



# THE SAVING WORD

PASSION SUNDAY (PALM SUNDAY) / A

2 APRIL 2023

**C. Barabbas.**  
**N.** Pilate said to them:  
**O.** What am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?  
**N.** They all said:  
**C. Let him be crucified!**  
**N.** Pilate asked:  
**O.** Why? What harm has he done?  
**N.** But they shouted all the louder,  
**C. Let him be crucified!**  
**N.** Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression, that in fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said:  
**O.** I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern.  
**N.** And the people, to a man, shouted back:  
**C. His blood be on us and on our children!**  
**N.** Then he released Barabbas for them. He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified.  
 The governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort round him. Then they stripped him and made him wear a scarlet cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying:  
**C. Hail, king of the Jews!**  
**N.** And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him.  
 On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had

reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him. Above his head was placed the charge against him; it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews'. At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said:

**C. So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!**

**N.** The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way, saying:

**C. 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. He put his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants him. For he did say, 'I am the son of God'.**

**N.** Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way.

From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice:

**J.** Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?  
**N.** That is: 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?'  
 When some of those who stood there heard this, they said:

**C. The man is calling on Elijah,**  
**N.** and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink. The rest of them said:

**C. Wait! See if Elijah will come to save him.**

**N.** But Jesus, again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

*All kneel and pause a moment.*

**N.** At that, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people.

Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said:

**C. In truth this was a son of God.**

*Longer form, Mt 26:14-27:66*

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**FIRST READING** Isa 50:4-7  
**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

*I did not cover my face against insult and I know I will not be ashamed.*

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.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Ps 21:8-9, 17-20, 23-24. R. v. 2

**R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned 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** Phil 2:6-11  
**A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians**

*He humbled himself to become like us and God raised him on high.*

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.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Phil 2:8-9  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! / Christ became obedient for us even to death, / dying on the cross. / Therefore God raised him on high / and gave him a name above all other names. / Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!**

**GOSPEL** Mt 27:11-54

**N.** The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (**N. Narrator J. Jesus O. Other single speaker C. Crowd, or more than one other speaker**)

**N.** Jesus, then, was brought before the governor, and the governor put to him this

question:

**O.** Are you the king of the Jews?

**N.** Jesus replied:

**J.** It is you who say it.

**N.** But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him:

**O.** Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?

**N.** But to the governor's complete amazement, he offered no reply to any of the charges.

At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at that time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate said to them,

**O.** Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?

**N.** For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. Now as he was seated in the chair of judgement, his wife sent him a message,

**O.** Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him.

**N.** The chief priests and the elders, however, had persuaded the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when the governor spoke and asked them:

**O.** Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

**N.** They said: