

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



Every year the liturgy for the celebration of Palm Sunday includes a reading of the Passion narrative. The crowd shouting, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" is contrasted with the crowd demanding "Crucify him". "Hosanna in the highest" is contrasted with "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?". In reality, the contrast is even

Chesterton comments that for an instant God himself seemed to be an atheist. St Paul tells the Corinthians, "He became sin who knew no sin" (2 Cor 5:21). All scripture is revelation so what is being revealed to us in the dying of the forsaken Jesus on the cross? One of the great mysteries of our faith is the incarnation. God becoming man. What sort of a man did God become?

more extreme than the one expressed by the fickleness of the crowd. God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity is there dying a shameful death on the cross condemned as a criminal, crying out his forsakenness before all the world.

The writer G.K.

He did not become a powerful man, a rich man, a successful man. He did not come down to earth as a prince, an emperor, a king. He came down to earth as a man who experienced being forsaken by God. This is what Jesus reveals to us regarding the mystery of his incarnation in his cry of abandonment. He reveals to us the man he became: a man who was rejected, humiliated, spat upon, nailed to a cross, utterly alone, so alone that he feels that even his God has abandoned him. Who could fail to love such a man?



POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL FRATELLI TUTTI BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL



CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

277. The Church esteems the ways in which God works in other religions, and "rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for their manner of life and conduct, their precepts and doctrines which... often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men and women".²⁷¹ Yet we Christians are very much aware that "if the music of the Gospel ceases to resonate in our very being, we will lose the joy born of compassion, the tender love born of trust, the capacity for reconciliation that has its source in our knowledge that we have been forgiven and sent forth. If the music of the Gospel ceases to sound in our homes, our public squares, our workplaces, our political and financial life, then we will no longer hear the strains that challenge us to defend the dignity of every man and woman".²⁷² Others drink from other sources. For us the wellspring of human dignity and fraternity is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. From it, there arises, "for Christian thought and for the action of the Church, the primacy given to relationship, to the encounter with the sacred mystery of the other, to universal communion with the entire human family, as a vocation of all".²⁷³

271. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions *Nostra Aetate*, 2.

272. Ecumenical Prayer Service, Riga, Latvia (24 September 2018); *L'Osservatore Romano*, 24-25 September 2018, p. 8.

273. *Lectio Divina*, Pontifical Lateran University, Rome (26 March 2019); *L'Osservatore Romano*, 27 March 2019, p. 10.

Jubilee of Seminarians

Bishop Robert Barron
(Gospel Reflection - Sunday, April 13, 2025
- Word on Fire)

Friends, how dark are the readings for Palm Sunday! We read through [the] Passion narrative, leaving out the good news of the Resurrection. To get to the bottom of this emphasis on suffering, to decipher its religious meaning, is to uncover the theological significance of this day. Do you remember the first time that life really knocked you around? It might have been an extraordinary failure; it might have been the first time you confronted real violence or real hatred; it might have been a massive disappointment; it might have been the death of someone that you loved. This mess, this problem, bedevils all of us. The biblical approach is clear: God sets about a rescue operation—the formation of a holy people Israel who would follow his commands, worship him aright, and thereby become a magnet to the world. They would teach and show the way out of the dilemma. He would form a people ready to receive him; he would gradually effect a unity between divinity and humanity; and one day, a servant of Yahweh would appear, someone despised and reviled by men. And this mysterious figure would solve the problem by bearing away the sins of the world, by carrying them off through his suffering.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Jn 12:1, 12-13; Ps 23:9-10

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,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah. Isaiah 50:4-7

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.

PSALM

Psalm 22(21):8-9. 17-18a. 19-20. 23-24. R.2a

R. My God, my God, why have you forsaken 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, for in him he delights.'

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.

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!

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.'

SECOND READING

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

Philippians 2:6-11

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

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.
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

THE PASSION

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
Matthew 26:14-27:66

At the end: The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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

Mt 26:42

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

R. 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.

R. Amen.