

## Pastor's Blog – A Holy Week Choose Your Own Adventure

Choose Your Own Adventure. Does anyone remember that series of books? As a kid, attending elementary school in the 1980s, I found the iconic white books, with the red lettering on the top, to be quite engaging and entertaining! And I guess I was not alone as the books apparently sold some 250 million copies between 1979 and 1998!

Now, I realize that some of you have no idea what I'm talking about, so let me share why these books were so unique and so well-loved.

As a reader, you would begin the book, just like any other, starting at the beginning; but then, after reading a bit, you'd come to a page where you had to make a decision. So, let's say a bad guy was racing to get away from the police. You might then come to a page that says: "If you take the boat to escape, turn to page 50" or "If you try to escape by running into the woods, turn to page 72." You'd then make your choice, turn to the appropriate page, and continue reading on from there, where there would be more and more choices to make as you "chose your own adventure" as to how the storyline would go.

As I said, they were very entertaining reading for elementary school-aged me!

The reason why I bring them up is because I was thinking about these books following the adult confirmation class I led this past week. We were talking about Holy Week and I asked each person in the class to pick one character—who has a role to play in the Holy Week story—and to look closely at what their experience during the final days of Jesus' life was like.

One person chose Peter, and we talked about why he might have denied knowing Jesus. One chose a criminal crucified beside Jesus, and we talked about why he may have asked for Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. Another chose Mary Magdalene, and we talked about what it would have been like for a woman to be the first to stand witness to the empty tomb.

You get the point, I'm sure. What I then invited them to do was to keep their "person" in mind as we enter into Holy Week and try to see the events unfold through their eyes—that perhaps it would give them a new perspective on the journey we are about to take through the holiest week of the year.

And, the more I thought about it, I realized that that would be a good message for all of us this year. As we begin Holy Week with a procession of palms, move to a dinner shared with friends, head to the garden to pray, witness the death on that horrible hill, and then anticipate what will come at Easter's first light, why not choose your own adventure by picking someone to follow?

Maybe it's Judas, betraying Jesus for some silver. Maybe it's a disciple who couldn't stay awake while Jesus prayed in the Garden. Maybe it was Simon of Cyrene who carried Jesus' crossbeam or Joseph of Arimathea who offered his tomb for Jesus' body to be buried in.

Whoever it is, I'd invite you to give it a try, and you might just find, at the end of the adventure you've chosen, that the week was more meaningful, and the empty tomb felt more joyful, than it ever has before.