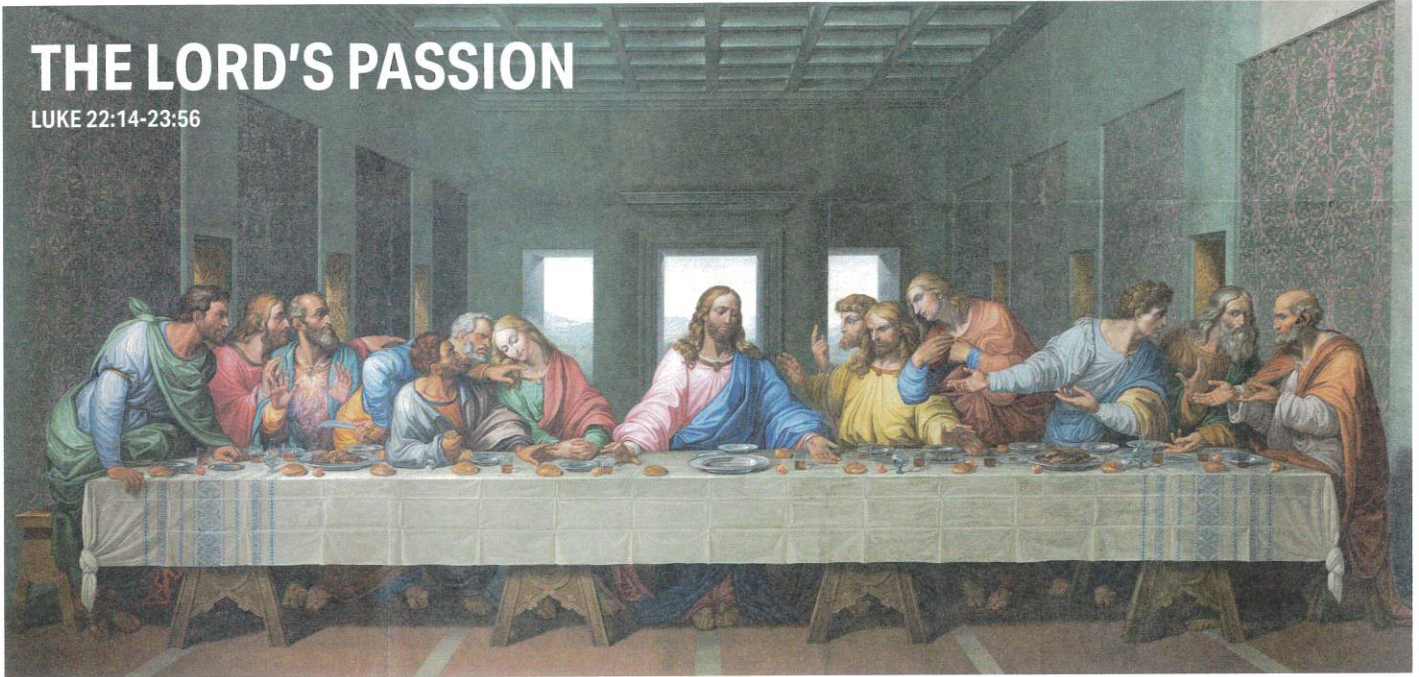


THE LORD'S PASSION

LUKE 22:14-23:56



This account from Luke's Gospel begins with Jesus and his disciples at the Paschal Meal. There is a sense of urgency, as Jesus knows what is about to happen. This is the last time he will break bread with these followers and he asks that all humankind continue to celebrate the Eucharist in memory of him.

At the table, there are reminders that the Eucharist is no guarantee against the possibility of betrayal. Judas sits there and will ultimately hand Jesus over to Pilate. Peter sits close by and his denial of Jesus brings an atmosphere of shame to the scene. Peter is so overconfident that he's prepared to go to prison and even die with Jesus. But that's not how the story unfolds. When the time comes for Jesus' crucifixion, the leaders will deliberately humiliate him further, as they place him beside two thieves. Torture and insults and sneering from the leaders present are what Jesus must contend with. Indeed, despite everything he experiences on the cross, he still has enough energy to speak to God. 'Father, forgive them.' In his last words to the thief, Jesus assures him that they would be together in paradise. ■

REFLECT

The famous city of Herculaneum, near Naples, was buried by the eruption of the volcano Vesuvius in 79 AD. Only in recent times, excavators found a body on the shore. It was the body of a young woman who died trying to protect a child from the eruption. From her bones, they knew that she'd been undernourished from childhood and marked by heavy work. The experts concluded that she'd been a slave or a servant, there not being much difference in the ancient world between slaves and servants. This is an image very familiar to us when we read the Gospels. Slaves are commonplace. They serve table, they do the hard work, their labour is tiring, and their bodies are worn. It's interesting that on reading the Passion of Jesus Christ, our first impression is of a slave being handed over to be crucified. Except this slave would show the world kindness, compassion, love and mercy. Like the servant in Herculaneum, her last act was to wrap a child in her arms for protection and safety. Jesus, the slave, the servant and the healer's last act would be to show the world the extent of God's love. This would ultimately get him killed. No one, not even his disciples, could fully comprehend Christ's message – that God so loved the world, he sent his only Son. So that the world might know his love. ■

DO

How can you be of service to God's people this week? Is there a reluctance in you to volunteer for a worthy parish initiative? How can you support your fellow lay missionaries?

LEARN

'The source of the Church's mission is the conviction that Christ is risen and fully alive and present to the community of believing Christians.' (Archbishop John Niendstedt)

SAY

'Give something, however small, to one in need. For it is not small to one who has nothing. Neither is it small to God, if we have given what we could.'

(Saint Gregory of Nazianzus)



THE PROCESSION OR SOLEMN ENTRANCE

ANTIPHON

*Hosanna to the Son of David;
blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,
the King of Israel.
Hosanna in the highest.*

ANTIPHON

*As the Lord entered the holy city, the children of the Hebrews
proclaimed the resurrection of life. Waving their branches of
palm, they cried: Hosanna in the Highest.*

*When the people heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,
they went out to meet him. Waving their branches of palm,
they cried: Hosanna in the Highest.*

THE SIMPLE ENTRANCE

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Six days before the Passover,
when the Lord came into the city of Jerusalem,
the children ran to meet him;
in their hands they carried palm branches
and with a loud voice cried out:
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant mercy!
O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!
Who is this king of glory?
He, the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant mercy!*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who as an example of humility for the human race to follow
caused our Saviour to take flesh and submit to the Cross,
graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering
and so merit a share in his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Isaiah 50:4-7

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of those who are taught,
that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary.
Morning by morning he awakens;
he awakens my ear
to hear as those who are taught.
The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious;
I turned not backwards.
I gave my back to those who strike,
and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard;
I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.
But the Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like a flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 22(21):8-9. 17-18a. 19-20. 23-24.
R. 2aR: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken 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, for in him he delights.' **R.**
2. For dogs have surrounded me;
a band of the wicked besets 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.
But you, O LORD, do not stay afar off;
my strength, make haste to help me! **R.**
4. I will tell of your name to my kin,
and praise you in the midst of the assembly;
'You who fear the LORD, give him praise;
all descendants of Jacob, give him glory;
revere him, all you descendants of Israel.' **R.**

SECOND READING Philippians 2:6-11

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God,
did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,
but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,
being born in the likeness of men.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.
Therefore God has highly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Philippians 2:8-9

R: *Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.*

Christ became for us obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.
Therefore God has highly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name that is above every name.
R: Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

GOSPEL Luke 22:14 – 23:56

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Through the Passion of your Only Begotten Son, O Lord,
may our reconciliation with you be near at hand,
so that, though we do not merit it by our own deeds,
yet by this sacrifice made once for all,
we may feel already the effects of your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my drinking it,
your will be done.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished with these sacred gifts,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,
that, just as through the death of your Son
you have brought us to hope for what we believe,
so by his Resurrection
you may lead us to where you call.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.