

APRIL 2, 2023
PALM/PASSION
SUNDAY



From cheers to rejection to triumph.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

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| Sunday | Matthew 21:1-11 | Jesus enters Jerusalem |
| Monday | Mathew 26:14—27:66 | Jesus' trial and crucifixion |
| Tuesday | Isaiah 50:4-9a | The servant's humiliation |
| Wednesday | Philippians 2:5-11 | Christ shows us true humility |
| Thursday | John 13:1-35 | Jesus washes disciples' feet |
| Friday | John 18:1—19:42 | Jesus suffers and dies |
| Saturday | Psalms 31:9-16 | Prayer for protection |
| Sunday | John 20:1-18 | Christ's resurrection |

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Philippians 2:5-8 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Eternal God, from the cross you triumph over all the forces that lead us away from you; give us faith to follow the way of the cross through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Suffering God, in a world where many lack the food they need, help us to care for others as you care for us with this meal today. In Jesus' name, amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God's face shine on you with the steadfast love of the cross of Christ.
(Psalm 31:16)

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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Stay with Me



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When was a time you were part of a crowd that was cheering loudly?
- If you were part of the crowd cheering for Barabbas to be set free instead of Jesus, why do you think you would do that?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 26:14—27:66.

What we experience in life can help us see things in the Bible we might otherwise miss. For example, in the age of social divisions we witness today, we can understand how very fragile a democracy can be. Pilate gave the crowds a moment to be a democracy by asking them who to free, Jesus or Barabbas. The crowds chose Barabbas. The week before, crowds were cheering on Jesus as he entered Jerusalem. Within a week the crowds saw things differently. Jesus takes our fickleness, our lack of insight, our willingness to follow the crowd with him to the cross. It is all part of our brokenness that fails to see the truth of Jesus. However, our failures do not stop God's plan. God's plan—God's will—according to Philippians 2:10-11 is that *"at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."* From the cross we learn that our foolish ways as individuals and as a society will not conquer God's will.

Discuss: How do you tell the difference between the will of God and the will of a crowd?

Pray: **Suffering God, you know how we fail you and yet you love us all the way to the cross; give us faith and wisdom to follow you all the days of our lives through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you care for people whom others look on with disrespect?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

This coming week is Holy Week. We remember the journey of Jesus from his entry into Jerusalem to his last meal, trial, crucifixion, death, and resurrection. These stories are central to our faith. Choose a space in your home to observe Holy Week. Each day, add an item (listed below), think or talk about its' role in the Passion story, and close with the prayer. **Sunday:** Palm branch, **Monday:** Bottle of perfume, **Tuesday:** Coins, **Wednesday:** Bowl of water, **Thursday:** Bread, **Friday:** Nails, **Saturday:** Stone. After placing an item each day, pray: **Eternal God, help us to grow in our faith so that we may be faithful witnesses to the power of Jesus' resurrection. Amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org