

# GOOD FRIDAY CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION

## Preparation for Ministers of the Word

### ATTEND

Ask the Spirit for help in hearing God's message

### BREAK OPEN THE WORD

Ask what the passages say about who God is, what your relationship is, and what God is saying

### CONNECT

How will you respond this week to what you have read or heard?

#### The feast

The two gospels in this Sunday's liturgy move from exaltation ('Hosanna!') to abandonment ('why have you forsaken me?'). The Christian mystery, however, moves from abandonment (dying to self) to exaltation (rising to new life).

#### Connecting to life experience

Christians tend to understand the cross in the narrow terms of an instrument of torture and death. The Liturgy of the Word this Sunday reminds us that the cross is also the means of exaltation.

#### GOSPEL

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John  
(18:1 - 19:42)

**N** Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kedron valley. There was a garden there, and he went into it with his disciples. Judas the traitor knew the place well, since Jesus had often met his disciples there, and he brought the cohort to this place together with a detachment of guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons. Knowing everything that was going to happen to him, Jesus then came forward and said,

✘ Who are you looking for?

**C** Jesus the Nazarene.

✘ I am he.

**N** Now Judas the traitor was standing among them. When Jesus said "I am he," they moved back and fell to the ground. He asked them a second time,

✘ Who are you looking for?

**C** Jesus the Nazarene.

✘ I have told you that I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.

**N** This was to fulfil the words he had spoken: "Not one of those you gave me have I lost." Simon Peter, who carried a sword, drew it and wounded the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter,

✘ Put your sword back in its scabbard; am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?

**N** The cohort and its captain and the Jewish guards seized Jesus and bound him. They took him first to Annas, because Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had

suggested to the Jews, "It is better for one man to die for the people." Simon Peter, with another disciple, followed Jesus. This disciple, who was known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's palace, but Peter stayed outside the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who was keeping the door and brought Peter in. The maid on duty at the door said to Peter,

**C** Aren't you another of that man's disciples?

**N** He denied it saying: "I am not." Now it was cold, and the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were standing there warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered,

✘ I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together; I have said nothing in secret. But why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught: they know what I said.

**N** At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying,

**C** Is that the way to answer the high priest?

✘ If there is something wrong in what I said, point it out; but if there is no offence in it, why do you strike me?

**N** Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas, the high priest. As Simon Peter stood there warming himself, someone said *continued...*

*In the garden, Jesus knows all that will happen to him. He quietly takes command of the situation after Judas and the guards shatter the stillness. Set the scene and build momentum by revealing the changing moods.*

*Before Annas, Jesus speaks clearly and has the last word. Contrast the harshness of the guard, Jesus' honesty and poise, and Peter's fear and caginess.*

*With Pilate, the action shifts inside and outside repeatedly, along with Pilate's mood and control of the situation. Consider when responses should be immediate and when they should come after pause. Sustain the action through careful pacing, stress and feeling.*

*The narration of Jesus' death should sympathetically reflect the pain of Jesus, his mother and friends. Make the feeling of each character clear. Jesus' final words convey his receding Spirit and his acceptance of this.*

*In the garden scene, depict richly the images provided. Try and see what is happening. Read the last sentence reverently and quietly.*

#### Pronunciations

Caiaphas	KAI-a-fus
Praetorium	pray-TAW-ree-um
Gabbatha	GAB-uh-thuh
Golgotha	GOL-guh-thuh
Clopas	KLO-pas
Magdala	MAG-duh-luh
Arimathea	A-ruh-muh-thee-uh
Nicodemus	ni-ko-DEE-mus

to him,  
C Aren't you another of his disciples?  
N He denied it saying, "I am not." One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said,  
C Didn't I see you in the garden with him?  
N Again Peter denied it, and at once a cock crew.

They then led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the Praetorium. It was now morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves or they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover. So Pilate came outside to them and said,  
C What charge do you bring against this man?  
N They replied: "If he were not a criminal, we should not be handing him over to you."  
C Take him yourselves, and try him by your own Law.  
N The Jews answered, "We are not allowed to put a man to death." This was to fulfil the words Jesus had spoken indicating the way he was going to die.  
So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him, and asked,  
C "Are you the King of the Jews?"  
✘ Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?  
C Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?  
✘ Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent me being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.  
C So you are a king then?  
✘ It is you who say it. Yes, I am a King. I was born for this, I came into the world for this; to bear witness to my truth, and to all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.  
C Truth? What is that?  
N And with that he went again out to the Jews and said,  
C I find no case against him. But according to a custom of yours I should release one prisoner at the Passover; would you like me, then, to release the king of the Jews?  
N At this they shouted,  
C Not this man but Barabbas.  
N Barabbas was a brigand. Pilate then had Jesus taken away and scourged; and after this, the soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him and saying,  
C Hail, the king of the Jews!  
N And they slapped him in the face. Pilate came outside and said to them,  
C Look, I am going to bring him out to you to let you see that I find no case.  
N Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said,

C Here is the man.  
N When they saw him the chief priests and the guards shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"  
C Take him yourselves and crucify him: I can find no case against him.  
N The Jews replied, "We have a law, and according to the Law he ought to die, because he has claimed to be the Son of God." When Pilate heard them say this his fears increased. Re-entering the Praetorium, he said to Jesus,  
C Where do you come from?  
N But Jesus made no answer. Pilate then said to him,  
C Are you refusing to speak to me? Surely you know I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?  
✘ You would have no power over me if it had not been given you from above; that is why the one who handed me over to you has the greater guilt.  
N From that moment Pilate was anxious to set him free, but the Jews shouted, "If you set him free you are no friend of Caesar's; anyone who makes himself king is defying Caesar." Hearing these words, Pilate had Jesus brought out, and seated himself on the chair of judgement at a place called the pavement, in Hebrew Gabbatha. It was Passover Preparation Day, about the sixth hour. Pilate said to the Jews,  
C Here is your king.  
N They said, "Take him away, take him away, Crucify him!"  
C Do you want me to crucify your king?  
N The chief priests answered, "We have no king except Caesar." So in the end Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

They then took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull, or, as it was in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in the middle. Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to the cross; it ran: "Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews." This notice was read by many of the Jews, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city, and the writing was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. So the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate,  
C You should not write "King of the Jews," but "This man said: I am King of the Jews".  
N Pilate answered: "What I have written, I have written." When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem; so they said to one another,  
C Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to have it.  
N In this way the words of Scripture were fulfilled: They shared out my clothing among them. They cast lots for my clothes. This is

exactly what the soldiers did.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother,  
✘ Woman, this is your son.  
N Then to the disciple he said,  
✘ This is your mother.  
N And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home.  
After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfil the Scripture perfectly he said:  
✘ I am thirsty.  
N A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said,  
✘ It is accomplished;  
N and bowing his head he gave up the spirit.

*(Pause)*

N It was preparation day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during the Sabbath – since the Sabbath was a day of special solemnity – the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then the other. When they came to Jesus, they found that he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. This is the evidence of the one who saw it – trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth – and he gives it so that you may believe as well. Because all this happened to fulfil the words of Scripture:

Not one bone of his will be broken, and again, in another place Scripture says:

They will look on the one whom they have pierced.  
After this Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus – though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews – asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission, so they came and took it away. Nicodemus came as well – the same one who had first come to Jesus at night-time – and he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, following the Jewish burial custom. At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in this garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried. Since it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was near at hand, they laid Jesus there.

*("The Gospel of the Lord" is not said.)*

## FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (52:13 - 53:12)

See, my servant will prosper,  
he shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights.

As the crowds were appalled on seeing him  
- so disfigured did he look  
that he seemed no longer human -  
so will the crowds be astonished at him,  
and kings stand speechless before him;  
for they shall see something never told  
and witness something never heard before:  
'Who could believe what we have heard,  
and to whom has the power of the Lord been revealed?'

Like a sapling he grew up in front of us,  
like a root in arid ground.  
Without beauty, without majesty (we saw him),  
no looks to attract our eyes;  
a thing despised and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering,  
a man to make people screen their faces;  
he was despised and we took no account of him.

And yet ours were the sufferings he bore,  
ours the sorrows he carried.  
But we, we thought of him as someone punished,  
struck by God, and brought low.  
Yet he was pierced through for our faults,  
crushed for our sins.

On him lies a punishment that brings us peace,  
and through his wounds we are healed.

We had all gone astray like sheep,  
each taking his own way,  
and the Lord burdened him  
with the sins of all of us.  
Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly,  
he never opened his mouth,  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter-house,  
like a sheep that is dumb before its shearers,  
never opening its mouth.

By force and by law he was taken;  
would anyone plead his cause?  
Yes, he was torn away from the land of the living,  
for our faults struck down in death.  
They gave him a grave with the wicked,  
a tomb with the rich,  
though he had done no wrong  
and there had been no perjury in his mouth.  
The Lord has been pleased to crush him with suffering.  
If he offers his life in atonement,  
he shall see his heirs, he shall have a long life  
and through him what the Lord wishes will be done.

His soul's anguish over  
he shall see the light and be content.  
By his sufferings shall my servant justify many,  
taking their faults on himself.

Hence I will grant whole hordes for his tribute,  
he shall divide the spoil with the mighty,  
for surrendering himself to death  
and letting himself be taken for a sinner,  
while he was bearing the faults of many  
and praying all the time for sinners.

*Make sure that you have prepared this reading many times over before proclaiming it.*

*The reader needs to utilise several different "voices" to reflect the dialogue in this reading between God and the people.*

*The opening words of promise turn to their contrast and indicate the tone of proclamation.*

*The following parts can overwhelm people in their negativity. Read with empathy, and provide some variation so as not to laden the reading down.*

*The sadness here leads to thankfulness at the end of the paragraph. Present a sense of hope and forgiveness.*

*Pause between the sections of this long reading. Read with a sense of sadness.*

*God speaks at the end with a sense of hope. Remember, and convey to the assembly, that the death of the "servant" lead to glory, victory and triumph.*

## SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews (4:14-16; 5:7-9)

Since in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven, we must never let go of the faith that we have professed. For it is not as if we had a high priest who was incapable of feeling our weaknesses with us; but we have one who has been tempted in every way that we are, though he is without sin. Let us be confident, then, in approaching the throne of grace, that we shall have mercy from him and find grace, when we are in need of help.

During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was a Son, he learnt to obey through suffering, but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

*This reading has a sense of appreciation to it. The assembly should be strengthened by the fact that Jesus is one with us. Be reassuring and even courageous in your proclamation.*

*Use the words as a guide as to how they should be proclaimed.*

*Assure the assembly through a proclamation touched with boldness.*

### Key words and phrases in the scriptures

See, my servant will prosper, he shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights.

Ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried.

Father, I put my life in your hands.

He learned obedience and became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Jesus carried his own cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull.

Christ became obedient for us even to death, dying on the cross.

Therefore God raised him on high and gave him a name above all other names.

It is accomplished.

### To the point of the scriptures

To Pilate's question, 'Where are you from?' Jesus was silent.

Such a simple question! Yet, Jesus 'did not answer' Pilate.

Surely Jesus did know who he was ('I AM') and where he was from ('from above'). As we hear the proclamation of the passion from John's gospel, do we know who Jesus is and where he is from? Do we know who we are and where we are going?

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

**R.** Father, I put my life in your hands.

In you, O Lord, I take refuge.

Let me never be put to shame.

In your justice, set me free.

Into your hands I commend my spirit.

It is you who will redeem me, Lord. **R.**

In the face of all my foes

I am a reproach,

an object of scorn to my neighbours

and of fear to my friends. **R.**

Those who see me in the street

run far away from me.

I am like a dead man, forgotten in men's hearts,

like a thing thrown away. **R.**

But as for me, I trust in you, Lord,

I say: 'You are my God.'

My life is in your hands, deliver me

from the hands of those who hate me. **R.**

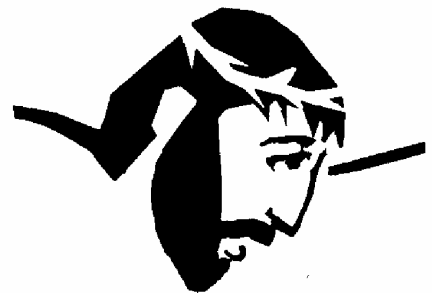
Let your face shine on your servant.

Save me in your love.

Be strong, let your heart take courage,

all who hope in the Lord. **R.**

(Psalm 30)



FOR THE USE OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD IN OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISH, WENTWORTHVILLE