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PASSION SUNDAY
(Palm Sunday)
The Procession with Palms

B

GOSPEL

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

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark

11:1-10

Jesus and his disciples reached Bethphage and Bethany,
near the Mount of Olives.
When they were getting close to Jerusalem,
Jesus sent two of them on ahead.
He told them, "Go into the next village.
As soon as you enter it,
you will find a young donkey that has never been ridden.
Untie the donkey and bring it here.
If anyone asks why you are doing that,
say, "The Lord needs it and will soon bring it back."

The disciples left and found the donkey
tied near a door that faced the street.
While they were untying it,
some of the people standing there asked,
"Why are you untying the donkey?"
They told them what Jesus had said,
and the people let them take it.

The disciples led the donkey to Jesus.
They put some of their clothes on its back,
and Jesus got on.
Many people spread clothes on the road,
while others went to cut branches from the fields.

In front of Jesus and behind him,
people went along shouting, "Hosanna!
God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
God bless the coming kingdom of our ancestor David.
Hosanna to God in heaven above!"

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 Mark 15: 1-39

Early in the morning the chief priests, the nation's leaders,
and the teachers of the Law of Moses
met together with the whole Jewish council.
They tied up Jesus and led him off to Pilate.

He asked Jesus, "Are you king of the Jews?"

"Those are your words," Jesus answered.

The chief priests brought many charges against Jesus.
Then Pilate questioned him again,
"Don't you hear what crimes they say you have done?"
But Jesus did not answer, and Pilate was amazed.

During Passover, Pilate always freed one prisoner chosen by the people.
And at that time there was a prisoner named Barabbas.
He and some others had been arrested for murder during a riot.
The Jewish people now came and asked Pilate to set a prisoner free,
just as he usually did.

Pilate asked them, "Do you want me to free the king of the Jews?"
Pilate knew that the chief priests had brought Jesus to him
because they were jealous.

But the chief priests told the crowd to ask Pilate to free Barabbas.
Then Pilate asked the crowd,
“What do you want me to do with this man
you say is the king of the Jews?”

They yelled, “Nail him to a cross!”

Pilate asked, “But what crime has he done?”

“Nail him to a cross!” they yelled even louder.

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

The soldiers led Jesus inside the courtyard of the fortress
and called together the rest of the troops.
They put a purple robe on him,
and on his head they placed a crown
that they had made out of thorn branches.
They made fun of Jesus and shouted,
“Hey, you king of the Jews!”
Then they beat him on the head with a stick.
They spit on him and kneeled down and pretended to worship him.

When the soldiers had finished making fun of Jesus,
they took off the purple robe.
They put his own clothes back on him
and led him off to be nailed to a cross.
Simon from Cyrene happened to be coming in from a farm,
and they forced him to carry Jesus’ cross.
Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.

The soldiers took Jesus to Golgotha,
which means “Place of a Skull.”
There they gave him some wine mixed with a drug to ease the pain,
but he refused to drink it.

They nailed Jesus to a cross
and gambled to see who would get his clothes.
It was about nine o’clock in the morning
when they nailed him to the cross.

On it was a sign that told why he was nailed there.
It read, “This is 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.
So the Scriptures came true which say,
“He was accused of being a criminal.”

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

The chief priests and the teachers of the Law of Moses
also made fun of Jesus.
They said to each other,
“He saved others, but he can’t save himself.
If he is the Messiah, the king of Israel,
let him come down from the cross!
Then we will see and believe.”
The two criminals also said cruel things to Jesus.

About noon the sky turned dark
and stayed that way until around three o’clock.
Then about that time Jesus shouted,

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

Some of the people standing there heard Jesus and said,
“He is calling for Elijah.”
One of them ran and grabbed a sponge.
After he had soaked it in wine,
he put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus.
He said, “Let’s wait and see if Elijah will come and take him down!”
Jesus shouted and then died.

At once the curtain in the temple tore in two from top to bottom.

A Roman army officer was standing in front of Jesus.
When the officer saw how Jesus died,
he said, “This man really was the Son of God!”

The gospel of the Lord.

PASSION SUNDAY — Cycle B

Opening Prayer:

Dear Lord, You speak words that inspire and stir our hearts. Open our ears so we might hear your voice and follow you. In your name we pray, Amen.

Gospel: Mark 11:1-10

Today, Jesus comes to Jerusalem and people greet him with great joy and much rejoicing. Let's listen to the story from the Gospel of Mark.

Read the Gospel through.

Reflection, Discussion and Activity:

Why do you suppose the people greeted Jesus this way?

Long before Jesus was born, the Jewish people had been promised that they would see the fruits of their special relationship with God. They were promised that they would live in freedom in a land that had been chosen just for them. But for years and years, the Jewish people had been ruled by conquerors from Assyria, Babylonia, Syria and Rome. They were sad, they were fearful and they were tired of being afraid. Jesus was for them a ray of hope. What kinds of things did Jesus teach or do that might help them feel hopeful again? (*Miracle stories... encouraging words...*)

Let's read the story again and act it out.

Pick a student to play Jesus, two to play the disciples, a few to play the bystanders. The rest can be the crowd. Have a broom or stick horse ready to use for the colt and palms for the crowd. If desired, teach the children a simple refrain for Hosanna.

After acting out the story, ask the children how it felt to act out this scene. Then ask: Is this the way the story of Jesus' life ends? Does Jesus go on surrounded by this happy crowd to be crowned King and live happily ever after? What happens?

Read or tell an abbreviated version of the Passion through the crowd's betrayal:

The people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem so joyously turned their backs on him just a few days later. They give him up to be punished and killed. They walk away.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, Do not let us turn our backs on you. Help us keep our eyes and hearts focused on you as King, as the Bread of Life, as our Savior and as our Lord. Let us not be afraid to walk by your side through Holy Week. In your name we pray, Amen.