

# Lent 2024

## People of the Passion:

### A Lenten Reflection & Prayer Experience with the LARCC

Please join us each Thursday evening this Lent, February 15 through March 21, via Zoom for a series of reflection and prayer experiences presented online by the *Los Angeles Retreat Center Community (LARCC)*.

Each of our six weekly Lenten spiritual journey presentations will focus on the book *People of the Passion* by Stephen J. Binz published through Threshold Bible Study. Drawing from the book, as well as the four Gospel accounts of the suffering and death of Jesus, we will experience the passion from the perspective of selected characters who participated – or were affected – in some dramatic way by their encounter with Jesus during that time. Some characters may be well known and involved throughout the passion; others may be lesser known and involved only for a short interval. Nevertheless, suffering and distress seem to bring out the best and the worst in human nature – with crisis responses including courage, trust, generosity, weakness, greed, and despair. Each week, a different retreat center will have its retreat leaders guide the presentation, reflection, prayer format, and opportunity for discussion. Each Thursday session will be one-hour in length, starting at 7:30 p.m. You may register at the following link and attend any or all of the sessions.

The program is offered without a fee, but we welcome free-will donations to offset the centers' costs to create and present the program. Also, it is not necessary to have your own copy of the book or to cover the book in-full; our leaders will provide applicable scripture excerpts or other reflection material to participants each week along the way. If you'd like to purchase the book, you can do so online, or pick up a copy from the bookstore at Mater Dolorosa Retreat Center.

## Weekly Session Topics

### Week 1 – Introduction

**Thursday, February 15, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

Hosted by all members of the Los Angeles Retreat Center Community, each will briefly introduce and describe their specific characters and unique focus or impact on the passion experience. The evening will include prayer, reflection, and an opportunity for large-group sharing.

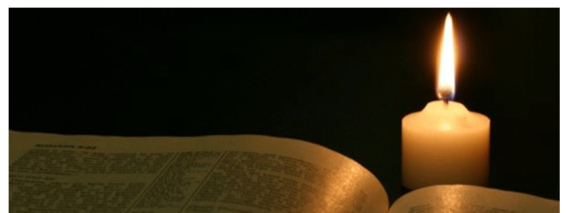
### Week 2 – Judas

**Thursday, February 22, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Facilitated by Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ**

Judas Iscariot holds a unique place in the life – and the death – of Jesus. History has branded Judas as the Betrayer, an abhorrent sin for the human heart ... and a warning to us all of what can become of us if we turn away from Christ's love. And yet, in the heart of God's mercy, is Judas not something more? Is his story not something more than a cautionary tale to the extreme? Might Judas bear a unique witness in our own lives, and call us to something deeper? We will delve into Judas's role in scripture and salvation history with visual images and reflection questions, and – in following his footsteps – end up in a place we might not have expected.

**Hosted by Center for Spiritual Development**



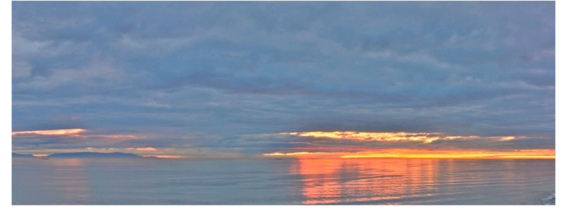
### **Week 3 – Woman Who Anoints**

**Thursday, February 29, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Facilitated by Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ**

There are varying accounts of the anointing of Jesus' feet and head in the four gospels. We will explore the differences found between them and delve into the deeper meaning each version holds for us today. Regardless of which gospel we reflect upon, there are intriguing questions for us to ponder. During our time together, we will break open these passages from scripture and delve into the mystery, symbolism, and meaning that invite and call us to contemplate the richness of our own faith in action. It is in the embodiment of the love and faith of this woman that touches and speaks to our own journey of faith today.

**Hosted by Center for Spiritual Development**



### **Week 4 – Simon of Cyrene**

**Thursday, March 7, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Facilitated by Sue Ballotti & Paul Craig**

Anyone – the most unlikely person at the most unlikely time or place – can be called to assist or provide important service to another. In the Passion, Simon of Cyrene is such an example. Traveling some distance on his own spiritual journey – and not familiar with or known by Jesus – he was drafted to walk with Jesus and share his burden for a while. That experience called Simon to discipleship, changed his life, and serves as a lesson for our own lives today. Using similar stories, visual images, poetry, and reflection questions, we will share in the Simon of Cyrene history and apply it to our own spiritual journeys.

**Hosted by Mary & Joseph Retreat Center**



### **Week 5 – Mother of Jesus**

**Thursday, March 14, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Facilitated by Fr. Bruno D'Souza, C.P.**

Throughout the Gospel according to John, the mother of Jesus is presented to us as a model of enduring faithfulness. One of the most striking images as Jesus hangs on the cross is his mother, along with other women from Galilee and the beloved disciple, standing at the foot of the cross. How poignant! Nothing fazes her. She stands there, the Mater Dolorosa (Mother of Sorrows), with her Son, when his closest friends have deserted him. During our time together, we will reflect, share, and pray on how this "Standing at the foot of the Cross" unfolds in our own lives.

**Hosted by Mater Dolorosa Retreat Center**



### **Week 6 – Mary Magdalen**

**Thursday, March 21, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

Mary of Magdala was a disciple and friend of Jesus. She had a unique role at the resurrection of Christ. She is known as the Apostle to the Apostles. During our time together, we will look into her role during the Passion and explore what the Gospel writers have to say about her encounters with Jesus and how they had transformed her. To aid reflection on the Gospel passages, we will provide time for Lectio Divina as well as Visio Divina. How can the experience of Mary Magdalen lead us into further reflection on our own lives? What needs to be transformed in our personal encounters with Jesus during this Lenten season?

**Hosted by Holy Spirit Retreat Center**

