

[33]

**PASSION SUNDAY**  
**(Palm Sunday)**  
**The Procession with Palms**

**A**

**GOSPEL**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 21:1-11

**W**hen Jesus and his disciples came near to Jerusalem,  
he went to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives  
and sent two of his disciples on ahead.  
He told them, "Go into the next village,  
where you will at once find a donkey and her colt.  
Untie the two donkeys and bring them to me.  
If anyone asks why you are doing that, just say,  
'The Lord needs them.'  
Right away he will let you have the donkeys."

So God's promise came true,  
just as the prophet had said,

"Announce to the people of Jerusalem:  
'Your king is coming to you!  
He is humble and rides on a donkey.  
He comes on the colt of a donkey.' "

The disciples left and did what Jesus had told them to do.  
They brought the donkey and its colt  
and laid some clothes on their backs.  
Then Jesus got on.

Many people spread clothes in the road,  
while others put down branches which they had cut from trees.  
Some people walked ahead of Jesus and others followed behind.  
They were all shouting, "Hosanna for the Son of David!  
God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hooray for God in heaven above!"

When Jesus came to Jerusalem,  
everyone in the city was excited and asked,  
"Who can this be?"

The crowd answered,  
"This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

The gospel of the lord.

## MASS

### FIRST READING

I did not cover my face against insult  
and I know I will not be ashamed  
(third oracle of the Servant of the Lord).

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 50:6-7

**I** let them beat my back and pull out my beard.  
I didn't turn aside when they made fun of me and spit in my face.

But the Lord God keeps me from being embarrassed.  
And I refuse to give up,  
because I know I will never be ashamed.

The word of the lord.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM 22:7-8, 16c-17a and 18, 19 and 22

*R. (2a) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*

Everyone who sees me  
makes fun and sneers.  
They shake their heads,  
and say, "Trust the Lord!  
If you are his favorite,  
let him protect you and keep you safe."

*R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*

My enemies have tied up  
my hands and my feet.  
I can count all my bones!  
They took my clothes  
and gambled for them.

*R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*

Don't stay far away, Lord!  
My strength comes from you,  
so hurry and help.  
And when your people meet,  
I will praise you, Lord.

*R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*

## **VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL**

Phillipians 2:8-9

*R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

Christ became obedient for us even to death,  
dying on the cross.  
Therefore God raised him on high  
and gave him a name above all other names.

*R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

## **GOSPEL**

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

† The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 27:11-54

**J**esus was brought before Pilate the governor, who asked him,  
“Are you the King of the Jews?”

“Those are your words!” Jesus answered.  
And when the chief priests and leaders  
brought their charges against him,  
he did not say a thing.

Pilate asked him, “Don't you hear what crimes they say you have done?”  
But Jesus did not say anything,  
and the governor was greatly amazed.

During Passover the governor always freed  
a prisoner chosen by the people.  
At that time a well-known terrorist named Jesus Barabbas

was in Jail.  
So when the crowd came together, Pilate asked them,  
“Which prisoner do you want me to set free?  
Do you want Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?”

Pilate knew that the leaders had brought Jesus to him  
because they were jealous.

While Pilate was judging the case,  
his wife sent him a message.  
It said, “Don’t have anything to do with that innocent man.  
I have had nightmares because of him.”

But the chief of priests and the leaders convinced the crowds  
to ask Barabbas to be set free and for Jesus to be killed.  
Pilate asked the crowd again,  
“Which of these two men do you want me to set free?”

“Barabbas!” they replied.  
Pilate asked them, “What am I to do with Jesus,  
who is called the Messiah?”  
They all yelled, “Nail him to a cross!”

Pilate answered, “But what crime has he done?”  
“Nail him to a cross!” they yelled even louder.

Pilate saw that there was nothing he could do  
and that the people were starting to riot.  
So he took some water and washed his hands in front of them  
and said,  
“I won’t have anything to do with killing this man.  
You are the ones doing it!”

Everybody answered,  
“We and our descendants will take the blame for his death!”

Pilate set Barabbas free.  
Then he ordered his soldiers to beat Jesus with a whip  
and nail him to a cross.

The governor’s soldiers led Jesus into the fortress  
and brought together the rest of the troops.  
They stripped off Jesus’ clothes and put a scarlet robe on him.  
They made a crown out of thorn branches and placed it on his head,  
and they put a stick in his right hand.  
The soldiers knelt down and pretended to worship him.

They made fun of him and shouted,  
“Hey, you king of the Jews!”  
Then they spit on him.  
They took the stick from him and beat him on the head with it.

When the soldiers had finished making fun of Jesus,  
they took off the robe.  
They put his worn clothes back on him  
and led him off to be nailed to a cross.  
On the way they met a man from Cyrene named Simon,  
and they forced him to carry Jesus’ cross.

They came to a place named Golgotha,  
which means “Place of the Skull.”  
There they gave Jesus some wine mixed with a drug to ease the pain.  
But when Jesus tasted what it was,  
he refused to drink it.

The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross  
and gambled to see who would get his clothes.  
Then they sat down to guard him.  
Above his head they put a sign that told why he was nailed there.  
It said, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”  
The soldiers also nailed two criminals on crosses,  
one to the right of Jesus and the other to his left.

People who passed by said terrible things about Jesus.  
They shook their heads and shouted,  
“So you’re the one who claimed you could tear down the temple  
and build it again in three days!  
If you are God’s Son,  
save yourself and come down from the cross!”

The chief priests, the leaders, and the teachers of the Law of Moses  
also made fun of Jesus.  
They said, “He saved others, but he can’t save himself.  
If he is the king of Israel,  
he should come down from the cross!  
Then we will believe him.  
He trusted God,  
so let God save him, if he wants to.  
He even said he was God’s Son.”

The two criminals also said cruel things to Jesus.

At noon the sky turned dark and stayed that way until three o’clock.

Then about that time Jesus shouted,

“Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?”  
which means, “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?”

Some of the people standing there heard Jesus and said,  
“He’s calling for Elijah.”

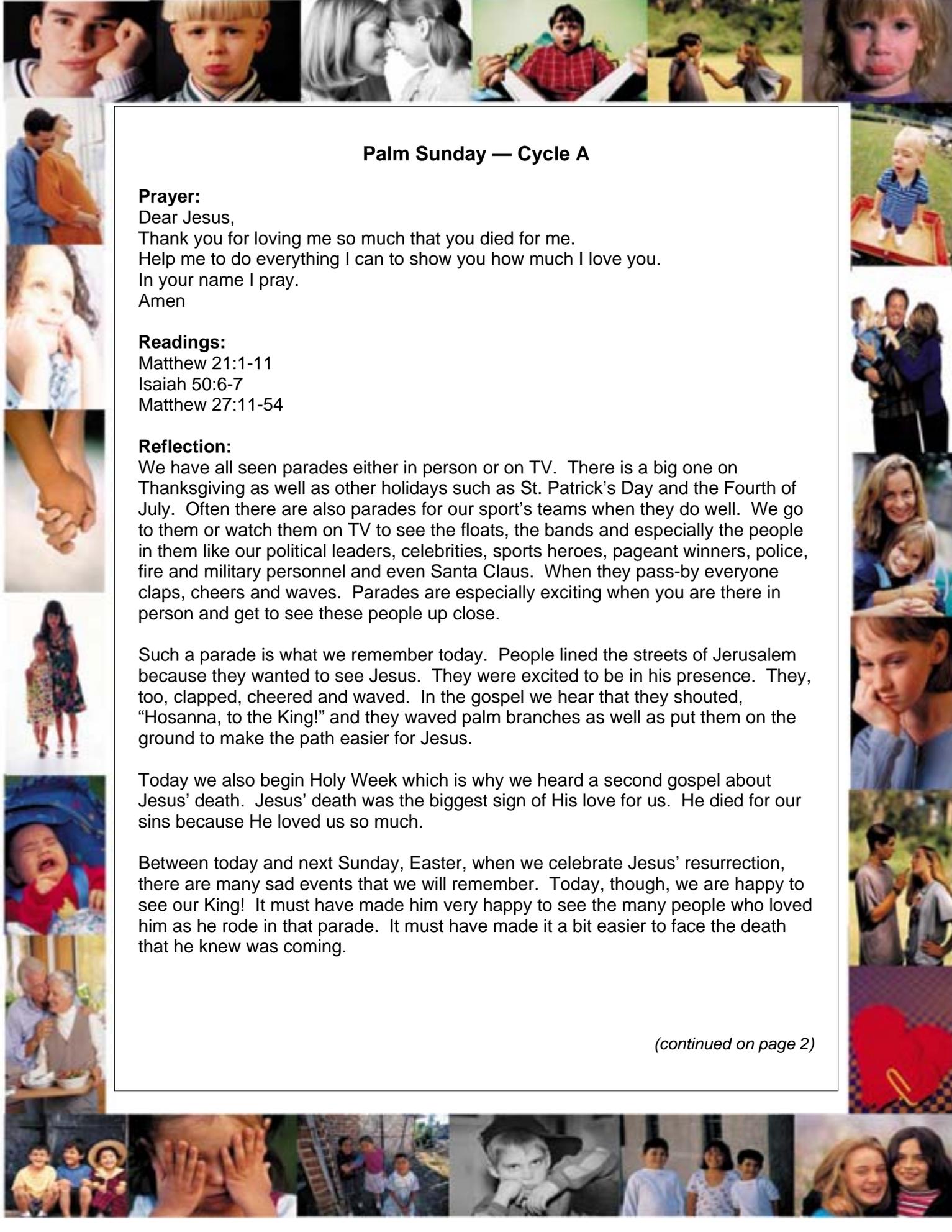
One of them at once ran and grabbed a sponge.  
He soaked it in wine,  
then put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus.

Others said, “Wait!  
Let’s see if Elijah will come and save him.”  
Once again Jesus shouted,  
and then he died.

At once the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.  
The earth shook, and rocks split apart.  
Graves opened,  
and many of God’s people were raised to life.  
Then after Jesus had risen to life,  
they came out of their graves and went into the holy city,  
where many people saw them.

The officer and the soldiers guarding Jesus felt the earthquake  
And saw everything else that happened.  
They were frightened and said,  
“This man really was God’s Son!”

The gospel of the Lord.



## Palm Sunday — Cycle A

### Prayer:

Dear Jesus,  
Thank you for loving me so much that you died for me.  
Help me to do everything I can to show you how much I love you.  
In your name I pray.  
Amen

### Readings:

Matthew 21:1-11  
Isaiah 50:6-7  
Matthew 27:11-54

### Reflection:

We have all seen parades either in person or on TV. There is a big one on Thanksgiving as well as other holidays such as St. Patrick's Day and the Fourth of July. Often there are also parades for our sport's teams when they do well. We go to them or watch them on TV to see the floats, the bands and especially the people in them like our political leaders, celebrities, sports heroes, pageant winners, police, fire and military personnel and even Santa Claus. When they pass-by everyone claps, cheers and waves. Parades are especially exciting when you are there in person and get to see these people up close.

Such a parade is what we remember today. People lined the streets of Jerusalem because they wanted to see Jesus. They were excited to be in his presence. They, too, clapped, cheered and waved. In the gospel we hear that they shouted, "Hosanna, to the King!" and they waved palm branches as well as put them on the ground to make the path easier for Jesus.

Today we also begin Holy Week which is why we heard a second gospel about Jesus' death. Jesus' death was the biggest sign of His love for us. He died for our sins because He loved us so much.

Between today and next Sunday, Easter, when we celebrate Jesus' resurrection, there are many sad events that we will remember. Today, though, we are happy to see our King! It must have made him very happy to see the many people who loved him as he rode in that parade. It must have made it a bit easier to face the death that he knew was coming.

*(continued on page 2)*

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What do you think the people who were at the procession felt? Why did they wave palms and lay them on the path?
2. How do you think it made Jesus feel to see all of those people? Why would He feel that way?
3. How can we make Jesus' path to His death and resurrection easier?

**Activity:**

*Supplies:* Green Construction paper, Scissors, Tape, Green Pipe Cleaners, Markers

Using the green construction paper, cut out the outline of large palm leaves (this can be done before class starts). Ask the children to write or draw on the leaves, how they will make Jesus' path easier. Then instruct them to cut slits on the sides of their leaves to form the palms. They can then tape a pipe cleaner to the back of the leaf. Ask them to wave their palms as they return to their parents in the main congregation.