

PALM PASSION SUNDAY



Journey with the Lord

Merciful Lord,
humbling yourself,
you came to us.
You endured humiliation, suffering,
and pain
as your followers turned away.
Today, we prepare to journey with you.
Open our ears
so that we may hear your voice.
Guide us in radically
accompanying you.
Wash away our sin
and lead us to paradise.
Who live and reign with God the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, April 13, 2025
Radical Accompaniment



Today's readings: Luke 19:28–40; Isaiah 50:4–7; Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; Philippians 2:6–11; Luke 22:14–23:56 or 23:1–49. Today we enter Holy Week as we celebrate Passion Sunday with procession with palms. Sunday's worship procession will be different than other Sundays. The assembly will receive palms and gather at the church's doors. As the Palm Sunday gospel is proclaimed, we hear of Jesus entering Jerusalem, greeted by a joyful crowd waving palms. At the end of the reading, all will wave palms and sing as we process to the sanctuary. These actions commemorate Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. During the proclamation of the passion, the horrifying story of Jesus' suffering and death is told. Not only do we hear of the crucifixion but also of Peter's denial of Jesus and

of the soldiers jeering at our Lord. Amid the betrayal and the mockery, though, women wept for him, a man carried Jesus' cross, a criminal asked to be remembered, and a righteous man wrapped the Lord's body and brought it to a tomb, where women prepared oils and perfume.

As a community, we contemplate the last moments of Jesus' human life. Aware that Jesus is with us in our moments of desolation, we take seriously our journey with him through his passion. Entering Holy Week, consider how you might walk with Jesus—be it praying with Scripture daily, inviting a friend or family member into your prayer, or serving at a local shelter. Offer a prayer in gratitude for Jesus' relentless accompaniment of us through life and through death.



This Week at Home

Monday, April 14 Fear Is not of God

The psalmist proclaims that, with the Lord as our light and salvation, we have nothing to fear. Fear can keep us from bringing authentic selves to our communities and to God. As we approach the Great Three Days, consider what might be keeping you from facing your fears and bringing yourself to the Lord. What fears do you need to release to journey with the Lord? Write down your thoughts and consider sharing them with a close friend or loved one. *Today's readings:* Isaiah 42:1-7; Psalm 27:1-3, 13-14; John 12:1-11.

Tuesday, April 15 Betraying, denying

Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him and that Simon (Peter) would deny him in front of a large crowd. We, too, have betrayed or denied a close friend, a loved one, or someone in our community (likely more than once). Today, pray for those you have hurt. Ask God to be with them and with you, as you repent. How can you move to reconciliation? *Today's readings:* Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalm 71:1-6, 15 and 17; John 13:21-33, 36-38.

Wednesday, April 16 Easter's Great Three Days

The Great Three Days celebrating our salvation begin tomorrow evening with the Lord's Supper and hand/footwashing. They continue through Good Friday and Holy Saturday and technically conclude with evening prayer on Easter Sunday. Though technically multiple days, the Three Days (Triduum) is celebrated as one liturgy. The slow unfolding of the days and movement of the liturgy helps us enter into the paschal mystery... *Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again.* If you have not already, find out when the Three Days are being celebrated at your congregation. Make plans to participate. *Today's readings:* Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 69:8-10, 21-22, 31-34; Matthew 26:14-25.

Thursday, April 17 Holy Thursday

In today's evening Holy Communion service, John's gospel tells of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. This radical and loving act of service is a model for us to follow. After washing the disciples' feet, Jesus tells them that they "ought to wash one another's feet." Participate in this humbling ritual by washing someone's hands or feet today. Consider inviting your family, roommates, or friends to do this with you. *Today's readings:* Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; Psalm 116:12-18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15.

Friday, April 18 Good Friday

We spend the day sitting with the discomfort that the detailed account of Jesus' agony and death brings. Consider community members who are persecuted. Christ suffers with them. Lift them up in your prayer. How can you accompany them? Ask God to enlighten you and inspire you to serve them. *Today's readings:* Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-17, 25; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42.

Saturday, April 19 Holy Saturday

Today marks the turning point of the Three Days (Triduum): we move from despair and eagerly await the glorious return of the Lord. Jesus' passing from death to life is marked. Attend an Easter vigil service. Come and see: New members are received into the Church around the world this night through Holy Baptism. Pray with and for those new members as well as all those for whom Lent and Holy Week has brought long awaited reconciliation. *Today's Easter Vigil readings:* Genesis 1:1-2:2; Genesis 22:1-18; Exodus 14:15-15:1; Isaiah 54:5-14; Isaiah 55:1-11; Ezekiel 36:16-28; Romans 6:3-11; Luke 24:1-12.