

“The Struggle”

Scriptures for today: [Mark 14:32-42](#), [Luke 22:39-53](#)

After the intimacy of The Last Supper Jesus went “as usual” to the Mount of Olives to pray. The disciples faithfully followed him. He charged the group, “Sit here while I pray.” Taking Peter, James and John farther he asked them to keep watch while he, himself, began to be deeply distressed, overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.

I think we see Jesus' humanity in his struggle in Gethsemane more clearly here than at any other time in our accounts of his earthly life. There must have been the dread of what was to come. We can't plumb the depths of his feelings, but we can relate a little when we think of how it feels to face something approaching that is inescapable, like childbirth or impending surgery. Beyond the horrors of the physical torture was the anguish of feeling forsaken by his Father and of all that was involved in allowing us to be reconciled to God.

Especially touching was his desire for human companionship in this darkest of hours. His best friends let him down, three times. I believe they really wanted to be there for him. They got so sleepy, and it was bedtime. Little did they know the saddest, most disappointing and confusing night and day in their lives lay ahead. Poor Peter had been so sure of himself. He did try valiantly with his sword to defend Jesus, only to hear Jesus say, “No more of this!”

Jesus pled with the Father to take the cup from him, a little like a child to a parent, “Please”. The great triumph, the victory for us and for all time was. “Not my will, but yours be done.”

He left the garden calm, composed and in control.

“Go to dark Gethsemane,
Ye that feel the tempter's power,
Your redeemer's conflict see;
Watch with Him one bitter hour:
Turn not from His griefs away;

Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.”

James Montgomery

