The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

Narrator: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Mark.
They went to a place called Gethsemane; and Jesus said to his disciples,

Jesus: "Sit here while I pray."

Narrator: He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And said to them,

Jesus: "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake."

Narrator: And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said,

Jesus: "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want."

Narrator: He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter,

Jesus: "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Narrator: And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them,

Jesus: "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

Narrator: Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying,

Judas: "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard."

Narrator: So when he came, he went up to him at once and said,

Judas: "Rabbi!"

Narrator: …and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them,

Jesus: "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled."

Narrator: All of them deserted him and fled. A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked. They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled.
Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying,

Choir: "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'"

Narrator: But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus…

High Priest: "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?"

Narrator: But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him,

High Priest: "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"

Narrator: Jesus said,

Jesus: "I am; and you will see 'the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'"

Narrator: Then the high priest tore his clothes and said,

High Priest: "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?"

Narrator: All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him,

Choir: "Prophesy!"

Narrator: The guards also took him over and beat him.
While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said,

Servant Girl: "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth."

Narrator: But he denied it, saying,

Peter: "I do not know or understand what you are talking about."

Narrator: And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders,

Servant Girl: "This man is one of them."

Narrator: But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter,

Choir: "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean."

Narrator: But he began to curse, and he swore an oath,

Peter: "I do not know this man you are talking about."

Narrator: At that moment the cock crowed for the second time.
Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him,

Jesus: "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times."

Narrator: And he broke down and wept.
As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council.
They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.
Pilate asked him,

Pilate: "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Narrator: He answered him,

Jesus: "You say so."

Narrator: Then the chief priests accused him of many things.
Pilate asked him again,

Pilate: "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you."

Narrator: But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.
Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them,

Pilate: "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"

Narrator: (For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over.)
But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again,

Pilate: "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?"

Narrator: They shouted back,

Congregation: ***"Crucify him!"***

Narrator: Pilate asked them,

Pilate: "Why, what evil has he done?"

Narrator: But they shouted all the more,

Congregation: ***"Crucify him!"***

Narrator: So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified.
Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters);
- and they called together the whole cohort; and they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him; and they began saluting him,

Congregation: ***"Hail, King of the Jews!"***

Narrator: They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

(All stand.)

Narrator: Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.
It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."
And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.
Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying,

Congregation: ***"Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!"***

Narrator: In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying,

Congregation: ***"He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe."***

Narrator: Those who were crucified with him also taunted him. When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice,

Jesus: "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"

Narrator: …which means…

Jesus: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Narrator: When some of the bystanders heard it, they said,

Congregation: ***"Listen, he is calling for Elijah."***

Narrator: And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying,

Congregation: ***"Wait… let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down."***

Narrator: Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

(Brief pause, all heads bowed)

Narrator: And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.
Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said,

Centurian: "Truly this man was God's Son!"

(Following the Passion, the congregation is seated. Silence is kept for a while.)