

Daily Reading for Good Friday

Reading 1, *Isaiah 52:13-53:12*

¹³ Look, my servant will prosper, will grow great, will rise to great heights. ¹⁴ As many people were aghast at him -- he was so inhumanly disfigured that he no longer looked like a man- ¹⁵ so many nations will be astonished and kings will stay tight-lipped before him, seeing what had never been told them, learning what they had not heard before. ¹ Who has given credence to what we have heard? And who has seen in it a revelation of Yahweh's arm? ² Like a sapling he grew up before him, like a root in arid ground. He had no form or charm to attract us, no beauty to win our hearts; ³ he was despised, the lowest of men, a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering, one from whom, as it were, we averted our gaze, despised, for whom we had no regard. ⁴ Yet ours were the sufferings he was bearing, ours the sorrows he was carrying, while we thought of him as someone being punished and struck with affliction by God; ⁵ whereas he was being wounded for our rebellions, crushed because of our guilt; the punishment reconciling us fell on him, and we have been healed by his bruises. ⁶ We had all gone astray like sheep, each taking his own way, and Yahweh brought the acts of rebellion of all of us to bear on him. ⁷ Ill-treated and afflicted, he never opened his mouth, like a lamb led to the slaughter-house, like a sheep dumb before its shearers he never opened his mouth. ⁸ Forcibly, after sentence, he was taken. Which of his contemporaries was concerned at his having been cut off from the land of the living, at his having been struck dead for his people's rebellion? ⁹ He was given a grave with the wicked, and his tomb is with the rich, although he had done no violence, had spoken no deceit. ¹⁰ It was Yahweh's good pleasure to crush him with pain; if he gives his life as a sin offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his life, and through him Yahweh's good pleasure will be done. ¹¹ After

the ordeal he has endured, he will see the light and be content. By his knowledge, the upright one, my servant will justify many by taking their guilt on himself. ¹² Hence I shall give him a portion with the many, and he will share the booty with the mighty, for having exposed himself to death and for being counted as one of the rebellious, whereas he was bearing the sin of many and interceding for the rebellious.

Responsorial Psalm, *Psalms 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25*

² turn your ear to me, make haste. Be for me a rock-fastness, a fortified citadel to save me. ⁶ you hate those who serve useless idols; but my trust is in Yahweh:

¹² I have no more place in their hearts than a corpse, or something lost. ¹³ All I hear is slander -- terror wherever I turn -- as they plot together against me, scheming to take my life.

¹⁵ every moment of my life is in your hands, rescue me from the clutches of my foes who pursue me; ¹⁶ let your face shine on your servant, save me in your faithful love.

¹⁷ I call on you, Yahweh, so let disgrace fall not on me, but on the wicked. Let them go down to Sheol in silence,

Reading 2, *Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9*

¹⁴ Since in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven, we must hold firm to our profession of faith. ¹⁵ For the high priest we have is not incapable of feeling our weaknesses with us, but has been put to the test in exactly the same way as ourselves, apart from sin. ¹⁶ Let us, then, have no fear in approaching the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace when we are in need of help.

⁷ During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, with loud cries and with tears, to the one who had the power to save him from death, and, winning a hearing by his reverence, ⁸ he learnt obedience, Son though he was, through his sufferings; ⁹ when he had been perfected, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation

Gospel, John 18:1-19:42

¹ After he had said all this, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron valley where there was a garden into which he went with his disciples. ² Judas the traitor knew the place also, since Jesus had often met his disciples there, ³ so Judas brought the cohort to this place together with guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons. ⁴ Knowing everything that was to happen to him, Jesus came forward and said, 'Who are you looking for?' ⁵ They answered, 'Jesus the Nazarene.' He said, 'I am he.' Now Judas the traitor was standing among them. ⁶ When Jesus said to them, 'I am he,' they moved back and fell on the ground. ⁷ He asked them a second time, 'Who are you looking for?' They said, 'Jesus the Nazarene.'
⁸ Jesus replied, 'I have told you that I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.' ⁹ This was to fulfil the words he had spoken, 'Not one

of those you gave me have I lost.' ¹⁰ Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. ¹¹ Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back in its scabbard; am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?' ¹² The cohort and its tribune and the Jewish guards seized Jesus and bound him. ¹³ They took him first to Annas, because Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ It was Caiaphas who had counselled the Jews, 'It is better for one man to die for the people.' ¹⁵ Simon Peter, with another disciple, followed Jesus. This disciple, who was known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's palace, ¹⁶ but Peter stayed outside the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the door-keeper and brought Peter in. ¹⁷ The girl on duty at the door said to Peter, 'Aren't you another of that man's disciples?' He answered, 'I am not.' ¹⁸ Now it was cold, and the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were standing there warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others.¹⁹ The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered, 'I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together; I have said nothing in secret. ²¹ Why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught; they know what I said.' ²² At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying, 'Is that the way you answer the high priest?' ²³ Jesus replied, 'If there is some offence in what I said, point it out; but if not, why do you strike me?' ²⁴ Then Annas sent him, bound, to Caiaphas the high priest. ²⁵ As Simon Peter stood there warming himself, someone said to him, 'Aren't you another of his disciples?' He denied it saying, 'I am not.' ²⁶ One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, 'Didn't I see you in the garden with him?' ²⁷ Again Peter denied it; and at once a cock crowed. ²⁸ They then led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the Praetorium. It was now morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves to avoid becoming defiled and

unable to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate came outside to them and said, 'What charge do you bring against this man?' They replied, ³⁰ 'If he were not a criminal, we should not have handed him over to you.' ³¹ Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves, and try him by your own Law.' The Jews answered, 'We are not allowed to put anyone to death.' ³² This was to fulfil the words Jesus had spoken indicating the way he was going to die. ³³ So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him and asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' ³⁴ Jesus replied, 'Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others said it to you about me?' ³⁵ Pilate answered, 'Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?' ³⁶ Jesus replied, 'Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. As it is, my kingdom does not belong here.' ³⁷ Pilate said, 'So, then you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'It is you who say that I am a king. I was born for this, I came into the world for this, to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.' ³⁸ 'Truth?' said Pilate. 'What is that?' And so saying he went out again to the Jews and said, 'I find no case against him. ³⁹ But according to a custom of yours I should release one prisoner at the Passover; would you like me, then, to release for you the king of the Jews?' ⁴⁰ At this they shouted, 'Not this man,' they said, 'but Barabbas.' Barabbas was a bandit. ¹ Pilate then had Jesus taken away and scourged; ² and after this, the soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on his head and dressed him in a purple robe. ³ They kept coming up to him and saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' and slapping him in the face. ⁴ Pilate came outside again and said to them, 'Look, I am going to bring him out to you to let you see that I find no case against him.' ⁵ Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said, 'Here is the man.' ⁶ When they saw him, the chief priests and the guards shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him: I find no case against him.' ⁷ The Jews replied, 'We have a Law, and according to that Law he ought

to be put to death, because he has claimed to be Son of God.' ⁸ When Pilate heard them say this his fears increased. ⁹ Re-entering the Praetorium, he said to Jesus, 'Where do you come from?' But Jesus made no answer. ¹⁰ Pilate then said to him, 'Are you refusing to speak to me? Surely you know I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?' ¹¹ Jesus replied, 'You would have no power over me at all if it had not been given you from above; that is why the man who handed me over to you has the greater guilt.' ¹² From that moment Pilate was anxious to set him free, but the Jews shouted, 'If you set him free you are no friend of Caesar's; anyone who makes himself king is defying Caesar.' ¹³ Hearing these words, Pilate had Jesus brought out, and seated him on the chair of judgement at a place called the Pavement, in Hebrew Gabbatha. ¹⁴ It was the Day of Preparation, about the sixth hour. 'Here is your king,' said Pilate to the Jews. ¹⁵ But they shouted, 'Away with him, away with him, crucify him.' Pilate said, 'Shall I crucify your king?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king except Caesar.' ¹⁶ So at that Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. They then took charge of Jesus, ¹⁷ and carrying his own cross he went out to the Place of the Skull or, as it is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, ¹⁸ where they crucified him with two others, one on either side, Jesus being in the middle. ¹⁹ Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to the cross; it ran: 'Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews'. ²⁰ This notice was read by many of the Jews, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the writing was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. ²¹ So the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate, 'You should not write "King of the Jews", but that the man said, "I am King of the Jews". ' ²² Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written.' ²³ When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem; ²⁴ so they said to one another, 'Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to have it.' In this way the words of scripture were fulfilled: They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothes. That is what the

soldiers did. ²⁵ Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. ²⁶ Seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, 'Woman, this is your son.' ²⁷ Then to the disciple he said, 'This is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. ²⁸ After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed and, so that the scripture should be completely fulfilled, he said: I am thirsty. ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine stood there; so, putting a sponge soaked in the wine on a hyssop stick, they held it up to his mouth. ³⁰ After Jesus had taken the wine he said, 'It is fulfilled'; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit. ³¹ It was the Day of Preparation, and to avoid the bodies' remaining on the cross during the Sabbath -- since that Sabbath was a day of special solemnity -- the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. ³² Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. ³³ When they came to Jesus, they saw he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs ³⁴ one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. ³⁵ This is the evidence of one who saw it -- true evidence, and he knows that what he says is true -- and he gives it so that you may believe as well. ³⁶ Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture: Not one bone of his will be broken; ³⁷ and again, in another place scripture says: They will look to the one whom they have pierced. ³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a disciple of Jesus -- though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews -- asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission, so they came and took it away. ³⁹ Nicodemus came as well -- the same one who had first come to Jesus at night-time -- and he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ They took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, following the Jewish burial custom. ⁴¹ At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in this garden a

new tomb in which no one had yet been buried. ⁴² Since it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.