

Sunday, November 20, 2022
Christ the King, Lectionary , Year C

Luke 23:26-32 (NRSV)

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?" Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."³⁹One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴²Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

OPEN

- Of all your childhood chores, what was your least favorite?

DIG

- By now, how is Jesus faring? Why would someone have to help Jesus carry the cross?
- Why would Jesus rather have no one weep for him? How might the crowds feel about what he said? How would you paraphrase what he meant by proverb in verse 31?
- What attitudes and motives do you see in the crowd following this death-march? In the rulers? The criminals? The Soldiers? The sign? (Vs 38) In Jesus?
- What aspects of the gospel message do you see in verses 40-43?
- Do you think the written notice (put there at Pilate's request) hints at sarcasm of truth on Pilate's part? Why?

REFLECT

- How do you view the crucifixion: Necessary evil? Common tragedy? Cruel and unusual punishment? Sacrifice for sin? Triumph over injustice? Why?
- When did the meaning of the death of Christ begin to make sense to you? How would you explain the necessity of the crucifixion to a non-Christian person? What hope does Christ's death give you?
- Who in this story do you identify with most? With least? Why?
- What impresses you about Jesus here?