

PALM SUNDAY
Sunday of the Passion



Today the Christian Church once more comes to the focal point of history: Passion Week. Passion Week begins in humiliation. It ends one week from today with the triumphant declaration: "He is risen!"

Introit



I hate those who cling to worthless idols;*
 I trust in the Lord.
 My times are in your hands;*
 deliver me from my enemies
 and from those who pursue me.
 Let your face shine on your servant;*
 save me in your unfailing love.
 Into your hands I commit my spirit;*
 redeem me, O Lord, the God of truth.
*(Antiphon, Ps. 31:5;
 Ps. 31:1, 3, 5-6, 15-16)*

Into your hands I commit my spirit;*
 redeem me, O Lord, the God of truth.

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God the Father, who sent your Son to take our nature upon him and to suffer death on the cross that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility, mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of our Savior Jesus Christ in his patience and also have our portion in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gradual

[Christ] entered the Most Holy Place once for all*
 by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.
 He is the mediator of a new covenant,*
 that those who are called may receive the promised
 eternal inheritance.
 He provided redemption for his people;*
 he ordained his covenant forever. *(Heb. 9:12b, 15a; Ps. 111:9a)*

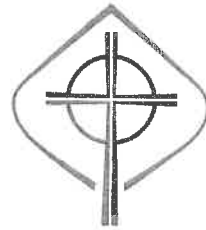
For Daily Devotions

April 13: Ps. 119:49-56; 2 Cor. 5-7; 14: Ps. 119:57-64; 2 Cor. 8-10; 15: Ps. 119:65-72; 2 Cor. 11-13; 16: Ps. 119:73-80; Gal. 1-3; 17: Ps. 119:81-88; Gal. 4-6; 18: Ps. 119:89-96; Eph. 1-3; 19: Ps. 119:97-104; Eph. 4-6.

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April 17: Ps. 119:81-88; Gal. 4-6; 18: Ps. 119:89-96; Eph. 1-3; 19: Ps. 119:97-104; Eph. 4-6; 20: Ps. 119:105-12; Phil. 1-2; 21: Ps. 119:113-20; Phil. 3-4; 22: Ps. 119:121-28; Col. 1-2; 23: Ps. 119:129-36; Col. 3-4.

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Isaiah 50:4–9b

The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue,
to know the word that sustains the weary.

He wakens me morning by morning,
wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.

The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears,
and I have not been rebellious;
I have not drawn back.

I offered my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;

I did not hide my face
from mocking and spitting.

Because the Sovereign LORD helps me,
I will not be disgraced.

Therefore have I set my face like flint,
and I know I will not be put to shame.

He who vindicates me is near.

Who then will bring charges against me?

Let us face each other!

Who is my accuser?

Let him confront me!

It is the Sovereign LORD who helps me.

Who is he that will condemn me?

Philippians 2:5–11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to
be grasped,

but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—even death on a
cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Matthew 27:11–54

Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

“Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied.

When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?” But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

Now it was the governor’s custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, “Which one do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him.

While Pilate was sitting on the judge’s seat, his wife sent him this message: “Don’t have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him.”

But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

“Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” asked the governor.

“Barabbas,” they answered.

“What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?” Pilate asked.

They all answered, “Crucify him!”

“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. “I am innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It is your responsibility!”

All the people answered, “Let his blood be on us and on our children!”

Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. “Hail, king of the Jews!” they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. They came to a place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull). There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!”

In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*”—which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.”

Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus’ resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”

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