

FAITH@HOME GUIDE

May 17-23

A resource to be used for Family or Individual worship this week. The daily readings are listed and a shorter option is in () if time is short. One item for discussion in addition to questions on guide that is always helpful is to have people pick out a verse they liked and explain why.

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYERS

Prayers this week: Bob Neumann, Marv Neubert

Cancer Care & Treatment: Sheila Finberg, Mark Thompson, Clara & Mike (family of Delores Volkers)

Confirmation Students: Clara & William Sprengeler

Grieving Families: Family of Rev. Dr. Bob Holst (former pres. of CSP)

Families as we go through our membership: Wendy, Erin, Alex Gilbert; Gary, Karen, Logan, Lexi Ludwig; Karen Lunderby; Matthew, Kelly, Maxwell, Ramona, Calvin Lurkin-Tvrdik; Steve, Sandy, Samantha Lyness; Joe, Jennifer, Jake Machula; Judd, Farrah, Emmett, Elsa Machula; Lynn, Sandy Machula; Stacy Machula; Tom, Karen Machula.

Questions to consider:

Who is someone I will support or encourage this week? What can I do and how will I do it?

Who do I know that is disconnected from the Lord that I can pray for and share my faith with and possibly invite?

Things to Commit to Memory this Week

1. She gave out of her poverty to the treasury. (Mark 12:41-44): **the poor widow**
2. One of the Twelve who betrayed Jesus for money: **Judas Iscariot**
3. Roman Governor who sentenced Jesus to death despite finding no guilt: **Pontius Pilate**
4. The murderer released in place of Jesus: **Barabbas**
5. Bystander forced to help Jesus carry His cross: **Simon of Cyrene**
6. Secret follower and council member who provided Jesus' tomb: **Joseph of Arimathea**
7. Event where Jesus' divine nature was physically revealed in radiant light: **Transfiguration**
8. Hebrew plea meaning "Save us, please!": **Hosanna**

9. "The place of the Skull," the site of the crucifixion: **Golgatha**
10. The supreme religious council of Jews that put Jesus on trial: **Sanhedrin**
11. Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
12. Mark 15:39 "And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, 'Truly this man was the Son of God!'"

Monday May 18th–Reading Mark 9 (9:30-50)

Mark 9 begins with the **Transfiguration**, where Jesus reveals His divine glory to Peter, James, and John on a mountain alongside Moses and Elijah. Following this, Jesus heals a boy possessed by a spirit after the disciples fail to do so, emphasizing that such miracles require deep faith and prayer. The chapter concludes with Jesus teaching on the true nature of greatness, instructing His followers to embrace humility, protect the "little ones," and maintain their spiritual "saltiness."

The Struggle of Faith (Mark 9:14–29) The father in this story is brutally honest about his wavering faith while standing right in front of Jesus. How does it feel to realize that Jesus responds to "honest doubt" rather than demanding perfect certainty? In what areas of your life right now are you saying, "I believe; help my unbelief"?

Tuesday May 19th–Reading Mark 10 (10:32-45)

Mark 10 highlights Jesus' radical teachings on the Kingdom of God, where He challenges social norms regarding divorce, wealth, and status by prioritizing the humble and the "least." He repeatedly predicts His coming death and resurrection, emphasizing that His mission is one of ultimate sacrifice rather than earthly power. The chapter concludes with the healing of blind Bartimaeus, whose persistent faith serves as a model for true discipleship as he follows Jesus on the road to Jerusalem.

Vision and Following (Mark 10:46–52) Unlike the rich young man who walked away, Bartimaeus throws off his cloak (his livelihood) and follows Jesus "on the way" to the cross in Jerusalem. Bartimaeus cried out persistently despite the crowd telling him to be quiet. What "crowds" or internal voices try to keep you from calling out to Jesus, and how can you persevere in your faith like he did?

Wednesday May 20th–Reading Mark 11 (11:12-19)

Mark 11 begins with Jesus' **Triumphal Entry** into Jerusalem on a colt, where the crowds hail Him as the promised Messianic King. Following this, He performs the prophetic act of cursing a barren fig tree and then clears the temple of moneychangers, demonstrating His authority over religious hypocrisy and a system that failed to bear spiritual fruit. The chapter concludes with Jesus asserting His divine authority to the chief priests and elders, emphasizing the power of faith and prayer for those who truly believe.

Fruitfulness vs. Appearance (Mark 11:12–21) Jesus curses the fig tree because it has the *appearance* of health (leaves) but no *fruit*. He then goes to the Temple and finds the same problem. It is easy to "look" like a healthy Christian on the outside. What does "fruit" actually look like in a believer's life, and how do we stay "fruitful" rather than just "busy"?

Thursday May 21st–Reading Mark 12-13 (12:28-44)

In Mark 12, Jesus confronts the religious leaders through parables and sharp teaching, emphasizing that the greatest commandments are to love God wholeheartedly and love one's neighbor as oneself. Moving into Mark 13, Jesus delivers the "Little Apocalypse," where He foretells the destruction of the Temple and the signs of the coming end of the age. Together, these chapters call for total devotion to God and a posture of constant watchfulness, as Jesus prepares His followers for the trials and His eventual return.

True Sacrifice (Mark 12:41–44) Jesus watches how people give and ignores the large sums of the wealthy to praise a widow who gave two small copper coins. Why do you think God values the *proportion* of our sacrifice over the *amount* of our gift? How does this story challenge our tendency to compare our spiritual "contributions" to those of others?

Friday May 22nd–Reading Mark 14 (14:10-25)

Mark 14 depicts the somber transition from Jesus' public ministry to His passion, beginning with His anointing at Bethany and the institution of the Lord's Supper during the Passover meal. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus undergoes intense spiritual agony and is ultimately betrayed by Judas, leading to His arrest while His disciples scatter in fear. The chapter

concludes with Jesus facing a defiant trial before the Sanhedrin and Peter's three-fold denial, fulfilling Jesus' earlier prophecy and highlighting the isolation of the Savior.

Failure and Identity (Mark 14:66–72) Peter, the leader of the disciples, denies even knowing Jesus three times to avoid trouble. Peter's failure came right after he boasted about his own strength (v. 31). Why is it often our "strengths" or our "pride" that lead us into our biggest spiritual failures? How do we move forward when we realize we've let God down?

Saturday May 23rd–Reading Mark 15 (15:24-47)

Mark 15 details the trial, crucifixion, and burial of Jesus, beginning with His interrogation by Pontius Pilate and the crowd's demand for the release of Barabbas instead of the "King of the Jews." Jesus endures mocking and physical abuse from Roman soldiers before being led to Golgotha, where He is crucified between two criminals as darkness covers the land. The chapter concludes with Jesus' death and the Roman centurion's confession of His divinity, followed by Joseph of Arimathea courageously placing Jesus' body in a rock-hewn tomb.

The Exchange (Mark 15:1–15) Barabbas was a known insurrectionist and murderer, yet he was set free while the innocent Jesus took his place on the cross. The "Barabbas Exchange" is a vivid picture of the Gospel: the guilty go free because the innocent One is condemned. How does it change your day-to-day perspective to realize that, spiritually speaking, we are Barabbas?

Life Application Focus: *3 summary points that come up in the week of readings. Write down another you came up with.*

1. Love God with all your heart.
2. Love your neighbor as yourself.
3. Truly, he is the Son of God.
- 4.