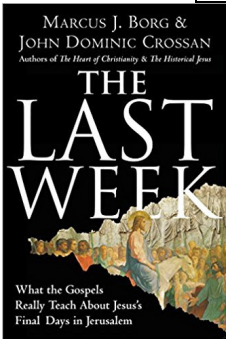




St. Mary's Church
Stone Harbor, New Jersey

Sunday March 4, 2018

We Welcome You to Join Us
For the Adult Forum and
Worship
All Year Long (well, almost)!



Date	Lent	Chapter	The Last Week
February 18	1	1 & 2	Palm Sunday Monday
February 25	2	3 & 4	Tuesday Wednesday
March 4	3	5	Thursday (Maundy)
March 11	4	6	Friday (Good)
March 18	5	7	Saturday (Holy)
March 25	6 (Palm Sunday)	8	Easter Day

At the end of the book the authors pose discussion questions on each chapter. If you would like to discuss any of the questions, they are on pp. 233-234.

Perhaps one way to discuss this day is to separate it into six evening happenings:

The Last Supper, a web of meanings

- They eat the Passover meal; Jesus speaks of imminent betrayal; Jesus performs the normal Jewish ceremony of sharing Bread and Wine, our story provides a new meaning about his death.
- Jesus *took, blessed, broke* and *gave* the bread.
- All the feeding parables are not about the multiplication of loaves but fair distribution of what we have. When justice is distributed on earth there is enough for us all. Justice is never used up by distribution.

The meal as Passover commemoration forever

- The Passover Lamb is food for the Exodus. Jesus is the Passover Lamb.
- The meal is the last one in 'Egypt', the place of bondage.
- Not substitution: Protection against death, and food for the journey into a new life in this world.
- Replace Egypt with Rome, or any other Empire since; a subversive story.

Body and blood and the death of Jesus

- The Jewish Exodus from Egypt is explicit in the Passover meal, but the nature of Jesus' death is implicit in the words of institution.
- Body and Blood separated imply violent death, sacrificial. Not suffering, not substitution, but participation with God through a meal.

Gethsemane, prayer and arrest

- Jesus says that all will desert him. Peter vows not to. Jesus says he will, before the next dawn.

- Jesus asks closest three to keep watch while he prays, but they fail.
- Jesus prays for deliverance from coming danger. Uses *Abba*, Dad, an intimate term.
- It was not God's will that Jesus should suffer and die, but He accepted that inevitability, trusted in God and went forward.
- Judas arrives with temple soldiers, Jesus is arrested, the disciples flee, and disappear from the story until after Easter.




Interrogation and condemnation

- In the trial, the witnesses could not agree that Jesus had claimed any title, so the high priest goes for a straight confession: "Are you the Christ, the Son of God?" Jesus says, "I am" but this could mean "Am I?", not definite.
- Jesus appears convicted on what looks like a post-Easter declaration of his significance for the church.

Confession and Denial

- Peter follows Jesus to the high priest's house. Jesus is interrogated and confesses his purpose. Peter is interrogated and denies Jesus.

Some questions for discussion:

- ◇ Have you noticed how many times Borg/Crossan say things were planned or preplanned? (pp. 3, 53,111) How do you make sense of that?
- ◇ Did you catch the statement: "A man carrying a water jar?" (p.11) A man carrying a water jar? In the words of my early childhood educator (Big Bird from Sesame Street), which of these things don't belong? Men in the First Century Mid-Eastern culture did not carry water jars! That was a woman's duty. It was an extremely feminine act. And yet this humbled man, who probably drew much scorn from his neighbors, led the disciples to the Upper Room. Hmmm! What do you think Jesus in Mark's words was trying to tell us? 
- ◇ Did you catch - meals were "real" meals, not nip and sip? (p.114) How has celebrating the Last Supper changed over the millennia? 
- ◇ Do the different Gospel versions of the Last Supper bother you? (pp.117-120)
- ◇ Why are there differences in Mark's account and John's in the telling of the arrest? (pp. 125-126)
- ◇ Was the death of Jesus "the will of God"? (p. 123)
- ◇ Was the description of the trial of Jesus "made up"? (pp.128-129) 

Last week the brief profile of Marcus Borg provided some glimpse into how his ideas of interpreting scripture were formed. No scholar, no matter how objectively they try to present their own work, is without some presuppositions and agendas of their own. My question to all of you is: how were your ideas about interpreting scripture formed...by whom...where...when...have those ideas changed?