

# WELCOME

Good morning/ evening, and welcome to St Mary's Parish.

Abandonment has two faces. On the one hand, Jesus suffers abandonment not only by his followers but even by God. On the other hand, Jesus freely chooses an abandonment of his own: letting go of his rightful claim to 'equality with God' (second reading), to his human dignity, and to life itself. For his choice to abandon all, God lifts Jesus in exaltation. This is more than the 'plot' of Holy Week; it's the core of Christian life.

Please say "hello" to those next to you, and if you do not know those seated near you, introduce yourself and say "hello."

We now keep in mind our sick brothers and sisters, especially those in our newsletter.

Our presider this morning/evening is -

Please join us as we begin with the Processional Hymn.

## First Reading

Isaiah 50:4-7 (JB)

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.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 21:8-9, 17-20, 23-24 (JB)

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

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.**

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.**

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

Philippians 2:6-11 (JB)

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.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Acclamation

Philippians 2:8-9 (JB)

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

Matthew 27:11-54 (JB)

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate, the governor, and the governor put to him this question, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' Jesus replied, 'It is you who say it.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him, 'Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?' 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, 'Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?' For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. Now as he was seated in the chair of judgment, his wife sent him a message, 'Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him.'

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, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' they said 'Barabbas'. 'But in that case,' Pilate said to them 'what am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all said, 'Let him be crucified!' 'Why?' he asked 'What harm has he done?' But they shouted all the louder, 'Let him be crucified!' 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, 'I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern.' And the people, to a man, shouted back, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' 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, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' 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 mixed with gall, which he tasted but refused 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 '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!' The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way. 'He saved others,' they said '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."' 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, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me!' When some of those who stood there heard this, they said, 'The man is calling on Elijah,' and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. 'Wait!' said the rest of them 'and see if Elijah will come to save him.' But Jesus again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

All kneel and pause a moment.

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, 'In truth this was a son of God.'

## General Intercessions

**Celebrant:** Because our Lord Jesus is merciful and loving we never hesitate to bring him our prayers.

### Reader:

1. Let us pray for the leaders of our faith community be strengthened and inspired to celebrate this Holy Week and Easter with sincere fervour and understanding, **(Pause)** We pray to the Lord.
2. Let us pray for all of us to take time today and this coming week to deepen our love of Jesus, **(Pause)** We pray to the Lord.
3. Let us pray for those who return to this church at Easter after a long absence may discover a reason for remaining with us, **(Pause)** We pray to the Lord.
4. Let us pray for the victims of violence, persecution, and discrimination receive the help they need to rebuild their lives, **(Pause)** We pray to the Lord.
5. Let us pray for the poor, the starving, the homeless, and the unemployed find relief from their conditions through our continued charity and support, **(Pause)** We pray to the Lord.
6. Let us pray for Thomas and Daisy Keys who are to be Baptised into the Catholic faith this weekend. May they always be close to God in this life and with Him in eternal joy. **(Pause)** We pray to the Lord.
7. Let us pray for those who have passed into eternal life, and those whose anniversary of death occurs at this time. We also pray for those who have no one to remember them in their prayers. May they find eternal rest and comfort within God's own life and love. *Together we pray* **(All)** Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord! And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. **(Pause)** We pray to the Lord.

**Celebrant:** God of life and love, in your mercy hear our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen.