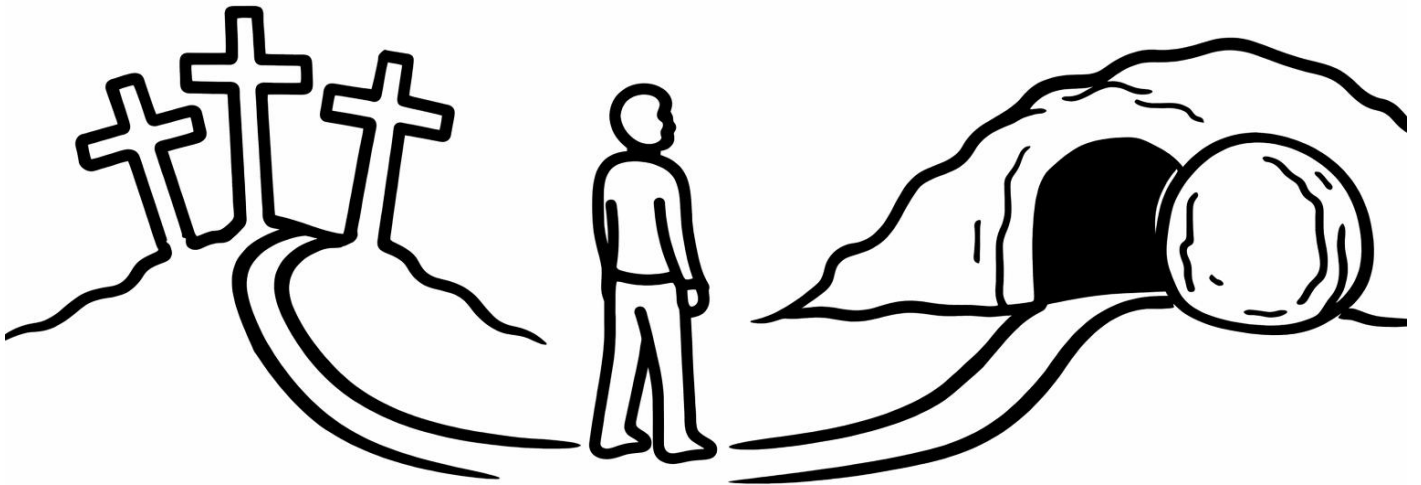


Eight Days in the City

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026



✠ Take five deep breaths and check-in with how you are feeling in body, mind and spirit. Take five more deep breaths and ask God to abide with you this Holy Week, and especially in this time today you have set aside for devotions.

✠ “HEAR THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.”
Take some time to allow this phrase to sink into your heart and mind.

Glory to you O Lord

This resource offers 15 readings from Matthew’s Gospel telling the story of Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. You can read these at your own pace over the week.

✠ You might like to say the Lord’s Prayer and use this collect:
Lord you make a gift of death to bring us to new life: free us from our need to fix and own your name so we may look for the day when you are lifted high and all are drawn into the arms of love, through Jesus Christ, the passion of God. Amen

✠ “THIS IS THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD.”
Close this time with a moment of quiet and stillness, saying:

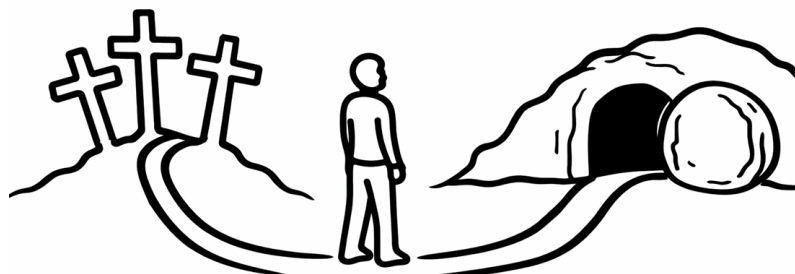
Praise to you O Christ

Reading 1

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, “The Lord needs them.” And he will send them immediately.’ This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, *‘Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’*

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!’ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, ‘Who is this?’ The crowds were saying, ‘This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.’



Reading 2

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, ‘It is written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer”; but you are making it a den of robbers.’

The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the children crying out in the temple, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David’, they became angry and said to him, ‘Do you hear what these are saying?’

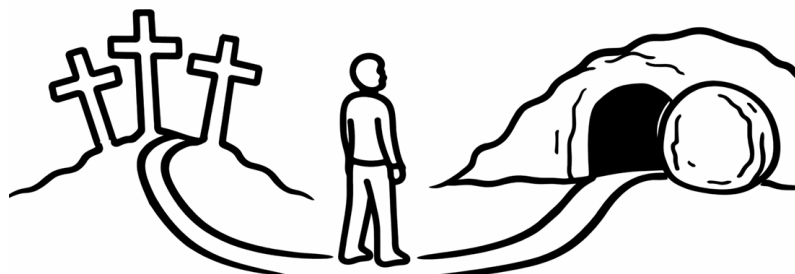
Jesus said to them, ‘Yes; have you never read, “Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself”?’ He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

[The next day,] when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?’

Jesus said to them, ‘I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I am doing these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?’

And they argued with one another, ‘If we say, “From heaven”, he will say to us, “Why then did you not believe him?” But if we say, “Of human origin”, we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.’ So they answered Jesus, ‘We do not know.’

And he said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.’



Reading 3

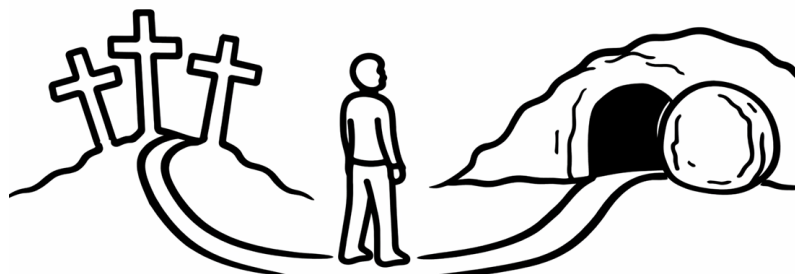
ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, ‘Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?’

But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, ‘Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.’ And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, ‘Whose head is this, and whose title?’ They answered, ‘The emperor’s.’ Then he said to them, ‘Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’ When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’ He said to him, ‘“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’

[As Jesus was leaving the Temple, he said,] ‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you, desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.”’



Reading 4

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

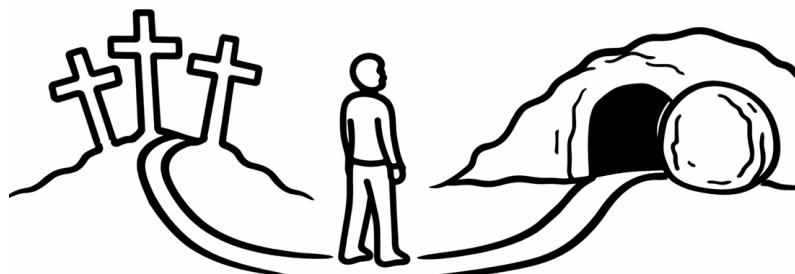
Jesus said to his disciples, ‘You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.’

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and they conspired to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, ‘Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.’

Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, ‘Why this waste? For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor.’

But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, ‘Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.’

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What will you give me if I betray him to you?’ They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.



Reading 5

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?’

He said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, “The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.”’ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, ‘Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.’

And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, ‘Surely not I, Lord?’

He answered, ‘The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.’

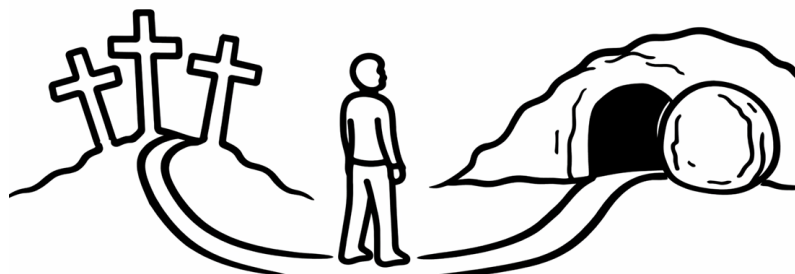
Judas, who betrayed him, said, ‘Surely not I, Rabbi?’

He replied, ‘You have said so.’

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body.’

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.’

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.



Reading 6

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

Then Jesus said to them, ‘You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.” But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.’

Peter said to him, ‘Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.’

Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.’

Peter said to him, ‘Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.’ And so said all the disciples.

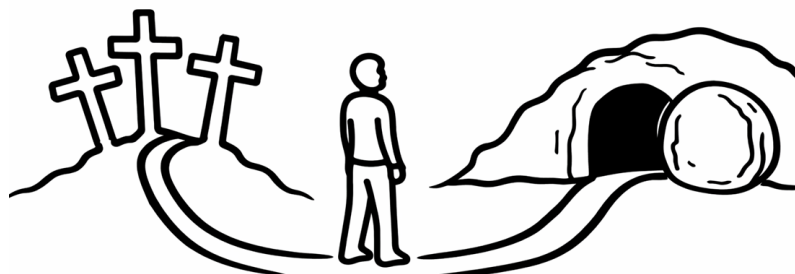
Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, ‘Sit here while I go over there and pray.’

He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, ‘I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.’

And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.’

Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, ‘So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’

Again he went away for the second time and prayed, ‘My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.’



Reading 7

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

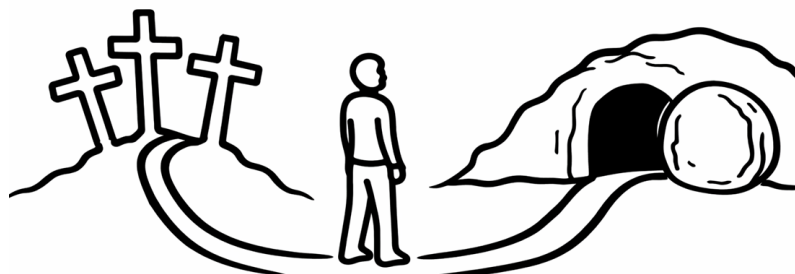
While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.'

At once he came up to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' and kissed him.

Jesus said to him, 'Friend, do what you are here to do.' Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.

Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?'

At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.



Reading 8

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward.

At last two came forward and said, ‘This fellow said, “I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.”’

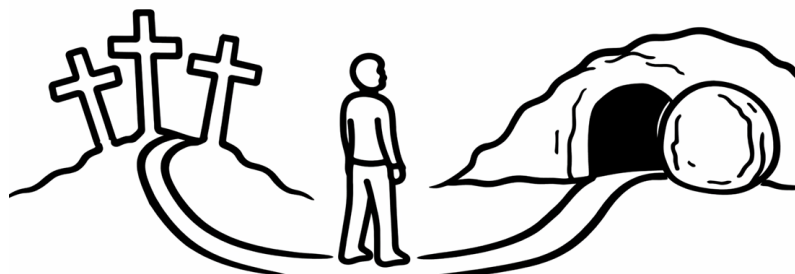
The high priest stood up and said, ‘Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?’ But Jesus was silent.

Then the high priest said to him, ‘I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.’

Jesus said to him, ‘You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.’

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?’

They answered, ‘He deserves death.’ Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, saying, ‘Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?’



Reading 9

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard.

A servant-girl came to him and said, 'You also were with Jesus the Galilean.'

But he denied it before all of them, saying, 'I do not know what you are talking about.'

When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, 'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.'

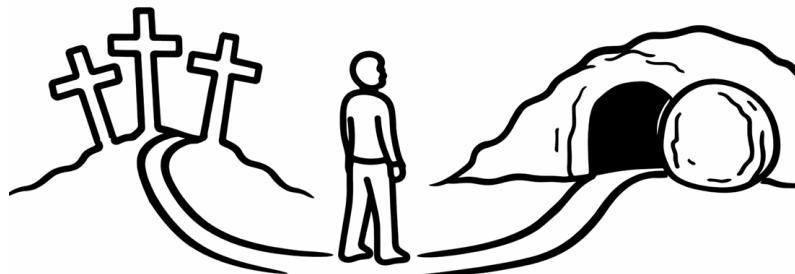
Again he denied it with an oath, 'I do not know the man.'

After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, 'Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.'

Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know the man!' At that moment the cock crowed.

Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: 'Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.'

And he went out and wept bitterly.



Reading 10

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

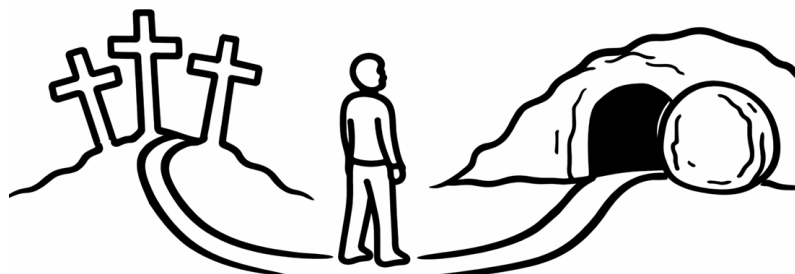
When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

Jesus said, 'You say so.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer.

Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?' But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over.

While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.'



Reading 11

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, ‘Which of the two do you want me to release for you?’

And they said, ‘Barabbas.’

Pilate said to them, ‘Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?’

All of them said, ‘Let him be crucified!’

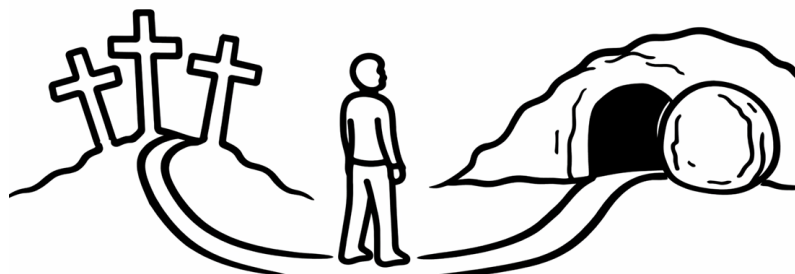
Then he asked, ‘Why, what evil has he done?’

But they shouted all the more, ‘Let him be crucified!’

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, ‘I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.’

Then the people as a whole answered, ‘His blood be on us and on our children!’ So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.



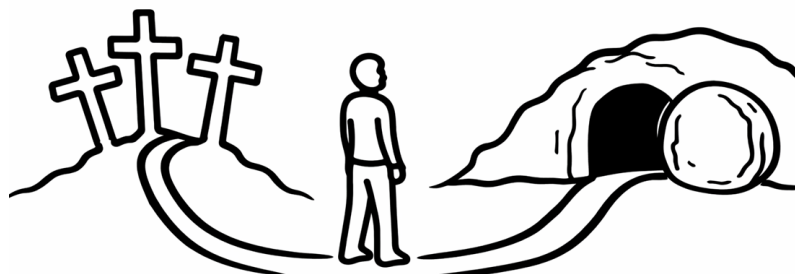
Reading 12

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, ‘This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.’

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.’

In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, ‘He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, “I am God’s Son.”’ The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.



Reading 13

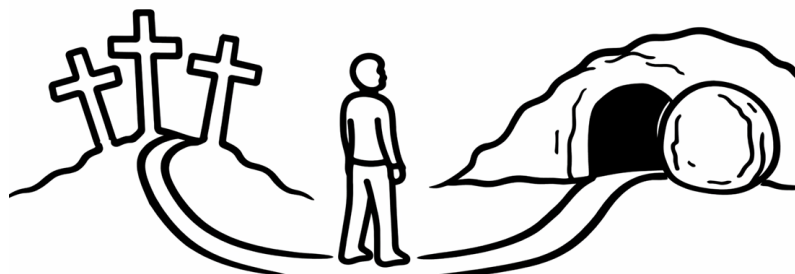
ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.'

Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'

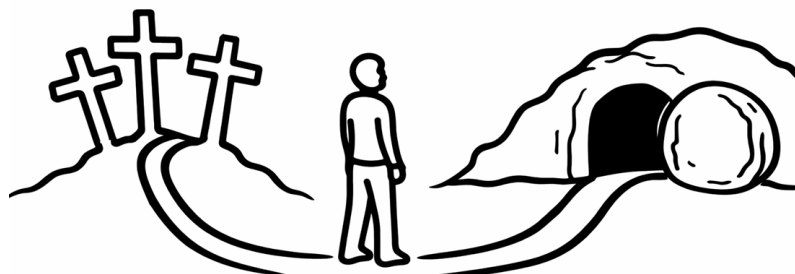


Reading 14

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, ‘Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, “After three days I will rise again.” Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, “He has been raised from the dead”, and the last deception would be worse than the first.’ Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.’ So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.



Reading 15

ABIDE resources for Palm Sunday to Easter Day 2026

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men.

But the angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, “He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.” This is my message for you.’

So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, ‘Greetings!’ And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him.

