

Courtney Godwin:

Good morning.

Congregation:

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Courtney Godwin:

Welcome to Morning Prayers in Appleton Chapel. Please rise as you are able and join in our responsive reading. Psalm number 11, in your black Appleton Psalter book. In the Lord, put I my trust. How say you to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain.

Congregation:

For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the stink, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

Courtney Godwin:

If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Congregation:

The Lord is in his holy temple. The Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

Courtney Godwin:

The Lord triumph the righteous, but the wicked and Him that love is violence, his soul hateth.

Congregation:

Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and the horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

Courtney Godwin:

For the righteous Lord love us righteousness, his continents stop behold the upright. You may be seated.

Choir:

(Singing)

Fr. Patrick Fiorillo:

An excerpt from the passion according to Matthew chapter 26. Now, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean," but he denied it in front of everyone saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus the Nazarene." Again, he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." A little later, the bystanders came over and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them. Even your speech gives you away." At that he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered

the word that Jesus had spoken, "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly.

Good morning everyone. I'm Father Patrick Fiorillo from the Harvard Catholic Center, St. Paul's Church right down the street, and as Catholics, we proclaimed this reading of the passion of Matthew yesterday for Palm Sunday as we do every year, one of the passion accounts. And then we always read the passion of John on Good Friday, and this excerpt sticks out to me this year, "I do not know the man." Words of Peter and his denial, and they're regarded as so important that there's a church commemorating this that I visited recently. We took a group of students on a Holy Land pilgrimage over spring break. One of the highlights of the trip was visiting this church, Peter in Gallicantu, as it's called. Peter, the place where the cock crowed. Peter wept after realizing that he had fulfilled this prophecy of denying Jesus three times. And it's a beautiful church.

It's not one of the grand ancient basilicas, but when we were there, we said mass around three or four o'clock in the afternoon after a long day of touring the city all day. So I was exhausted, and it was not a moment of physical or emotional consolation. However, meditating on the deeper meaning of that spot was actually one of the most profound moments of the trip for me because it made me to think about what we might say the more subjective side of sin as opposed to, you know what theology teaches us about what objectively happens when we sin? We cut ourselves off from God, lose grace, all those things. But this account with Peter and Jesus gives us a little more perspective from the human heart about what is happening. And very simply, this gospel account tells us that sin is a betrayal of a best friend.

Think about it. What could be worse than betrayal by your best friend and as a result, being left to suffer alone? In Jesus's case, he knew in advance that this was going to happen, but still chose to wash Peter's feet at the last Supper. Probably only 12 hours prior to his denial. Imagine loving someone whom you know is about to harm you. We can't. It's humanly impossible, but this is the beautiful part of this part of the passion account in a moment of human weakness and sin, we see at the same time perfect love, perfect divine mercy.

Let us pray. Almighty God, we ask for this week the grace of the gift of sorrow for our sins like Peter, so that like him, we too may be raised up by your mercy, we may be renewed and given a new heart and experience the fullness of your divine love and mercy, bless this week, this holy week. Help us to enter into the full spirit of it. Bless all that we do. Protect us from all harm and grant us your peace through Christ our Lord. Amen. And we pray, our Father who art in heaven, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from for thine is the kingdom, the power and glory. Forever. Amen.

Courtney Godwin:

Please rise, embody your spirit for our closing hymn. Number 153. Ah Holy Jesus, how hast thou offended.

Congregation/Choir:

(Singing).

Courtney Godwin:

Lord in all our moments of weakness and sin, you are with us, giving us your perfect love and your divine mercy. Stay with us always as we go into this day to love and serve you. Amen.

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