

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

APRIL 2026

We are about to come to the culmination of the Lenten season, Passion Week, when we face events that God initiated to love us forever. Some have observed a special practice during Lent, some have not done anything different. Some people observe Lent out of ritual; some view it as a disgusting practice which no longer is necessary. One of the reasons there is so much disdain for Lent, literally or figuratively, is because it is not a source of earthly pleasure or happiness which is valued highly in our culture. Quite to the contrary, we put forth a great deal of effort in the choices we make to create a state of happiness for ourselves. We invest heavily in 'drowning our sorrows' with some form of earthly behavior to pleasure our self. These efforts have ultimately not created lasting happiness and in many cases increased our sadness. Jesus said in the beatitudes, *'Blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted'* (Matthew 5:4). It is only in experiencing holy sadness that we will ever find solace in all that causes sadness in life.

What is holy sadness and is it desirable?

Holy sadness is seen as a virtue and thus is very desirable. It begins with being honest with our self. The fundamental principle for a joyful life is love of God and love of others. This we have failed to do evident in all self-centeredness, envy, anger, bitterness, resentment, belittling, greed, irreverence or impure thoughts or desires that litters our past. Further, we have gotten so use to exhibiting this behavior, we cannot stop it if we tried. Does this make you sad? Ah, now we are approaching holy sadness; sadness that we have grieved our loving Father in heaven and our inability to ever get it right. Does this make us 'bad'? No, we were created in the image of God and God pronounced us good; bad is judgment rendered by evil. Further, bad is often associated with being hopeless which truly undermines all efforts to be happy. We are not bad, but we should be sad that we cannot make our self truly happy as God wills for us. But this holy sadness should not lead to despair and depression as some let it do, but it should drive us to God where our hope of things being different exists. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, in whom there is forgiveness and hope for a better day.

Holy Week is a time to experience holy sadness so one might find eternal joy at its completion on Easter Sunday and forever thereafter. Only as one is willing to face holy sadness can one truly ever know true joy. Many people will only celebrate Easter. To avoid the days leading up to Easter, prevents one from experiencing the true joy of Easter. The schedule for Holy Week is here in the Church Mouse. I would strongly encourage you to clear your schedule so you may experience all that is provided in this week's activities. I would encourage you to come and experience Jesus' choice to face the worst that humanity has to offer and to defeat it with the love of God. When we have experienced holy sadness at what we caused, we will be elated to know we are forgiven and things are different now. Thanks be to God.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'BB' with a stylized flourish underneath.