

## **Prayer of the Day**

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a**

<sup>4</sup>The Lord GOD has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to sustain  
the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he wakens—  
wakens my ear  
to listen as those who are taught.

<sup>5</sup>The Lord GOD has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,  
I did not turn backward.

<sup>6</sup>I gave my back to those who struck me,  
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;  
I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.

<sup>7</sup>The Lord GOD helps me;  
therefore I have not been disgraced;  
therefore I have set my face like flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;  
<sup>8</sup>he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.

<sup>9a</sup>It is the Lord GOD who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?

*...“Word of God, Word of Life.”*

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading: Philippians 2:5-11**

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
<sup>8</sup>he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

*...“Word of God, Word of Life.”*

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**PALM / PASSION SUNDAY GOSPEL**  
**A Four-Gospel Abridged Harmonization**

P A reading from the holy gospels.

**C Glory to you, O Lord.**

P When Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem, reaching Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples ahead, saying to them,

**C Go into the village. You will see a young donkey tied there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks what you are you doing, say "The Lord needs it and will return it soon."**

P The disciples brought the colt to Jesus. After throwing their garments over it, he sat on it. Many in the crowd spread their garments on the road ahead of him, spreading branches they had cut in the fields. Jesus was in the center of the procession, as the people all around him shouted:

**C Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! 🛎**

P When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil wondering who this was. The crowds proclaimed:

**C This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth.**

P [Several days later, after Jesus was arrested]: He was taken to the house of the High Priest, Caiaphas. With the chief priests, elders, and teachers of the Law gathered, Caiaphas questioned him. Many witnesses lied about Jesus, but their stories did not agree. Some gave witness:

**C We heard him say, "I will tear down this Temple, and after three days, I will rebuild it."**

P Caiaphas, the High Priest, questioned Jesus:

**C How do you answer the accusations brought against you? Are you the Messiah, the Son of God?**

P Jesus answered:

**C I am. And you will see the Son of Man seated at the right side of the Almighty, and coming with the clouds of heaven!**

P With that, the High Priest tore his robes and said:

**C We need no more witnesses! You have heard his blasphemy!**

P Asking the leaders and people what their decision was, they answered:

**C He deserves to die!**

P They mocked and beat him, blindfolded and taunted him, saying:

**C Be a prophet! Guess who hit you!**

P Early in the morning the chief priests met with the elders, the teachers of the Law, and the whole Council to make plans. They put Jesus in chains, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked Jesus if he was King of the Jews, and Jesus answered:

**C You have said so.**

P Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds:

**C I find no crime in this man.**

P The chief priests were urgent saying:

**C He stirs up the crowds with his teachings!**

P When Pilate heard this, he sent him to Herod, who questioned Jesus at length, but he gave no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Herod and his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Herod sent him back to Pilate. Pilate said:

**C You brought this man as one who was perverting the people. After examining him, I do not find this man guilty of any of your charges. Neither did Herod. He has done nothing deserving of death. I will therefore have him**

**whipped, and then release him.**

P But the crowd cried out together:

**C Do not release him! Give us Barabbas!**

P Barabbas was a man who was in prison for insurrection and murder. Pilate addressed them again, wanting to release Jesus. But the crowd shouted:

**C Crucify him!** 🔔

P Pilate again said to them:

**C Why? What evil has he done? I find no crime deserving of death. I will have him whipped and release him.**

P But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries and shouting:

**C Crucify him! Crucify him!** 🔔🔔

P Pilate asked:

**C Shall I crucify your King?**

P They shouted back:

**C We have no king but Caesar! If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend!**

P Pilate took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, released Barabbas, and delivered Jesus over to be crucified. The soldiers took him away, clothed him with a purple cloak, placing a crown of thorns on him, mocking him:

**C Hail, King of the Jews!**

P After beating him, they led him away to be crucified. On the way, they compelled Simon of Cyrene to carry his cross. A great crowd of people followed, and women wailed in grief. Jesus turned to them and said:

**C Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children.**

P Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place called "The Skull," they crucified him and the criminals, one on the right, the other on the left. And Jesus said:

**C Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.**  
🔔

P The soldiers cast lots to divide his garments. The people stood by, watching while the rulers scoffed saying:

**C Save yourself!**

P The soldiers mocked him, offering him vinegar, and saying:

**C If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!**

P Pilate had an inscription placed on the cross:

**C This is the King of the Jews.**

P One of the criminals who was hanged railed at him, saying:

**C Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!**

P The other shouted back, saying:

**C Do you not fear God? You and I are rightly condemned! We are receiving what we deserve. This man has done nothing wrong.**

P That criminal said:

**C Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power.**

P Jesus answered:

**C Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.** 🔔

P At about twelve o'clock noon, there was darkness over the whole land until three o'clock. The sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus said:

**C It is finished!** 🔔

P Then he cried out in a loud voice:

**C Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!** 🔔

P Having said this, Jesus breathed his last, and died. 🔔🔔🔔

### ***pause for prayerful reflection***

P When the centurion saw what had taken place, he said:

**C Truly, this man was the Son of God!** 🔔🔔🔔

P The crowd, which had gathered to see these things, saw what had taken place, and returned home quietly and sadly...

P The gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need  
*A brief silence.*

God of life and love, we thank you for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus,  
your Son, our Lord. Help us to remember his sacrifice daily. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

As disciples of old welcomed your Son with garments and palm branches, prepare us to welcome him into our daily lives. Help us, and all people, to praise him by serving, witnessing, and living in sacrificial love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Be gracious and generous to your children in every distress and anguish. May the loving service and ministries of the church make your grace visible in the world. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for our nation and every nation of the world, that justice, compassion,

and your Holy Spirit guide leaders and all who govern. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those who are persecuted and oppressed, those who are weary and struggling, those who are poor and homeless, those who are broken. Send out ministers of mercy and service. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the sick and suffering. Grant them healing and strength. We pray for all those on our personal and congregational prayer lists. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those who are grieving, that the triumph of the cross and resurrection will flow into their hearts and souls. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Faithful and loving God, hear our prayers and mercifully answer us according to your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**