

Intercessory Prayers

Sunday, March 29, 2026 Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday, Year A

Introduction

Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin before God, who
removes our guilt
and blots out all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your
steadfast love.**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us
and dishonor you:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your
steadfast love.**

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering
for your word:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your
steadfast love.**

For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your
steadfast love.**

For drawing from the well of self-serving
ambition,

and for disdaining the living water Christ offers:
Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your
steadfast love.**

For disregarding voices from the margin,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and
hope in the world:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your
steadfast love.**

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and
discontent,

and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth
to life:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your
steadfast love.**

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness
abound.

Through faith, the free gift of God,
you have been clothed in the righteousness of
Christ.

In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are
forgiven.

The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from
the dead

dwells in you,

pours God's love into your hearts,
and gives you life and peace.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the
human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to
take on our nature and to suffer death on the
cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his
obedience to your will and in the glorious
victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and
forever.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day (Alternate)

Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day (2nd Alternate)

O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Christ humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death ^l on a cross.* Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above ^l ev'ry name. (*Phil. 2:8-9*)

Procession with Palms

Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus enters Jerusalem

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 26:14—27:66

Matthew 27:11-54 (alternate)

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally (*here local bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay preachers may be named*). Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. **Hear us, O God.**

Your mercy is great.

You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for (*Hans Nielsen Hauge and*) all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
your steadfast love embraces all creation.
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the
earth
and bring forth its bounty.
Through these gifts of bread and wine,
draw us into the death and life of your Son,
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.

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Invitation to Communion

Come to the table.
Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

Prayer after Communion

God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores
our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for
the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:
God, who calls all things into existence,
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains
creation,
✠ bless you now and always.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Believe the good news.
Thanks be to God.

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