

# PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD



## Open Us, Lord

God of salvation,  
you sent your beloved Son to dwell among us  
and show us the way, the truth, and the life.  
His humble obedience in pouring out his love  
for us on the cross  
unlocked the path to eternal life with you.  
Give us the strength to follow Jesus  
through Holy Week

to share in his passion and glory.  
Open our hearts to receive his gift of saving  
love anew  
so that we might in turn share it with  
all the world.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 2, 2023

## Actions Speak Louder Than Words



*Today's readings: Procession: Matthew 21:1–11. Mass: Isaiah 50:4–7; Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; Philemon 2:6–11; Matthew 26:14–27:66.* Today marks a major turning point in the liturgical year, and the way the liturgy is celebrated signals the transition. The assembly processes and waves palm branches just as did the crowds that gathered to welcome Jesus to Jerusalem. In the Liturgy of the Word, we participate in the proclamation of the Gospel account that follows that day, detailing the arrest, trial, conviction, torture, crucifixion, and death on the cross. It is heart-wrenching and mystifying.

In looking back at the last three Sundays of Lent, we recall that Jesus reveals his full identity to the woman from Samaria, the man blind from birth, and Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. On trial, however, he is mute before Pilate. His humility and obedience to God reveal his divinity.

Holy Week offers us the opportunity to walk alongside our Lord from the cross to the garden. This week is sacred. Approach it like a week-long retreat. Make arrangements to fully participate in the liturgies of Holy Week and to prayerfully accompany our Lord through it all.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, April 3 Faithful Friends

Mary anoints the feet of Jesus with perfumed oil and dries them with her hair. This tender gesture took place at a banquet held in Jesus' honor for restoring her brother Lazarus to life. We can look to Jesus and his authentic friendship with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, to emulate in our relationships. *Today's readings: Isaiah 42:1–7; Psalm 27:1, 2, 3, 13–14; John 12:1–11.*

### Tuesday, April 4 Wear the Armor of Faith

Both the prophet Isaiah and the psalmist recall the hand of God in our lives from the moment we are created in our mother's womb. The Gospel passage highlights our tendency to forget our origins in God and turn away in betrayal. Reflect on how your Lenten practices have helped you form habits that have strengthened your armor of fidelity. *Today's readings: Isaiah 49:1–6; Psalm 71:1–2, 3–4a, 5ab–6ab, 15 and 17; John 13:21–33, 36–38.*

### Wednesday, April 5 Spy Wednesday

Wednesday of Holy Week is referred to as “spy Wednesday” because the Gospel reading from Matthew reveals that Judas will betray Jesus. Look for an opportunity to upturn the ignominy of this day. Invite someone to attend Mass with you on Easter. Share your faith in Jesus with someone who doubts. Send an Easter card promising prayer to someone who needs spiritual support. *Today's readings: Isaiah 50:4–9a; Psalm 69:8–10, 21–22, 31 and 33–34; Matthew 26:14–25.*

### Thursday, April 6 Holy Thursday

The season of Lent ends as the sun sets today and the Sacred Paschal Triduum commences. Jesus, fully aware that “he had

come from God and was returning to God,” chooses the intimate gesture of washing his disciples' feet (John 13:5). He draws as close as possible to those he loves. As he did for his disciples, he does for us tonight at the Mass of the Lord's Supper. *Today's readings: Exodus 12:1–8, 11–14; Psalm 116:12–13, 15–16bc, 17–18; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; John 13:1–15.*

### Friday, April 7 Bend on Knee

In union with Christians around the world, the faithful assemble on Good Friday to recall the final hours of Jesus' life—when he is condemned to die, beaten, forced to carry his cross, and publicly crucified. Approaching the cross, the faithful offer a gesture of veneration. We touch, kiss, bow, or genuflect to the instrument of our salvation. God steadfastly invites us to draw close. Today we do that on bended knee. *Today's readings: Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Psalm 31:2, 6, 12–13, 15–16, 17, 25; Hebrews 4:14–16; 5:7–9; John 18:1–19:42.*

### Saturday, April 8 Keep Vigil

We continue our journey through the Sacred Paschal Triduum after sundown at the Easter Vigil. Through Scripture readings, psalms and prayers, we deliberately recount the entire plan of salvation from God's handiwork in creation to Jesus' overcoming the power of death in resurrection. Listen carefully to the story unfold. It is a magnificent synthesis not to be missed. *Today's readings: Genesis 1:1–2:2 or 1:1, 26–31a; Psalm 104:1–2, 5–6, 10, 12, 13–14, 24, 35 or Psalm 33:4–5, 6–7, 12–13, 20–22; Genesis 22:1–18 or 22:1–2, 9a, 10–13, 15–18; Psalm 16:5, 8, 9–10, 11; Exodus 14:15–15:1; Exodus 15:1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 17–18; Isaiah 54:5–14; Psalm 30:2, 4, 5–6, 11–12, 13; Isaiah 55:1–11; Isaiah 12:2–3, 4, 5–6; Baruch 3:9–15, 32–4:4; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11; Ezekiel 36:16–17a, 18–28; Psalm 42:3, 5; 43:3, 4 or Isaiah 12:2–3, 4bcd, 5–6 or Psalm 51:12–13, 14–15, 18–19; Romans 6:3–11; Psalm 118:1–2, 16–17, 22–23; Matthew 28:1–10.*

