Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Throughout Lent, we’ve been getting ready for our holiest time of the year: Holy Week. But as we read in the gospels, Jesus has been preparing for this his whole life. Jesus accepts what is about to happen because it is his Father’s plan and because he loves us so much. It will be hard for us to hear some of the things that happen to Jesus. He will be betrayed. People will say awful things about him. He will suffer terrible pain. He will carry the heavy wooden cross. And he will die. Don’t be afraid to think of Jesus on the cross. Don’t be afraid to think of how much he loves you.

Jesus, I love you. Help me stay close to you.

Matthew 21:1-11 • Isaiah 50:4-7 • Psalm 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24
Philippians 2:6-11 • Matthew 26:14—27:66
What would it be like to have a superhero as a friend? Someone who can fly or fight injustice and evil? It’s fun to imagine, but we know that superheroes are make-believe. Jesus, on the other hand, is really real! He is the Son of God who was born into our world, and who lived, taught, healed and worked mighty deeds. This week, we especially remember how he suffered and died on the cross and then rose from the dead to save us from the greatest evil—sin. Jesus is our Savior, who brings real justice, and our true eternal life.

Jesus, thank you for your life, death and resurrection!

Do you ever need to talk but nobody will listen?
That’s frustrating, especially when you have something important to say. You could talk in a loud voice, but that might make things worse. After all, who wants the whole world hearing what’s on your mind?

There are times when others really are too busy to give us their undivided attention. It’s not that they don’t care, but you might have to wait a little while. Just remember that God always wants to hear from you. He will always listen.

Lord, help me be patient!

Isaiah 49:1-6
Psalm 71:1-6, 15, 17
John 13:21-33, 36-38
Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear.

Isaiah 50:4

Morning after morning this week, we wake up to learn something new about the days leading up to Jesus’ death and resurrection. Today in the gospel, we read about Judas and his plans to betray Jesus. This is hard to hear. Yet, morning after morning, we know that Jesus loves us. Morning after morning, God asks us to open our hearts to his great love for us. This week, pray about the Scripture readings you hear. What can you learn about Jesus that can help you follow him more closely each day?

Lord God, open my heart to your great love for me.

Isaiah 50:4-9 • Psalm 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34 • Matthew 26:14-25
If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet.

John 13:14

HOLY THURSDAY

Thursday  April 9

In Jesus’ time, there were no sidewalks. People walked on dusty paths, and their feet got dirty. So if you were invited to someone’s house for dinner, a servant might wash your feet. But Jesus himself did this for his disciples, and he told them to do the same for others.

We no longer need to wash one another’s feet, but we can help in other ways. Our Lord helps us through our difficulties when we ask. Why not do the same for others? Start with your family and friends. Think about it—wouldn’t life be great if everyone did that?

Lord, help me do what you ask of me.

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14  •  Psalm 116:12-13, 15-18
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  •  John 13:1-15
Friday April 10

GOOD FRIDAY

When we hear these words at church today, we get down on our knees. Everything goes quiet so that we can spend a few moments thinking and praying about what is happening to our Lord. Whether you go to church today or you are someplace else, spend some quiet time thinking of Jesus on the cross. If you want, use the space here to write or draw how you feel. Share your feelings with God.

It is finished.

John 19:30

Isaiah 52:13—53:12 • Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 • John 18:1—19:42
After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

Matthew 28:1

I imagine that Mary Magdalene, Peter, James, John and the other disciples didn’t sleep much on the long, terrible nights after Jesus died on the cross. I imagine them tossing and turning, staring into the darkness, and weeping for their friend, and for themselves too. How would they ever get over this awful ache in their hearts?

Now, you and I know they wouldn’t be sad for much longer. The disciples would see Jesus again. And tonight in Catholic churches everywhere, the Easter fire will light up the darkness to show that Jesus has defeated death. People will pray and sing with joy:

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
...and he saw and believed.

John 20:8

The Resurrection of the Lord

Have you ever seen something so unusual, so strange, so...crazy that you just couldn’t believe your own eyes? When the disciples entered the tomb on Easter morning, they probably couldn’t believe their eyes. Jesus, who had died on the cross three days earlier, whose body had been laid in this tomb, was gone. We don’t know what Peter thought when he first saw all of this, but we know that John saw and believed. He knew there was only one explanation: God. God works every day in our lives, in big, unusual ways and in small ones. Believe it!

Jesus, you are risen! I believe!

Acts 10:34, 37-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Colossians 3:1-4 or
1 Corinthians 5:6-8
John 20:1-9 or Matthew 28:1-10
By the Lord has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. Psalm 118:23

What sign can you see in God’s creation that is wonderful in your eyes today? Draw or write about it here. Then share your joy with a friend!

Happy Easter! Jesus is risen!