to rescue the people from their slavery; the eternal Word in frailty of flesh; and John the Baptist's voice was heard in the silence calling, "God's kingdom is come" ...

Tuesday of Holy Week

And Jesus passed through the Jordan as God's people did, and heard God's words; and Jesus was tempted in the wilderness as God's people were, and spoke God's words; and Jesus stood on the mountain shining in the radiance of glory, and God blessed him; and Jesus spoke to the people of the best rules for life saying, "I give you a new commandment" ...

Wednesday of Holy Week

And Jesus said, "I am the Way", and he gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty and rest to the weary; and Jesus said, "I am the Light", and he brought sight to the blind, freedom to the prisoner and life to the dead; and Jesus said, "I am the Shepherd", and he welcomed the unwelcome, loved the unlovable and forgave the guilty ...

Maundy Thursday

And Jesus entered Jerusalem as the king of glory proclaiming, "The greatest one is the servant of all"; and he washed the feet of his friends, and broke bread with them saying, "This is the new covenant"; and brought into being the substance of former shadows ...

Good Friday

But Passover came, and the priest became sacrifice to give life to the dead, the master became slave to redeem those in chains, and the perfect Lamb of God gave himself for the wrong of all people; and Jesus spoke forgiveness and welcomed the wanderer home; and darkness covered the land.

They thought this was the end of the story.

But it was not.

Holy Saturday

And they carried his body to a garden and laid him in a tomb; and there was silence, and in the time between times the world waited, hardly daring even to breathe; and the Ancient of Days gathered the clouds of heaven ...

Easter Sunday

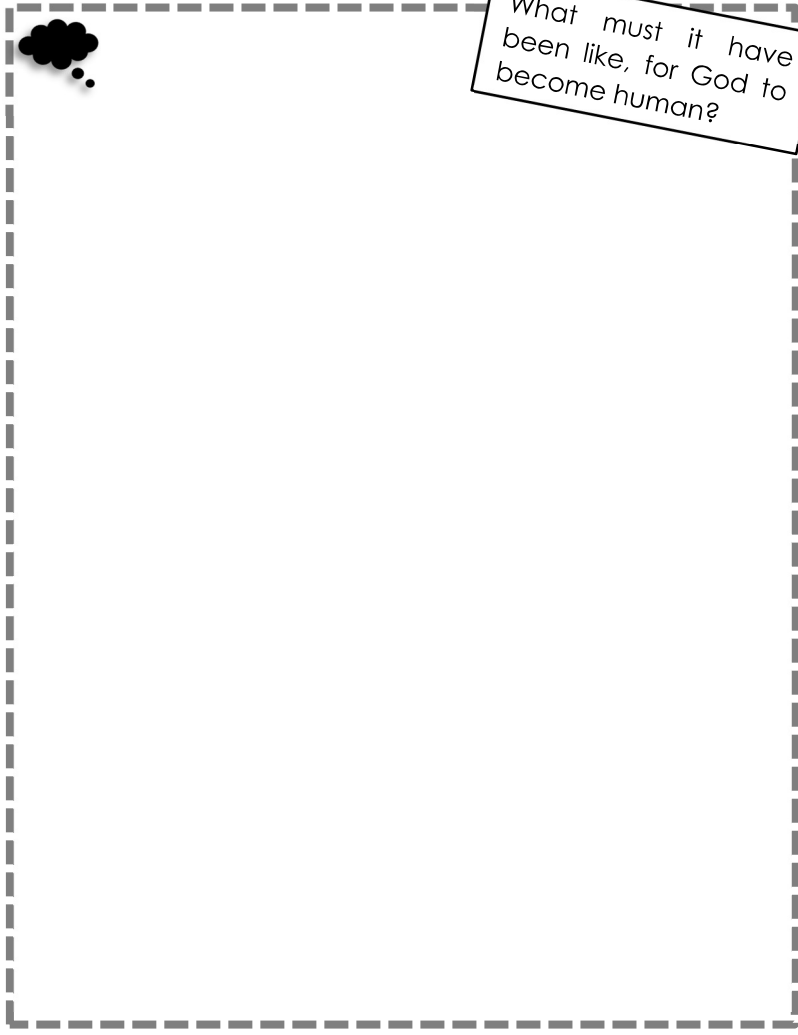
But death could not hold the Lord of Life, and in the darkness of the first day of the week, Jesus burst out and made light and life, and hope and home; and Eden is restored, Jerusalem rebuilt, and the gates of heaven opened; for the old chapter is ended and the new chapter is begun ...

35 Monday of Holy Week



The Big Story

... and God came as a baby, born to a peasant woman and laid to sleep where animals ate, to rescue the people from their slavery; the eternal Word in frailty of flesh; and John the Baptist's voice was heard in the silence calling, "God's kingdom is come" ...



What must it have been like, for God to become human?



Looking Closer

Isaiah 40:1-5 (MSG)

"Comfort, oh comfort my people",
says your God.
"Speak softly and tenderly to Jerusalem,
but also make it very clear
That she has served her sentence,
that her sin is taken care of—forgiven!
She's been punished enough and more than enough,
and now it's over and done with."

Thunder in the desert!
"Prepare for God's arrival!
Make the road straight and smooth,
a highway fit for our God.
Fill in the valleys,
level off the hills,
Smooth out the ruts,
clear out the rocks.
Then God's bright glory will shine
and everyone will see it.
Yes. Just as God has said."

Galatians 4:4-5 (NRSV)

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.



Engaging

It can be easy to look back to some supposed golden age, when everything was right with the world, and to long for a return. At the time of Jesus' birth, many looked back fondly to David's reign, when Israel was a powerful and well-respected nation, ruled by a godly king.

So when John the Baptist arrived on the scene, thundering in the desert and saying, "Repent, for the king is coming", it sounded like a return to the glory days.

But this would be a very different type of king.

God was not looking back, but looking forward. This would be no human king, a man after God's own heart, yet still fallible and in need of forgiveness. This would be a king of God's own self, perfect and able to forgive.

Born of woman to be fully like us,
yet born of God to redeem us.
In our lives and in our world,
yet bringing our lives and our world into God's kingdom
heaven to earth and earth to heaven.



Talking and Listening

Father God,

Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.
My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion forever.
I am always with you;
you hold me by my right hand.
You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will take me into glory.

Amen.

(Psalm 73:23-26 NIV)