

Sunday Message

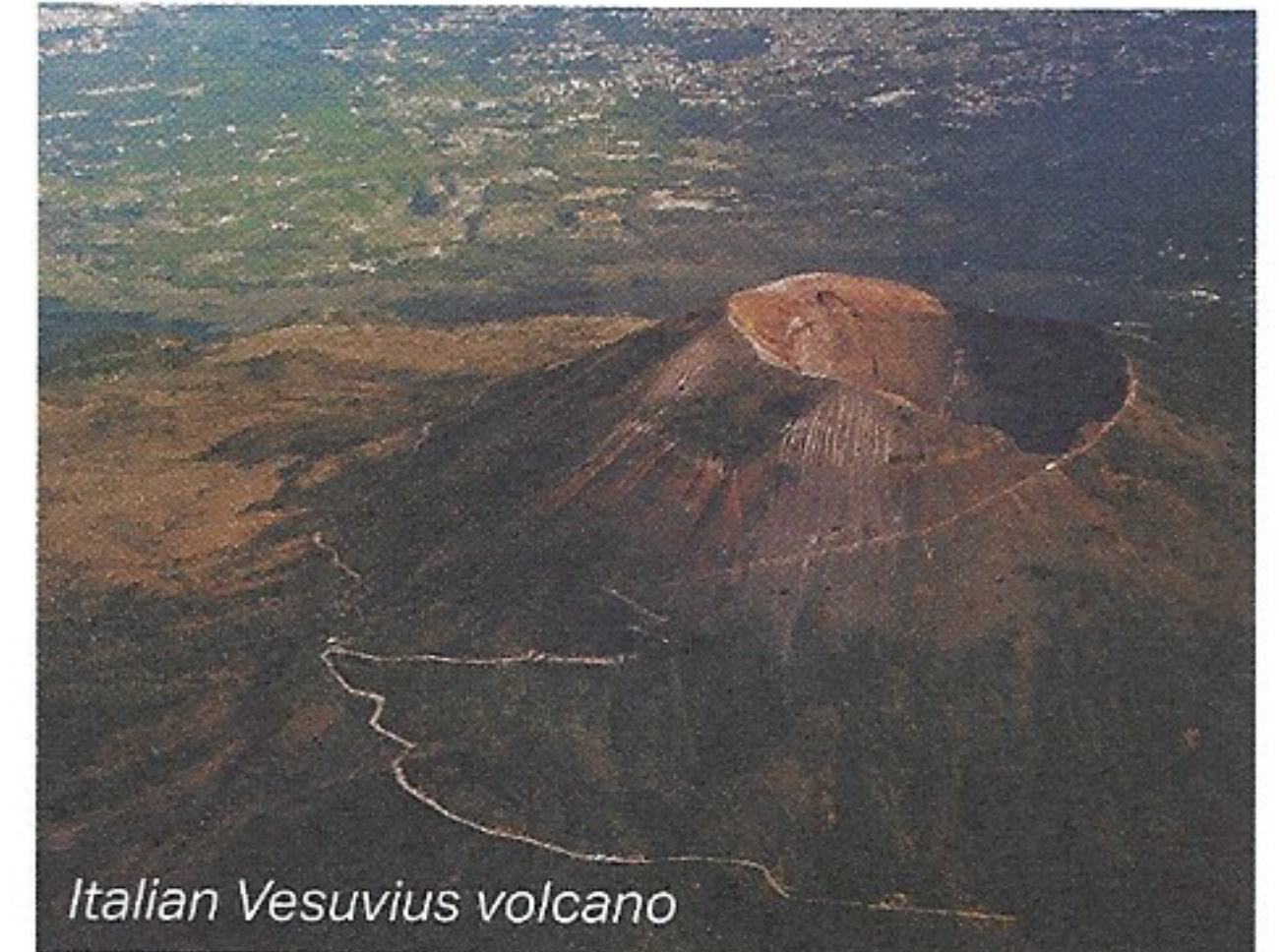
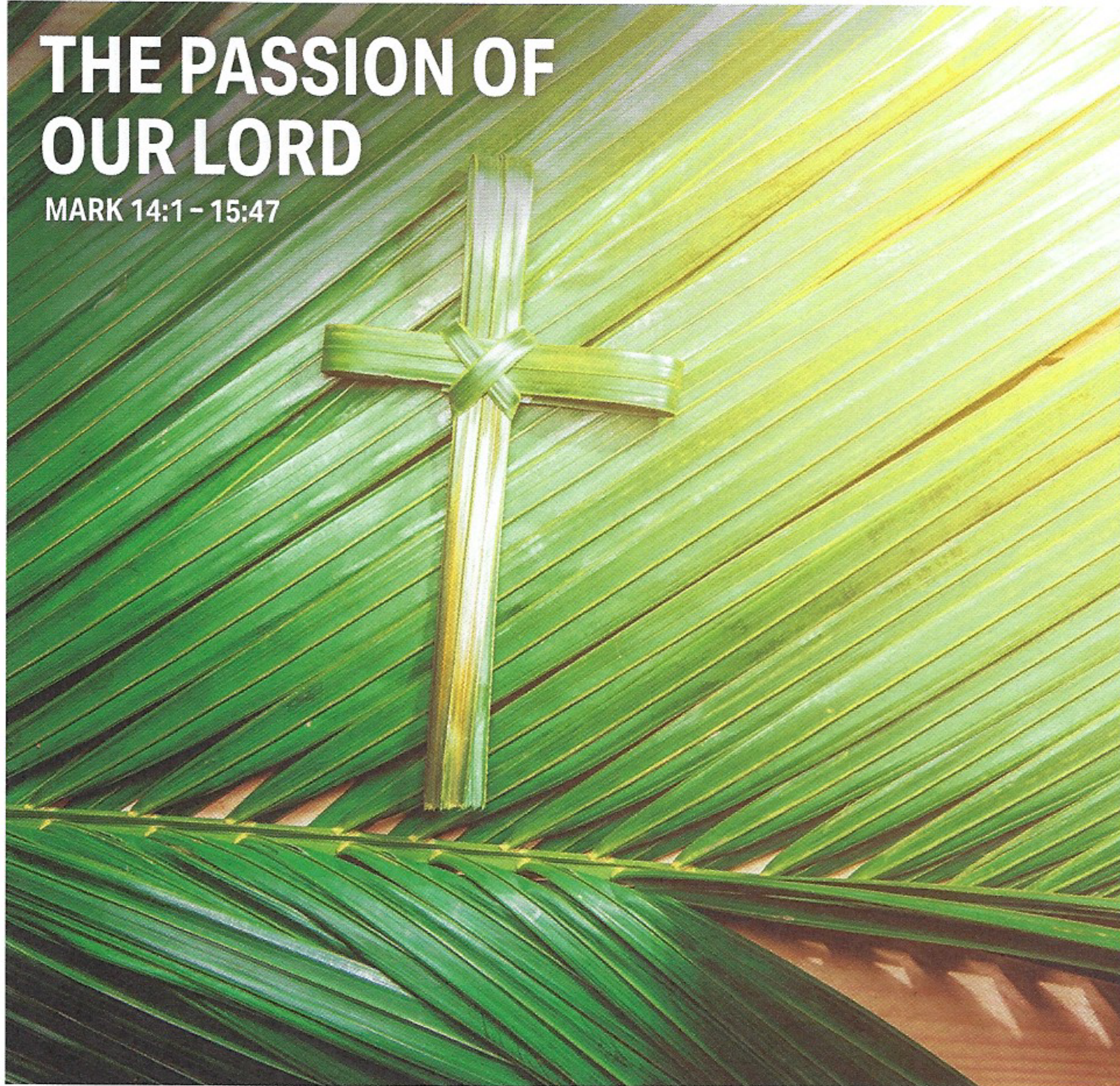
PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

THE WORD

Year B • 24 March 2024 • Psalter Week 2

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

MARK 14:1 - 15:47



Italian Vesuvius volcano

REFLECT

The famous city of Herculaneum, near Naples, was buried by the eruption of the volcano Vesuvius in 79 AD. Only in recent times, excavators found a body on the shore. It was the body of a young woman who died trying to protect a child from the eruption. From her bones, they knew that she'd been undernourished from childhood and marked by heavy work. The experts concluded that she'd been a slave or a servant, there not being much difference in the ancient world between slaves and servants. This is an image very familiar to us when we read the Gospels. Slaves are commonplace. They serve table, they do the hard work, their labour is tiring, and their bodies are worn. It's interesting that on reading the Passion of Jesus Christ, our first impression is of a slave being handed over to be crucified. Except this slave would show the world kindness, compassion, love and mercy. Like the servant in Herculaneum, her last act was to wrap a child in her arms for protection and safety. Jesus, the slave, the servant and the healer, his last act would be to show the world the extent of God's love. This would ultimately get him killed. No one, not even his disciples, could fully comprehend Christ's message – That God so loved the world, he sent his only Son. So that the world might know his love. ■

We recall today the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and we hear again the story of the passion. Two very contrasting scenes. One of welcome, celebration and hospitality. The other a scene of darkness, fear, hostility, and death.

Some might say that Jesus could have taken a detour and avoided Jerusalem. If he knew what lay before him, would it not have been better to travel to a safer destination? The great statement from Denis McBride might help: "Love does not demand the cross; but in the life of Jesus, love ends up on the cross. Love chooses not to avoid the suffering that emerges from its commitment." And so, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. He doesn't disguise himself but instead he heads a parade. In doing so, he's confronting the powerful, the religious leaders that seek to persecute him.

Our second reading today should be read in conjunction with the Passion. The reading is often called The Christ Hymn, and St. Paul uses the opportunity to detail the life of Jesus from his existence before all time, right the way through to his passion, death, resurrection and ascension. The account is detailed and poetic and looks to the cross not as a single moment, but as a summary of the entire mystery that is Christ. ■

SAY

"Every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
(St. Paul)

DO

This week, we take an opportunity to read the second reading once again. Keep in mind the large audience St. Paul was writing to. *The Christ Hymn* seeks to teach us about the life and ministry of Jesus.

LEARN

In his plan of salvation, God ordained that his Son should not only die for our sins, but should also "taste death", experience the condition of death, the separation of his soul from his body, between the time he expired on the cross and the time he was raised from the dead. (Catechism 624)

1. THE SOLEMN ENTRANCE**ANTIPHON**

Hosanna to the Son of David;
blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord, the King of Israel.
Hosanna in the highest.

2. THE SIMPLE ENTRANCE**ANTIPHON**

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!

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who as an example of humility for the human
race to follow
caused our Saviour to take flesh and submit to
the Cross,
graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of
patient suffering
and so merit a share in his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 50:4-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 21(22):8-9,17-20,23-24

Response:

**My God, my God, why have you forsaken
me?**

- 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.)

- 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.)
- 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.)
- 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

Philippians 2:6-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Philippians.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal
glory:**

**Christ 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
names.**

**Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal
glory!**

GOSPEL

Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**
(all bow during the next two lines)

**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;
on the third day he rose again from the
dead;
he ascended into heaven,**

**and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living
and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.**

Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Through the Passion of your Only Begotten
Son, O Lord,
may our reconciliation with you be near at
hand,
so that, though we do not merit it by our own
deeds,
yet by this sacrifice made once for all,
we may feel already the effects of your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Father, if this chalice cannot pass without
my drinking it,
your will be done.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished with these sacred gifts,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,
that, just as through the death of your Son
you have brought us to hope for what we
believe,
so by his Resurrection
you may lead us to where you call.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE

Look, we pray, O Lord, on this your family,
for whom our Lord Jesus Christ
did not hesitate to be delivered into the hands
of the wicked
and submit to the agony of the Cross.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

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We thank you Father for the life and
knowledge which you have made known to
us through Jesus your Son. As this bread
which we have broken was once scattered
on the hillside and was gathered and became
one again, so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.
For yours is the glory and the power through
Jesus Christ our Lord.

(The Didache 2nd century)

