

**Liturgy of the Word with Children**  
**Passion (Palm) Sunday, Year C**  
**14 April 2019**  
**Luke 23:1-47**

### **Catechist Background**

Central to the Christian faith, Jesus' humiliating crucifixion is not the end, but the beginning of a new beginning for humanity, without which the resurrection cannot happen.

### **Setting the Scene**

The liturgical colour for today is red. This is not the end of Lent, however, so during the week, until Holy Thursday, when Lent ends, the colour will still be purple. This week's suggestions assume that the children have been present with the rest of the assembly for the blessing of and procession with palms. There is thus no Penitential Act at this Mass. For the rest of the congregation the procession is followed by the Collect (Opening Prayer) and Liturgy of the Word.

### **We Pray (1)**

Almighty God, you gave us Jesus to save us from all our wrongs. He did what you asked of him, even when it was extremely difficult. Help us to always follow Jesus' example. Amen.

### **Gospel Intro**

Remind the children that today's gospel is a very important one, but it is also quite long. Explain that because it is packed so full of really important things, we will be reading it in sections.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

#### **Gospel, Reflection, and Response:** Luke 23:1-47

The gospel has been broken up into various suggested sections below. After each stage, get children to form a tableau, or frozen picture, of the characters present at that section of the passion. Use simple props, if you have them. Ask the characters what they are feeling in the situation. The following has been provided as one option of breaking up the Passion; the numbers of children and/or other constraints may mean you adapt the suggestion here.

#### *(Section 1)*

After Jesus had been on trial before the leaders of his people, the chief priests and the scribes took him to Pilate. They accused Jesus of doing wrong and they said to Pilate, 'This man has been trying to confuse our people and change the way they think. And he told us not to pay taxes to Caesar. He also says that he is the Christ, a king.'

So Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

Jesus answered, 'You have said so.'

Then Pilate said to the leaders and to all the people, 'I do not find this man guilty of doing anything wrong.'

But the people said over and over again, 'He has been teaching and making trouble all over in Judea. He started in Galilee and now he is even teaching here in Jerusalem!'

Characters for tableau: Jesus, Pilate, accusers

*(Section 2)*

When Pilate heard that Jesus was from Galilee, he sent him to Herod because Herod was the ruler of Galilee. Herod asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus did not answer any of them.

The soldiers put a beautiful robe on him like a king would wear and made fun of him because they thought he was pretending to be a king.

Characters for tableau: Jesus, Herod, soldiers

*(Section 3)*

Herod sent him back to Pilate. Pilate called all the people and their leaders together and said to them, 'You brought this man to me and told me that he has been making trouble among the people. He has not done anything wrong and does not deserve to be put to death. I will have him whipped and then I will let him go.'

But the people shouted, 'Kill him! Let Barabbas go free!'

Now, Barabbas was a man who was in prison because he had started a riot in the city and was also a murderer.

Pilate told them that he wanted to let Jesus go.

But they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!'

For the third time, Pilate said to the people, 'Why? What has he done wrong? He does not deserve to die.'

But the people would not stop shouting that Jesus should be killed. They wouldn't stop shouting, so Pilate finally gave in to them. He let Barabbas, a murderer go free. And he let them have their way with Jesus.

Characters for tableau: Jesus, Pilate, accusers, Barabbas

*(Section 4)*

As they were taking Jesus away to crucify him, they saw a man from Cyrene, named Simon, coming into the city. They made him carry the cross on his shoulder and walk behind Jesus.

Many people were following Jesus and there were some women in the crowd who were crying. Jesus said to them, 'Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me. Cry for yourselves and for your children.'

Characters for tableau: Jesus, Simon of Cyrene, Women of Jerusalem

*(Section 5)*

Two criminals were also led away with Jesus to be killed. And when they came to the place which is called 'the Skull,' they crucified Jesus.

And Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them! They do not know what they are doing!'

And they crucified two criminals beside him, one on his left and one on his right.

The people who were there watching made fun of Jesus, saying, 'He saved other people. If he truly is the Christ, God's chosen one, let him save himself.'

The soldiers also made fun of him, and said, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself.'

One of the criminals yelled at him, 'Aren't you the Christ? Then save yourself and save us.'

But the other criminal scolded him and then said to Jesus, 'Jesus, when you come into your kingdom, remember me.'

Jesus said to him, 'I promise you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

Characters for tableau: Jesus, 2 criminals, soldiers, people making fun

*(Section 6)*

It was now about noon, and the sun stopped shining and it was dark until about three o'clock in the afternoon. Then Jesus called out loud, 'Father, take my life. I give you my spirit.'

And he died.

One of the soldiers in the Roman army who saw all of this began to praise God and he said, 'Surely this was a great and good man!'

Characters for tableau: Jesus, soldier, crowd

## **We Believe**

Relating to the creed what you have done with the children, ask this series of questions and invite the children to reply, 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God the Father, who sent his Son to us?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son who died on a cross and was raised to life after three days to save us?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who remains with us still to help us through our own difficulties?

## **We Pray (2)**

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'We know that Jesus understands all sorts of human sadness, because he experienced lots of it in his life, and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for all people who, like Jesus, suffer innocently. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for all prisoners. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for all who are dying. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for anyone whose friends have left them. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, we know that you are especially close to anybody who is filled with sadness. Help us all to know that through your crucifixion and rising from the dead, sadness is not the end; your glory has won. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

