

THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: Red • Psalter Week 2

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.

Antiphon During Procession

The children of the Hebrews spread their garments on the road, crying out and saying: Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

2. THE SIMPLE ENTRANCE 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 ashamed. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 21

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 the wicked beset me. They tear holes in my hands and my 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 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 Luke 22:14-23:56

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

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 two 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.**

PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE

Look, we pray, O Lord, on this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ did not hesitate to be delivered into the hands of the wicked and submit to the agony of the Cross. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**



Throughout the account of the Passion of Jesus, which takes us from the Last Supper to his burial, we find that many of the themes which characterise Luke's Gospel narrative recur.

Jesus prays on the Mount of Olives while he is tested as to whether he will be obedient to his mission from the Father and finds it a struggle, which the sweat falling *like great drops of blood* indicates. He heals the wound inflicted on the servant of the high priest by one of his disciples, and curtails the use of violence. Herod and Pilate are reconciled after their separate examinations of Jesus. Women have played an important part in Luke's version of the story, and Jesus takes time to speak to the *Daughters of Jerusalem* as he makes his way to Calvary. He prays for forgiveness for those who are crucifying him out of ignorance. He promises a place in Paradise to the criminal on the cross who appeals to him. His final words are a prayer of confidence in the Father. His death results in the conversion of those who witnessed it and return to the city *beating their breasts*, both of these verbs suggesting conversion. Luke omits the mention of the crown of thorns, which is an instrument of ridicule rather than torture. Finally, we have the women as witnesses to the place of Jesus' burial, thus setting the scene for the events of Easter day. ■

SAY

Father, into your hands I commend myself.

DO

Take a palm cross home and look at it during the week. Notice how one arm is horizontal, the other vertical. It may suggest that where the vertical (divine) world meets the horizontal (human) we find the cross. Make sure you attend the Holy Week services, if you can.

LEARN

Crucifixion was a *vindictive* punishment: it was not intended to reform the person.

It was also a deterrent to anyone who might be contemplating a similar crime.

Calvary was a mound just outside the city walls not far from a main road so that the warning would be most effective.

The upright bar of the cross may have been the trunk of an olive tree still rooted in the ground. ■

REFLECT

As we read or listen to Luke's account of the Passion of Jesus, we might be aware of a certain note of serenity about it. Jesus' ministry of healing and teaching by word and example continues. His death is of a piece with his life. His final words are a prayer of confidence in the care of the Father, not the cry of despair about being abandoned which we find in Mark. Jesus is very much in charge of himself and what happens to him. There is often a tendency to treat the Gospel accounts of the Passion and crucifixion of Jesus as simply different versions of the same event, in the way that witnesses to a traffic accident might give wildly differing accounts of the one incident. But the differences are due to the individual evangelists' understanding of who Jesus is. At the heart of our redemption is Jesus' willingness to accept the will of the Father, an acceptance which finds its clearest and most dreadful expression on the cross. During Holy Week, we are given the opportunity to contemplate the human cost to God and to Jesus of God's reaching out to human beings to invite us into a covenant relationship of life and love: this we do as we celebrate in the liturgy the events at the climax of Jesus life and ministry. As a result, may we respond positively to God's initiative at the Easter Vigil ceremonies. And the reason for our positive response, hopefully, will be that we are overcome with wonder and gratitude. ■