

# Bible Reading Together during this Covid-19 Shutdown

## February 14-20: Read Ruth 1 & Gospel of Matthew 26

### **Ruth 1**

The story of Ruth begins with a family in crisis caused by a bad human decision. But it celebrates renewal caused by God's intervention. The whole book of Ruth should be read in one sitting (just four chapters).

#### Further Study & Discussion

- There are two central characters in Ruth – Ruth and Naomi. But the tragedy begins when Elimelech make a family decision to depart Bethlehem in Judah for Moab. What's going on here from a spiritual perspective? Why is Elimelech's decision a wrong one?
- Bethlehem is a word that means "house of bread," but the town is facing a famine. How does this truth apply to us today? Think of the bad things that happen to our live even though God is with us.
- 1:16-17 is often quoted for Ruth's upright character. She is from Moab, and all her family and friends live there. But she is willing to go in support of her mother-in-law to a foreign land. Talk about her decision and her character. Do you know someone who is like her in your life?
- Naomi returns to Bethlehem and blames God for her misfortune. In what ways is God to blame? And in what ways is she being unfair? And why do we always blame others?

### **Matthew 26**

The crucifixion of Jesus Christ is near and everything is happening very quickly. Judas' evil plan is revealed right before the Passover feast. The Last Supper is celebrated with an air of ambiguity. There is the prayer at Gethsemane, the arrest, and the illegal trial of the Sanhedrin. And the denial of Peter.

#### Further Study & Discussion

- In the Passover feast, Jesus changes the focus of the memorial from that of the Exodus story to himself as the Lamb of God who is killed. Jesus is the better sacrifice because in the Exodus story, the lamb protected the family. In Christ's death, he protects the world. Talk about the many ways Jesus is the better sacrifice.
- Peter's denial is compared to the betrayal of Judas. How are they similar and how are they different?
- Jesus prays at Gethsemane with grief and agitation (vv.37-38). What is troubling him? And what is the cup Jesus is talking about (v.39)?
- In the trial of the Sanhedrin that begins at v.57, what is the charge against Jesus?