

## **Palm Sunday (Year B)**

### **Palm Procession - Mark 11.1-2,7-10**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Mark.  
Jesus and the disciples  
were approaching Jerusalem.  
When they reached Bethany,  
near the Mount of Olives,  
Jesus gave instructions  
to two of his disciples  
to go on ahead  
into the village,  
and to bring back  
a foal  
that they would find there.  
They brought the foal to Jesus,  
and made a saddle from their cloaks,  
and Jesus sat on it.  
Many people now  
spread their cloaks on the road,  
and others spread leaves  
that they had cut in the fields.  
Those going ahead of Jesus,  
and those following behind,  
shouted out, 'Hosanna!  
Blessed is the one who comes  
in the name of the Lord!  
Blessed is the  
coming kingdom  
of our ancestor David!  
Hosanna  
in the highest heaven!'  
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

### **Main Liturgy**

#### **First Reading - Isaiah 50.4-9a**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.  
The Lord God  
has taught me wisdom,  
so that I may speak  
words of comfort  
to the weary.  
Morning by morning,  
the Lord God awakens me,  
so that I may learn wisdom  
as a servant of the Lord.  
When I face  
persecution and violence,  
I do not hide my face,  
or turn away.  
Let my accusers  
confront me.  
I will set my face like flint.  
For I know  
that the Lord God brings justice,  
and I will not  
be defeated  
or ashamed.  
This is the word of the Lord.

#### **Second Reading - Philippians 2.5-11**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Let Christ Jesus  
be your example.  
He did not regard  
his equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a servant.  
Born in human form,  
he humbled himself,  
in faithful obedience,  
even to death on the cross.  
And now, God has highly exalted him,  
and has given him the name  
that is above every name,  
so that  
at the name of Jesus,  
all shall bow down,  
in heaven, on earth, and under the earth,  
and declare that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory  
of God the Father.  
This is the word of the Lord.

#### **Passion - Mark 14.1 - 15.47**

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Mark.

The chief priests and the scribes  
were looking for a way  
to arrest Jesus,  
and execute him.  
But they feared a riot  
if they made the arrest  
in a public place,  
or during the Festival of the Passover,  
which was only two days away.

Jesus was at Bethany, outside Jerusalem,  
in the house of Simon the leper.  
As Jesus sat at the table to eat,  
a woman came,  
with a carved  
alabaster jar  
of valuable  
perfumed  
ointment.  
She broke open the jar,  
and poured out the ointment  
on Jesus' head.  
Some of those present  
condemned her,  
saying that the ointment  
had been wasted,  
when it could have been sold,  
for a whole year's wages,  
and the money  
given to the poor.

But Jesus said, 'Let her alone.

She has done  
a beautiful thing for me.

You always

have the poor with you,  
and you can help them  
whenever you wish;  
but you will not always have me.

She has done what she could;  
she has anointed my body early,  
for burial.

And she will be remembered  
throughout the world  
for her good deed,  
wherever  
the good news  
is proclaimed.'

Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve,  
then went to the chief priests,  
offering to betray Jesus to them.

The chief priests were glad  
to receive this offer,  
and promised Judas payment.

And Judas began to look  
for an opportunity  
to betray Jesus.

On the first day  
of the Passover festival,  
the day when  
the Passover lamb  
is sacrificed,  
the disciples asked Jesus where they should  
make preparations  
for the Passover meal.

Jesus sent two of the disciples  
into the city,  
saying that they would see someone  
carrying a jar of water  
into a house.

They should ask  
the owner of that house  
to show them a guest room,  
where their teacher, and his disciples,  
could eat the Passover meal.

They would be shown  
a large upstairs room, furnished and ready,  
and they should  
make preparations there.

The disciples went to the city,  
and found everything  
as Jesus had told them;  
and they prepared  
the Passover meal.

When it was evening,  
Jesus and the twelve  
took their places at the table.

While they were eating,  
Jesus said, 'Truly, I tell you,  
one of you  
will betray me -  
one who is here,  
eating with me.'

The disciples were distressed,  
and began to say to him,  
one after another, 'Surely, not me, Lord.'  
Jesus said to them, 'It is one of the twelve,  
one who is eating,  
here at this table.

The Son of Man will go  
as it is written.  
And for the one who  
betrays him,  
it would have been  
better  
not to have been  
born.'

While they were eating,  
Jesus took bread,  
and after giving thanks,  
he broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples,  
saying, 'Take, and eat;  
this is my body.'

Then he took the cup,  
and after giving thanks,  
he gave it to them,  
and they all  
drank from it.

And he said, 'This is my blood, of the covenant,  
which is poured out for many.

And I will not drink  
the fruit of the vine again  
until I drink it  
in the kingdom of God.'

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

And Jesus said to them, 'You will all fall away;  
as the scripture says, "I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep will be scattered."

But after I am raised up,  
I will go ahead of you  
to Galilee.'

Peter said to Jesus, 'Others may fall away,  
but I will not.'

Jesus said to Peter, 'This very night,  
before the cock crows twice,  
you will deny me three times.'

But Peter insisted all the more, 'Even if I must  
die with you, I will not deny you.'

And they all  
said the same.

They went to a place  
 called Gethsemane.  
 And Jesus said  
 to his disciples, 'Stay here while I pray.'  
 Jesus took with him  
 Peter, James, and John.  
 And he became troubled,  
 and distressed,  
 saying to them, 'My soul  
 is consumed with grief, to the point of death.  
 Stay here, and keep watch.'  
 And going a little further,  
 he fell to the ground,  
 and prayed that, if it were possible,  
 the hour might pass from him;  
 saying 'Abba, Father,  
 for you  
 all things are possible;  
 remove this cup from me;  
 yet not my will,  
 but yours,  
 be done.'  
 Jesus returned  
 to Peter, James, and John,  
 and found them sleeping.  
 Jesus said to Peter, 'Could you not  
 keep awake one hour?  
 Stay awake, and pray,  
 that you may not  
 have to enter  
 the time of temptation, testing, and trial;  
 for the spirit is willing,  
 but the flesh is weak.'  
  
 Jesus left them again,  
 and prayed once more,  
 saying the same words.  
 And he returned to them again,  
 and found them sleeping,  
 for their eyes were heavy;  
 and they did not know  
 what to say to him.  
  
 And Jesus returned a third time,  
 and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping,  
 and taking your rest?  
 Enough. The hour has come,  
 and the Son of Man is betrayed  
 into the hands of sinners.  
 Let us be going;  
 see, my betrayer is at hand.'

While Jesus  
 was still speaking,  
 Judas, one of the twelve, arrived,  
 with a crowd,  
 with swords and clubs,  
 from the chief priests,  
 the scribes, and the elders.  
 Judas, the betrayer,  
 had arranged a signal with them,  
 saying, 'I will greet him  
 with a kiss.  
 Then you can arrest him,  
 and lead him away, under guard.'  
 So Judas  
 now approached Jesus,  
 and said, 'Teacher,'  
 and greeted him  
 with a kiss.  
 And they took hold of Jesus,  
 and arrested him.  
  
 Someone took a sword,  
 and struck  
 the servant of the high priest,  
 cutting off his ear.  
  
 Jesus said, 'Day after day  
 I was in your temple,  
 teaching,  
 and you did not  
 arrest me.  
 And now you come out  
 with swords and clubs  
 to arrest me  
 like an outlaw.  
 But let the scriptures  
 be fulfilled.'  
  
 All the disciples  
 now deserted Jesus,  
 and fled.  
 One young man amongst them  
 had been wearing a single garment  
 of linen cloth.  
 Those who had arrested Jesus  
 caught hold of it,  
 as they tried to arrest him,  
 and he fled  
 without it.

Those who had arrested Jesus  
 took him  
 to the high priest.  
 The elders, the scribes,  
 and the chief priests,  
 had all assembled there.  
 Peter had followed  
 at a distance,  
 into the courtyard  
 of the high priest;  
 and he was sitting with the guards,  
 warming himself  
 at the fire.  
 The chief priests, and the whole council,  
 were looking for testimony against Jesus,  
 to put him to death;  
 but they found none.  
 Many gave false testimony against Jesus,  
 but their testimony did not agree.  
 Some stood up,  
 and gave false testimony against him,  
 saying, 'We heard him say,  
 "I will destroy this temple, that is  
 made by human hands,  
 and in three days, I will build another,  
 not made by human hands."''  
 But even on this point,  
 their testimony did not agree.  
 Then the high priest stood,  
 and demanded of Jesus, 'How do you respond  
 to what they are saying?  
 Have you no answer?'  
 But Jesus was silent,  
 making no reply.  
 The high priest  
 asked Jesus, 'Are you the Messiah,  
 the Son of the Holy One?'  
 Jesus said, 'I am;  
 and you will see  
 the Son of Man,  
 seated  
 at the right hand of power,  
 and coming  
 with the clouds of heaven.'  
 Then the high priest  
 tore at his robes,  
 and said, 'We need  
 no further witnesses.  
 You have heard his blasphemy.  
 What is your verdict?'  
 And they all condemned him  
 as deserving death.  
 Some spat at him,  
 blindfolded him,  
 beat him,  
 and said to him,  
 'What now,  
 prophet!'

And the guards also  
 took him  
 and beat him.

One of the women who worked for the high priest  
 walked past  
 where Peter was keeping warm  
 in the courtyard below.  
 She looked closely at Peter,  
 then said to him, 'You were with  
 Jesus of Nazareth.'  
 But Peter denied it,  
 saying, 'I do not know  
 what you mean.'  
 And he moved  
 to the outer courtyard.  
 And the cock crowed.  
 The woman saw Peter again,  
 and said to those who were standing there,  
 'This man is one of them.'  
 Again, Peter denied it.  
 A short time later,  
 those who were standing there  
 said to Peter, 'Surely you are with him,  
 for you are a Galilean.'  
 Peter began to curse,  
 and swore with an oath,  
 'I do not know this man.'  
 And at that very moment,  
 the cock crowed  
 a second time.  
 And Peter remembered  
 that Jesus had said to him,  
 'Before the cock crows twice,  
 you will deny me three times.'  
 And Peter broke down and wept.

As soon as it was morning,  
 the chief priests consulted  
 with the elders, and the scribes,  
 and the whole council.  
 Then they bound Jesus, led him away,  
 and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you  
 the King of the Jews?'  
 Jesus replied, 'You have said it.'  
 Then the chief priests made  
 many accusations  
 against Jesus.  
 Pilate asked Jesus, 'Have you no answer?  
 See how many charges  
 they bring against you.'  
 But Jesus made no further reply.

Now it had become a custom  
 that at the festival  
 Pilate would release a prisoner,  
 whichever one  
 the people demanded.  
 Amongst the prisoners  
 was Barabbas.  
 He had committed a murder,  
 as one of the rebels  
 during an insurrection.  
 The crowd began to ask Pilate  
 to release a prisoner,  
 in keeping with his custom.  
 Pilate had now recognised  
 that it was out of envy  
 that the chief priests  
 had handed Jesus over to him.  
 So Pilate said to the crowd, 'Shall I release for you  
 the King of the Jews?'  
 But the chief priests  
 stirred up the crowd  
 to ask Pilate  
 to release Barabbas instead.  
 Pilate addressed the crowd again,  
 saying, 'What then  
 shall I do  
 with the one  
 you call  
 the King of the Jews?'  
 And they shouted back, 'Crucify him!'  
 Pilate asked them, 'Why,  
 what evil has he done?'  
 But they shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!'  
 So to appease the crowd,  
 Pilate released Barabbas.  
 And after having Jesus flogged,  
 Pilate  
 handed Jesus over  
 to be crucified.  
  
 The soldiers  
 led Jesus into the courtyard,  
 and called together  
 the whole guard.  
 They twisted some thorns  
 into a crown,  
 and put it on him.  
 They put him  
 in a purple cloak,  
 and began to salute him,  
 saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'  
 They struck his head with a reed,  
 spat upon him,  
 and knelt down,  
 as if they were honouring him.  
 And after they had mocked him,  
 they removed the purple cloak from him,  
 put his own clothes on him,  
 and led him out  
 to crucify him.

A man called Simon, from north Africa,  
 the father of Alexander and Rufus, was there,  
 coming in from the country;  
 and they took him,  
 and made him carry the cross.

They brought Jesus  
 to the place called  
 Golgotha,  
 The Place of the Skull.  
 They offered him wine, mixed with myrrh;  
 but he did not take it.  
 And they crucified him.  
 And they divided his clothing between them,  
 casting lots  
 to determine  
 what each of them  
 would take.

It was nine o'clock  
 in the morning  
 when they crucified him.  
 The inscription  
 of the charge against him  
 read, 'The King of the Jews.'  
 And with him,  
 they crucified  
 two thieves,  
 one on his right, and one on his left.  
 Those who passed by  
 mocked him,  
 shaking their heads,  
 and saying, 'You said you could  
 destroy the temple  
 and build it  
 in three days;  
 so save yourself;  
 come down  
 from the cross.'  
 The chief priests and the scribes  
 also  
 mocked him  
 amongst themselves,  
 saying, 'He saved others,  
 but he cannot save himself!  
 If he is the Messiah, the King of Israel,  
 let him come down from the cross,  
 and we will believe in him.'  
 And those who were crucified with him  
 also taunted him.

At midday,  
darkness came over the whole land  
for three hours.  
Then Jesus cried out,  
with a loud voice,  
'My God, my God,  
why have you forsaken me?'  
Jesus cried out in Aramaic,  
addressing God as 'Eli'.  
Some of the bystanders  
thought he was calling  
for Elijah.  
One of them  
brought a sponge,  
filled it with sour wine,  
put it on a stick,  
and held it up  
for Jesus to drink,  
saying, 'Wait,  
let us see  
whether Elijah  
will come to save him.'  
Then Jesus  
let out  
a loud cry;  
and breathed his last.  
And the curtain  
of the temple sanctuary  
was torn in two.  
When the centurion, who stood facing Jesus,  
saw that in this way,  
he breathed his last,  
he said, 'Truly this was  
the Son of God.'

Amongst the women, watching from a distance,  
were Mary Magdalene, and  
Salome, and  
Mary the mother of Joseph and the younger James.  
They had followed  
and provided for Jesus  
in Galilee.  
And many other women, who had  
travelled with him to Jerusalem,  
were also there.

It was the day of Preparation,  
that is, the day before the sabbath.  
Joseph of Arimathea  
was a respected member of the council,  
who was, himself, waiting expectantly  
for the coming of the kingdom of God.  
When evening came,  
he found the courage  
to go to Pilate, to ask  
for the body of Jesus.  
Pilate had not expected  
that Jesus would already be dead;  
but when Pilate had confirmed,  
with a centurion,  
that Jesus had indeed  
been dead for some time,  
Pilate granted the body  
to Joseph,  
as requested.  
Then Joseph  
bought  
some linen cloth,  
took down the body,  
wrapped it in the cloth,  
and laid it in a tomb  
that had been carved out  
from the rock.  
Then he rolled a stone  
across the entrance  
to the tomb.  
Mary Magdalene,  
and Mary the mother of Joseph,  
saw where the body was laid.

The Passion of the Lord.