

Lessons for Sunday of the Passion

March 20, 2016

Processional: John 12:12-19 - *Some Greeks came to see Jesus when the hour of his glorification was near.*
Psalm 118:19-29 (antiphon: v. 26) – *The king is welcomed in triumphal procession as the people give thanks.*
Deuteronomy 32:36-39 -*There is no other God who puts to death and brings to life and can help in trouble.*
Philippians 2:5-11 - *Jesus showed His eternal Lordship through service, by dying on the cross for us.*
Luke 22:1-23:56 – *The entire Passion narrative from Luke.*
or Luke 23:1-56 - *The King of heaven and earth was judged by a representative of a king of this world.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Lord of All, We Bow before You!

Suffering in our lives begins to make sense as we observe our Lord on this Sunday of His passion. Moses sang a song of deliverance in times of trouble, recalling that only the God of Israel can rescue from catastrophe and bring life out of death. In another song of the people of God, St. Paul recorded how God, in Christ, took upon Himself our humanity and willingly suffered as servant in order to rescue us from sin and death. The Gospel Lesson recounts Lord Christ before Lord Caesar, and in the appearance of defeat, reveals God's victory at the cross.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: O Jesus, You alone have shown the power of God to bring peace through suffering and life out of death. Let me embrace sorrow in my own life as a sign of Your presence and an invitation to turn all things over to Your Lordship. Show me opportunities to spend my life in service to Your kingdom and to others. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Material things become instruments of sorrow when they begin to control us or when we expect them to deliver us from the difficulties of life. We are blessed through them when we use them to bring benefits to others, physically and spiritually.

OFFERING PRAYER: We bend our knee and with our tongue confess that Christ is Lord!
And through these gifts that now we place into Your care,
We willingly proclaim His name; and when our days are hard,
Take comfort in our griefs and sufferings Jesus shares. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We want to select our own gods and lords, but when the chips are down, they cannot help us. Idols at our command are no stronger than we are in times of trouble. The only one who can judge, put to death, and bring to life, eternally, serves at His own behest. He stood before the courts of this world and literally gave Himself in our place. He accepted death in order to bring us to life; He has selected us! Our knees now bow and tongues confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of all!