

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION



Make Us a Gift

Father,
through the gift of your Son,
you have continued the work begun
at creation,
drawing all you have made to yourself,
redeeming the world,
bringing all into the light of your love
through your own self gift.
Help us to enter into the mysteries of these
holy days.

Give us the strength to follow where
the Shepherd leads,
embracing our cross,
relinquishing all that is not love,
offering all we have received back to you,
that we might participate in the world's
re-creation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 28, 2021
Seeing Ourselves in the Story



Today's readings: Procession: Mark 11:1–10 or John 12:12–16; Mass: Isaiah 50:4–7; Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; Philemon 2:6–11; Mark 14:1–15:47. As Holy Week begins, we herald Jesus as he triumphantly enters Jerusalem. We cry, “Hosanna!” The excitement of his coming reaches us across time and space. Jesus is the one for whom Israel has been waiting. He will bring about the longed-for kingdom of justice and peace.

From jubilant welcome, the mood shifts quickly, and before long the crowd shouts again, this time not “Hosanna,” but “Crucify him!”

One way that we can reflect upon the events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is to imagine ourselves in the

story. If you were part of the crowd, what might have made you excited about Jesus as he entered? What might you have felt as public opinion changed, and people became fearful of him? Are you one of the disciples? How do you feel in the garden as Jesus prays? What is it like when he is arrested? Another perspective you might take is that of the women. They had come with Jesus to Jerusalem and were witnesses to all that had happened. What would it be like to see the passion through their eyes?

Entering into Holy Week, make space for silence, prayer, and reflection. Prepare yourself to celebrate the greatest of all mysteries, the moment that redeemed all of history: the resurrection.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 29 Perfumed Oil

Jesus uses Mary's actions, anointing his feet, to again discuss his burial; like the grain of wheat, his death will bring about much fruit. Everything in Jesus' life at this time is pointing toward the laying down of his life. Look online for paintings of Mary anointing Jesus' feet and use them to enrich your reflection today. *Today's readings: Isaiah 42:1-7; Psalm 27:1, 2, 3, 13-14; John 12:1-11.*

Tuesday, March 30 Light to the Nations

In Isaiah we hear about the servant whose role is to restore Israel and be a light to the nations. This was the great hope of the people. Even those closest to the one we recognize as that servant reject him. Judas begins the work of his betrayal, and Jesus predicts Peter's denial. Because he was fully human, Jesus knew the sting of rejection. He models the kingdom of peace and justice that he inaugurates. *Today's readings: Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalm 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15 and 17; John 13:21-33, 36-38.*

Wednesday, March 31 Betrayed

Jesus knew Judas would betray him but did not seek to protect himself. Isaiah's servant gives his back to those who beat him and his cheeks to those who pluck his beard, trusting that God will vindicate him. Throughout the passion, Jesus accepts what is coming because of this same trust. The evil and injustice in the world are disturbing. Jesus recognizes the brokenness and does not struggle against those who hurt him. But the entirety of his life is bringing about the kingdom of justice and peace, doing the work that will heal the world of its brokenness. How can we follow in this path? *Today's readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 69:8-10, 21-22, 31 and 33-34; Matthew 26:14-25.*

Thursday, April 1 I Have Given You a Model to Follow

Time and again, Jesus upended the expectations of the people around him. "You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am," he says. Those words convey power and authority. What does the master and teacher do? He empties himself of all that the world values. At the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, the priest washes feet. If you do not usually attend this Mass, try to do so. The beauty of this moment strikes even young children. *Today's readings: Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15.*

Friday, April 2 By His Wounds We Were Healed

Because Jesus was fully human, he knew all aspects of the human experience, including rejection, suffering, and death. If we jump from this moment to the resurrection, we fail to appreciate that Jesus is with us in our darkest times, waiting with us while we hope in God's ability to transform even those moments. Take time in quiet prayer, reflecting on the cross and Jesus' merciful love. *Today's readings: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25; Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42.*

Saturday, April 3

At the Easter Vigil, the readings take us through salvation history, from creation to the discovery of the empty tomb. We see how God prepared the world for its redemption. *Today's readings: Genesis 1:1-2:2; Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35 or Psalm 33:4-5, 6-7, 12-13, 20-22; Genesis 22:1-18; Psalm 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11; Exodus 14:15-15:1; Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18; Isaiah 54:5-14; Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13; Isaiah 55:1-11; Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11; Ezra 3:16-17a, 18-28; Psalm 42:3, 5; 43:3, 4 or Isaiah 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6 or Psalm 51:12-13, 14-15, 18-19; Romans 6:3-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Mark 16:1-7.*

