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Monday in Holy Week

"Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." John 12:3

Dear Ones,

We have come to Holy Week, the final stretch of our Lenten Journey... the darkest part.

Traditional Christian observances in the past would have included daily church services, and ponderous sermons on the gathering gloom, as the church re-enacted the final days of Jesus. Most of us no longer have the time – or make the time – to live into the story so fully, any more.

Except that this year, we have the time.

So, my invitation to you is to do for yourself what I cannot at the moment. Create a *truly holy* Holy Week. I shall send you the scripture, and a ritual. My invitation to you is to find the time to build the sacred space you need, away from the pandemic, the numbers, the dreadful stories on the news. Slip into the gospel story as fully as you can. It is the most important story about us right now... for it is the story of life which conquers death.

You may never have done this before! That's OK. I will be with you, as will your community of faith. Each in our own homes – we are together. Let us make this Holy Week one to remember.

Monday

- Create a space where you will come each day this week to reflect and to pray. You might include a candle, a plant, a stone or piece of driftwood, an icon or image of Jesus. Select a few things which, when seeing them, will remind you that you are a beloved child of God.
- Read John 12:1-11 (I include it below for your convenience; however, if you have your own Bible I strongly recommend that you use it. There is nothing more wonderful than holding the Word of God in your hands in a prayerful way).
- Read the passage again, as many times as feels right, as slowly as you can, with these questions in your heart:
 - What speaks to me here?
 - Do I need more information about anything? If so, feel free to look things up online.
 - How was Jesus feeling?
 - Do I connect with him, or any other person in this story in a personal way?

- Ritual: find something in your home which has a perfume in it. Even some laundry soap has perfume! Pour a little into a dish. Allow the scent to move into the space, holding these questions from John Wesley in your prayerful heart:
 - Where would you have me go?
 - What would you have me do?
 - What would you have me say, and to whom?
- Close in prayer, ending with The Lord's Prayer (The Prayer of Jesus).

We will meet again tomorrow!

Grace to you, and peace,

Kate

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John 11

1 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 2 There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. 3 Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" 6 (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) 7 Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it[c] so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. 8 You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

9 When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, 11 since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

*"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.
We welcome and include **everyone** into congregational life."*