

# Read



Mark 11:1-10 or  
John 12:12-16

Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalms 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20,  
23-24

Philippians 2:6-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 or 15:1-39

## LIVING THE WORD

# Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

March 28, 2021




## REFLECTION

Today's readings began with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem amid crowds joyfully waving palms, singing "Hosanna," and conclude with the crucifixion and death of Christ. It's an emotional rollercoaster. Have you ever had that experience, where things are going great, and then they aren't; from the highest of highs to the lowest of lows? If you've ever been there, if you've ever suffered, if you've ever felt abandoned, you're in good company, because Jesus has, too. This is the essence of our faith: we believe in a God that is so full of divine love that he became human; a God who personally knows the depths of human emotion, fully present to suffering, evil, and death. We believe in a God who conquers evil, revealing his almighty power to transform suffering and death into new life and hope. Today, we read of Christ's passion and reflect on the painful reality of suffering.



## ACTION

Today, consider how you can be present to those who are suffering. Jesus asked the disciples to stay with him in the garden, not to solve his problems, but just to be with him. Being present involves listening and practicing empathy, which is when we seek to understand what the other person is feeling, from their point of view. So very often, listening with empathy is all we need to do. You can ask, "Do you want to talk about it?" Let them know that you're happy to just sit with them if they don't. Say, "It's okay to cry." Offer a hug. Validate their pain and share your sorrow. If you can't begin to imagine what they're going through, just compassionately say that. Be present and let them know they're not alone.

 "Come as You Are"—Crowder  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2zhf2mqEMI>



## QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ In what way can you identify with the human emotions that Jesus experienced in his passion? When have you been betrayed? abandoned by friends? hurt?
- ❖ Do you know someone who is suffering? How can you show them God's love?



March 28, 2021

## PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

### LECTIONARY #37B AND 38B

Mark 11:1-10 or John 12:12-16  
(at the Blessing of the Palms)

Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

Philippians 2:6-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 or 15:1-39

### 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 session focuses on the Gospel that is read at the Blessing of the Palms at the beginning of today's liturgy. As the Church enters Holy Week we hear of Jesus' joyful entry into Jerusalem. Jesus enters Jerusalem to cheers and homage from the crowd, but in a few short days he will be killed and buried. He was not caught up in events beyond his understanding. Jesus was in complete control, bringing to fulfillment the prophecies of the Old Testament and bringing salvation to his people.

**Q FOCUS:** We ask for Jesus to save us.

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

Today is Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord. It is the last Sunday of Lent, which means that we are entering into Holy Week. Lent will end when the Sacred Paschal Triduum begins on Holy Thursday of this week. The Triduum (literally, "three days") celebrates Jesus' Paschal Mystery in great detail, focusing on his life, death, and Resurrection. Plan to attend the liturgies on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday (at the Easter Vigil) with family or friends.

### Church Teaching Connection

"The Word of God, through whom all things were made, was made flesh, so that as a perfect man he could save all women and men and sum up all things in himself. The Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the desires of history and civilization, the center of humanity, the joy of all hearts, and the fulfillment of all aspiration. It is he whom the Father raised from the dead, exalted and placed at his right hand, constituting him as judge of the living and the dead. Animated and drawn together in his Spirit we press onwards on our journey towards the consummation of history which fully corresponds to the plan of his love: 'to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth' ([Ephesians] 1:10)" (*Gaudium et spes*, 45).

### 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

Mark 11:1-10

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel  
according to Mark.

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

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips,  
and heart.

When Jesus and his disciples drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately on

entering it, you will find a colt tethered on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone should say to you, 'Why are you doing this?' reply, 'The Master has need of it and will send it back here at once.'" So they went off and found a colt tethered at a gate outside on the street, and they untied it. Some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They answered them just as Jesus had told them to, and they permitted them to do it. So they brought the colt to Jesus and put their cloaks over it. And he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. Those preceding him as well as those following kept crying out: / "Hosanna! / Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! / Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is to come! / Hosanna in the highest!"

**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:*

Several years ago, country singer Carrie Underwood released the song "Jesus Take the Wheel." The song tells the story of a woman in the middle of an unfolding car accident, praying to God for her safety. The phrase caught on for any circumstance where a person needed God to take control.

Today's Gospel reading and reflection focuses on the reading that is read at the beginning of Mass, at the Blessing of the Palms. Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a colt to cheers and praise. Mass begins with this reading, and we, the faithful, wave our palms joyfully in the air and enter the mystery of Christ's passion. We know how this story will end. It starts in glory and ends in a tomb. Yet we still feel this moment of joy as we recognize Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah. Through all the events of the

Paschal Mystery, that is, his life, death, Resurrection, and Ascension, we can see that Jesus is in control. He has the wheel.

Jesus and his disciples approach two towns on the outskirts of Jerusalem, where they will stay in the days leading up to the Passover. He orders two of the disciples to get him a young horse. Jesus tells them exactly where to find it and what they should say to anyone if they are asked about their actions. This alone is an amazing feat; just as Jesus knows that his appointed hour is drawing near, he knows that this too must happen for everything to be fulfilled in God's plan of salvation. While it may seem like a small detail, it shows us again that Jesus is in control; he is the Master, the Lord.

► **How is Jesus described in this passage? What do they call him?**

► **What titles for Jesus resonate with you?**

As Jesus enters Jerusalem, people line the streets and spread their cloaks and leafy branches on the street as he passes. The cloak is an interesting symbol. At that time, cloaks were an important and useful clothing item. They served many purposes and most people wore their cloak daily. The act of laying the cloak on the ground is an act of submission and humility. Imagine that a donkey is going to walk over your favorite piece of clothing, and you will get the sense of what the crowd is telling Jesus. We surrender to you. You are worthy of our homage.

► **What can you lay down at the feet of Jesus to show you surrender to his will?**

► **What have you held on to this Lent that you are ready to let go of today?**

The crowd surrounding Jesus chants "Hosanna" to him. Hosanna is a Hebrew term meaning "Save us!" As Jesus enters the holy city of Jerusalem, the crowd begs for salvation. They lay down their lives to Christ. As we hear in the Gospel reading of the passion of Jesus during today's Mass. Jesus will lay down his life for his people. In this gracious act, he will save them. As we see, Jesus is not caught up in events beyond his control. This was not a weekend gone wrong. Jesus has the wheel and is driving the events to bring what is truly needed: his saving love. Let us remember that Jesus is in control and has the

power to take the wheel of our lives, too. Let us lay ourselves before him, so that he can draw us closer to him.

## 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 158.*

**As Jesus enters Jerusalem, he is not caught up in events that are beyond his control; rather, he controls the entire passion narrative.**

**The crowd lays down their cloaks and cries out "Hosanna," submitting to Jesus and asking for salvation.**

**Jesus loves us and lays down his own life to bring us his salvation.**

## Act on the Word

### Joy and Sorrow

*You will need paper or journals and writing materials. You may want to have quiet, prayerful music available to play while the young people are writing.*

Have the young people spread out in your meeting space. You may want to dim the lights, light candles, or play quiet prayerful music to help create a prayerful environment. Invite the teens to spend several minutes, anywhere from five to fifteen minutes, reflecting on this past Lent and writing down their

thoughts. Encourage them to write about the joys that God has brought into their lives this Lent and the sorrows that they have struggled with. Remind them that Jesus has experienced all of our emotions and knows what we are going through. He alone can save us and bring us to our salvation. They might want to finish their reflection by looking ahead to the joy of Easter and consider how God will work through them in the coming months.

## Closing Prayer

*King of kings and Lord of lords,  
today we commemorate your solemn entrance  
into Jerusalem.*

*It was there that you would be betrayed,  
rejected, scourged, and put to death.  
May we see in your carrying of the Cross our  
road to salvation,  
that in choosing to offer ourselves for others,  
we grow more deeply in your likeness.*

*You live and reign with the Father 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.*