

# Purification and Enlightenment Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA  
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord • Year C • April 13, 2025

## Catechist Preparation

**FIRST READING**—ISAIAH 50:4-7

Today's reading comes from the portion of the Book of Isaiah called the "Songs of the Servant," in which the author tries to work out the meaning of Israel's suffering during the exile in Babylon. The anonymous servant who figures in these Scripture passages may represent Israel itself. Christians read these passages and see the Lord's Servant as a prefiguration of Christ, the Suffering Servant of God.

**SECOND READING**—PHILIPPIANS 2:6-11

This Scripture passage is believed by scholars to be an early Christian hymn used by Saint Paul as he wrote his letter to the Church in Philippi. This hymn is poetic and evocative while containing a rich theological understanding of the divine self-emptying in the Incarnation, which includes Jesus' embrace of suffering and Death.

**GOSPEL**—LUKE 22:14-23:56 OR 23:1-49

It is only in this account of the Last Supper that we hear the words of Jesus, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Luke thus underscores in his account of Jesus' Passion how it becomes the pattern for our own suffering, dying, and rising. In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke shows that Jesus exemplifies the way of self-denial that his disciples must follow by describing the death of Stephen in terms that clearly intend to evoke the pattern of Jesus' Death.

## Making Connections

### Key Images and Symbols

Last Supper (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC] 610, 1329, 1340)

Jerusalem (CCC 757, 1044, 1045)

Jesus (CCC 430, 432, 434)

The Cross (CCC 616, 618)

The Kingdom (CCC 545, 2046, 2804, 2816)

### Music Suggestions

"Hosanna," F.P. O'Brien (GIA)

"Hosanna to the Son of David," D. Shutte (OCP)

"God So Loved the World," P. Tate (WLP)

## Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Have the space with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a purple cloth, a crucifix, and some palm branches.

### Respond

Allow for a sufficient amount of quiet time for the participants to reflect or journal about their experiences of the Liturgy of the Word. Then invite volunteers to share what touched them during the liturgy.

### Enhance

Lead a guided meditation in these or similar words:

*Close your eyes. . . . Take a few deep breaths. . . . Imagine yourself as part of a crowd walking on the road to Jerusalem. . . . What do you see? . . . What do you hear? . . . What do you feel? . . . There seems to be something happening behind you. You stop and watch and wait. . . . The crowd seems to part and you see a man riding on a donkey. . . . The people are throwing their cloaks down on the path in front of him. They are waving palm branches and crying out, "Hosanna to the Son of David." As the man on the donkey comes near you, your eyes meet. . . . The man's gaze holds your attention. . . . He is speaking to your heart. What does he say to you? (Long pause.) You speak to him about your desire to be baptized. (Long pause.) What does he say in response to you? (Long pause.) You continue to walk with the crowd, and then he is hidden from your view.*

### Pray

Invite the participants to talk to the Lord, in the quiet of their hearts, about their desire for Baptism. Then conclude by praying the prayer from the participant handout: *Almighty Father, by your Son's holy and glorious wounds, guard us, keep us, save us, and raise us up. Amen.*

# Purification and Enlightenment Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA  
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord • Year C • April 13, 2025

## Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

### Readings

Luke 19:28-40 (Procession with Palms)

Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18a, 19-20, 23-24

Philippians 2:6-11

Luke 22:14-23:56 or 23:1-49

### Welcome

Begin by welcoming everyone who is present, including godparents, sponsors, team members, and spouses who are joining the group. Spend a few minutes gathering some of the participants' reflections on the Liturgy of the Word.

### Uncover

1. Summarize the **Repent** section on the participant handout and allow time for quiet reflection on the questions presented there. Then invite the participants to share their reflections with one or two other people.
2. Encourage volunteers to share their thoughts with the large group.

### Purify

1. Play or sing the chant "Jesus, Remember Me" as you pass the crucifix around the group. Encourage each person to gaze upon the crucifix for a few minutes.
2. Invite the participants to read the **Renew** section and allow time for quiet reflection on the question given at the end.
3. Distribute some paper and encourage the participants to take time to write a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus. You may wish to play quiet music in the background while they are writing, or use one of the suggested songs for this session.
4. When most of the participants have finished, ask them to fold their prayers. You may wish to provide envelopes for safekeeping. Encourage the participants to pray their prayers of thanksgiving throughout Holy Week.

### Enlighten

1. Summarize or invite the participants to read on the participant handout **Church Teaching: Jesus Christ, King and Savior, Who Reigns from the Cross**. Discuss the following points:
  - Though darkness came over the land, the light of Jesus' love penetrated the darkness. Jesus conquers all sin (darkness) through his Death and Resurrection.
  - One of the criminals recognizes Jesus as the Savior. He pleads for forgiveness and receives the assurance that he will be in paradise.
  - Jesus demonstrates the depth of his love by willingly embracing death—death on the Cross.
  - As believers we too are called to be ready to lay down our lives for the sake of the kingdom. Self-sacrifice is the way of life for a Christian disciple.
2. Highlight the **Key Images and Symbols of the Season** section.

### Live

1. The end of the journey toward initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist—is just a few days away. Encourage the group to participate in the liturgies of Holy Thursday and Good Friday and the Rites of Immediate Preparation of Holy Saturday morning.
2. Invite the group to reflect on the **Preparing for Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist** section. If there is time, encourage volunteers to share their reflections.

### Pray

Use the Responsorial Psalm from today's liturgy (Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18a, 19-20, 23-24) as the closing prayer.