

Today's Reading: Mark 15:16-39

And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified him. And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

Simple Summary (for Parents):

Friday of Holy Week, which we now refer to as Good Friday, was the day that Jesus was crucified. Here we see the depth of God's love and, at the same time, the depth of our sin. Although Jesus was the sinless Son of God, He was willing to be mocked, spat on, beaten, and even nailed to a cruel cross. Most who witnessed this scene had no idea that the Man who was stretched out and bleeding in front of them was sent to be the Savior of sinners, sinners like you and me. As we hear Jesus cry out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" we are reminded of what we deserve on account of our sins. Yet it is through Jesus's death that we are reconciled to God. That's why the curtain of the temple was "torn in two, from top to bottom." Christ's sacrifice gives us access to God. Amazingly,

it is from the lips of a centurion guard that we hear the proper response to Christ's death: "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

Discuss:

1. On previous days, we have talked about the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. Does that mean that the cross was not really that painful for Him?

(No, Jesus was not only fully God but also fully human. He felt everything they were doing to Him, including the nails in his hands and feet.)

2. If Jesus never sinned, why was He treated so cruelly and then killed in today's reading?

(Jesus was treated this way because of sin, and the cross reminds us of how serious our sin is. Sin keeps us from seeing things rightly. Instead of loving and obeying Jesus, sin leads us to reject the only One who can save us from our sins.)

3. Does the cross show us that God's plan had failed?

(No, Jesus had told His disciples that this was going to happen—see Mark 8:31. Christ came to save sinners by dying as a sacrifice for their sins. God's enemies thought that they had won, but they were fulfilling God's plans and promises.)

4. How does Jesus's death on the cross help us?

(Jesus died in our place, taking the judgment that our sins deserve. Therefore, when we put our trust in Him, God forgives our sins and gives us new life. The curtain of the temple being torn in two shows us that we now have access to God through Jesus.)

5. What does Jesus's death on the cross teach us about God's love?

(God's love is so great that He's willing to send His Son for people who do not deserve His love. Our sin may be great, but God's love and grace are even greater. The cross is a beautiful demonstration of that!)

Pray:

Praise Jesus for His willingness to humble Himself and to come and die a cruel death on our behalf. Thank Him for paying the price for our sins so that we can be in a right relationship with God.

Sing:

["Man of Sorrows"](#) (See Week 3 Song Sheet for lyrics)

