

Palm Sunday Gospel – yr B

Mark 15:1-39

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

Key: N. Narrator. ✠ Jesus. O. Other single speaker. C. Crowd, or more than one speaker.

N. First thing in the morning, the chief priests together with the elders and scribes – in short, the whole Sanhedrin – had their plan ready. They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate questioned him:

O. Are you the king of the Jews?

N. He answered,

✠ It is you who say it.

N. And the chief priests brought many accusations against him. Pilate questioned him again:

O. Have you no reply at all? See how many accusations they are bringing against you!

N. But, to Pilate's amazement, Jesus made no further reply.

At festival time Pilate used to release a prisoner for them, anyone they asked for. Now a man called Barabbas was then in prison with the rioters who had committed murder during the uprising. When the crowd went up and began to ask Pilate the customary favour, Pilate answered them

O. Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?

N. For he realised it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over. The chief priests, however, had incited the crowd to demand that he should release Barabbas for them instead. Then Pilate spoke again:

O. But in that case, what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews?

N. They shouted back,

C. Crucify him!

N. Pilate asked them,

O. Why? What harm has he done?

N. But they shouted all the louder,

C. Crucify him!

N. So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, having ordered Jesus to be scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together. They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And they began saluting him,

C. Hail, king of the Jews!

N. They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes.

They led him out to crucify him: they enlisted a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull.

They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it. Then they crucified him, and shared out his clothing, casting lots to decide what each should get. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The inscription giving the charge against him read: 'The

King of the Jews.’ And they crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.

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

C. Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself: come down from the cross!

N. The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way. They said,

C. He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe.

N. Even those who were crucified with him taunted him.

When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

✠ Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

N. which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you deserted me?’ When some of those who stood by heard this, they said

C. Listen, he is calling on Elijah.

N. Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink, saying:

O. Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down.

N. But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

All kneel and pause for a moment.

And the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he had died, and he said,

O. In truth this man was a son of God.