

## Read

Luke 19:28–40

Isaiah 50:4–7

Psalms 22:8–9, 17–18,  
19–20, 23–24

Philippians 2:6–11

Luke 22:14–23:56 or  
23:1–49

## Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

April 10, 2022



### REFLECTION

The whole multitude of Jesus' disciples met their donkey-riding leader along the road to Jerusalem (see Luke 19:28–40, the Gospel read at the beginning of today's Mass). They praised God aloud with joy, a radical praise that acclaimed a king other than Caesar—and peace. The disciples called for peace. Energy pulses through the Palm Sunday scene.

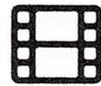
And then, where do they go? The whole multitude welcomed Jesus to town on this fateful day, but when push comes to shove days later, no one exalts Jesus. In fact, even his closest friends deny and abandon him (see Luke 22:14–23:56, the Gospel read during the Liturgy of Word). Just when he needed support the most, Jesus faces the cross alone.

We will experience this dramatic shift throughout this Holy Week. We know the joy of Easter and rejoice in the fact that Jesus conquered death. At the same time, we will once again enter into Jesus' passion and death. Jesus sits alone in the garden and carries the cross up the hill with few supporters nearby. And yet all of these experiences are part of the same narrative. Crowds and solitude, cheering and crying, feeling supported and feeling abandoned. Jesus understands the ups and downs of human life. He lived it, quite publicly, during his time on earth. He remains close to us during our up and down moments now.



### ACTION

Holy Week is filled with meaningful rituals designed to help us enter more fully into the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Carve out time in your schedule to attend all the liturgies you can this week: the Holy Thursday foot washing, the Good Friday service, the Stations of the Cross, the Easter Vigil. This week may test your "church stamina," but give it a try! Invite friends or family to go with you.



Watch LTP's video on Palm Sunday to learn more about today's liturgy: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/5976235/video/327778868>



### QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ In the crosses of your life, who has stayed with you or who will?
- ❖ From whom in your life do you receive praise?



April 10, 2022

# PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

## LECTIONARY #37C AND 38C

Luke 19:28–40 (at the Blessing of the Palms)

Isaiah 50:4–7

Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24

Philippians 2:6–11

Luke 22:14–23:56 or 23:1–49

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

Today's Gospel reading shows us the depth of love God has for all people. We hear of those who love Jesus. We also hear of those who hate him. Jesus is unjustly condemned, jeered at, and tortured. We witness his suffering, his death, and the great emotion of devastation once those at the foot of the cross realize he was innocent. In the midst of all of these emotions and injustices, Jesus offers love and mercy to all. The lives of those who accept it are transformed.

**Q FOCUS:** *Even in the midst of pain, God's loving presence is all around us.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week, our season of Lent will end and we will enter into the Sacred Paschal Triduum (the three days from the evening of Holy Thursday, into Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and ending on the evening of Easter Sunday). Through the liturgies of the Church, we are invited to enter into the last days of Christ's life and journey with him to the cross. We know what comes next—Christ's resurrection and the joy of Easter—but for this week, let us unite our suffering with Christ's and die to our sinful ways so that we might live more fully in the light of his life at Easter.

### Church Teaching Connection

"Looking at the cross means allowing our priorities, choices and actions to be challenged. It means questioning ourselves about our sensitivity to those experiencing difficulty. Brothers and sisters, where is our heart focused? Does Jesus Christ continue to be a source of joy and praise in our heart, or does its priorities and concerns make us ashamed to look at sinners, the least and forgotten?" (Pope Francis, Homily, March 25, 2018).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, king of  
endless glory.**

### Gospel

Luke 23:26–49

**Reader:** The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

As they led him away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus. A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that

never bore and the breasts that never nursed.' At that time people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?" Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed.

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, "He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Christ of God." Even the soldiers jeered at him. As they approached to offer him wine they called out, "If you are King of the Jews, save yourself." Above him there was an inscription that read, "This is the King of the Jews."

Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last.

*Here all kneel and pause for a short time.*

The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, "This man was innocent beyond doubt." When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts; but all his acquaintances stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events.

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

► **Have you ever seen something so awful happening that even though you wanted to turn away, you couldn't?**

This reality is true for many Americans as they recall watching the news, seeing the large, commercial airplanes crash into the Twin Towers in New York City in 2001. For months, the news coverage continued and viewers could not stop watching. Many asked, What happens now? Some responded with ideas for new political policies, some lost their faith. However, some had faith that we would come together and comfort those who had lost someone in the crash, or help those who were on the front lines. Some had faith that God would comfort the hurting and bring peace to those who embraced tragedy.

When Jesus was on his way to Calvary, those who were following him, I imagine, could not turn away. They knew the most unjust injustice was happening, and they could do nothing to stop it. They were following their Lord, the man that redefined love, compassion, and discipleship for them. When he got to the top of the hill, they saw him crucified. And if that was not enough, he was jeered at while on the cross. After his death, darkness fell over the whole earth. They knew in the depths of their hearts that the worst thing in their world had happened.

"The worst thing" in your world is different from what we hear in the Gospel today. We could go around this room and everyone in here would have their own version of "the worst thing" in their life. Death. Divorce. Breakups. Abuse. Abandonment. Jail. Hunger. Homelessness.

► **Spend a minute thinking about one of these times in your life. See if you can recall the emotion that accompanied that moment.**

Today's Gospel reading is bleak. Where do we find hope in it? God is still in control, even in the dark

moments of our life. We hear Jesus offer mercy and salvation to the criminal on the cross. We hear of the soldier's belief in God after Jesus had died. God is forever faithful, loving, and forgiving. We can be overwhelmed by circumstance in our life or we can embrace God even tighter than we have ever before. We have the freedom and the power to trust God. We can stand up to evil and proclaim that whatever we are going through, being a disciple of Christ is better than being part of the catastrophe of evil.

► Spend a few minutes in silent reflection asking the Holy Spirit to give you the strength to turn to God in moments of despair.

## Wrapping It Up

*Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 162.*

**We are never alone.**

**God is always present, even in the midst of our suffering.**

**Holy Week gives us an opportunity to enter into the depth of God's love for us by celebrating Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.**

## Act on the Word

### Amidst the Storm

*For this activity, you will need to print out a recent news story—it can be on any topic, but if you can find an article about people doing good works in your community, that would help with the theme of this activity. Divide the article into five parts, and have each part printed on a separate sheet. You will also need to play a recording of "Praise You in the Storm" by Casting Crowns.*

Ask for five volunteers to each read a part of the article. Have them stand in front of the group and instruct them to only begin reading when you point at each person. Instruct the rest of the group to listen carefully and try to make sense of the story they are hearing. Point to one of the teens who does not have the beginning of the article to start. Then, after

a about ten seconds, point to another reader and have them begin their part, continuing this pattern until all are reading aloud at the same time. Have them continue reading until the listeners give up and get frustrated or the article comes to an end. Have the readers rejoin the group and discuss the following questions with all the young people.

- ✧ If you were a reader, how did it feel to be interrupted by someone else? Was it hard to concentrate? What was most distracting?
- ✧ If you were a listener, what was the most challenging part of hearing the article? Was it easy to piece together the information?

Guide the discussion back to today's reflection topic. When there are so many things going on in our life, Satan can use moments like that to distract us from the safety of God's love. Remind the young people that God is always with us and his love overcomes any darkness. Close the discussion by listening to the Casting Crowns song "Praise You in This Storm."

## Closing Prayer

*God of mercy,  
you transformed the cross of Jesus  
into the tree of life.  
Bless us with the grace to learn from  
the example of his passion  
and to share in the glory of his resurrection.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus  
Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity  
of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.*

## For Next Sunday

*To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend the Triduum liturgies and Easter Sunday Mass with family or friends.*