

MATTHEW 26

GREAT AND HOLY WEDNESDAY (26:1-16)

Blessed Theophylact on the woman anointing Christ with myrrh:

She confessed great faith by unstintingly pouring out such precious myrrh. She poured it on His head, honoring the chiefest part. And you also, O reader, if you suffer from the spiritual and pharisaical leprosy of arrogance which cuts us off from God, accept Jesus into your house and anoint Him with the myrrh of the virtues.

THE PASSOVER AND HOLY EUCHARIST (26:17-35)

St. Cyril of Alexandria on why Christ gives us His Body and Blood:

So that we could have His body present, He has given us His own body and blood that it might ruin the power of decay. For without the presence of Christ, salvation from death is not possible and humanity is unable to be freed from sin which dwells along with us in this life. He dwells with us in our souls through the Holy Spirit, and we become sharers in holiness, heavenly people and spiritual name bearers.

CHRIST PRAYS AND IS ARRESTED IN GETHSEMANE (26:36-56)

St. John Chrysostom on saying, "Not as I will, but as You will:"

By saying then, 'If it be possible, let it pass from me,' He showed His true humanity. But by saying, 'Nevertheless not as I will, but as You will,' He showed His virtue and self-command. This too teaches us, even when nature pulls us back, to follow God...See in how many ways He shows the reality of the Incarnation. He demonstrates both by what He speaks and by what He suffers.

CHRIST APPEARS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN (26:67-68)

St. John Chrysostom on Christ being accused of blasphemy:

Why then did they now call the saying a blasphemy? And why did Christ now answer them? He did so to take away all their excuses. Even to the last day He taught that He was the Christ, and that He would sit at the right hand of the Father and that He would come again to judge the world.

ST. PETER DENIES CHRIST THREE TIMES (26:69-75)

Blessed Theophylact on St. Peter weeping when the rooster crowed:

The rooster is the Word which does not permit us to be lazy and to sleep, but says, 'Wake up and rise, O sleeper!' Peter, therefore, was wakened by the Word as if by a rooster. Going out of the palace of the high priest, that is, the confines of a hardened mind, and leaving behind senselessness, he wept bitterly.

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Quote Sources: Manlio Simonetti, editor. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Matthew 1a and 1b* (IVP)
Blessed Theophylact. *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Chrysostom Press)

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