



A Meditation for the Wednesday in Holy Week **March 31, 2021**

"Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." [John 13:21]

Holy Week is a beautiful pause in our busy lives.

This week gives us visions of love and of betrayal.

It gives us memories of solitude and of companionship.

In the northeast, it may be a time of sunshine or snow, but everywhere it offers signs of spring.

And Holy Week always brings us face to face with betrayal and forgiveness.

All of us are haunted by a time we have been betrayed and by a time we have betrayed someone else.

All of us are set free from that shadow by forgiveness.

Betrayal and forgiveness are at the center of the story of the *agape* meal that Jesus shares with his disciples.

Forgiveness and betrayal are at the center of the story of the crucifixion.

Forgiveness is at the center of the story of the resurrection.

The Way of the Cross leads us out of the shadow of betrayal, through the depths of sorry and loss, and to the dawn of a new life beyond what we can imagine.

We need to remember that forgiveness is a skill.

It is not an expression of trust or reconciliation or restoration.

It is neither a denial that damage was done nor a promise to forget the suffering it caused.

Forgiveness means letting go of the future we would have preferred and opening our hearts to unseen possibilities.

Forgiveness allows us to stop defining ourselves by the damage done by or to us, and to weave the darkness of our pain or remorse into the larger, intricately multi-colored, fabric of our selves.

As we approach the middle of Holy Week, let us make this promise and let us trust in the hope it expresses:

All that has offended me, I forgive.

Within and without, I forgive.

Things past, things present, things future I forgive.

I forgive everything and everyone who

can possibly need forgiveness in my past and present.

I forgive positively everyone.

I am free, and all others are free too.

*All things are cleared up between us
now and forever.*

-Catherine Ponder