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PSALM: I have taken refuge in the LORD. How can you tell my soul: “Be homeless in your mountain like a bird”?

For look! Wicked people draw their bows. They have put their arrows against the bow-strings to shoot in the dark at people who are upright in heart.

When the foundations are laid in ruins, what has a righteous person been able to do?

The LORD is in His holy Temple. The throne of the LORD is in heaven. His eyes see. His eyelashes test the descendants of Adam.

The LORD tests the righteous person but His soul hates the wicked person and the one who loves violence.

Let Him rain snares down on wicked people! Fire, sulphur and a whirlwind will be the portion of their cup.

For the LORD is righteous. He loves righteous actions. The upright person will see His face.

Psalm 11

COLLECT: Lord God, You are merciful and tenderhearted, abounding in love and faithfulness. Turn to us in our anguish over sin and hear our cry for mercy that we may be at peace; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERMON: Mark 11:15-19 Our Lord Took Significant Action

¹⁵ When they had come to Jerusalem Jesus went into the Temple and began to drive out those who were selling and buying in the Temple. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the chairs of those who were selling doves. ¹⁶ He would not allow anyone to carry any object through the Temple. ¹⁷ Then He began to teach them: “Has not Scripture said, ‘My House will be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? However, you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’”

¹⁸ When the Chief Priests and scribes heard this, they began to look for a way to destroy Him. For they were afraid of Him, because the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching. ¹⁹ Whenever evening came, they used to go out of the city.

Our 1st Readings for this Lenten Season will track the story of Joseph, which supplies so many parallels to the Passion of our Lord

1st Reading: Genesis 39:1-21

¹ Joseph was taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian, an official of Pharaoh and captain of the bodyguards, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. ² However, the LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man. He was in the home of his Egyptian master. ³ His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD used to give him success in everything that he undertook. ⁴ Joseph's master was kind to him, and Joseph became his servant. His master put him in charge of his household and entrusted everything that he owned to him. ⁵ After the Egyptian appointed Joseph over his household and over everything that he owned, the LORD blessed his household because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything that his master had, both in the household and in the field. ⁶ He left everything that he had in Joseph's charge. Because he had him, he did not concern himself with anything except the food that he was eating.

Joseph was well built and good-looking. ⁷ After these things, his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

⁸ He refused. He told his master's wife: "Look! Because I am here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house. He has entrusted everything that he has to me. ⁹ In this house my master is no greater than I am. He has not withheld anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then could I do this very wicked thing and sin against God?"

¹⁰ Although she kept talking to Joseph day after day, he refused her requests to lie beside her and even to be with her. ¹¹ One day he went into the house to do his work, when none of the household servants was there in the house. ¹² She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" However, he left his cloak in her hand, ran away and went outside. ¹³ When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run outside, ¹⁴ she called her household servants. She told them: "Look! He has brought us a Hebrew man to play around with us. He came to me to sleep with me, but I screamed. ¹⁵ As soon as he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me, ran away and went outside."

¹⁶ She kept Joseph's cloak with her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she told him a similar story. She said: "The Hebrew slave whom you brought to us came to me to play around with me.

¹⁸ However, when I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran outside."

¹⁹ When his master heard the story that his wife told him, "This is what your slave did to me," he burned with anger. ²⁰ Joseph's master arrested him and put him in prison, in the place where the king's prisoners were held. So, Joseph was there in the prison. ²¹ Nevertheless, the LORD was with Joseph and extended His mercy to him. He made the superintendent of the prison kind to him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C

Thanks be to God.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Drawn from the Four Gospels, Part 2

While they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, one of you, **one who is eating with Me**, will betray Me!"

They began to be sad, and to ask Him one after another, “I am not the one, am I?”

Jesus answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the bowl with Me is the one who will betray Me. The Son of Man is going as the Scriptures have said about Him, but how terrible for that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born.”¹

The disciples began to look at one another, at a loss to know whom Jesus meant.

One of His disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table close to Him. Therefore Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus which one He meant. Leaning back so that he was against Jesus’ chest, he asked Him, “Lord, who is it?”

Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I shall give the piece of bread when I have dipped it.”

Then He dipped the piece of bread and gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. After Judas had taken the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, “Do quickly what you are doing!”

None of those who were reclining at the table knew why Jesus had said this to him. For, since Judas had the moneybag, some thought that Jesus was telling him, “Buy the things that we need for the feast!” or that he should give something to the poor. After Judas had taken the piece of bread, he immediately went outside. It was night.

When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him. If God has been glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself; and He will glorify Him immediately.”²

While they were eating, on the night when He was betrayed, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples. He said, “Take, eat, this is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.” Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, “Drink from it all of you, for this is My blood of the new testament, which is poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”³

“Little children, I shall be with you a little longer yet. You will look for Me, but, as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. I am giving you a new Commandment, that you love one another. You also love one another, as I have loved you! By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Simon Peter asked Him, “Lord, where are You going?”

Jesus answered him, “You cannot follow Me now where I am going, but you will follow later.”

Peter asked Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I shall lay down my life for You.”

Then the Lord said, “Simon, Simon, look! Satan has asked for you people, to sift you like wheat. However, I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. When you have turned back, strengthen your brothers!”

However, Peter told Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.”

Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day before you deny three times that you know Me.”

¹ Matthew 26:21-25; Mark 14:18-21

² John 13:22-32

³ Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20

Peter told Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I shall certainly not deny You.” All the other disciples said something similar.⁴

Then Jesus asked them, “When I sent you out without a purse, or a bag, or sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?” They answered, “Nothing!”

He told them, “However, now the person who has a purse should take it, and also a bag! The person who does not have a sword should sell his garment and buy one! For I tell you that this passage of Scripture must be fulfilled in Me, ‘**He was numbered with transgressors.**’ Yes, what has been written about Me is being fulfilled.”

The disciples said, “Lord, look! Here are two swords.” He told them, “That is enough.”⁵

Then Jesus told them, “All of you will take offence at Me this night. For Scripture has said, ‘I shall **strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.**’ However, after I have been raised, I shall go ahead of you to Galilee.”⁶

After they sang a hymn, Jesus went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley, to the Mount of Olives, where there was a garden called Gethsemane. He and His disciples went into it. Now Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with His disciples.⁷

When He reached the place, He said to His disciples, “Sit down here, while I go over there and pray! Pray that you may not enter into temptation!”

He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and began to be deeply distressed and troubled. Then He told them, “**My soul is very sorrowful**, to the point of death. Stay here and be watchful with Me!” He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed, “Abba! Father! All things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me! Nevertheless, not what I want, but what You want!”

When He came back to the disciples, He found them sleeping. He asked Peter, “So could you men not be watchful with Me for one hour? Be watchful and pray, that you may not enter into temptation! The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass by unless I drink it, let Your will be done.” Again He returned and found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what they should answer Him. He left them again, went away, and prayed a third time. He said the same words as before.

An angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him. As He was in agony, He prayed more fervently. His sweat became like great drops of blood falling to the ground. Then He returned to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise. Let us go. Look, My betrayer is near!”⁸

M: Here ends the reading.

The congregation stands.

⁴ Matthew 26:33-35; Luke 22:31-34; John 13:33-38

⁵ Luke 22:35-38

⁶ Matthew 26:31-32

⁷ John 18:1; Matthew 26:30

⁸ Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46