

AT HOME WORSHIP DEVOTIONAL

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Coral Gables, FL

Your church cares about you!

Palm/Passion Sunday

April 5, 2020

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

+ In the Name of the (+) Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

+ Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

+ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, our God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Kneel (A time for personal confession and prayer)

+ Most merciful God

C: You asked for my hands, my mouth, and my eyes to serve. I've given only a small part of my life to you. Forgive me, renew me, and send me into the world with a changed heart, O God that I might live to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

+ In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for me, and for his sake God forgives me for all of my sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ, he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit,

C: Amen

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

⁴The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.
⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.
⁶I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.
⁷The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
⁸he who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.
^{9a}It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

Psalm 31:9-16

- ⁹Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I | am in trouble;
my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat | and my belly.
- ¹⁰**For my life is wasted with grief, and my | years with sighing;
my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones | are consumed.**
- ¹¹I am the scorn of all my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors, a dismay to | my acquaintances; when they see me in the street | they avoid me.
- ¹²**Like the dead I am forgotten, | out of mind;
I am as useless as a | broken pot.**
- ¹³For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is | all around;
they put their heads together against me; they plot to | take my life.
- ¹⁴**But as for me, I have trusted in | you, O LORD.
I have said, “You | are my God.**
- ¹⁵My times are | in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who | persecute me.
- ¹⁶**Let your face shine up- | on your servant;
save me in your | steadfast love.” R**

Second Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

- ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel: Matthew 26:14-27:66

¹⁴One of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, “What will you give me if I betray him to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

¹⁷On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?” ¹⁸He said, “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, my time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’” ¹⁹So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

²⁰When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; ²¹and while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.” ²²And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, “Surely not I, Lord?” ²³He answered, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.” ²⁵Judas, who betrayed him, said, “Surely not I, Rabbi?” He replied, “You have said so.”

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” ²⁷Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

³⁰When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

³¹Then Jesus said to them, “You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written,

‘I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’

³²But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” ³³Peter said to him, “Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.” ³⁴Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.” ³⁵Peter said to him, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And so said all the disciples.

³⁶Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." ³⁹And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." ⁴⁰Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴²Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. ⁵¹Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" ⁵⁵At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, ⁶⁰but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" ⁶²The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" ⁶³But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you,

From now on you will see the Son of Man
seated at the right hand of Power
and coming on the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶What is your verdict?" They answered, "He deserves death." ⁶⁷Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, ⁶⁸saying, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?"

⁶⁹Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." ⁷¹When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷²Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." ⁷³After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." ⁷⁴Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. ⁷⁵Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.^{27:}

¹When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. ²They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

³When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. ⁴He said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." ⁵Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. ⁶But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." ⁷After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. ⁸For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, ¹⁰and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

¹¹Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." ¹²But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. ¹³Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" ¹⁴But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. ¹⁵Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. ¹⁶At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" ¹⁸For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. ¹⁹While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." ²⁰Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. ²¹The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas."

²²Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" ²³Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" ²⁴So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." ²⁵Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" ²⁶So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

²⁷Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

³²As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. ³³And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), ³⁴they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; ³⁶then they sat down there and kept watch over him. ³⁷Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

³⁸Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

⁴¹In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, ⁴²"He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. ⁴³He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" ⁴⁴The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

⁴⁵From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." ⁴⁸At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." ⁵⁰Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. ⁵¹At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵²The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. ⁵³After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

⁵⁵Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. ⁵⁶Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

⁵⁷When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶²The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." ⁶⁵Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." ⁶⁶So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

Glimpse At
April 5 2020
Matthew 26:14-27:66
Palm/Passion Sunday

What is the Passion of Christ?

Summary

Initially, the journey through Holy Week might appear to be a depressing litany of loss, betrayal, denial, and death. Yet, God's redeeming power is discernible even in times of tragedy and loss.

The passion of Christ includes the time period from the night prior to the crucifixion of Jesus until his death upon the cross. Significant emphasis has been placed on this time period to emphasize the sufferings of Jesus leading up to his death as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This time period is traditionally marked by his time in the Garden of Gethsemane and includes his prayers, betrayal by Judas Iscariot, abandonment and denial by his disciples, arrest, trials, beatings, and period of time on the cross

Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane

[John 18](#) mentions Jesus praying in the garden; Matthew and Luke detail the events of these prayers. Jesus prayed three times while his disciples were to keep watch, but instead fell asleep ([Luke 22:39-46](#)). Jesus' prayers were so intense that his sweat "became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground" ([Luke 22:44](#)). Some interpret this as literal blood (such as occurs with the condition of hematomidrosis), while others interpret this as meaning he was dripping with sweat. Either interpretation speaks to the intensity of his prayers.

His Betrayal

Judas Iscariot arrived at the garden with a crowd of those who sought to arrest Jesus. Though Judas had been one of his closest followers, he handed Jesus over to his betrayers with a kiss, a customary Jewish greeting ([Luke 22:48](#)).

Abandoned/Denied by Disciples

The Gospels record that all of Jesus' followers fled when Jesus was arrested ([Mark 14:50](#)). John and Peter followed at a distance to the high priest's home where Jesus was put on trial. Peter denied knowing Jesus three times while in the high priest's courtyard, which fulfilled Jesus' earlier prediction ([Luke 22:54-62](#)).

His Arrest

[Matthew 26:50](#) records, "Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him." His arrest took place at the hands of the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus and his claims to be the Messiah.

His Trials

The Gospels record seven different trials that took place at the hands of both the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities that occupied Israel at the time. Though Jesus had done nothing deserving of death, he was condemned to crucifixion. Pilate washed his hands to demonstrate his innocence of Jesus' blood, though he consented to the wishes of the Jewish leaders and crowd.

His Beatings/Sufferings

Luke summarized the treatment of Jesus during this night by stating, "Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, 'Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?' And, they said many other things against him, blaspheming him" ([Luke 22:63-65](#)). In addition, Jesus was flogged using a whip with braided pieces of either bone or perhaps lead balls, leaving many bleeding wounds that remained open when he was nailed to the cross to die.

The Cross

Roman crucifixion involved three nails, with one in each wrist (or hand) and one through both ankles to secure the person's feet. The Bible records that Jesus was crucified with two criminals, one on each side of him ([Luke 23:32-33](#)). Jesus gave seven specific recorded sayings at the cross before his death, a death later confirmed by Roman soldiers piercing his side.

Looking through the lens of faith

There are two sides to every story. Sometimes there is an obvious side and a hidden, not-so-obvious side. There are times when we need to put in a bit of effort to catch a glimpse of another perspective. When it comes to Bible stories, we might need to use a different lens altogether to help us see the "story behind the story."

That's especially true when we view the events of Holy Week. When we first encounter the story of the Passion, we might mostly notice the pain, loss, and anguish that Jesus experiences. Our heart goes out to him as he encounters one heart-rending challenge after another. The story is filled with sorrow and loss. But, as Christians, we know that there is much more to this story. This story, so central to our faith, compels us to look through the lens of faith to discover not only the evil that is at work but also the hope and grace that can be discovered.

There is the evil of those who are plotting to capture Jesus and finally silence his voice. There is the heart-wrenching loss of faithful disciples through betrayal and denial. There is the long, painful journey that leads to the cross. Yes, there is that side of the story. But, there is another side as well. It is a testament to faithfulness, to hope, and to God's grace and presence weaving through a shroud of despair.

The passion of Christ is so important to the Christian faith. Those who genuinely study Christ's passion will find a deeper love for the One who gave his life as a sacrifice for all, to give the opportunity for those who believe to have eternal life ([John 3:16](#)). This is not only the "story behind the story." For those of us "who believe in him," this story becomes our story of hope and grace that offers us life with Jesus forever. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilot, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the father. He will come again 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 the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER:

Merciful God, we know that your heart overflows with compassion for your whole creation. Pour out your Spirit on all people living with this illness, or who are living with anxiety about this illness, for which there is not yet a cure. Be with those who tend to the needs of the sick. Strengthen us all in body and spirit, console us when anxious, comfort us in grief and hearten us in discouragement. Help to remind us that you claim us as your own and are with us wherever we go. Through Christ, our healer and Lord. **Amen.**

PERSONAL PRAYER:

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION:

*The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you,
The Lord look upon you and give you his peace,
+ In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.*