

**FROM THE
PASTOR'S DESK**

These comments, which are excerpted from an essay written by Martin Luther in 1519, are very relevant today as we consider questions raised by the movie "The Passion of the Christ."

**How to Meditate on
the Passion of Christ**

by Martin Luther

**Wrong Ways to Meditate
on Christ's Passion**

Some people meditate on the Passion of Christ and become angry at the Jews. But they are just doing what they always do. They love to complain about other people. They spend all their time condemning their enemies. I guess this is a meditation of sorts, but not a meditation on the sufferings of Christ!

Then there are the people who like to sympathize emotionally with Christ. They weep and wail over Him because He was so innocent. They meditate on these things for hours and hours on end. But they never get any farther.

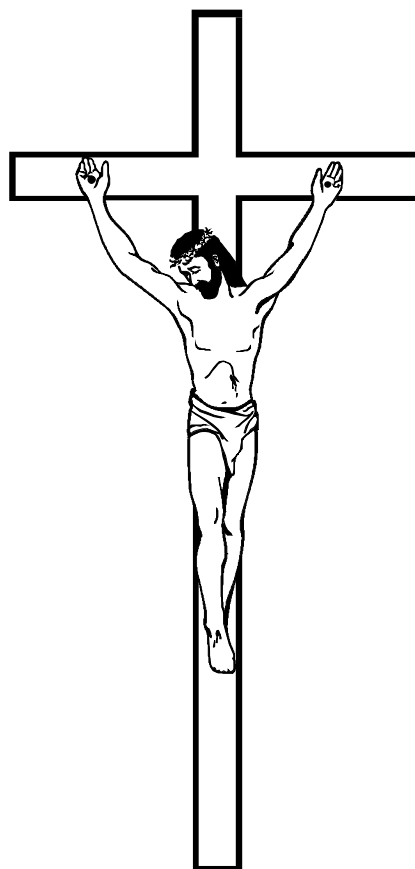
**The Right Way to Think About
Christ's Passion**

When we meditate on the Passion of Christ the right way, we see Christ and are terrified at the sight. Our conscience sinks in despair. This feeling of terror needs to happen so that we fully realize how great the wrath of God is against sin and sinners. We understand this when we see how God sets sinners free only because His dearly beloved Son—His only Son—paid such a costly ransom for us, as Isaiah 53:8 says, "He was stricken for the transgressions of my people."

You should deeply believe, and never doubt, that in fact you are the one who killed Christ. Your sins did this to Him.

**The Comfort of
Christ's Suffering**

When a person, whose conscience has been filled with terror, understands his sins in this light, he needs to watch out that his sins do not remain in his conscience, for then nothing but pure doubt will result. Just as our sins flowed out of Christ and we became aware of them, so we should pour them back on Him again and set our conscience free.



Take your sins and throw them on Christ. Believe with a joyful spirit that your sins are His wounds and sufferings. He carries them and makes satisfaction for them, as Isaiah 53:6 says, "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Peter says in

1 Peter 2:24, "He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree." In 2 Corinthians 5:21 Paul says, "For our sake, He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

You must rely on these verses from the Bible with all your might, even more when your conscience tries to kill you. You'll never find peace if you miss this opportunity to quiet your heart. You will have so much doubt that you will despair. If we dwell too much on our sins, going over and over them in our conscience, keeping them close to our hearts, soon they will become too much for us to manage and they will live forever.

But when we see our sins laid on Christ and see Him triumph over them by His Resurrection, and fearlessly believe this, our sins are dead and become nothing. Our sins don't stay on Christ, but are swallowed up by His resurrection. Now you see no wounds, no pain, no sight of sin at all in Him. That is why Paul says in Romans 4:25 that Jesus "was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification." In His sufferings Christ made our sins known and was crucified for them. By His resurrection He makes us righteous and frees from all sin.

Therefore, here is what you need to do. First, stop looking at Christ's sufferings any longer. They have already done their work and have terrified you. Press forward through all difficulties and see His friendly heart. Look how full of love God's heart is for you. It was this love that moved Him to bear the heavy load of your conscience and sin. If you do this, your heart will be sweetly loving toward Him.

When your heart is set on Christ, His sufferings should be an example for your whole life. When the day comes that sickness and sorrow weigh you down, think how little it matters com-

pared to the thorns and nails of Christ. If you have to do something you don't want, or can't do something you want to do, think about how Christ was led about by others, tied up as a prisoner. Does pride attack you? Look at how your Lord was mocked and disgraced along with murderers. Do sexually impure thoughts and lust come your way, thrusting themselves on you? Think how bitter it was for Christ to have his tender flesh torn, pierced and beaten, again and again. Are hatred and envy at war within you, or are you seeking vengeance? Remember how Christ prayed for you, and all of his enemies, with many tears and cries. He had more reason than you to seek revenge! If any trouble or adversity trouble your body or soul, take heart! Say, "Why shouldn't I also not suffer a little since my Lord sweat blood in the Garden because of his anxiety and grief? I would be a lazy, disgraceful servant if all I want to do is lie in bed while my Lord is forced to do battle with a painful death."

We need to meditate on Christ's passion, not with lots of words or with a showy display, but put it to true use in our lives. As Paul says in Galatians 5:24, "Those who are in Christ have crucified the flesh with all its passions and lusts," and in Hebrews 12:3 admonishes us, "Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted."

This is the right way to meditate on the Passion of Christ. This is how you will find strength in Christ and be comforted by His suffering.

Crossnotes

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Volume 2

Number 3



Community Easter Sunrise Service

Easter Sunday, April 11

Sunrise Service—7:00am

Easter Breakfast—8:00am

Second Easter Service with Holy Communion—9:30am

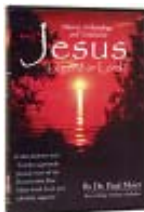
All Events Held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Freewill Offering Taken to Defray Breakfast Expenses

All Invited—Everyone Welcome!

Discussion on "The Passion of the Christ"

During the Bible Class hour at 10:30am on Sunday, March 21 we will have a group discussion on the movie "The Passion of the Christ." Those who wish to may see the movie before that day, but even if you don't wish to see the movie you will find the discussion interesting.

Everyone is invited to join in the discussion! For more information, contact Pastor Vogts at 232-9117.



**Jesus:
Legend
or Lord?**

Is there any evidence for Jesus outside the Bible? Is the Biblical account of Jesus historically and factually accurate?

We will explore these and other important question about Jesus' life, crucifixion and resurrection beginning Sunday, March 28 in a new eight-week Bible Class, featuring a DVD with Rev. Dr. Paul Maier, a Lutheran pastor, noted author, and professor of ancient history at Western Michigan State University.

Each week we will see a 25-30 minute segment of Dr. Maier's captivating presentation, followed by time for discussion. Everyone is invited to join in Sundays at 10:30am for this fascinating look at Jesus as seen from the perspective of a noted historian.

New Order of Service During Lent

During the Lenten season this year we are using one of four main orders of service planned for the new Lutheran hymnal due to be released in 2007. This service may be familiar to some members because it is revised from the service in *Hymnal Supplement 98*, which has been used at Holy Cross previously.



Missionaries of the Month

Each month we remember in prayer in our worship specific missionaries sponsored around the world by our congregation, through our Synod and related organizations. You are encouraged to remember them also in your personal and family prayers.

March 7
Jay Brinkmeyer
Haiti

Jay is the liaison between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti and the LCMS. The Lutheran Church in Haiti has been having great success and growing rapidly. Pray for Jay's protection during the turmoil there and that peace may be established so that the Gospel will not be hindered and the church's work may continue.

March 14
Matthew and Rachel Hill
India

The Hills were married last June and left almost immediately to serve as international educators at Kodai Kanal School. India does not allow foreign missionaries per se, but this position gives them the opportunity to share the Gospel.

March 21
Kim Acton
Kazakhstan

Kim teaches English as a second language and has asked us to pray "that God would use me as a tool through which the Holy Spirit can create saving faith in the lives of people of Kazakhstan."

March 28
Jeffrey and Angela Pautz
Thailand

The Pautzes lead translation projects and assist congregations in Bangkok and other areas in Southeast Asia. They have completed their initial language study and are now beginning their work. Pray for the success of the Gospel in this part of the world where there are so few Christians.



Lord, Teach Us to Pray

2004 Lent Services on The Lord's Prayer
Wednesday Evenings, 7:00pm

February 25
"Our Father Who Art in Heaven"

March 3
"Hallowed Be Thy Name"
"Thy Kingdom Come"

March 10
"Thy Will Be Done on Earth,
as It Is in Heaven"

March 17
"Give Us this Day
Our Daily Bread"

March 24
"Forgive Us Our Trespases,
as We Forgive Those Who
Trespass against Us"

March 31
"Lead Us Not into Temptation,
But Deliver Us from Evil."
"Thine Is the Kingdom, and
the Power, and the Glory,
Forever and Ever. Amen."



Preschool Registration Night March 16

Holy Cross Preschool will hold registration night on Tuesday, March 16 from 6:00pm-7:30pm. Members of Holy Cross have preferred enrollment until March 15.

Classes include Mom's Day Out for two year-olds, and Preschool sessions for three, four and five year-olds. Holy Cross Preschool is blessed with a dedicated, professional staff, and an excellent facility. Most of all, education takes place in a loving, Christian atmosphere.

Holy Cross also offers After School Care. Children thru 6th grade enjoy a

variety of supervised activities from 3:00pm-6:00pm. Bus service is provided directly to Holy Cross from both Dakota Valley and Sacred Heart.

Classes this year were all full or nearly full, so you are encouraged to reserve a place for your child on March 16. For more information speak with Board of Education chair Terese Vogts or call 235-1688.

"We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord" (Psalm 78:4).

Flowers in Worship



Thank you for these flower donations to beautify our worship. Any additional donations will be listed in future newsletters.

A sign-up sheet to provide flowers for worship in 2004 is on the bulletin board at the back of the church. Occa-

sions to remember include anniversaries, birthdays, in memory of loved ones, etc. Flowers may be obtained anywhere and you may provide your own vase or use one of the assortment in the church kitchen.

February 1

Mike & Daniell Bargstadt
Caitlyn's Birthday

February 15

Pastor Kevin & Terese Vogts
St. Valentine's Day

February 29

Mike & Daniell Bargstadt
Ashley's Birthday

March 7

Mabel Schibonski
Elmer's Birthday

March 14

Doug & Janet Martin
Doug's Birthday

March 21

Joey, Marcy & Bryce Schroeder
Brady's Birthday

**Family
Fun
Carnival
September
12**



Holy Cross will again sponsor a free Family Fun Carnival for the entire community, on Sunday, September 12 from 4:00pm-7:00pm. Events will be held rain or shine under the "Big Top" on the church grounds at Dakota Dunes Boulevard and Bison Trail.

Last year over 300 members of the community enjoyed activities such as a children's inflatable "bouncer," carnival games, crafts, food, prizes, and a special appearance by "Sonny the Clown."

Mark your calendars now for this fun family event that you don't want to miss, and watch in coming months for needed items and help with this big event!

Free Family Movie Night



Sunday, March 21, 4:00pm

Disney's Finding Nemo

Presented at Holy Cross • Projected on Big Screen
Free Popcorn and Koolaid • All Ages Welcome
(No unattended children, please)
Bring Family, Children's Friends, Grandchildren, Etc.
No Charges or Fees

All Invited – Everyone Welcome!

Presented Under License from Christian Video Licensing International License #501228800



March 3 (Lent Service)

Brandon Dolan

March 7

Morgan Kaardal

March 10 (Lent Service)

Sarah Vogts

March 14

Kendall Martin

March 17 (Lent Service)

Casey Johnson

March 21

Jacob Vogts

March 24 (Lent Service)

Austin Munns

March 28

Alex Kaardal

March 31 (Lent Service)

Kylie Martin



March 7

Dennis Melstad

March 14

Mike Bargstadt

March 21

Joey Schroeder

March 28

Greg Huibregtse

Lent Services

Doug Jansen

Easter Egg Hunt



Holy Cross is again sponsoring a Community Easter Egg Hunt, on Saturday, April 10 (day before Easter) at 10:30am on the church grounds. This event is for the entire community, and all children up to age 10 are welcome. In case of rain, it will be held inside the church. (Pray for good weather!)

Last year over 40 children attended and this year we are preparing for about double that number. There will be plenty of eggs, prizes, snacks and an Easter video. There are no charges or fees for this free community event.

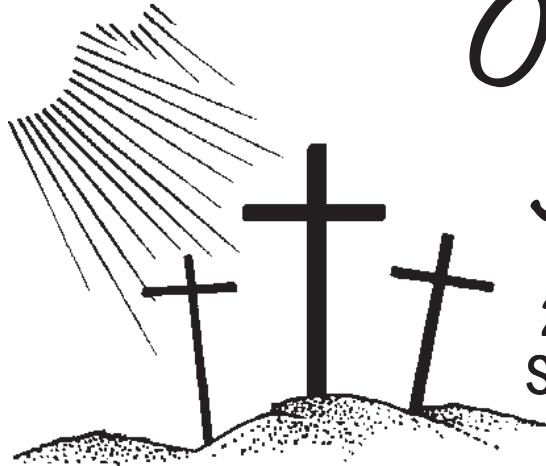
We already have enough eggs and prize items but donations to help defray expenses would be appreciated. Place in offering plate marked "Easter Egg Hunt."

Sunrise Service

Community Sunrise Service at Holy Cross

You are invited to a Community Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday, April 11 at 7:00am, held in the sanctuary at Holy Cross. This simple service will feature the Easter story and favorite Easter hymns. A second Easter Service, with Holy Communion, will be held at 9:30am.

Along with Christmas Eve Candlelight Services, the Easter Sunrise Service is one of the most moving and meaningful worship opportunities of the year. It is especially memorable for children.



Our Lenten Journey

2004 Sunday Sermon Series for Lent

For our Sunday services during Lent this year we are taking a walk with Jesus through the story of his suffering and death, visiting the places of the passion as we walk "Our Lenten Journey." Pastor Vogts, who has worked as an archaeologist and professional photographer, will illustrate some of the messages with his own pictures from the Holy Land. Everyone is invited to join "Our Lenten Journey" in worship on Sundays at 9:15am.

February 29

"The Upper Room"

Mark 14:15

March 7

"The Garden of Gethsemane"

Matthew 26:36-39

March 14

"The Judgment Hall"

Acts 2:22-23

March 21

"The Way of Sorrows"

Matthew 27:27-33

March 28

"Mt. Calvary"

Luke 23:33

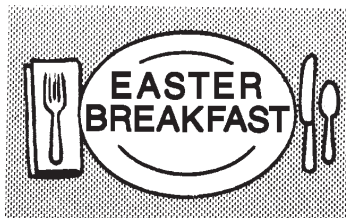
Bring your family and holiday guests to celebrate the real significance of Easter. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite family, friends, neighbors, etc.—everyone enjoys Easter Sunrise services!

Donate Lilies for Easter



Sign up on the bulletin board to donate lilies to beautify our church at Easter. Note whom or what they are in memory or honor of. As we focus on the promise of the resurrection, Easter is a wonderful occasion to remember loved ones.

Cost is \$10; put in offering marked "Easter Lilies." You are also *welcome* to bring plants you purchase elsewhere or receive as gifts. Please still sign up, noting you will bring your own plants.



Following the Easter Sunrise service, everyone is invited to stay for an Easter Breakfast, also at the church, sponsored by the Board of Evangelism. A free-will offering will be taken to help defray expenses for the breakfast.

Free Family Movie Night



Sunday, March 21, 4:00pm

Disney's *Finding Nemo*

Presented at Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Projected on Big Screen • Free Popcorn & Koolaid
All Ages Welcome *(No unattended children, please)*

No Charges or Fees

All Invited – Everyone Welcome!

Mark Your Calendars for Summer Movie Nights!
June 20, July 18 and August 15

Presented Under CVLI License #501228800

Community Easter Egg Hunt



Saturday, April 10 • 10:30am

On Church Grounds at
Dakota Dunes Boulevard and Bison Trail

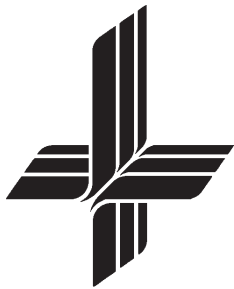
Up to Age 10 • Plenty of Eggs!

Prizes • Snacks • Easter Video

All Children Invited—Non-Members Welcome!

No Charges or Fees

For More Information Call 232-9117



Rev. Kevin Vogts, Pastor
149 Bison Trail P.O. Box 1902
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049

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