

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SUNDAY
April 2, 2023
Palm-Passion Sunday

PALM SUNDAY GOSPEL:
Matthew 21:1-11

¹ When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." ⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵ "Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them.

⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹ The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:
Matthew 27:11-54

We now enter into the contemplation of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and meditate on the salvation of the world

through his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection.

Narrator: Jesus stood before the governor, Pilate, and Pilate asked him,

Pilate: Are you the King of the Jews?

Narrator: Jesus answered,

Jesus: You say so.

Narrator: But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him,

Pilate: Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?

Narrator: But Jesus gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after all had gathered, Pilate said to them,

Pilate: Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Narrator: For Pilate realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over.

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him."

Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them,

Pilate: Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

Narrator: And the crowd said,

Barabbas.

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Pilate: Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Narrator: All of the crowd said,

Let him be crucified!

Narrator: Then Pilate asked,

Pilate: Why? What evil has he done?

Narrator: But the crowd shouted all the more,

Let him be crucified! Let him be crucified!

Narrator: So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying,

Pilate: I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.

Narrator: Then the people as a whole answered,

His blood be on us and on our children!

Narrator: So Pilate released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They

put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying,

Hail, King of the Jews!

Narrator: They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry Jesus' cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when Jesus tasted it, he would not drink it.

And when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two bandits were crucified with Jesus, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying,

You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself!

If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

Narrator: In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying,

**He saved others; he cannot save himself.
He is the King of Israel;
let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe
in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he
wants to;
for he said, "I am God's Son."**

Narrator: The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice,

Jesus: Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?

Narrator: That is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystander heard, they said,

This man is calling for Elijah.

Narrator: At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filling it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to Jesus to drink. But the others said,

Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come save him.

Narrator: Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

A period of silence is kept.

Narrator: At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with Jesus, who were keeping watch over him, saw the earthquake and what

took place, they were terrified and said,

Truly this man was God's Son!