

## 1<sup>st</sup> Station of the Cross (Modern) - Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane



*Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me. "Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."*

*Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.*

*~ Mathew 26:36-46*

*The Agony in the Garden,  
Luis de Morales. Museo Nacional del Prado*

"Gethsemane" is a corruption into English of two Hebrew words GAT and SHMANIM. It is taken to mean "the place where olive oil is pressed." At an olive press, olives used to be gathered into rough sacks and stacked one on top of another. A beam was lowered onto the stack and increasing weight was added to the end of the beam to press oil from the olives - the more pressure, the more oil. Olive oil, in the symbolism of the Bible, is a picture of the presence of the Spirit of God. Oil was used for anointing priests, and kings. It was also used to bring light from the menorah in the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

Think about the symbolism inherent in the pressing of olives to extract the oil that is the fuel for burning the eternal flame in the temple. The oil is what is used to anoint the King, Messiah, Holy One, the one who has attained immortality, eternity. Think about the story of the woman that anointed Christ's feet with expensive oil and what we learn from this parable about devotion.

- When have you felt immense pressure to change? What was the pressure?
- Have you been afraid and wished you didn't have to do it?
- How have you felt squeezed and compressed?
- What did you extract from the experience?
- Consider what needs to happen in order to extract the pure, virgin (everything but the essential) oil out of you?
- What is discarded after the extraction? Is anything actually discarded?
- Think of the moments in your life when you have been transformed through pressure, learnt a lesson from suffering, grown because of pain.
- What do all the parts of the olive tree symbolize in mythology?

**Today find an olive tree and get to know it intimately – discover what every part of it can teach you.**