



St Michael's Catholic Parish Traralgon

St Michael's Vision Statement: Inspired by Jesus Christ, we are a welcoming Catholic Community seeking to enrich lives. Come and join us!

St Michael's Mission Statement:

To provide opportunities for parishioners –

- to grow in holiness
- to discover and live out their personal and community call to mission to live as Catholics who effectively transform society.

www.smpt.org.au
email: traralgon@cdsale.org.au

Statement of Commitment to the safety of children and vulnerable adults: Central to the mission of St Michael's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children, young people and vulnerable adults and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

St Michael's Parish Information

Fr Francis Otopo Parish Priest

Fr Ajin Albarnas IVD Assistant Priest

Parish Centre 0417 572 564

Priests' Residence: 5174 6765

Deacon Tony Aspinall

Phone 5174 8167

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St Michael's Parish Office 0417 572 546

35 Kay Street, Traralgon

PO Box 103, Traralgon 3844

Office hours –

Tues, Weds, Fri 9:00am to 4:00pm

Parish Secretary: Bev O'Brien

Email: sec@smpt.org.au

Sacraments / Youth Jenifer Hanratty

Email: sacraments@smpt.org.au

After office hours - in case of an emergency please call 0448 529 712 and leave a message. All non-urgent calls should be made during office hours.

Baptisms: currently in abeyance

Weddings: currently in abeyance

Parish Pastoral Council: Greg Imhagwe Chairperson, Fr Francis, Sr Doreen, Lia Di Corleto, Watson Gomez, Jenifer Hanratty, Steve Kimani, Judi McLaughlin, Thomas Mathew, Amanda Reid, Kevin Taylor, Jodie Ware, Ros Joyner, Doug Doherty and Bev O'Brien.

Our Schools:

St Gabriel's School 5174 5515

Principal: Mrs Roslyn Joyner

St Michael's School 5174 3295

Principal: Mrs Jodie Ware

Lavalla Catholic College 5174 5272

Principal: Mr John Freeman

Kildare Campus 5174 8111

St Paul's Campus 5174 7355

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY by Dianne Bergant CSA

Palm Sunday is the first step in our journey into Holy Week. Two gospel passages are proclaimed today.

Procession

Jesus' entry into the city has symbolic meaning. He is in complete control of the incident, knowing in advance what is available, what can be done, and what should be said. The entrance itself must have been quite dramatic. Jesus is not on foot like a pilgrim, but riding like a messianic king (Zech 9:9). He comes over the crest of the eastern hill at the Mount of Olives, a place long associated with the appearance of the messiah (Zech 14:4). The people spread their cloaks on the ground before him as their ancestors had done in deference to kings (2 Kgs 9:13), and they praise him with an acclamation taken from one of the psalms (Ps 118:25-26). The reading states that the entire city was electrified by the occasion.

Mass

In the first reading for today's Mass, God provides the speaker with ears to hear God's word and a well-trained tongue to speak that word to others. This description marks the speaker as a prophet, one who hears God's word and proclaims it. Since the words that are spoken are given for the sake of the weary or downtrodden, they would be words of comfort. The speaker willingly accepts the consequence of his prophetic ministry, suffering both physical attack and insult for its sake. He does not recoil from suffering, maintaining that God is his strength. He does not feel disgraced, for he is certain of the authenticity of his call and convinced of the truth of the words that he communicates.

The psalm contains a lament (vv.8-9;17-20) and a prayer of thanksgiving (vv.23-24). It describes the derision that the psalmist endures. Characterised as encircling dogs, bloodthirsty assailants and rapacious thieves, bystanders hiss at him, wag their heads in ridicule and revile him because he continues to cling to God in confidence. Neither his person nor his possessions are safe from their savagery. He lies humiliated, stripped and wounded, his integrity challenged and his trust in God ridiculed. Still, nothing can undermine his devotion. Clinging to hope, he turns to God and prays for deliverance. With words of thanksgiving, he is confident that his prayer has been or soon will be heard. Thus, in the midst of a liturgical assembly, the psalmist praises God's greatness.

The passage from Paul reflects on the nature of Jesus who, though still in the form of God, freely chose the form of a servant or slave. He then became obedient, even unto death. In a sense, Christ's crucifixion, a common punishment for slaves, was inevitable, for obedience to God in a world that was alienated from God placed his life in jeopardy. Christ's exaltation was as glorious as his humiliation was debasing. While he freely emptied himself, it was God who glorified him. In exalting Jesus, God bestowed dignity on his human name, raising it above every other name. Now spiritual beings in heaven, living beings on earth, even the dead under the earth all praise Christ, whose exaltation gives glory to God. *(Continued on Page 2)*

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY: *(continued from page 1)*

Today's passion reading recounts Jesus' last days. Though he appears to be passive in the hands of others, he is really in charge of his destiny. He claims that his death/resurrection is the *kairós* event, that decisive moment when God's promises are brought to completion. At the end of the reading we are left at the sealed tomb. Pilate has executed Jesus, whom he saw as a threat to Roman order. The Jewish leaders have silenced the wonder-working preacher, and any possibility of future upheaval has been sealed in the tomb with his body. Neither Pilate nor the Jewish leaders realise that in reality everything is now in place for the eschatological event of the resurrection.

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Sunday Mass Times	No Mass Celebrations for the time being
Weekday Mass Times	No Mass Celebrations for the time being

PLEASE PRAY FOR: We remember those who have died recently, remembering especially those whose lives have been lost due to the Covid-19 virus, and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Teresa Reeves, Nell Bakker, Edward Said and family, Gwen Chambers and Graeme Carney.

Lord, let your perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK including, including Megan Agostino, Maria Alessandrini, Lee Allman, Lulu Aragon, Cath Boers, Fr Bernard Buckley, Conceicao Carvalho, Julie Dal Pra, Peter Dal Pra, Ann-Maree Daly, Anthony Derham, Gary Donchi, Bill Edgar, Bernadette Formaran, Fr Frank Freeman, Marj Gilbert, Carolyn Gleeson, Robert Hazelman, Imogen Hillier, Marie Howard, Joan Lamont, Peter Lont, Joyce Martin, Ivy May, Deborah McKerchar, Ben Melenhorst, Joan Quigley, Joan Riggall, Kath Ryan, Ray Smith, Jerry Templer, Julie Vaz, Brian Vivian, Celie Smith, George Walkan, and Fr Frank Young, and all those we hold dear in our hearts.



GOOD FRIDAY & EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES: Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP is grateful to Channel 7 who will stream The Lord's Passion at 3:00pm on Good Friday and Easter Sunday Mass at 10:30am on Channel 7, Prime 7 in regional areas, and live-streamed on 7plus.

LiturgyHelp has offered free access to the daily Mass readings, Roman Missal texts and Commentaries. Please use the special website link for the Diocese of Sale liturgyhelp.com/aus/sale/pray and create your own login and password.

Lent Program Brisbane Archdiocese's Lent Program Be Open offers reflections and commentaries for each Sunday in Lent including Passion Sunday <http://evangelisationbrisbane.org.au/resources/lenten-program/>

Families Preparing for Holy Week at Home

Catechists Journey is a useful website provided by Loyola Press, with online and downloadable stations of the Cross for children, exploring Holy Week through Art & Faith videos, Holy Week activities pack, praying the Rosary and more. <https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/>.

NEW TEMPORARY PHONE NUMBER FOR THE PARISH OFFICE:

Whilst the office is closed, the number for you to call during office hours to make contact with Fr Francis, Fr Ajin, Deacon Tony or Bev is now **0417 572 546**.

Our email address is now **traralgon@cdsale.org.au**.

SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER AND OUR PARISH:

As we figure out how to 'be parish' in this time without Sunday and weekday Masses in our Church, we need to consider :-

- * our prayer and spiritual life
- * our commitment to and support for our Parish
- * our community.

The Parish Pastoral Council has devised ways of extending prayer resources and online Masses, and of keeping track of each other and being supportive of each other (please see Page 1)

Our parish Bulletin will be produced each week and available on our Website and our Parish App, and will contain the readings for the Sunday, and Parish News. It will also include a link for people to participate in a Mass online (www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass or <http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand> or <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>).

We will also endeavor to include some 'prayer hints' to help each of us maintain our prayer life.

In this time of uncertainty, please remember our priests and religious in your prayers. Our priests are financially supported by our weekly 'first collections', and these expenses will still need to be met. Parishioners are asked to make donations by electronic transfer to **St Michael's Parish Traralgon Presbytery Account, BSB 083 879 Account Number 48906 6098, Reference 1Collect**.

Our Parish will still need to pay our utility bills, our wages bills, rates and insurances. We meet these costs through the Planned Giving Program. Parishioners who currently give via the weekly envelopes are asked to consider altering their giving to Direct Debit giving to enable our Parish to continue. Direct Debit Giving forms are available. If you are able to make the change, **please email to traralgon@cdsale or phone Bev on 0417 572 546 and we can get a form to you**.

Anyone wishing to make a general donation to our parish can do so by electronic transfer to St Michael's Parish Traralgon Church Account, BSB 083 879, Account Number 48885 1289, *Reference Donation(surname)*. Please let Bev know by email (traralgon@cdsale.org.au) if you decide to do this. Thank you.

Thanks to those parishioners who have dropped in their planned giving and first collection donations in envelopes through the parish 'mail slot'.

If you are wanting to request a Mass Offering, then please place your donation in an envelope, and clearly mark:-

1. The name of the person(s) for whom you wish the Mass to be offered.
2. Whether it's a death anniversary, or recent death.
3. Your name, contact number and email.

The envelopes can be 'posted' through the mail slot beside the front door of the Parish Office.

Please look out for those in our community who are the most vulnerable and could be in need of our support. Let the Office know if you know of anyone in need.

FINANCE MATTERS:

April 5, 2020 - Palm Sunday

“As they were marching out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross.” (Matthew 27:32)

The Lord calls us to love God and to love our neighbor. Every day we are presented with opportunities to love our neighbor and help him “carry his cross.” These opportunities aren’t usually big events, they are usually ordinary occurrences like helping someone carry their groceries or holding the door open for them. The key is putting the other person’s needs before our own and not expecting anything in return.

PARISH FINANCE MATTERS:

March 2020

Loose collections

March 01	\$1,123.00
March 08	\$1,100.00
March 15	\$1,151.00
March 22	\$ 90.00
March 29	\$ 60.00
	<u>\$3,524.00</u>

Planned Giving

Envelopes	\$ 7,823.00
Direct Debit	\$ 5,673.00
Credit Card	\$ 3,190.00
<u>Unplanned giving</u>	<u>\$ 507.15</u>
<u>March total</u>	<u>\$17,193.15</u>

With many thanks to those parishioners who have recently brought their envelope giving up to date.

A SUNDAY PRAYER PLAN FOR FAMILIES:

1. Gather – create a prayer space for your family in your home. Light a candle, silence all technology, be still.
2. Read scripture. Ask various family members to read a part each.
3. Listen to a homily (Mass at home or other, see information sheet on our website)
4. Reflect together – talk about what you each heard. Did you hear the same thing? How can we reflect this in our family?
5. Pray - gather the intentions of your family, our community and our world, and ask God to hear your prayer.
6. Spiritual communion – receive Jesus into your heart. Ask Jesus to come into your life. Close with the Lord’s Prayer.



CARITAS AUSTRALIA: *Message from Deacon Jim Curtain, Diocesan Director of Caritas Australia, about the Project Compassion 2020 Appeal.*

We here at Caritas understand that many in our community will have financial concerns, worries about health, and worries about their future due to the COVID19 crisis. We do appreciate that many generous people who would normally give may no longer be in a position to do so.

However through Project Compassion we support people and communities in countries that have nothing like the resources of Australia, where governments do not have the ability to provide social welfare payments or subsidise employers to keep people in work.

Bearing in mind the uncertainty that we are all experiencing, we would still ask that, if you are able, you consider continuing to support Project Compassion as best you can.

Thank you for your generosity in the past, and for whatever you feel able to give now.

LET'S GO FURTHER, TOGETHER

Spanning through the six weeks of Lent each year, Project Compassion is an extraordinary, ongoing demonstration of the faith, love and generosity of Caritas Australia's caring supporters, all in the name of justice and peace. Millions of Australians come together in solidarity with the world's poor to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

It only takes seconds to make the world a better place. Are you with us?

To make a donation to Caritas, please go to :-

<https://lent.caritas.org.au/>



CAN YOU HELP AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS?: We have been contacted by Australian Red Cross, who have asked us to share this plea for blood donations over this Easter period.

‘A lot has changed in the past few months, and this Easter is going to be very different from previous years.

But something that hasn’t changed? The need for blood. Our friends at Australian Red Cross Lifeblood need 29,000 blood donors every week. We’re making this Easter different for a good reason, but we could do with some help. Book a donation today

<https://don8blood.com/2QPRMg5>’.

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!*

First Reading Is 50:4-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I did not cover my face against insult and I know I will not be ashamed.

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech.

Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple.

The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle.

The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 21:8-9. 17-20. 23-24. R. v.2

(R.) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

1. 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 if this is his friend.' *(R.)*
2. Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet.
I can count every one of my bones. *(R.)*
3. They divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me! *(R.)*
4. I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons.' *(R.)*

Second Reading

Phil 2:6-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

He humbled himself to become like us and God raised him on high.

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.

But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation

Phil 2:8-9

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
king of endless glory!*

*Christ became obedient for us even to death
dying on the cross.*

*Therefore God raised him on high
and gave him a name above all other names.*

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
king of endless glory!*



Gospel (on following pages)

Gospel

Mt 26:14 – 27:66

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

N One of the Twelve, the man called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said:

O What are you prepared to give me if I hand him over to you?

N They paid him thirty silver pieces, and from that moment he looked for an opportunity to betray him.

Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus to say,

C Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the passover?

N He replied:

J Go to so-and-so in the city and say to him, 'The Master says: My time is near. It is at your house that I am keeping Passover with my disciples.'

N The disciples did what Jesus told them and prepared the Passover.

When the evening came he was at table with the twelve disciples. And while they were eating he said:

J I tell you solemnly, one of you is about to betray me.

N They were greatly distressed and started asking him in turn,

C Not I, Lord, surely?

N He answered:

J Someone who has dipped his hand into the dish with me, will betray me. The Son of Man is going to his fate, as the scriptures say he will, but alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! Better for that man if he had never been born!

N Judas, who was to betray him, asked in his turn,

O Not I, Rabbi, surely?

N Jesus answered:

J They are your own words.

N Now as they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said:

J Take it and eat; this is my body.

N Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them saying:

J Drink all of you from this, for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. From now on, I tell you, I shall not drink wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in the kingdom of my Father.

N After psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them,

J You will all lose faith in me this night, for the scripture says: I shall strike the shepherd and the flock will be scattered. But after my resurrection I shall go before you to Galilee.

N At this, Peter said:

O Though all lose faith in you, I will never lose faith.

N Jesus answered him,

J I tell you solemnly, this very night, before the cock crows, you will have disowned me three times.

N Peter said to him,

O Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.

N And all the disciples said the same.

Then Jesus came with them to a small estate called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples,

J Stay here while I go over there to pray.

N He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with him. And sadness came over him, and great distress. Then he said to them:

J My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here and keep awake with me.

N And going on a little further he fell on his face and prayed:

J My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass me by. Nevertheless, let it be as you, not I, would have it.

N He came back to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter:

J So you had not the strength to keep awake with me one hour? You should be awake, and praying not to be put to the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

N Again, a second time, he went away and prayed:

J My father, if this cup cannot pass by without my drinking it, your will be done!

N And he came back again and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy. Leaving them there, he went away again and prayed for the third time, repeating the same words. Then he came back to the disciples and said to them,

J You can sleep on now and take your rest. Now the hour has come when the Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is already close at hand.

N He was still speaking when Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared, and with him a large number of men armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and elders of the people. Now the traitor had arranged a sign with them. He had said:

O 'The one I kiss, he is the man. Take him in charge.'

N So he went straight up to Jesus and said:

O Greetings, Rabbi,

N and kissed him. Jesus said to him,

J My friend, do what you are here for.

N Then they came forward, seized Jesus and took him in charge. At that, one of the followers of Jesus grasped his sword and drew it; he struck out at the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. Jesus then said:

J Put your sword back, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father who would promptly send more than twelve legions of angels to my defence? But then, how would the scriptures be fulfilled that say this is the way it must be?

N It was at this time that Jesus said to the crowds:

J Am I a brigand, that you had to set out to capture me with swords and clubs? I sat teaching in the Temple day after day and you never laid hands on me.

N Now all this happened to fulfil the prophecies in scripture. Then all the disciples deserted him and ran away.

The men who had arrested Jesus led him off to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled. Peter followed him at a distance, and when he reached the high priest's palace, he went in and sat down with the attendants to see what the end would be.

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus, however false, on which they might pass the death-sentence. But they could not find any, though several lying witnesses came forward. Eventually two stepped forward and made a statement,

O This man said, 'I have power to destroy the Temple of God and in three days build it up.'

N The high priest then stood up and said to him:

O Have you no answer to that? What is the evidence these men are bringing against you?

N But Jesus was silent. And the high priest said to him:

O I put you on oath by the living God to tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.

N Jesus answered:

J The words are your own. Moreover, I tell you that from this time onward you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.

N At this, the high priest tore his clothes and said:

O He has blasphemed. What need of witnesses have we now? There! You have just heard the blasphemy. What is your opinion?

N They answered:

C He deserves to die.

N Then they spat in his face and hit him with their fists; others said as they struck him:

C Play the prophet, Christ! Who hit you then?

N Meanwhile Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came up to him and said:

O You too were with Jesus the Galilean.

N But he denied it in front of them all, saying:

O I do not know what you are talking about.

N When he went out to the gateway another servant-girl saw him and said to the people there:

O This man was with Jesus the Nazarene.

N And again, with an oath, he denied it,

O I do not know the man.

N A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter:

C You are one of them for sure! Why, your accent gives you away.

N Then he started calling down curses on himself and swearing:

O I do not know the man.

N At that moment the cock crew, and Peter remembered what Jesus had said, 'Before the cock crows you will have disowned me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly.

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people met in council to bring about the death of Jesus. They had him bound, and led him away to hand him over to Pilate, the governor. When he found that Jesus had been condemned, Judas his betrayer was filled with remorse and took the thirty pieces of silver back to the chief priests and elders, saying:

O I have sinned. I have betrayed innocent blood.

N They replied:

C What is that to us? That is your concern.

N And flinging down the silver pieces in the sanctuary he made off, and went and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the silver pieces and said:

C It is against the Law to put this into the treasury; it is blood money.

N So they discussed the matter and bought the potter's field with it as a graveyard for foreigners, and this is why the field is called the Field of Blood today. The words of the prophet Jeremiah were then fulfilled: And they took the thirty silver pieces, the sum at which the precious One was priced by children of Israel, and they gave them for the potter's field, just as the Lord directed me.

Jesus, then, was brought before the governor, and the governor put to him this question:

O Are you the king of the Jews?

N Jesus replied:

J It is you who say it.

N But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him:

O Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?

N But to the governor's complete amazement, he offered no reply to any of the charges.

At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at this time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered Pilate said to them,

O Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Christ?

N For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. Now as he was seated in the chair of judgement, his wife sent him a message,

O Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him.

N The chief priests and the elders, however, had persuaded the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when the governor spoke and asked them:

O Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

N They said:

C Barabbas.

N Pilate said to them:

O What am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?

N They all said:

C Let him be crucified!

N Pilate asked:

O Why? What harm has he done?

N But they shouted all the louder,

C Let him be crucified!

N Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression, that in fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said:

O I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern.

N And the people, to a man, shouted back:

C His blood be on us and on our children!

N Then he released Barabbas for them. He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified.

The governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort around him. Then they stripped him and made him wear a scarlet cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying:

C Hail, king of the Jews!

N And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him.

On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothes by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him. Above his head was placed the charge against him; it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews'. At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said:

C So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!

N The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way, saying:

C He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He put his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants him. For he did say, 'I am the son of God'.

N Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way.

From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice:

J Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?

N That is: 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood there heard this, they said:

C The man is calling on Elijah,

N and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink. The rest of them said:

C Wait! See if Elijah will come to save him.

N But Jesus, again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

All kneel and pause a moment.

N At that, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people,

Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said:

C In truth this was a son of God.

N And many women were there, watching from a distance, the same women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and looked after him. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

When it was evening, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, called Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate thereupon ordered it to be

handed over. So Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean shroud and put it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away. Now Mary of Magdala and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulchre.

Next day, that is, when Preparation Day was over, the chief priests and the Pharisees went in a body to Pilate and said to him,

C Your Excellency, we recall that this imposter said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I shall rise again.' Therefore give the order to have the sepulchre kept secure until the third day, for fear his disciples come and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead'. This last piece of fraud would be worse than what went before.

N Pilate said to them:

O You may have your guards. Go and make all as secure as you know how.

N So they went and made the sepulchre secure, putting seals on the stone and mounting a guard.



Next weeks Readings

Sunday April 12 - Easter Sunday of the
Resurrection of the Lord

First Reading: Act 10:34 37-43

Second Reading: Col 3:1-4

Gospel: John 20:1-9 or
Matthew 28:1-10