

Lenten and Easter Bible Study



Feb 11

Feb 18

Feb 25

Mar 4

Mar 11

Mar 18

Mar 25

Let's start with a prayer

Holy Father,

Help us to submit ourselves more fully to Your divine will for our lives in our Forty day Lenten journey to repentance and spiritual cleansing in preparation for the celebration of Your Son's glorious Resurrection on Easter Sunday. We pray that this Lenten journey, Father, brings about a change in our lives that leaves us, at the end of the journey, more committed to our faith and less drawn to the attractions of this earthly existence. As we begin our study of Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem, help us, Lord, to follow in His footsteps by denying selfish worldly interests and by humbly showing our gratitude to You through acts of charity, self-sacrifice, and service to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We pray in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Topical Outline



Today we will look at Palm Sunday's Scripture readings:

Isaiah 50: 4-7

Psalm 22

Philippians 2:6-11

Mark 14:1-15:47



Prophet Isaiah

Michelangelo (the Sistine Chapel)

The first reading from the book of Isaiah 50:4-7 (740 BC - 686 BC) and spoke of the suffering servant that is an allusion to Jesus.

Isaiah 50:4-7



The Servant of the Lord said:

⁴ "The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens —
wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.

⁵ The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

⁶ I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who
pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

⁷ The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to
shame."

⁴ *"The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens – awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. ⁵ The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. ⁶ I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. ⁷ The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame."*

In the 4 Servant's Songs in Isaiah, God who created the earth and intervened to save us, announced that He was going to give a mission to a mysterious figure called the "Servant of the Lord".

The passage from our reading begins Isaiah's third Servant's Song that focuses on the Servant himself. The poem or song is in three parts, with each beginning with the words "The Lord God" (v. 4, 5, and 7).

⁴ *"The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens – awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.*

The first part (verse 4) emphasizes the servant's submission to the word of God. He is not a self-taught leader with his own ideas. Instead, he is obedient to the commands of the Lord. He tells us that he is God's faithful disciple, teaching the divine word and God's promise of redemption to sinful and oppressed humanity.

⁵ The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. ⁶ I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. ⁷ The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame."

The second part (v.5-6) concerns his suffering as the Lord's faithful servant.

The third part (v.7-9) shows the servant's determination. He suffers in silence not because he is a coward but because God is with him to help him and to make him strong in the face of persecution. He says that he teaches as God directs him despite suffering persecution, thanks to God's divine guidance. Because of his faith and obedience, he will endure all persecution since he knows his suffering is part of God's divine plan.

Since the earliest age of the Church, Christians have seen the image of the "Suffering Servant" fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

⁴ *The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher*

During His years of ministry, Jesus faithfully taught about the coming of God's Kingdom.

⁶ *I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.*

Jesus did not resist His persecutors' insults, nor did He turn away from those who beat Him, slapped His face, or spit upon Him. Finally, they attempted to disgrace Him by crucifying Him like a common criminal and a man "condemned by God" because He was "hung on a tree".

⁷ *The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame."*

However, Jesus was not disgraced; instead, He arose victorious as He prophesied on the third day having defeated both sin and death.

Scripture references for the previous page:

Since the earliest age of the Church, Christians have seen the image of the "Suffering Servant" fulfilled in Jesus Christ. During His years of ministry, He faithfully taught about the coming of God's Kingdom (Mt 4:17; Mk 1:14-15; Lk 4:14-15). He did not resist His persecutors' insults, nor did He turn away from those who beat Him, slapped His face, or spit upon Him (cf. Mt 26:67-68; 27:26-31; Mk 14:65, 15:15; Jn 18:22; 19:1). Finally, they attempted to disgrace Him by crucifying Him like a common criminal (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:21-27; Lk 23:26-34, 38; Jn 19:17-24) and a man "condemned by God" because He was "hung on a tree" (Dt 22:22-23). However, He was not disgraced; instead, He arose victorious as He prophesied on the third day (Mt 20:17-19; Mk 10:33-34; Lk 18:31-33), having defeated both sin and death (Mt 28:5-6; Mk 16:6; Lk 24:5-8; Jn 20:1-10).



King David, the Psalmist

(King David statue on the Column of the Immaculate Conception on Piazza Mignanelli, Rome)

King David's Psalm 22
prefigures the Passion of
Christ.

Psalm 22: 7-8, 16-19, 22-23



⁷ All who see me mock at me;

they make mouths at me,
they shake their heads;

⁸ “Commit your cause to
the LORD; let him deliver;
let him rescue the one in
whom he delights!”

¹⁶ For dogs are all around
me;

a company of evildoers
encircles me.

My hands and feet have
shriveled;

¹⁷ I can count all my bones.

Psalm 22: 7-8, 16-19, 22-23



¹⁸ they divide my clothes
among themselves,
and for my clothing they
cast lots.

¹⁹ But you, O LORD, do not
be far away!
O my help, come quickly
to my aid!

²² I will tell of your name
to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the
congregation I will praise
you:

²³ You who fear the LORD,
praise him!

All you offspring of
Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all
you offspring of Israel!

Psalm 22 prefigures the Passion of the Christ. It also offers a description of what took place during Jesus' crucifixion, a form of capital punishment that was unknown in David's day. Crucifixion was invented by the Persians and was made for an execution by the Romans.

We note in Psalm 22:

¹ *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

Jesus' first statement from the Cross. (Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34)

¹⁶ *For dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers encircles me.*

The jeering of the crowd like a "pack of evildoers" (Mt 27:39; Mk 15:29; Lk 23:35, 39)

¹⁶ My hands and feet have shriveled;

The piercing of Jesus' hands and feet by nailing Him to the Cross. (Jn 19:37 also in fulfillment of Zec 12:10)

¹⁴ I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint;

The disjointing of Jesus' bones as His body, nailed to the wooden cross, is violently up-righted into the prepared hole and then left to hang by His arms (Mk 15:35)

⁷ All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads; ⁸ "Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver – let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

The taunt of the crowd for God to rescue Jesus if He indeed belongs to God (Mt 27:40, 43; Mk 15:31-32; Lk 23:35-37).

¹⁵ my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws;

The dryness of His mouth (Jn 19:28)

¹⁸ they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.

The casting of lots to divide Jesus' clothing (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Ps 22:18 was quoted in the Gospel of John as fulfilling prophecy, Jn 19:23-24)

The psalmist (King David) declared that the Suffering Servant will proclaim God's name in the liturgical assembly.

Then he calls upon God's covenant people: *"²³ You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!"*

It is the praise and glory we proclaim to Jesus Christ in our liturgical assembly as we remember His Passion and death that God the Father transformed into victory and glory. We, the universal Christian community of Jesus Christ, are now the true descendants of Jacob-Israel and the sacred assembly of the new Israel.

Psalm 22 ends with a prophecy that accurately tells how Christianity will spread across the world in the future.

*²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.*

*²⁸ For dominion belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.*

*²⁹ To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.*

*³⁰ Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,*

*³¹ and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.*



St. Paul the Apostle

(St. Paul statue in front of the basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Rome)

St. Paul reminds us about the Lord's humility in His Suffering and Death.

Philippians 2:6-11



Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,

⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death —
even death on a cross.

Philippians 2:6-11



- ⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Most Bible scholars believe that verses 6-11 are from an early Christian hymn perhaps written by St. Paul for the Christian community at Philippi in Macedonia. It speaks of Jesus' humility in emptying Himself of His divine glory (kenosis in Greek) to live a human life in which He experienced trials and suffering (verses 6-8). Paul was probably intentionally contrasting Jesus "in the form of God" with Adam "created in the image of God" (Genesis 1:26).

Adam attempted to grasp equality with God through his sin of rebellion and pride in eating from the fruit of the forbidden tree that Satan said would make him god-like (Gen 3:5). The sin of Adam condemned humanity to live in sin. Jesus, however, is not "created in the image of God." He is entirely God and, at the same time, fully man, and in His humility, He was obedient to the Father in offering His life as a sacrifice for the sins of humanity. His reward was to defeat both sin and death to be raised by God to divine glory (8-11). His victory provided a way for humanity to be lifted through Him out of sin to receive the promise of eternal salvation in Heaven that had been closed to man since Adam's fall (CCC 536, 1026).



St. Mark the Evangelist

The Gospel tells of the Passion of Christ.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



The Plot to Kill Jesus

14 It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him; ² for they said, “Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.”

The Anointing at Bethany

³ While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,^[b] as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. ⁴ But some were there who said to one another in anger, “Why was the ointment wasted in this way?

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.” And they scolded her. ⁶ But Jesus said, “Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. ⁹ Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.”

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. ¹¹ When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

The Passover with the Disciples

¹² On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, “Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?” ¹³ So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



¹⁵ He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.” ¹⁶ So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

¹⁷ When it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.”

¹⁹ They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, “Surely, not I?” ²⁰ He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. ²¹ For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.”

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



The Institution of the Lord's Supper

²² While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



Peter's Denial Foretold

²⁶ When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ And Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters; for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered.'

²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."

²⁹ Peter said to him, "Even though all become deserters, I will not." ³⁰ Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this day, this very

night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." ³¹ But he said vehemently, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And all of them said the same.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. ³⁴ And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." ³⁵ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." ³⁷ He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? ³⁸ Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



³⁹ And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words.

⁴⁰ And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. ⁴¹ He came a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.”

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

⁴³ Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.”

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



⁴⁵ So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶ Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁴⁷ But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? ⁴⁹ Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰ All of them deserted him and fled.

⁵¹ A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, ⁵² but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



Jesus before the Council

⁵³ They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. ⁵⁴ Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

⁵⁵ Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. ⁵⁶ For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷ Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, ⁵⁸ “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” ⁵⁹ But even on this point their testimony did not agree.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?"

⁶¹ But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"

⁶² Jesus said, "I am; and

'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'"

⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death.

⁶⁵ Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



Peter Denies Jesus

⁶⁶ While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. ⁶⁷ When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.” ⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.” And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. ⁶⁹ And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” ⁷⁰ But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.” ⁷¹ But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know this man you are talking about.”

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



⁷² At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

Jesus before Pilate

¹⁵ As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ² Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” He answered him, “You say so.” ³ Then the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ Pilate asked him again, “Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.” ⁵ But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



Pilate Hands Jesus over to Be Crucified

⁶ Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. ⁷ Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. ⁸ So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. ⁹ Then he answered them, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” ¹⁰ For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. ¹² Pilate spoke to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” ¹³ They shouted back, “Crucify him!” ¹⁴ Pilate asked them, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him!”

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



¹⁵ So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

¹⁶ Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters^[c]); and they called together the whole cohort. ¹⁷ And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him.

¹⁸ And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. ²⁰ After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



The Crucifixion of Jesus

²¹ They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. ²² Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). ²³ And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it.

²⁴ And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

²⁵ It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him.

²⁶ The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷ And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



²⁹ Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself, and come down from the cross!”

³¹ In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³² Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

The Death of Jesus

³³ When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ At three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” ³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “Listen, he is calling for Elijah.”

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



³⁶ And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” ³⁷ Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹ Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

⁴⁰ There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹ These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

Mark 14: 1 – 15: 39



The Burial of Jesus

⁴² When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where the body was laid.

Discussions:

The Anointing at Bethany

³ While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head.

The dinner on Wednesday of Jesus' last teaching day in Jerusalem was at the home of a man named Simon, a former leper, probably healed by Jesus.

At this banquet honoring Jesus, an unnamed woman anointed Jesus' **head**. This event is Jesus' third anointing by a woman during His ministry.

Anointing # 1: Early in Jesus' ministry, an unnamed sinful woman anointed His feet with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair at the home of Simon, a wealthy Pharisee who did not respect Jesus (Lk 7:36-38).

Anointing #2: Mary of Bethany anointed Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair 6 days before Passover (Saturday), at the home of Lazarus. He told Mary "**to keep it** for the day of my burial" when she anointed His **feet** in the Gospel of John on Saturday. The next day Jesus rode into Jerusalem. (Jn 12:1-19)

Anointing #3 (our Gospel reading today and on Palm Sunday): This happened after Jesus rode into Jerusalem. An unnamed woman anointed Jesus' head at the home of Simon the Leper in Bethany two days before the Passover (Wednesday). (Mt 26:1-16: Mk 14:1-11)

The same woman (Mary of Bethany) may have done Anointing #2 and #3. It is reasonable to assume that Mary of Bethany, in obedience to Jesus' command on Saturday at the home of Lazarus (Jn 12: 7), kept the half-used jar of ointment, and on Wednesday at the home of Simon the Leper, knowing that Jesus has prophesied His death, she broke open the bottle to get the last of the ointment to anoint His head (Mk 14:3).

Each anointing of Christ symbolized the three holy offices He fulfilled as God's supreme Prophet, High Priest, and Davidic King. (CCC 436)

As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so are all the baptized.

The baptized received the common Priestly vocation: to devote ourselves to holiness: prayer, sacraments, and the Mass and to make offerings of our gifts and sacrifices to God. At the Mass, the ministerial priest says: ““Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.”

The Prophetic office of the baptized means that we are called to bear the truth of God.

The Kingly office means to govern our charges in the state of life based on our religious conviction.

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

²² While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Notice that Jesus did not offer His disciples the New Covenant sacred meal until after they were already eating.

He offered the gift of the first Eucharistic banquet after the ceremonial passing of the first two communal cups of wine and after they ate the unleavened bread dipped into the fruit mixture and bitter herb in the communal dish (see John 13:26), after the boiled meat of the hagigah festival offering, and finally after the roasted flesh of the Passover sacrifice.

After consuming the Passover sacrifice, those assembled could eat no other food, and there remained only the last two of the communal cups of wine to pass to the guests. The third cup was the Cup of Blessing or Redemption, and the fourth cup that concluded the meal was the Cup of Consecration.

²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the^[g] covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Verse 23 tells of the third cup.

Jesus did not drink the fourth (last cup) at the Passover meal.

For the second time, Jesus changed the ritual traditions of the meal. The first time was when He washed the Apostles' feet at the beginning of the meal (Jn 13:4-10).

When did Jesus drink the last (fourth) cup or The Cup of Consecration ?

From Mark (15:36-37):

³³ When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." ³⁶ And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." ³⁷ Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

From John (19:28-30):

²⁸ After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. ³⁰ When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Why is drinking The Cup of Consecration a significant event?

1. It is significant that the reed was a hyssop branch and that Jesus drank this wine while He had refused wine earlier because of His vow not to drink wine until He came into His Kingdom (Mk14:25, Lk 22:17). In the first Passover in Egypt, the people used a hyssop branch to smear the atoning blood of the first Passover victim around the doors of the houses of the children of Israel as a "sign" of redemption and salvation (see Ex 12:22). It is fitting in Jesus' crucifixion that the soldier used a hyssop branch to give Jesus the wine that symbolized the "wine of God's wrath" in divine judgment (Is 51:17-22; Jer 25:15; Rev 16:19) that Jesus took upon Himself as God accepted His sacrifice and He entered into His Kingdom.

continued....

Why is drinking The Cup of Consecration a significant event?

2. As Jesus prepared to enter into His divine Kingdom, the wine He drank was also symbolic of the 4th Cup of the sacred Passover supper that He did not offer at the end of the meal with his disciples. When the host offered the last cup at the end of the Passover meal, he said: "It is finished" (also translated as "It is fulfilled").

Drinking the cup symbolically sealed and confirmed God's covenant with Israel for another year. By saying "It is fulfilled" Jesus announced the fulfillment of the obligation for another year and that the people are again consecrated to the covenant with God.

However, what also "finished" or "fulfilled" that Jesus announces from the Cross, is the old Sinai Covenant (see Mt 5:18; Heb 8:6,13).

His words declare that there is now a new Passover sacrifice whose blood is offered for the purification of sins (Heb 9:22, 27-28) and a new sacred meal that will mark the continuation of a New Covenant in the blood of Christ establishing fellowship with God.

Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declares unto Mary.

R. And she conceived on the Holy Spirit.

➤ Hail Mary full of grace....

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to thy word

➤ Hail Mary full of grace...

V. And the word became flesh

R. And dwelt among us.

➤ Hail Mary full of grace...

V. Pray for us O Holy Mother of God

R. That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ

V. Let us pray,

R. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O LORD, Thy grace into our hearts; that, we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection.