



a Kendall Hunt Company

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, Year B, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



Intermediate Session

Isaiah 50:4-7

Mark 14:1-15:47 [or short form 15:1-39]

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, you are always with us, especially when we go through tough times.

Help us to never give up on you.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is the Gift of Perseverance. For today's session provide construction paper, scissors, and markers. To begin, invite the children to design cards of support for people who are experiencing hard times. The cards can be given to local nursing homes or to school guidance counselors. Discuss:

- Who are some people you know who are experiencing hard times?
- What helps you get through difficult situations?
- Who helps you when you are hurting?

Allow time for discussion. Our faith in God helps us get through hard times. Jesus has shown us how to persevere and trust in God when things get tough.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading, listen to how God's servant remains faithful even when he is suffering.

Read Isaiah 50:4-7.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How is God's servant suffering?
- What gives him the strength to deal with his suffering?
- How does God's servant remain faithful?

In the gospel passage, listen to the story of Jesus' passion.



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Read Mark 14:1-15:47 [or short form 15:1-39].

Allow for silence.

- How is Jesus betrayed by his friends?
- What happens when Jesus is handed over to Pilate?
- What does Jesus cry out before he dies on the cross?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the **Catechist Background** section.

On this Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, the Church's Holy Week begins. In today's celebration we recall Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Upon his entry, the people greet Jesus by placing palm branches in his path.

In the first reading from the Old Testament, God's servant tells of the great burdens that he must endure. The servant is mistreated and humiliated. What is most striking about this passage, however, is the perseverance of the servant. Even in the face of suffering and death, his faith in God does not fail.

In the gospel we hear the story of Jesus' passion. In Mark's account of the passion, Jesus is abandoned, betrayed and denied by his friends. Jesus is handed over to Pilate where he is condemned to death. The horrible method of Roman execution at the time is crucifixion. Pilate follows the wishes of the crowd and gives Jesus over to be crucified. Jesus cries out to God as he hangs on the cross, feeling abandoned even by God as he faces his death alone.

The story of Jesus' passion is not only an account of those who betrayed, condemned, and abandoned Jesus to his death. It is also the account of the Son of God who never faltered in his mission, and who, even in his cry of abandonment on the cross, spoke to God in prayer. The power of Jesus' death shook the world. Through his death, Jesus destroyed the separation between God and God's people forever.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- When do you feel hurt or alone?
- Do you turn to God for help?
- How can faith in God help you through difficult times?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in Life**.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

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The Gift of Perseverance

In our life journey, we all experience difficulties along the way. While Jesus came to bring God's kingdom among us, it is not yet here in full. Suffering, evil, and sin exist in our world. Despite these experiences of difficulty, evil, and sin, we Catholics believe that God is with us, lovingly guiding us through it all.

As believers, we trust that our lives are in the hands of God. The love of God guides us on right paths, even when we are confronted with situations of suffering and pain. When we experience suffering, our challenge is to pray in hope for the gift of perseverance. Catholics believe that God saves us and guides us through every difficulty that we face. We persevere because Jesus Christ has shown us the way. He is our model, guide, and teacher.

- * What is the gift of perseverance?
- * When have you needed the gift of perseverance?
- * Why is Jesus a model and guide for us?

Sacrament Connection

In the Sacrament of Confirmation we are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Our faith in God is made stronger. In times of difficulty we can call on the power of the Holy Spirit to help us persevere.

The Gospel in Life

How can you share your card of support with someone who is going through a hard time this week?