

## 1. THE SOLEMN ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Hosanna to the Son of David;  
blessed is he who comes in the name of the  
Lord, the King of Israel.  
Hosanna in the highest.

## 2. THE SIMPLE ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Six days before the Passover,  
when the Lord came into the city of  
Jerusalem,  
the children ran to meet him;  
in their hands they carried palm branches  
and with a loud voice cried out:  
\*Hosanna in the highest!  
Blessed are you, who have come in your  
abundant mercy!  
O gates, lift high your heads;  
grow higher, ancient doors.  
Let him enter, the king of glory!  
Who is this king of glory?  
He, the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.  
\*Hosanna in the highest!  
Blessed are you, who have come in your  
abundant mercy!

## COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,  
who as an example of humility for the human  
race to follow  
caused our Saviour 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  
**Amen.**

## FIRST READING

Isaiah 50:4-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.  
The Lord has given me  
a disciple's tongue.  
So that I may know how to reply to the  
wearied,  
he provides me with speech.  
Each morning he wakes me to hear,  
to listen like a disciple.  
The Lord has opened my ear.  
For my part, I made no resistance,  
neither did I turn away.  
I offered my back to those who struck me,  
my cheeks to those who tore at my beard;  
I did not cover my face  
against insult and spittle.  
The Lord comes to my help,  
so that I am untouched by the insults.  
So, too, I set my face like flint;  
I know I shall not be shamed.  
The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## RESP. PSALM

Psalms 21

Response:

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

1. 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.)

2. Many dogs have surrounded me,  
a band of the wicked beset me.  
They tear holes in my hands and my feet.  
I can count every one of my bones. (R.)
3. 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.)
4. 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

Philippians 2:6-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the  
Philippians.

His state was divine,  
yet Christ Jesus did not cling  
to his equality with God  
but emptied himself  
to assume the condition of a slave,  
and became as men are,  
and being as all men are,  
he was humbler yet,  
even to accepting death,  
death on a cross.  
But God raised him high  
and gave him the name  
which is above all other names  
so that all beings  
in the heavens, on earth and in the  
underworld,  
should bend the knee at the name of Jesus  
and that every tongue should acclaim  
Jesus Christ as Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!  
Christ was humbler yet,  
even to accepting death,  
death on a cross.  
But God raised him high  
and gave him the name which is above all  
names.  
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!**

## GOSPEL

Mark 14:1-15:47

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Mark.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
(all bow during the next three lines)**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the  
Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living**

and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.**

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

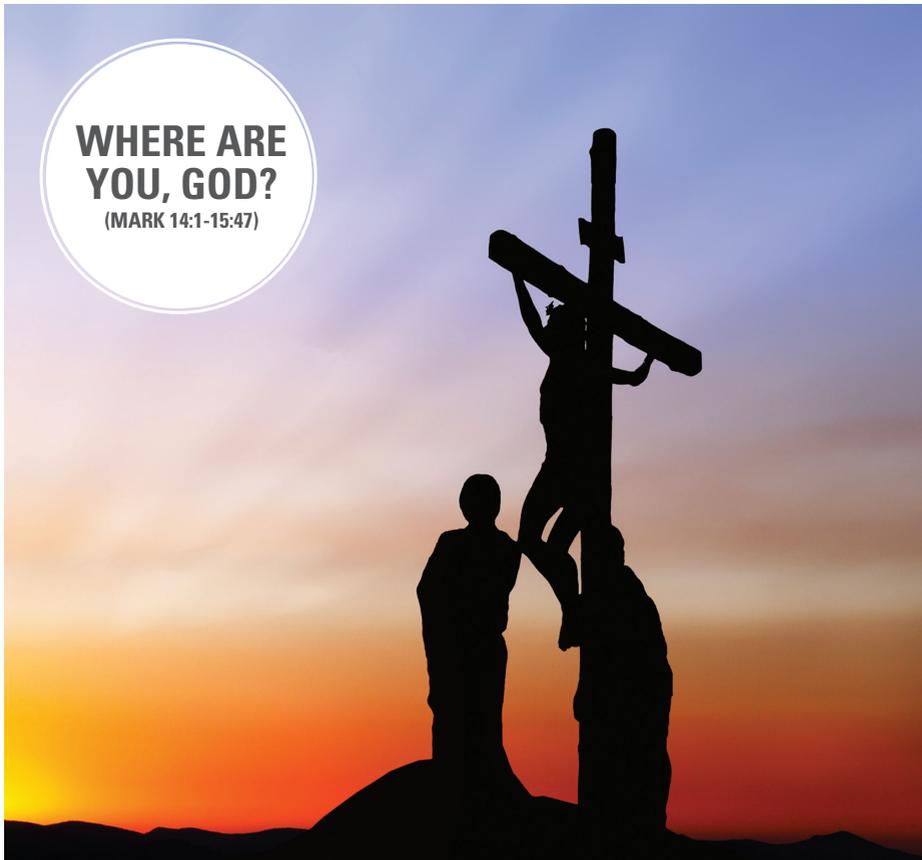
Through the Passion of your Only Begotten  
Son, O Lord,  
may our reconciliation with you be near at  
hand,  
so that, though we do not merit it by our own  
deeds,  
yet by this sacrifice made once for all,  
we may feel already the effects of your mercy.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my  
drinking it,  
your will be done.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.**



Mark's version of the Passion of Jesus is unremittingly bleak: as one author puts it, Jesus is "abandoned by his disciples, betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, accused of blasphemy by the priests, rejected in favour of a murderer by the crowd, mocked by the Sanhedrin and by Roman troops and by all who came to the cross, surrounded by darkness and seemingly forsaken by his God."

He suffers and dies alone and in utter desolation: there are none of the human touches that we find in the other accounts which relieve the picture of Jesus' being utterly forsaken.

Throughout the Gospel, Jesus has refused to allow people to refer to him as the Messiah. The probable reason is that if we read the Gospel of Mark carefully and ask ourselves why any human being would come to that conclusion about Jesus, we would have to say that the reasoning was that Jesus could perform works of power which we usually call miracles. But for Mark, the sign of Jesus being the Messiah is the cross. It is at the cross that the Gentile centurion can finally make the well-founded declaration that "In truth this man was a son of God". This is the answer to the devil's testing at the outset of Jesus' ministry, where he challenges Jesus, "If you are the Son of God..." The Roman soldier can make the valid confession about Jesus now because there can be no possible further misunderstanding about what it means to be the *Son of God*. It is Jesus' commitment to his mission, his obedience to the will of the Father which has brought him to this.

God's answer to Jesus' desperate cry comes after he dies: the veil of the Temple is ripped from top to bottom. It is now Jesus, not the Temple, where Jew and Gentile will encounter God, and these two groups are represented by the Roman centurion, Joseph of Arimathea, the women and the other people from Galilee who were present at Calvary. The name Jesus means God saves. God has saved people from their sins in the person, ministry, passion and death of Jesus. And through this dedication to his mission from the Father, Jesus will be glorified. ■

## REFLECT

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews tells us that in Christ we have a high priest who understands our human weaknesses because he has been tested in exactly the same way that we have, except for sin. In Mark's account of the Passion, we can see that Jesus has experienced the most extreme form of loneliness, feeling abandoned by everyone including those closest to him, even by God. It might not be stretching the point to say that Jesus experienced despair, if we take his final cry as it stands and accept the most obvious meaning without trying to qualify it.

All too often people find themselves in a similar situation and state of mind. In the most tragic cases, it can lead to suicide. Perhaps we can see from Mark's account of the Passion that Christ has plumbed the depths of that emotion and can understand the pain people experience there. After the cross came the resurrection: no situation is so bad that there is never any hope. ■

## LEARN

Calvary, or Golgotha, was a mound near the city wall of Jerusalem, not a green hill.

Crucifixion caused death by suffocation or asphyxiation, not by bleeding.

Criminals were crucified near to the road so that passers-by would be warned that they would suffer a similar fate if they committed a crime similar to that advertised on a notice above the crucified person.

The veil of the Temple was a curtain across the entrance to the Holy of Holies and separated the divine presence from the worshippers in the Temple courts.

## DO

During Holy Week, carry your palm, or a piece of it, with you to remind you of the lengths God is prepared to go to reach out to you personally.

## SAY

Truly, this was the Son of God.