

First Reading:	Isaiah 50:4-7
Response:	<i>“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”</i> (Ps.21:2)
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 22:8,9,17-20,23,24
Second Reading:	Philippians 2:6-11
Gospel:	Luke 22:14-23,56

The Risen Lord is with us but his body still bears the marks of his passion. Apostles saw and touched his risen body. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday. We see and live with the Lord in his passion in the work of our redemption. Sing Hosanna to the King of kings.

In the third song of the Suffering Servant, Isaiah prophetically describes the passion of Christ, ***“I made no resistance. I offered my back to those who struck me. I did not cover my face against insult”*** (Is.50:6)

The Servant knows that doing God’s word is a great responsibility. He is the prophetic Messiah. He will be scourged and tortured but the Messiah is not a loser, he is the victor in the end. ***“I know I shall not be shamed”*** (Is.50:7)

Psalm 21 is a Messianic psalm from which comes the response and the cry of Jesus from the cross: ***“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”*** (Ps.21:2)

The psalm is so prophetic in detail that it seems it could have been written after the crucifixion instead of a thousand years before. We read ***“they divide my clothing among them. They cast lots for my robe?”*** (Ps.21:18).

Paul uses an early Christian hymn proclaiming the Easter journey of the Messiah, how ***“he humbled himself, emptied himself”*** (Phil.2:8) ***“even to accepting death, death on a cross”*** (Phil.2:8) ***“but God raised him on high”*** (Phil.2:9). This is the *Kerygma*, the apostolic proclamation of the death and resurrection of the Lord.

Paul’s hymn expresses mystery of Incarnation, how God humbled himself becoming man, his passion and death. Finally the resurrection showing ***“Jesus Christ as Lord”*** (Phil.2:11) and ***“every tongue should acclaim him as Lord to the glory of the Father”*** (Phil.2:11).

The Gospel for today is the reading of ***“the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke”*** (Lk.22:14). We read of his suffering and death ***“and darkness came over the whole land”*** (Lk.22:)

But the passion is not the end. A great revelation is taking place. ***“The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle”*** (Lk.22:) and the crucified one will rise again conquering death and sin. Holy Week has begun with the Passion but will end with the glory of Easter.

Listen to the reading of the Passion in church and meditate upon it after at home. **Gospel.**

“Dying he destroyed our death, rising he restored our life,” we celebrate in **Eucharist.**

“He was crucified, died and buried...and rose again,” is what we profess in the **Creed.**

Holy Week is the climax of our Liturgical Year. Bring others into the celebration. **Witness.**

FOR THE CHILDREN

Read from the Gospel about Palm Sunday and the joyful ‘Hossanas’ of the children.

Let the children celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus and let them sing and dance.

Why was Palm Sunday called Passion Sunday? Explain meaning of ‘Passion.’ Teaching.

Holy Week is a special time of the year. **What are you going to do about it?** Witness.

FOR TEENAGERS

Suppose the youth did the Passion Play. **What would the procedure be?** Read the *Passion* carefully and try to see the role of Jesus and certain characters in the **Gospel**.

Experience the Lord. Try to be with him in mind and heart. **Liturgy** is such an encounter.

Study the roles, lessons and how the Church **Teaches** about persons involved in the Passion, such as the apostles, Pilate, High priest, Jews, Romans, Simon of Cyrene, etc.

How do you feel about identifying with the characters? What part would you have played then? What will you do now? How will you live and act your part? **Witness.**

RCIA

Today the Church sings *Hosanna* to the King, another step in the Christian journey of faith in the RCIA. It begins the passionate walk of Holy Week climaxing in the glorious resurrection of Easter. This will be the moment of the full initiation into the saving mysteries of Christ.

LIFE EXPERIENCE

What hit the headlines of our newspapers was not the passion of Christ and his resurrection but the passion of Zuma and his sexploits. We in South Africa have to examine the state of our nation, not just materially but spiritually. Where are we going? Seemingly more erotic than the *Kama Sutra* is the president of our country, Jacob Zuma. He has fathered another child out of wedlock. Other countries would impeach their president for far less. Many of our countrymen are unbelievably stunned. Political party leaders and Church leaders have publicly expressed their disapproval of the presidential iniquity. We are dealing with a national scandal which a corrupt government will treat lightly. Earlier he had faced charges of raping a young woman. A fellow priest commented that at least it will take away the focus from the Church. I wonder at his comment. The Church should be a voice of conscience to the nation, proclaiming what is right, condemning what is wrong. Zuma at present has presented South Africa with five first-ladies, claiming all to be equally his wives, and three love-children from extra-marital affairs. What role model is he to the nation, especially in these times of abuse, promiscuity and AIDS?

P.S: The *Kama Sutra* is an erotic classic, in the Sanskrit literature of India, that ultimately aims at mastery of the senses and not treat women simply as sexual objects.⁽ⁱ⁾ Treat your pigeon like a peacock; a bird which is sacred in India.

⁽ⁱ⁾ **THE KAMA SUTRA OF VATSYAYANA. Ch.II. "On the Acquisition of Dharma, Artha and Kama."** Translat. Burton R. & F. Arbuthnot. Wordsworth Classics, Ware, Herts. U.K. p.23.

LITTLE ANGELINA

"The body of Christ," said the priest at Mass. "Yes, I am," replied Little Angelina, much to the chagrin of the priest. She had learned at catechism that she and her class-mates are the Body of Christ. When she heard the proclamation, she joyfully responded "Yes, I am." How would that fit with St. Augustine's "*Non essem, nisi essem in te*"⁽ⁱ⁾, "I wouldn't be unless in thee."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

However, it was unliturgical and Angelina was solemnly advised to say "Amen!"

⁽ⁱ⁾ **AUGUSTINE. CONFESSIONS. Bk.1:2. Loeb Classical Library. Harvard University Press, Cambridge. 2002.**

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ A free translation of Augustine.

IMPORTANT WORDS: "Hosanna"

"**Hosanna**" translates from the Greek word *ωσαννα* (*hosanna*) which in turn transliterates from Hebrew *הושיע נא* (*hoshiya na*), meaning "Save please" or "Deliver us we plead." Later, as a proclamation for Jesus, our Saviour, it meant "We are saved" and "Salvation has come." In our Eucharistic celebration we proclaim: "**Hosanna; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**" (*Sanctus*).

Watchword: “*Father, forgive them*” (Lk.23:34).

Hebrew: אבי סלח להם ‘*Avi selah* lahem.

Greek: Πater αφες αυτοις. *Pater aphet autois.*

Latin: Pater dimitte illis.

Spanish: Padre pardonalos.

Portuguese: Pai, perdoa-lhes.

French: Pere, pardonne-leur.

German: Vater, vergib ihnen.

Afrikaans: Vader, vergeef hulle.

Zulu: Baba bathethelele.

Xhosa: Bawo, baxolele.

Sotho: Ntate, ba tshwarele.

Irish: