

# MAUNDY THURSDAY PRAYER: GETHSEMANE



On Thursday evening, when Jesus and the disciples concluded the Passover meal in the upper room (home of Mary and her son, John Mark), they sang a psalm and then departed for Gethsemane. As they traveled their way north to the Mount of Olives on the east side of the city, Jesus probably continued teaching the disciples as Rabbi's do. As they passed by the vineyards on the Kidron Valley slope, perhaps Jesus reminded them of the importance of "remaining in the vine". Feeling pressed when they arrived, Jesus bid his companions: "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me (Matthew 26:28)." Gethsemane, meaning "the place of olive pressing," was where Jesus and his disciples would sometimes spend the night, renting space in a cave used for pressing equipment. Withdrawing from the others to an olive tree grove, Jesus took his three closest disciples with him for support while he poured out in prayer: "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will (Matthew 26:29)." As Jesus was praying, soldiers from the Sanhedrin, led by his disciple Judas Iscariot, arrived with torches and weapons to arrest him (Bob Rognlien, The Footsteps of Jesus Trip Guide).

## Welcome to this holy moment of prayer!

As you begin, take time to pause and rest. Shed the burdens and noise of the day and align your spirit with Jesus, the Living God, who is here with you. Write down anything you are grateful for from the day. (5 mins)

Ask that God would give you a way to stay with Jesus and experience his sorrow and suffering, as he suffers out of love for me and for the whole world. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Read **Matthew 26:36-56** a few times. Reflect on what God's Spirit is revealing to you: (20 mins)

*Mind: What idea or thought is standing out to me?*

*Body: What am I sensing in my body (relief, tension, sadness, etc.)*

*Heart: How do I feel about what I am reading? Name emotions...*

*Soul: How do I sense God inviting me into this encounter?*

## Gethsemane continued...

In the ancient garden (Eden), sin entered the world through the deception and disobedience of humankind. In this garden (Gethsemane), sin was crushed through the perfect obedience and submission of Jesus, the God-Man, who alone could reconcile our relationship with God once and for all (Romans 5:12-21). “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22).” At Gethsemane we see the complete breakdown of humanity in the flesh, juxtaposed with the perfect love of Jesus in the power of the Spirit—the pioneer and perfecter of our human faith (Hebrews 12:2).”

Jesus, agonizing and being hard pressed by the weight of the pain and suffering he was about to experience, longed for his friends to be with him. However, in this moment of fellowship and prayer, only Jesus could drink the Father’s cup. With this in mind, read and reflect on **John 18:1-14**. Allow yourself to sit in the reality that Jesus longs for you to be with him. Allow yourself to feel the significance of what Jesus did for you, not only in the garden, but in the horrible events to follow.

Reflect again with your mind, heart, body, and soul. *(20 mins)*

### Communion

Jesus invites us to join him in daily sacrifice and suffering for the sake of the Gospel—to join God’s Kingdom movement of restoring and reconciling the world. “For God so loved the world... (John 3:16).” In solidarity with Christ, inspired from love and gratitude, enjoy a rich time of communion with God as you receive the bread and cup on the table. Begin by praying for relinquishment—a spiritual practice rooted in the example of Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. *(10 mins)*

*Take, Lord, and receive  
all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, my entire will—  
all is yours; do with it what you will.  
Give me only your love and your grace.  
That is enough for me.*

**SUSCIPE PRAYER OF IGNATIUS**

### Easter and Beyond

This moment right now is significant. What you received from the Lord here is significant. What are you going to do with it? How is your life going to be different because of this time of prayer? How is Jesus preparing you to experience the fullness of the resurrection power he longs to see manifested in your life? Who is God inviting you to share this with?

Take a moment to ask God for the grace of commitment. Thank God for this time together. *(5 min)*

*I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings,  
becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.  
Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal,  
but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.*

**PHILIPPIANS 3:10-12**