

Palm Sunday - April 5, 2020

Announcements and Welcome

Hymn 442 "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" v. 1-3

ref All glory, laud, and honor
To You, Redeemer, King,
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.

1 You are the King of Israel
And David's royal Son,
Now in the Lord's name coming,
Our King and Blessèd One. Refrain

2 The company of angels
Is praising You on high,
And we with all creation
In chorus make reply. Refrain

3 The multitude of pilgrims
With palms before You went;
Our praise and prayer and anthems
Before You we present. Refrain

Text: Public domain

The Invocation and Opening Address: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Today we will be celebrating Palm Sunday and Passion Sunday together. We begin by hearing about our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, where He is proclaimed King, and treated as such. As the service progresses, we move to other events in the week, that show our Lord's Passion and deep love for us. In the midst of it all, He is still that King, and conquers sin, death, and the devil for us. He still lives and reigns for the benefit of His Church, and for you.

The Holy Gospel According to St. John, the 12th Chapter.

¹²The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" ¹⁴And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, ¹⁵"Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" ¹⁶His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. ¹⁷The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him."

The Confession: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us then confess our sins to God our Father. Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

The Absolution: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake, God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ, He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Collect of the Day

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

The Passion of Our Lord comes from the Gospel of Matthew, chapters 27:11 to 28:10.

Hymn 449 "O Sacred Head Now Wounded" v. 1-3

- 1 O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown.
O sacred Head, what glory,
What bliss, till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call Thee mine.
- 2 What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place;
Look on me with Thy favor,
And grant to me Thy grace.

3 What language shall I borrow
To thank Thee, dearest Friend,
For this Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever!
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never,
Outlive my love for Thee.

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110003136

Jesus Before Pilate

¹¹ Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You have said so.” ¹² But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. ¹³ Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?” ¹⁴ But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

The Crowd Chooses Barabbas

¹⁵ Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. ¹⁶ And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷ So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” ¹⁸ For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. ¹⁹ Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.” ²⁰ Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” ²² Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” ²³ And he said, “Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

²⁴ So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood,^[b] see to it yourselves.” ²⁵ And all the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” ²⁶ Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged^[c] Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

Jesus Is Mocked

²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters,^[d] and they gathered the whole battalion^[e] before him. ²⁸ And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ³⁰ And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹ And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

³² As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross. ³³ And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), ³⁴ they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. ³⁶ Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. ³⁷ And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." ³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. ³⁹ And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." ⁴¹ So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, ⁴² "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" ⁴⁴ And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

The Death of Jesus

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour^[f] there was darkness over all the land^[g] until the ninth hour.^[h] ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷ And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." ⁴⁸ And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." ⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

⁵¹ And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵² The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, ⁵³ and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son^[i] of God!"

⁵⁵ There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, ⁵⁶ among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Jesus Is Buried

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

⁶² The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³ and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' ⁶⁴ Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the

last fraud will be worse than the first.” ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.” ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

The Resurrection

28 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he ^[a] lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” ⁸ So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

Hymn 461 "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" v. 1, 2, and 8

- 1 I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living head.
- 2 He lives triumphant from the grave;
He lives eternally to save;
He lives all-glorious in the sky;
He lives exalted there on high.
- 8 He lives, all glory to His name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same;
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives:
I know that my Redeemer lives!

Text: Public domain

Apostles' Creed: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

The Sermon: Buried! Amos 9:1-6

I saw the Lord standing beside ^[a] the altar, and he said: “Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people; and those who are left of them I will kill

with the sword; not one of them shall flee away; not one of them shall escape. ²“If they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them; if they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down. ³If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I will search them out and take them; and if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. ⁴And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them; and I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good.” ⁵The Lord GOD of hosts, he who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell in it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile, and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt; ⁶who builds his upper chambers in the heavens and founds his vault upon the earth; who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—the LORD is his name.

Ginette Sainfort became trapped underneath a mountain of concrete after the three-story bank building in downtown Port-au-Prince, where she was working, collapsed. It buried her, an assistant bank director, and two security guards. They were trapped there for six days. She was rescued by her husband, Roger, and the head of Haiti’s National Equipment Center, Jude Celestin. They pulled her out of the rubble after using an excavator to remove heavy slabs of concrete. When she was hospitalized and recovering, Celestin visited her, and said, “Madame Sainfort, it’s your God who got you out because I couldn’t have had that power.” She was buried, and then rescued. What an amazing story!

Have you ever been buried like that before? Sure you have, and so have I. We’ve been buried in questions. “If God is so good, why do I hurt so bad?” “If Jesus is the light, why am I in the dark?” We’ve been buried in disappointment. “You’re fired!” “I don’t love you anymore!” “I’m done with you!” We’ve been buried in the past—the minute we lost our temper, the hour we lost our purity, the day we lost control, the years we lost our priorities. Buried, boxed in, six feet under, again, right here, just now; it’s dark, tight, and claustrophobic. And if there isn’t screaming, there are heavy sighs, lifeless looks, and broken hearts.

Amos envisions a day when Israel’s temple will be judged and the people will be dead and buried. The vision considers all of the possible ways of escape and then slams each door shut just before “**all the sinners of My people**” are able to reach safety.

The vision begins with the words “**I saw the Lord.**” The prophet’s use of the name “**Lord**” connects his vision with his third creation hymn in Amos 9:5–6, which begins “**the Lord God.**” The one who commands the destruction in verses one to four is none other than the Creator of the universe depicted in verses five and six!

The prophet’s vision came at a time of great security and abundance for Israel during the reign of Jeroboam ben Joash. Economic growth and military might were both on the rise. But it was all a house of cards. Amos announces that the capitals and thresholds of Bethel’s temple will shake, leading to its destruction and God’s judgment of Israel’s leaders. Everything and everyone will be destroyed. The earthquake mentioned in Amos 1:1 will finally reach its chief destination, Bethel. The temple at Bethel had many altars, but “the altar” in Amos 9:1 probably refers to the greatest and grandest altar at Bethel.

The prophet then lists seven divine actions in verses two to four. The number *seven* here means that all possible escape routes will be blocked off. Israel’s leaders will have to face the LORD no matter where they attempt to hide. God will find them in Sheol, in heaven, in the thick forests and numerous caves in Mount Carmel, in the ocean floor, and even in a foreign land during their captivity. There is no place where God won’t find them.

Psalms 139 affirms the LORD’S presence in the midst of a vast and threatening world. Amos 9:2–4, on the other hand, is a guarantee of God’s destructive dominion. What is affirmed as

hopeful, God's dominion over the universe, is Israel's reason to be utterly *hopeless*. In 722 BC, Samaria came to an end. The temple burned. The walls crumbled. The people sent far away from home. Everyday life and "normal" was forever gone. It did not seem like it could happen, but it did. Everything turned to ashes.

Colonel Hans Von Luck knows what that is like. In World War II, Luck was a commander of a German Panzer division, and survived all six years of the conflict. In the last few days of the war, he was captured by the Russian army, and sent to a Gulag in Georgia for five long years. He described those years as cold and hungry. He was constantly starving. For five long years, he did 10 hour days, mining and harvesting minerals underground. After two years, he was finally able to write a 25 word post card to his mother saying that he was alive. Part of that 25 word limit included the address! One day though, he was awakened in the middle of the night, and brought to a parole board for an interview. Perhaps, he might get out. At one point in the interview, the board began to speak to each other in Russian, thinking he wouldn't understand. They said, "Let's make another false charge and keep him here. He is a great worker!" "Good idea, we'll say he stole bread, and that is a five year sentence." At this point, Luck said in Russian, "I know what you are saying. Please, let me out! I just wanna go home. Let me out, let me out, please!"

We also know the cry, "let me out!" We know what it is like to be trapped and enslaved against our will. The sin of idolatry that led to the temple toppling in Amos's vision also leads to our entrapment. Idols of money, sex, alcohol, and possessions offer everything. But they deliver nothing. We look around at the mess we have made of our lives and desperately cry, "let me out!"

There is refuge in another temple, also toppled and torn apart by God. This day helps us recall that this temple's name is Jesus. He once promised, "**Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it.**" And destroy they did. Because of your sin and mine, the Father marshaled every weapon of mass destruction against our Savior; Judas, Pilate, and Herod; thorns, nails, spear, darkness, and sweat. There was no escape for Jesus, and so we hear screaming, screaming, screaming, and then silence. It all ended "crucified, dead, and buried." Nothing is as bottomless as a pit, as lifeless as a grave, as hopeless as a tomb. Smell the mildew, the odor of blood, the stench of death. See the confines, the darkness, the sealed stone.

But this temple will be rebuilt. In Amos 9:11 the LORD promises, "**I will raise up the falling tabernacle of David. I will repair their breaches, and his ruins I will raise up, and I will rebuild it as in days of old.**" But how will that help us? We are still cramped by the chaos, suffocating in the stillness, trapped in transgressions, and overwhelmed with our silent scream. What shall we do? I've got an idea.

Let's light a match and see who we're buried with: we're not alone. Paul writes in Romans 6:4, "**We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life!**" Again in Colossians 2:12 the apostle announces: "**Having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead.**" God is the One Who gets us out! It is by His power and might! It is by Jesus' death and resurrection!

We are not alone when life caves in and our many sins and transgressions trap us in despair. In baptismal promises Jesus still comes to raise us out of the ruins. And so our silent scream is forever changed into a baptized and blood-bought, "Thanks be to God!" We're going home! We're let out! In Christ we have been set free! Amen.

Prayer of the Church

Let us pray for the Church, that the Lord would defend her against all her enemies and keep her true to Jesus Christ by the power of Your Word and Spirit:

Gracious Lord, keep Your Church in Your mercy, that she may endure the assaults of the evil one and remain faithful for the sake of those numbered within Your Kingdom and those who have not yet heard the Gospel and been brought to faith.

Almighty God, by Your Spirit You have established us as Your Church and granted to us particular vocations within the Church, home and community in which to serve You. Grant to us every gift and blessing needful, that we may honor our calling and serve You to the best of our ability

O mighty Lord, You have established the kingdom of the left and hold accountable all those who govern in this and every place. Guide our president; the members of Congress; the governor of this state; and all who make, administer and judge our laws, that they would serve nobly and wisely, pursuing the path of justice and protecting those least able to protect themselves

Merciful Lord, Your grace is sufficient for all our needs, and You have promised to be the strength of the weary, the hope of those who fear, the healing of the ill, the fullness of those disabled, and the peace of all who are distressed. Hear us on behalf of _____ and all whom we name in our hearts, that they may be well supplied by Your grace in their time of trouble;

Everlasting Father, it is Your will that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of Your Son by faith. Give to Your Word success and deliver from error all those who live in darkness, that they may walk in the light of the Lord Jesus

Blessed Lord, You give food to the hungry and provide for all our needs in this mortal life. Grant to us a grateful heart and knowledge to use wisely and well all that You have entrusted to our care;

Holy Lord, as once Your Son was welcomed with palms and hosannas, help us to welcome Him who comes to us this day in the blessed Sacrament of His body and blood. Guard us against false teaching and help us to discern truth from error, that none may be led astray or lost from the fellowship of Your Son; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, in Whose name we pray,

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: Let us pray the prayer Jesus has taught us to 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. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn "How Deep the Father's Love For Us" by Stuart Townend

The Benediction: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious unto you. The Lord look on You with His favor and give you peace. Amen.

Closing Address