

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 13, 2025



REFLECTION

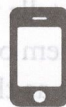
In the Gospel for Palm Sunday, we read of Jesus' passion and death, from the Last Supper to his burial. What is striking about these powerful and familiar events is that Jesus seems to be in control of every situation. He is not caught up in events beyond his control or knowledge that lead to his death. Instead, he is in total control of what is happening around him. He knows that his hour has come, and these things must come to pass if he is to fulfill his mission. In the midst of the confusion and fear that surrounds these events, Jesus confidently follows the will of his Father. Jesus placed his trust in his loving God and laid down his own life out of love for his people.

The world often feels chaotic and out of control. There are systems and powers in place so far above us that we often have no power to effect change. But we place our trust in the highest power, just as Christ did. We place our lives into the hands of the Father who loves us.

As we reflect on Jesus' passion and death today, even now let us put our faith in God, who is with us in all our sufferings. As we suffer with him, so too will we rise with him.

ACTION

This week, spend time in prayer for all those who are suffering. Each day, choose a different group to pray for. You could include groups such as your family and friends, your local community, young people your age around the world, those whose basic needs are not being met, those who live in the shadow of violence, and so on. Though you don't know all of the sufferings of others, God does. By lifting these people up in prayer, you help unite their suffering with Christ's, so that we all might better know his will and rise to new life with him at the end of time.

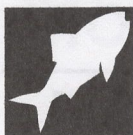


Pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary this week. <https://ltp.org/s/pray-rosary>



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What areas of your life do you feel you don't have control over? How can you invite Christ into those places?
- ❖ What does Jesus' suffering teach you about your own suffering?



April 13, 2025

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

Psalms 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

Palm Sunday has two Gospels proclaimed during Mass. The first is proclaimed at the beginning of Mass before the procession with palms and tells the story of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. Jesus was cheered on by the crowd as they praised his name in the streets. The second Gospel takes place at its normal time during Mass and recounts for us the entirety of Jesus' passion. Instead of cheers, we hear mourning and lamentations from his followers and jeering and ridicule from others. Jesus' suffering is done out of love for us so that we might one day experience the joy of eternal life with God in heaven.

Q FOCUS: *Jesus is the light in our darkness.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week Lent will end as we begin Holy Week and enter into the mystery of the Sacred Paschal Triduum. It is a single liturgical celebration that lasts three days. Beginning on the evening of Holy Thursday, we remember Jesus' washing the feet of the disciples and Jesus' gift of his Body and Blood at the Last Supper. On Good Friday, we remember the Lord's passion—his crucifixion and death on the cross. On the evening of Holy Saturday, we celebrate the high point of our liturgical year with the Easter

Vigil liturgy, beginning in the darkness of Christ's death but soon rejoicing in the light of his resurrection. We end our Triduum on the evening of Easter Sunday as we rejoice with the risen Lord.

Church Teaching Connection

"Jesus shows us how to face moments of difficulty and the most insidious of temptations by preserving in our hearts a peace that is neither detachment nor superhuman impassivity, but confident abandonment to the Father and to his saving will, which bestows life and mercy. He shows us this kind of abandonment by spurning, at every point in his earthly ministry, the temptation to do things his way and not in complete obedience to the Father. From the experience of his forty days in the desert to the culmination of his Passion, Jesus rejects this temptation by his obedient trust in the Father" (Pope Francis, Homily, April 14, 2019).

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 23:36–49

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:

For both believers and nonbelievers, one of the biggest mysteries of life is that of suffering. Why does God allow suffering and evil in the world? Why do bad things happen to good people? How can God tolerate the suffering of the innocent? Where is God where there are injustices and evil in this world? Sometimes, in the face of such evil and suffering, we are left questioning whether God exists or not.

► **Have you ever encountered an event or a situation that made you question where God was or why he was allowing such things to happen?**

Today's reading from Jesus' passion might make us question why God let Jesus die. Jesus, full of love and mercy, was tormented, jeered at, and executed alongside criminals, even though he was sinless and had done nothing wrong.

Although evil and suffering may always remain a mystery to us, it is in Jesus' suffering that we start to make sense of it. Jesus did not exempt himself from human suffering. He was treated unjustly and suffered terribly, just like what happens to many human beings. God allowed Jesus the fullness of this experience because it was an expression of Christ's divine love for us: he loves us and gave his life for us so that we might know eternal life with God. There is nothing that we can experience that he does not know. He is always with us as we face our own trials

and tribulations. Even though we may not fully understand why these bad things happen in our world, Jesus overcame all of the darkness and evil that is present in our world by conquering death through his resurrection.

- ▶ In what ways do you feel Jesus' presence with you when you are suffering or feeling pain?
- ▶ What are some things you can do to help you remember Jesus in the midst of your suffering?

By turning to Christ in our times of suffering, we can offer it up to him for the sake of others, just as he did in his own suffering. This brings us closer to God and helps us remember that God is in control and desires our good and the good of the world. There might be times when we are so overwhelmed with the darkness that we cannot see any light. But if we allow ourselves to step back and look at the situation through Christ's eyes, we might find the goodness and light of Christ's love in the midst of darkness.

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 174.

Jesus is always with us.

Jesus' suffering brings us our salvation.

Jesus is our light in the midst of darkness.

Act on the Word

Stations of the Cross

For this activity, you will need booklets or handouts of the Stations of the Cross. Your parish might have these

resources or you can find one online, like this one published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/ecumenical-stations-cross>.

In this activity, you will lead the teens through the Stations of the Cross. Share with the teens that this is a way to prayerfully participate in the story of Jesus' passion. Jesus entered into human suffering to save us. By walking with Jesus, we join our suffering with his. If possible, pray these stations in your church or chapel, following the station markers that are typically found on the walls of the worship space. If you are not able to be in the church, you can set up fourteen "stations" along the perimeter of your meeting space and move from one to the next with each station. Allow the young people to help lead the different parts of the prayer.

Closing Prayer

O God,
you sent your Son to us
to deliver us from sin and death.

Trusting in your goodness and love,
we ask that you show us your light
when we feel trapped in darkness.

Through Christ our Lord.

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. Encourage teens to attend the Triduum liturgies and Easter Sunday Mass with family or friends.