

We hold palm branches today, recalling Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the holy city. It is a bittersweet remembrance because we know that no sooner had he celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples than he was arrested, tried, convicted, and put to death. But Jerusalem is more than the site of his crucifixion. It is also the site of his resurrection. Through his sacrifice we all hope to one day reach the eternal Jerusalem.

As we gather together let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

*Profession of Faith: Page 21*

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow as we say) and by the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*Introductory Rite:*

*Greeting:*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

*Penitential Rite:*

My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves for this celebration, let us call to mind our sins.

Lord Jesus, Savior of the world, in your dying you revealed the immensity of the Father’s love:      Lord, have mercy

**Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, Savior of the world, in your passion and death you emptied yourself for our sake:      Christ, have mercy

**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, Savior of the world, in your resurrection you have been given the name that is above every other name:

Lord, have mercy.      **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

*Opening Prayer:*

Almighty ever-living God, who as an example of humility for the human race to follow caused our Savior to take flesh and submit to the Cross, graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering and so merit a share in his Resurrection.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word:First Reading Page 98

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

*Isaiah 50:4-7*

The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back. I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**Responsorial Psalm Page 100

R/. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

*Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24***R/. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

All who see me scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads:  
“He relied on the LORD; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, if he loves him.” **R/.**

Indeed, many dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers closes in upon me;  
They have pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones. **R/.**

They divide my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots.  
But you, O LORD, be not far from me; O my help, hasten to aid me. **R/.**

I will proclaim your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:  
“You who fear the LORD, praise him; all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;  
revere him, all you descendants of Israel!” **R/.**

Second Reading Page 100

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

*Philippians 2:6-11*

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**Gospel Page 102

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Matthew 27:11-54***Glory to you, O Lord**

Jesus stood before the governor, Pontius Pilate, who questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You say so.” And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?” But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them, “Which one do you want me to release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?” For he knew that it was out of envy that they had handed him over. While he was still seated on the bench,

his wife sent him a message, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of him.” The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas but to destroy Jesus. The governor said to them in reply, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” They answered, Barabbas!” Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” But he said, “Why? What evil has he done?” They only shouted the louder, “Let him be crucified!” When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood. Look to it yourselves.” And the whole people said in reply, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.” Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him. As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha — which means Place of the Skull —, they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!” Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he wants him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” The revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way.

From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Some of the bystanders who heard it said, “This one is calling for Elijah.” Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said, ‘Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him.’” But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit.

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

And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said, “Truly, this was the Son of God!”

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

**Reflection on the Word:**

“The whole city was shaken” (Matthew 21:10). If the beasts of burden, the tree branches all over the road, and the shouted hosannas weren’t enough of a sign, when Jesus passes through the gates of the holy city the very earth quakes. Among all the evangelists, the Greek verb *eseisthe* is unique to Matthew. He uses it three times: here, in the moment Jesus dies (27:51), and when the angel appears outside the empty tomb (28:4). It is a sign of a theophany, a manifestation of God on earth. The final two times the witnesses react immediately with the recognition of God’s presence, but for now the city is ignorant. “Who is this?” is a far cry from “Truly, this was the Son of God!” (21:10,

27:54). The earthquake tells them that something momentous is happening, but they don't yet realize that in seeing Jesus they have seen the Lord. April 5, 2020 31 Readings at Mass:

Jesus is on his own. Everyone had abandoned him. Judas betrayed him, his closest friends fell asleep, all his disciples fled after his arrest, Peter denied even knowing him. Pilate believed him innocent, but washed his hands of him in frustration with the riotous crowd. Those passing by the crucified Jesus openly mocked him, observing that God had obviously deserted him. Finally, Jesus cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). In his agony, Jesus wondered if even his Father had left him to die all alone.

The psalmist feels abandoned as well, as we might if we are persecuted and find ourselves on our own. Gloom and despair close in like a pack of dogs, from which there is no escape. Like one defeated, the psalmist loses all his belongings, right down to what he is wearing. But he continues to call on God, continues to place his faith in God, continues to praise God. God's power and mercy are greater than the forces of the entire world around him.

For many of us, most of the time we live a very comfortable life. We are blessed with a wonderful family, a decent job, good health, and a nice place to live. God is smiling upon us. We aren't even conscious of our good fortune. But then a spouse leaves, or we lose our job, or we find out we have cancer, or disaster strikes. Now where is God? Isaiah, taking on the persona of the Suffering Servant, never doubts that God is right there with him. Therefore, no matter how excruciatingly difficult it is for him he is willing to face it head-on. Despite the violence he is forced to endure, he takes refuge in the knowledge that God is stronger and will save him.

Question - How can I rely on God during my trials and hardships? How will this help?

*Prayer of the Faithful:*

We know that God will never abandon us, so we cry out with our needs and the needs of the world knowing that we will be heard.

- For the Church, that we may sing hosannas to the Lord, giving witness to our faith and to our joy in Christ's saving act, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For an end to religious persecution worldwide, that all people everywhere may have the freedom to worship without fear, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all who have been imprisoned and condemned to death, that they may know the infinite saving mercy of God, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those who will be initiated into the Church at the Easter Vigil, that their celebration of Holy Week, which begins today, may bring them ever closer to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those in our families, neighborhoods, and workplaces who feel abandoned or forsaken, that they may feel the Lord's tender presence through the compassionate outreach of others, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For what else should we pray? \_\_\_\_\_ let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, we know that you will never forsake us and so we call upon you today. Hear our prayers and accompany us through our trials as you did for your Son, in whose name we offer them, our Lord for ever and ever.

Communion RiteThe Lord's Prayer: Page 152

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

Rite of Peace:

The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ’s presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Communion:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:

Nourished with these sacred gifts, we humbly beseech you, O Lord, that, just as through the death of your Son you have brought us to hope for what we believe, so by his Resurrection you may lead us to where you call.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Concluding Rite:Final Blessing:

May the Lord bless us,  protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ! **Thanks be to God.**