

**5 APRIL 2020**  
**PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD**

**OPENING HYMN**

**Christ became obedient unto death**

On the cross for us.  
Therefore God exalted him to such a height,  
Giving him a name above every other name.

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*

**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.

**FIRST READING:** Is 50:4-7

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Psalm 21:8-9, 17-20, 23-24

**Response:** My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

All who see me deride me.  
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.  
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;  
let him release him if this is his friend. **R/**

Many dogs have surrounded me,  
a band of wicked beset me.  
They tear holes in my hands and feet.  
I can count every one of my bones. **R/**

They divide my clothing among them.  
They cast lots for my robe.  
O Lord, do not leave me alone,  
my strength, make haste to help me! **R/**

I will tell of your name to my brethren  
and praise you where they are assembled.  
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;  
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.  
Revere him, Israel's sons.' **R/**

**SECOND READING:** Phil 2:6-11

**GOSPEL:** Mt 27:11-54

**REFLECTION:**

The first reading is the third Suffering Servant song taken from the book of Isaiah. Isaiah points of Jesus' conscious and active choice to remain faithful to his mission i.e. his Father's plan of Salvation to save all humanity. "...neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me..."

At the Last Supper Jesus tells his disciples that their faith will be shaken but the disciples deny this. When their faith is threatened and there is a cost involved, like the disciples we quickly look to protect ourselves. In the present case the disciples fled. Jesus' faith remains unshaken. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus says 'Yes' to doing his Father's will. During his trial he is silent before his accuser's who levy false allegation against him. Jesus is faithful to his father's will and freely, willingly and obediently gives up his spirit on the cross.

In the Second Reading St. Paul tells us about Jesus' passion. The Gospel stops at the empty tomb, but St. Paul tells us about an even greater sign yet to come i.e. God exalts him.

As Christ's disciples, Palm Sunday invites us to personally reflect on who Jesus is to each one of us? **(Pause to reflect.)** In our daily lives are others able to see Christ living in me? **(Pause to reflect.)** Like Jesus, in our daily life, we need to learn to embrace death i.e. a life of total self-giving, so that, we can share in the New Life that he invites us to. By placing our trust in Jesus, we can remain faithful in our commitment in following him. **(Pause to reflect.)**

**PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

**Leader:** Jesus shed his blood on the cross at Calvary for the forgiveness of sins. Trusting in his compassion and love let us confidently bring our prayers to our heavenly Father.

**Our response is:** Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all the members of the Church, that they may remain faithful to following Christ; **pause;** let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all the nations of the world struck by the pandemic of Corona virus that God may inspire the leadership and people of good will to work selflessly for the welfare of their citizens; **pause;** let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those who are suffering and nearing death that they may know the peace of Christ and find comfort through all those who care for them; **pause;** let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all baptised Christians that they may emulate the humility, obedience and faithfulness of Christ; **pause;** let us pray to the Lord...

**Leader:** God of exceeding goodness, by Jesus' life, death and resurrection you revealed your great love for humnaity. Hear the prayers of your Church and bring us to Easter joy. We ask this, through Christ our Lord.

**Response:** Amen

**Leader:** At the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, we dare to say:  
*(All say the Lord's Prayer together)* Our Father, ...

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

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.

### **PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS**

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **CLOSING HYMN**

**If you wish to be my disciple,  
Take up your cross and follow me.**

Whoever loves his life will only lose it.  
It's only sacrifice that brings one gain.

The one who holds the plough and looks behind,  
My kingdom cannot serve, my peace won't find.

A servant is less than his master:  
If they hated me, they will hate you.

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*