

# Palm Sunday

## Gospel – Adapted from Mark 14:1-15:47

It was two days before the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were trying to arrest Jesus secretly, and kill him. They said, “Not during the feast, otherwise the people might begin to riot.”

While Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was sitting at the table, a woman with a jar of very expensive perfume broke the jar and poured it over his head. But there were some people who said, “Why was this wasted? It could have been sold for a lot of money, which could have been given to the poor.” They were upset with her, but Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. You always have the poor with you, and you can do good for them whenever you choose; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body for burial. Truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”



Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the Apostles, went to the chief priests, in order to betray Jesus. And they were glad, and promised to give him money. And Judas looked for a chance to betray him.

On the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples asked him, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?” Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jug of water will meet you; follow him. Wherever he enters, say to the householder,

The Teacher wants to know where the guest room is, where he can eat the Passover with his disciples.' He will show you a large upper room that is ready. Prepare for us there." The disciples went to the city, and found everything as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

When it was evening, Jesus came with the Apostles. As they were at the table eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, one of you who is eating with me will betray me." They began to be sad, and each said to him, "Is it I?" He said, "It is one of you, who is dipping bread in the same dish with me. The Son of Man will go, as the Scriptures have said, but great suffering

will come to the one who has betrayed him. It would be better for that man if he had never been born."



As they were eating, he took bread, blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take and

eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I tell you, I will not drink the fruit of the vine again until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, "You will all run away. It has been written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will scatter. But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Even if they all run away, I will not." And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." But Peter said, "Even if I have to die with you, I will not deny you." And they all said the same thing.

And they went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I pray." And he took Peter, James, and John with him, and he began to be greatly troubled. He said to them, "My soul is very sad; it feels like it will kill me. Stay here and keep watch."



And Jesus went a little farther, fell to the ground and prayed, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Take this cup of suffering from me. But I do not pray for what I want, but what you want.” And Jesus found the disciples sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? You could not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you will not fall to temptation; your spirit is willing, but your body is weak.” And again he went and prayed in the same way. Again he returned and found them sleeping; their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. Get up. See, my betrayer is coming.”

Immediately, while Jesus was speaking, Judas came, with a crowd carrying swords and clubs. He had given the crowd a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.” And when he came, he went up to Jesus and said, “Master!” And he kissed him. They grabbed Jesus. But one of those with Jesus grabbed his sword and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his ear. Jesus said to them, “Have you come out with swords



and clubs, like you are arresting a robber? Every day I was in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.” And the Apostles ran away. A young man followed him, wearing only a linen cloth on his body, and the crowd grabbed him. But he left the cloth behind and ran away, not wearing anything.



They led Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders were gathered. And Peter followed at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, and warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council looked for people to testify against Jesus so they could have him killed, but they could find no one. Many told lies about him, but their stories did not agree. Some stood up and lied, “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy the temple that has been made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” But their testimony did not agree.

And the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Do you have nothing to say? What is this, that they are saying against you?” But Jesus was



silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of God?” And Jesus said, “I am; and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” The high priest tore his clothing and said, “We do not need more witnesses; you heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all decided that he deserved to die. And some began to spit on him, and cover his face, and hit him, saying, “Who hit you?” And the guards also hit him.

As Peter was in the courtyard, one of the maids of the high priest came, and saw Peter warming himself, and said, “You were with Jesus.” But he denied it, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about.” And he went to the gateway. The maid saw him, and began to say to the people standing there, “This man is one of them.” But Peter again denied it. After a little while, the people said to Peter, “You are certainly one of them; after all, you are a Galilean.” But Peter began to curse and swear, “I do not know this man you are talking about.” Immediately a rooster crowed for a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times. And Peter began to cry.



As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, with the council, led Jesus to Pontius Pilate. And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And Jesus answered, “You have said so.” The chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate said to him, “Do you have no answer? See what they are accusing you of.” But Jesus made no further answer, and Pilate was amazed.

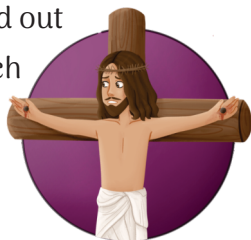
Now at the feast, Pilate used to release one prisoner for the people. There was a rebel in prison, who had committed murder in the rebellion, called Barabbas. The crowd came up, and asked Pilate to release a prisoner. And he answered, “Do you want me to release the King of the Jews?” For he knew the chief priests had arrested him out of jealousy.

But the chief priests convinced the crowd to ask for Barabbas instead. And Pilate said, "Then what should I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out, "Crucify him." Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." So Pilate released Barabbas; he had Jesus scourged, and ordered him to be crucified.

The soldiers led Jesus away. They dressed him in a purple robe, and put a crown of thorns on his head. They made fun of him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they hit his head with a stick, and spat on him. After they made fun of him, they took off the purple robe, and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

They forced a man who was walking by, Simon from Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to help carry his cross. They brought him to the place called Golgotha, which means place of the skull. And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and cast lots to see who would get his clothing. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The charge against him said, "The King of the Jews." And they crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by said, "You said you would destroy the temple and build it in three days. Save yourself, and come down from that cross!" The chief priests also made fun of him and said, "He saved others; he can not save himself. If he is the Christ, the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross, so we can see and believe."

When the sixth hour came, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" Some of the people heard it and said, "Look, he is calling Elijah." And one ran, filled a sponge full of



vinegar, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down." And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and died. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the soldier who was standing there, saw how he died, he said, "Truly, this man was the Son of God!"

There were also women looking on, including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome, who had followed him and took care of him; and also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

And when evening came, since it was the day of Preparation, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was himself looking for the kingdom of God, had courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate asked the Roman soldier if he was already dead. And when he learned that he was, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking Jesus down, wrapped him in the shroud, and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.



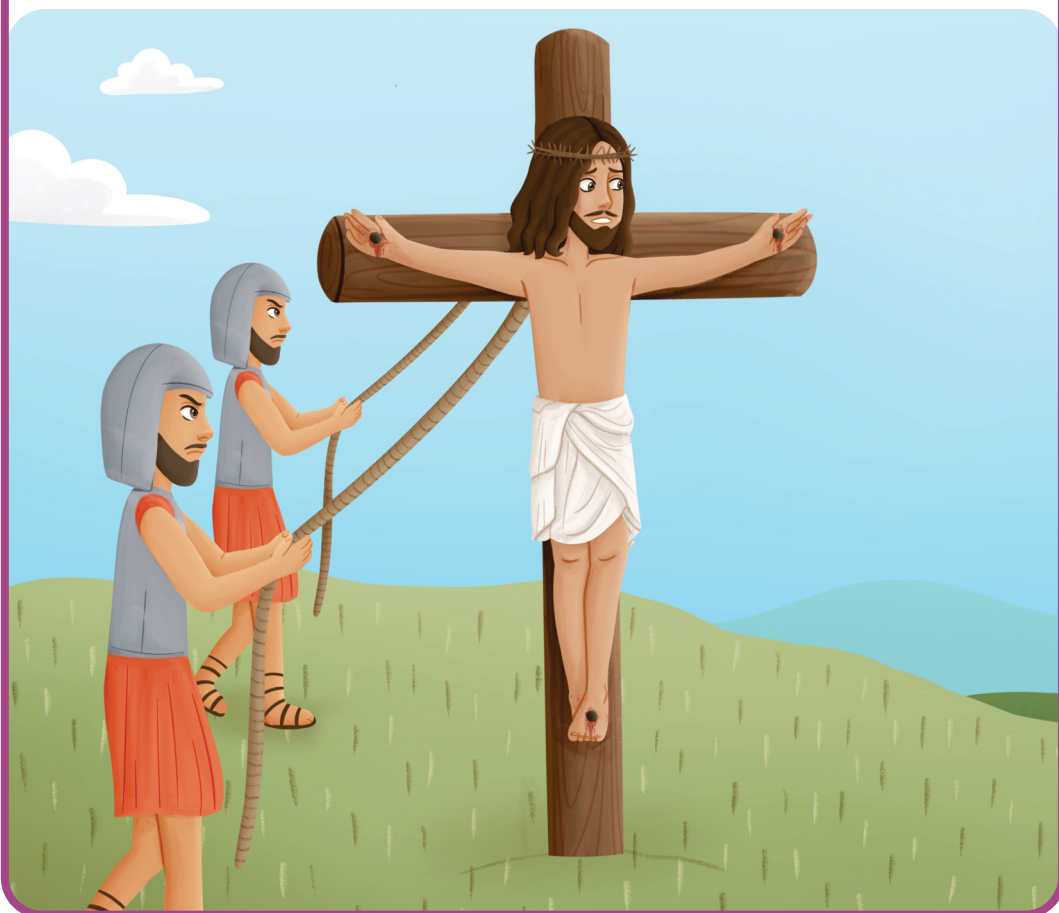
## Reflection

Today is Palm Sunday. It is the beginning of Holy Week, when we will celebrate the feast days of the Paschal Mystery, the Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. Today's Gospel is very long. It covers all the events we will be celebrating later in the week on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, the Last Supper and the Crucifixion.

Let us focus on a theme from today's Gospel reading, which relates to both the Last Supper and the Crucifixion. The theme is, "This is my Body." We hear this at every Mass. Do we pay attention? Do we really think about it, and everything it means?

At the Last Supper, Jesus gave us the Eucharist, His Body and Blood, for us to receive. “This is my Body,” He said, as He changed bread into His Body. He gave Himself to us. And He does so at every Mass. We can be so close to Jesus that He comes inside of us. He becomes part of us as we receive the Eucharist.

Then, at the Crucifixion, the theme comes back. “This is my Body.” Jesus gives up His Body on the cross. He dies for us. Why? To be close to us, so we can be close to Him forever in Heaven. The Eucharist and the Cross – “This is my Body.” Jesus gives Himself entirely to us, because He loves us, because He wants to be so close to us, because He wants to be within us, and for us to be within Him. That is incredible love. As we celebrate this Holy Week, and every time we go to Mass, let us focus on that theme: “This is my Body.” Jesus gave Himself to us. Let us give ourselves to Him.



## Discussion Questions

How is the Eucharist connected to the Cross?

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Jesus gives Himself entirely to you. How can you give yourself entirely to Him?

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## Vocabulary

- **Eucharist** - The Body and Blood of Jesus. At every Mass, bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.
- **Holy Week** - The holiest week of the year, which includes celebrations of the Last Supper, and Jesus's death and burial, leading up to Easter Sunday.
- **Last Supper** - The Passover meal that Jesus ate with His Apostles, when He gave them the Eucharist for the first time, and gave them the power to celebrate the Eucharist as priests.
- **Paschal Mystery** - The saving suffering, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus.

## Fill in the blanks

- 1 Jesus gives Himself completely to us in the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Jesus gave us both the priesthood and the Eucharist at the \_\_\_\_\_.



**3** The important feast days of Holy Week help us to experience the \_\_\_\_\_.

**4** \_\_\_\_\_ is the holiest week of the year.

## Quiz

**1** Who denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed twice?

- A** John
- B** Mary Magdalene
- C** Peter
- D** Judas

**2** What did Jesus turn bread and wine into, at the Last Supper?

- A** His Body and Blood
- B** Water and Manna
- C** A cross
- D** Peter's body and John's blood

**3** Who asked Pontius Pilate for Jesus's Body?

- A** Peter
- B** John
- C** Mary Magdalene
- D** Joseph of Arimathea

## Palm Sunday

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CROSS

EUCCHARIST

HOLY WEEK

LAST SUPPER

PASCHAL MYSTERY

SACRIFICE

Answers:

Fill in the blanks

- 1** Eucharist
- 2** Last Supper
- 3** Paschal Mystery
- 4** Holy Week

Quiz

- 1** C – Peter
- 2** A – His Body and Blood
- 3** D – Joseph of Arimathea

