



CELEBRATING AT HOME  
**PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD**

*Love revealed (Luke 23:1-49)*



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*For this Sunday, gather some green branches from your garden. After the blessing these can be given to everyone present. The greenery is a reminder that the story of Jesus does not end in death, but life.*

### Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### Preparing to hear the Word

We have been called by God  
to be the Church,  
the Body of Christ in this world.  
We are not a building, but a people,  
gathered and grounded in  
the Word of God,  
the love of Christ,  
and the unity of the Holy Spirit.

**During Lent we have been preparing  
for the celebration of Easter  
by works of love and self-sacrifice.**

Today, in union with the whole Church we  
remember Christ's entry into Jerusalem  
to complete his saving work as our Messiah:  
to suffer, to die and to rise again.

**We, too, enter this week of holiness  
and welcome Christ as our Saviour.**

### Blessing the Palms

*In the Roman Empire people used palm branches and other greenery as a sign of welcome and respect as important people entered the towns and cities. The Gospels record that this is what many people in Jerusalem did for Jesus.*

Almighty God, hear our prayers:  
let your blessing be upon us and these branches.  
Today we joyfully acclaim Jesus our Messiah and  
King. May we honour you every day by living  
always in him for he is Lord for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

### The Passion of Jesus according to Luke

*Reader 1* The elders of the people and the chief priests and scribes rose, and they brought Jesus before Pilate.

They began their accusation, 'We found this man inciting our people to revolt, opposing payment of tribute to Caesar, and claiming to be Christ, a king.' Pilate put to him this question, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' 'It is you who say it.'

Pilate then said to the chief priests and the crowd, 'I find no case against this man.' 'He is inflaming the people with his teaching all over Judea; it has come all the way from Galilee, where he started, down to here.' When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man were a Galilean; and finding that he came under Herod's jurisdiction he passed him over to Herod who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

*Reader 2* Herod was delighted to see Jesus; he had heard about him and had been wanting for a long time to set eyes on him; moreover, he was hoping to see some miracle worked by him. So he questioned him at some length; but without getting any reply. Meanwhile the chief priests and scribes were there, violently pressing their accusations. Then Herod, together with his guards, treated him with contempt and made fun of him; he put a rich cloak on him and sent him back to Pilate. And though Herod and Pilate had been enemies before, they were reconciled that same day.

*Reader 3* Pilate then summoned the chief priests and the leading men and the people. 'You brought this man before me as a political agitator. Now I have gone into the matter myself in your presence and found no case against the man in respect of all the charges you bring against him. Nor has Herod either, since he has sent him back to us. As you can see, the man has done nothing that deserves death, so I shall have him flogged and then let go'. But as one they howled, 'Away with him! Give us Barabbas!' (This man had been thrown into prison for causing a riot in the city and for murder.)

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*Reader 1* Pilate was anxious to set Jesus free and addressed them again, but they shouted back, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' 'But why? What harm has this man done? I have found no case against him that deserves death, so I shall have him punished and then let him go.' But they kept on shouting at the top of their voices, demanding that he should be crucified. And their shouts were growing louder.

Pilate then gave his verdict: their demand was to be granted. He released the man they asked for, who had been imprisoned for rioting and murder, and handed Jesus over to them to deal with as they pleased.

*Reader 2* As they were leading him away they seized on a man, Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and made him shoulder the cross and carry it behind Jesus. Large numbers of people followed him, and of women too, who mourned and lamented for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For the days will surely come when people will say, 'Happy are those who are barren, the wombs that have never borne, the breasts that have never suckled!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!'; to the hills, 'Cover us!' for if you use the green wood like this, what will happen when it is dry?' Now with him there were also leading out two other criminals to be executed.

*Reader 3* When they reached the place called the Skull, they crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left. Jesus said, 'Father forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.' Then they cast lots to share out his clothing.

*Reader 1* The people stayed there watching him. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.' The soldiers mocked him too and

when they approached to offer him vinegar they said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.' Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews.'

*Reader 2* One of the criminals hanging there abused him. 'Are you not the Christ?' he said. 'Save yourself and us as well.' But the other spoke up and rebuked him. 'Have you no fear of God at all? You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it; we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, Remember me when you come into your kingdom.' 'Indeed, I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.'

*Reader 3* It was now about the sixth hour and, with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle; and when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, he said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.' With these words he breathed his last.

*[All pause for a moment]*

*Reader 1* When the centurion saw what had taken place, he gave praise to God and said,

'This was a great and good man.' And when all the people who had gathered for the spectacle saw what had happened, they went home beating their breasts. All his friends stood at a distance, so also did the women who had accompanied him from Galilee, and they saw all this happen.

### Prayers of Intercession

For all who suffer verbal, psychological, sexual or physical abuse.

**Lord, in your gentleness, raise us to new life.**

For all who are persecuted in the cause of right.

**Lord, in your love, raise us to new life.**

For all who suffer torture and are violently killed.

**Lord, in your tenderness, raise us to new life.**

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For all whose character or reputation has been destroyed.

**Lord, in your compassion, raise us to new life.**

For the victims of violence and war, their families and friends.

**Lord, in your goodness, raise us to new life.**

For those who suffer from fear, anxiety, psychological distress, addiction, broken relationships, and grief.

**Lord, in your kindness, raise us to new life.**

For the victims of disease, especially those suffering with coronavirus, and for those caring for them.

**Lord, in your love, raise us to new life.**

For our share in causing suffering to each other.

**Lord, in your mercy, raise us to new life.**

### Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread**

**and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

### Closing Prayer

Father of mercy,  
through the suffering and death of your Son  
you open our minds to the suffering of each other.  
By our sharing in Christ's suffering  
may your mercy be seen in us  
until love's work is completed  
and all your children  
give you joyful praise.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### Blessing

May the Lord bless us,  
keep us from all evil  
and lead us to life everlasting.  
**Amen.**

### Ending

Our Holy Week has begun.  
**We go in peace remembering  
the Lord's great love for us.**

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when many cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.



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