



Year C Luke 22:14 – 23:56

23: 33 When they reached the place called The Skull, they crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left. **34** Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.’ Then they cast lots to share out his clothing.

35 The people stayed there watching him. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. ‘He saved others,’ they said, ‘let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.’ **36** The soldiers mocked him too and when they approached to offer him vinegar **37** they said, ‘If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.’ **38** Above him there was an inscription: ‘This is the King of the Jews.’

39 One of the criminals hanging there abused him, ‘Are you not the Christ?’ he said. ‘Save yourself and us as well.’ **40** But the other spoke up and rebuked him. ‘Have you no fear of God at all?’ he said. ‘You got the same sentence as he did, **41** but in our case we deserved it; we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. **42** Jesus,’ he said, ‘remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ **43** ‘Indeed, I promise you,’ he replied, ‘today you will be with me in paradise.’

44 It was now about the sixth hour and, with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. **45** The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle; **46** and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’ With these words he breathed his last.

Other readings: Isaiah 50:4-7 Psalm 21 (22) Philippians 2:6-11

The gospel reading given above, which includes the words of Jesus on the cross and the account of his death, is only part of Luke’s story of the passion. Even amid suffering Jesus shows great compassion to others. He prays for forgiveness for his executioners, who ‘do not know what they are doing’. He promises paradise to the criminal who seeks forgiveness.

Jesus’ final words in Luke are taken from Psalm 31, ‘Into your hands I commit my spirit.’ The evangelist tells us of the trust of Jesus at the moment of death. Jesus knows that the Father will not abandon him, but raise him up on the third day. As the story of Jesus’ death concludes, the hope of resurrection remains.

What are the striking features of the story of the passion as told by Luke?

Take time this week to read the complete story of the passion and death of Christ.

We pray for the willingness to die with Christ in order to rise with him to new life.

Let us join with the Church throughout the world to live Holy Week to the full.

