

Palm Sunday of The Passion of the Lord April 10, 2022
Our Lady of Perpetual Help

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

4 The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him that is weary. Morning by morning he wakens, he wakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. 5 The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward. 6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. 7 For the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been confounded; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame...

Responsorial Psalm: PS 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

R. (2a) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

All who see me scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads: "He relied on the LORD; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, if he loves him."

R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Indeed, many dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers closes in upon me; They have pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones.

R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

They divide my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots. But you, O LORD, be not far from me; O my help, hasten to aid me.

R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

I will proclaim your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you: "You who fear the LORD, praise him; all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him; revere him, all you descendants of Israel!"

R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

...6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form he

humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel: Luke 23:1-49

1 Then the whole company of them arose, and brought him before Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king." 3 And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." 4 And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, "I find no crime in this man." 5 But they were urgent, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place." 6 When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. 7 And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. 8 When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. 9 So he questioned him at some length; but he made no answer. 10 The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. 11 And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then, arraying him in gorgeous apparel, he sent him back to Pilate. 12 And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other. 13 Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, 14 and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him; 15 neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Behold, nothing deserving death has been done by him; 16 I will therefore chastise him and release him." [17 Now he was obliged to release someone for them at the festival.] 18 But they all cried out together, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas"— 19 a man who had been thrown into

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prison for an insurrection started in the city, and for murder. 20 Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus; 21 but they shouted out, "Crucify, crucify him!" 22 A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no crime deserving death; I will therefore chastise him and release him." 23 But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. 24 So Pilate gave sentence that their demand should be granted. 25 He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, whom they asked for; but Jesus he delivered up to their will. 26 And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. 27 And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. 28 But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck!' 30 Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' 31 For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?" 32 Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. 33 And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. 34 And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. 35 And the people stood by, watching; but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him vinegar, 37 and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38 There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." 39 One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 And he said, "Jesus,

remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." 44 It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. 47 Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, and said, "Certainly this man was innocent!" 48 And all the multitudes who assembled to see the sight, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. 49 And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance and saw these things.

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

This Sunday, Passion Sunday, completes the Season of Lent and introduces the beginning of Holy Week, the most memorable week of the liturgical year. For one week of the year we are encouraged to focus all of our faculties on recalling and reliving Jesus' Passion, culminating in an explosion of joy at Jesus' resurrection. We must all confess that in some years Holy Week has been much more meaningful than in others, usually depending on the degree to which we have been able to grasp the significance of his death and resurrection for us. Jesus' Passion is introduced with the joyous acclamation of the people of Jerusalem proclaiming, "Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord," as Jesus entered Jerusalem. Jesus' Passion nears its end with many of the same people tumultuously yelling "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Jesus comes humbly riding into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt, and exits by being taken outside of Jerusalem to be crucified and carried in burial garments to a tomb beyond the city's gate. One thing holds true in this week of contrasts, that is the disciples' inability to grasp what is taking place or the significance of this Passover. Praise be to the Holy Spirit who later made all things clear to them and caused these things to be recorded for our edification for all eternity. In this recounting of Jesus' Passion there appear many characters in whom, with just a little bit of reflection, we can discover ourselves. With dismay we may find ourselves among those who contributed to his death. For as Fr. Richard John Neuhaus points out, "For whom does he pray forgiveness? For the leaders of his own people, a fragile, frightened establishment that could not abide the threat of the presence of a love so long delayed. For pitiable Pilate, forever wringing his hands, forever soiled. For the soldiers who did the deed, who wielded the whip, who drove the nails, who thrust the spear, it all being but a day's work on foreign assignment, far from home. And for us he asks forgiveness, for we were there." (From Death on A Friday Afternoon) If it is with dismay that we discover our complicity in Jesus' death, it is with relief and joyous exaltation that we also discover that we are included among those for whom Jesus prays, asking the Father to forgive. Fr. Neuhaus rightly draws attention to our inclusion both among the guilty standing at the foot of the cross and among those forgiven by Christ from the cross. Sin and its accompanying guilt has been with humankind since the beginning. Someone has jokingly said, "Guilt is the gift that keeps on giving." Unfortunately, never ending guilt is no joke when it remains unrecognized, unclaimed, and unforgiving. Rather, guilt hangs over us like an ever-abiding cloud blotting out the Son's warmth. If there is no recognized guilt, then there can be no recognized forgiveness. So it is important as we enter Holy Week that we come face to face with both our guilt, and Christ's forgiveness. We must, looking through the eyes of Christ, see ourselves standing in the crowd, unwittingly participating in his crucifixion. However, it is also imperative, lest we not be able to bear it, to hear ourselves included in Jesus' request to the Father for forgiveness. If Christ died to secure our forgiveness and relieve both the penalty and guilt of our sin, we do him and ourselves a great disservice by not acknowledging his completed work of forgiveness, and claiming it as our rightful inheritance as his followers. As the reality of forgiveness grips our soul we too will experience an explosion of joy.

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INVITATION TO REFLECT

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading

1. What does this prophesy indicate about the Messiah?

Second Reading

2. What aspect of Jesus' humility is most significant to you?
3. What ramifications should verses 9-11 have on the way in which we live in the future?

Gospel Reading

4. With whom do you most identify in these passages?
5. What contrast do you see between the disciples and Jesus?
6. What do you think it means to share in Jesus' passion?
7. With what points of his passion can you identify?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer