

Passion (Palm) Sunday

Year B

[Printable version](#)**Mark 14:1 - 15:47**

It was the third hour when they crucified him. 26 The inscription giving the charge against him read: 'The King of the Jews'. 27 And they crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.

29 The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said, 'Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! 30 Then save yourself: come down from the cross!' 31 The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way. 'He saved others,' they said, 'he cannot save himself. 32 Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe.' Even those who were crucified with him taunted him. 33 When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' 35 When some of those who stood by heard this, they said, 'Listen, he is calling on Elijah.' 36 Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink saying, 'Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down.' 37 But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

Other readings: Isaiah 50:4-7 Psalm 21 (22) Philippians 2:6-11

The part of the story of the Passion of Jesus according to Mark which immediately precedes his death is given above. These verses are punctuated by the evangelist's references to the time of day. Jesus is crucified 'at the third hour'. Roman reckoning of day-time hours began with 6 a.m. so this is 9 a.m. The darkness over the earth begins at noon. Jesus 'breathes his last' at 3 o'clock, the traditional time for recalling the death of Christ.

Three groups mock Jesus. Anonymous passers-by taunt Jesus by referring to his words about the temple. The chief-priests and scribes mock Jesus, who 'saved others, but cannot save himself'. They also ridicule him with his supposed claims to be the Messiah. Finally, Mark tells us that 'even those who were crucified with him taunted him'. This evangelist appears to know nothing about the 'good thief'.

Jesus' final words are words of abandonment. The Son of God, who comes to share our life and give his life for us, drinks the cup of suffering to the depth out of love for his brothers and sisters. And thus he dies.

What are the memorable features of Mark's story of the death of Jesus?

Take time this week to read the complete story of the death of Jesus as told by Mark.

Let us enter fully into the events of Holy Week so that we may be renewed in Christ's

resurrection.

We pray that the self-giving love of Christ for all will change minds and hearts.