

April 5, 2020

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (A)

Mt 21:1–11

Is 50:4–7 / Phil 2:6–11

Mt 26:14–27:66 or 27:11–54

Who Is this Man?

He is a convicted criminal. He is a threat to the sovereignty of Rome, because he might be a rival king; a challenge to Jewish religious tradition, for he interprets the law by his own authority. Still, he is just a common carpenter; a sometimes preacher and healer like many others; a man whose friends and followers have deserted him and are in hiding. At least this is how some might describe Jesus. But we know better.

He fits well the Isaian image—a man with “a well-trained tongue” who knows “how to answer the weary” (Isaiah 50:4). He also resembles the Psalm 22 sketch of one to scoff at and mock, one whose hands and feet are pierced, an image also found in the Gospel account of his suffering and death. This is a man rejected, beaten, and nailed to wood like a piece of flimsy material. Who is this man and why was he so hated?

The hymn in Philippians 2 probably offers the best likeness of him. He was in the form of God, but out of love for others he took on the form of a slave so that he might serve them. What about this was so objectionable? Does he represent an idea of God that is too different from the one with which we have grown comfortable? As a man for others, does he put our own selfishness to shame? Does his desire to serve challenge our propensity to control? Is this why he has been rejected?

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR *Reflection*

- ★ *What does Jesus' self-emptying tell us about God?*
- ★ *How would your world change if you chose to serve others rather than control them?*



He emptied himself, taking the form of a slave [and]... humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

PHILIPPIANS 2:7–8

April 5, 2020
Palm Sunday of the
Passion of the Lord

Gospel Reflection
Matthew 26:14–27:66

“All this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled,” Jesus says in today’s Gospel.

Indeed, we have reached the climax of the liturgical year, the highest peak of salvation history, when all that has been anticipated and promised is to be fulfilled.

By the close of today’s long Gospel, the work of our redemption will have been accomplished, the new covenant will be written in the blood of His broken body hanging on the cross at the place called the Skull.

In His Passion, Jesus is “counted among the wicked,” as Isaiah had foretold. He is revealed definitively as the Suffering Servant the prophet announced, the long-awaited Messiah whose words of obedience and faith ring out in today’s First Reading and Psalm.

The taunts and torments we hear in these two readings punctuate the Gospel as Jesus is beaten and mocked, as His hands and feet are pierced, as enemies gamble for His clothes, and as His enemies dare Him to prove His divinity by saving Himself from suffering.

He remains faithful to God’s will to the end, does not turn back in His trial. He gives Himself freely to His torturers, confident that, as He speaks in today’s First Reading: “The Lord God is My help... I shall not be put to shame.”

Destined to sin and death as children of Adam’s disobedience, we have been set free for holiness and life by Christ’s perfect obedience to the Father’s will.

This is why God greatly exalted Him. This is why we have salvation in His Name. Following His example of humble obedience in the trials and crosses of our lives, we know we will never be forsaken. We know, as the centurion today, that truly this is the Son of God.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Joe McNaughton

April 8

Raegan Reed

April 9

Congratulations to University of PA students: **Jan Lescantz and Cassie Kutsa** on the completion of their courses at the University of the Cumberlands

PRAYER REQUESTS

Pray to end Abortion, Russell Brooks, Cassie & Clifton Centers, Maere Tekanene, Bill Moses, Jerry Roberts, Donna Blevins, Norma Wilson, Dennis Parks & Family, Erica Davis, Chris & Amanda Decker, Marian Colette, Debbie Moses Haggins, Rose Grant, Sandy Hurts, Dominic Cureton, Todd Morris, Charles Pennington (Louann Lennon's father), Alex Woods, Christopher Braden, Bonnie (Warfield) Bishop, Sister Alice, Curt and LeeAnn Hall, Jay Baird, Gary Hackler, Patricia Hernandez-Torres, and loved ones who are ill.

UPCOMING SAINTS AND FEASTS

Holy Thursday

April 9

Good Friday

April 10

Holy Saturday

April 11

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

April 12

IN TIME OF PANDEMIC

Antiphon Is 53:4

Truly the Lord has borne our infirmities, and he has carried our sorrows.

Collect

Almighty and eternal God, our refuge in every danger, to whom we turn in our distress; in faith we pray look with compassion on the afflicted, grant eternal rest to the dead, comfort to mourners, healing to the sick, peace to the dying, strength to healthcare workers, wisdom to our leaders and the courage to reach out to all in love, so that together we may give glory to your holy name. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Antiphon Mt 11:28

Come to me, all who labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you, says the Lord.

Prayers

O God, from whose hand we have received the medicine of eternal life, grant that through this sacrament we may glory in the fullness of heavenly healing. Through Christ our Lord.

O God, protector of all who hope in you, bless your people, keep them safe, defend them, prepare them, that, free from sin and safe from the enemy, they may persevere always in your love. *Amen*





O Mary, you always brighten
our path assign of salvation
and of hope.

We entrust ourselves to you,
Health of the Sick, who, at the
Cross, took part in Jesus' pain
While remaining steadfast in
faith.

O loving Mother, you know
what we need, and we are
confident you will provide for
us as at Cana in Galilee.

Intercede for us with your Son
Jesus, the Divine Physician, for
those who have fallen ill, for
those who are vulnerable, and
for those who have died.

Intercede also for those
charged with protecting the
health and safety of others and
for those who are tending to
the sick and seeking a cure.

Help us, O Mother of Divine
Love, to conform to the will of
the Father and to do as we are
told by Jesus, who took upon
himself our sufferings and
carried our sorrows, so as to
lead us, through the Cross, to
the glory of the Resurrection.

Amen.

Under thy protection we seek
refuge, O Holy Mother of God.

In our needs, despise not our
petitions, but deliver us always
from all dangers, O glorious
and blessed Virgin. *Amen*

Dear Padre,

How can I use Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to find spiritual meaning for myself during Holy Week?

The Gospel tells us that Jesus goes to Jerusalem knowing he will suffer and die there. Jerusalem is the place where prophets have been killed in the past (Matthew 23:37). Jesus predicts his passion in the Gospel of Matthew three times (Matthew 16:21, 17:22, and 20:17). Jesus, the one sent by God, will meet the same fate as the prophets who had been sent by God to call Jerusalem to conversion. He goes to Jerusalem as a prophet, to preach God's saving word to the very people who will turn on the messenger.

Jesus isn't fooled by the enthusiastic crowd of people who throw him a welcome party and refer to him as the prophet coming in God's name. He tells them that he comes in humility, as the prophet foretold: "Your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass" (Matthew 21:5).

He challenges their expectations by referencing the prophet Zechariah's humble

king. In the second reading we hear a hymn to Jesus' humility, which praises his willingness to give of himself, even unto death.

Jesus' hopes aren't based on the crowd's emotions. He has chosen to obey his Father's will, and if that obedience leads him to the place where prophets have gone before him, so be it. He is ready to suffer and die. We need Jesus' example and grace to remain faithful in the face of flattery, scorn, and threat. Live this week seeking to have the mind of Christ, to live his humility.

—Fr. Timothy McCanna
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



INKED PIXELS/SHUTTERSTOCK

A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

Jesus enters Jerusalem. The liturgy... somehow expresses the contradictory feelings that we too, the men and women of today, experience: the capacity for great love, but also for great hatred; the capacity for courageous self-sacrifice, but also the ability to "wash our hands" at the right moment.

—PALM SUNDAY HOMILY, MARCH 25, 2018



Calendar

Monday

APRIL 6

Monday of Holy Week

Is 42:1–7

Jn 12:1–11

Tuesday

APRIL 7

Tuesday of Holy Week

Is 49:1–6

Jn 13:21–33, 36–38

Wednesday

APRIL 8

Wednesday of Holy Week

Is 50:4–9a

Mt 26:14–25

Thursday

APRIL 9

Holy Thursday

Ex 12:1–8, 11–14

1 Cor 11:23–26

Jn 13:1–15

Friday

APRIL 10

Good Friday

Is 52:13–53:12

Heb 4:14–16; 5:7–9

Jn 18:1–19:42

Saturday

APRIL 11

Holy Saturday

Gn 1:1–2:2 or 1:1,

26–31a

Gn 22:1–18 or Gn 22:1–2,

9a, 10–13, 15–18

Ex 14:15–15:1

Is 54:5–14 / Is 55:1–11

Bar 3:9–15, 32–4:4

Ez 36:16–17a, 18–28

Rom 6:3–11

Mt 28:1–10

Sunday

APRIL 12

Easter

Acts 10:34a, 37–43

Col 3:1–4 or 1 Cor 5:6b–8

Jn 20:1–9 or Mt 28:1–10