

DARLING DOWNS PARISH OF THE AELC
TRINITY OAKEY, ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA

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Bulletin for the 4th mid-week Lenten Service

HYMNS: 65 175 51 48 v.3

PSALM: I shall extol You, O LORD. For You have lifted me up and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O LORD, my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me.

O LORD, You have brought my soul up from Sheol. You have kept me alive from among those who go down to the pit.

Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His, and give thanks to the memorial of His holiness!

For His anger lasts for only a moment. In His favour there is life. Weeping may last for the evening, but there is a shout of joy in the morning.

When I was at ease, I said, "I shall never be shaken."

LORD, by Your favour, You have made my mountain stand strong. When You hid Your face, I was terrified.

I shall call out to You, O LORD. I shall plead to the LORD for grace: "What profit is there if my blood is shed, if I go down into the pit? Will dust praise You? Will it proclaim Your truth?

"Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me! LORD, be my Helper!"

You have changed for me my rites of mourning into dancing. You have removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that what is glorious may praise You with music and may not be silent. O LORD, my God, I shall praise You for ever.

Psalm 30

COLLECT: Lord Jesus, You bring light to those who dwell in darkness and make Your love known to them. Do not enter into judgment with Your servants, but strengthen us in the saving faith and guide us into the land of perfect peace where with the Father and the Holy Spirit You live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

SERMON: Matthew 23:1-12 Significant Teaching

¹ Then Jesus told the crowds and His disciples: ² “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³ Therefore, do all the things that they tell you and keep them; but do not do as they do! For they tell others but do not practise it. ⁴ They tie up loads that are heavy and hard to carry and lay them on other people’s shoulders but they themselves are not willing to move them with one of their fingers. ⁵ They do everything that they do that other people may see them. For they make their prayer-strips broad and the tassels on their garments long. ⁶ They love the places of honour at dinners and the most important seats in synagogues. ⁷ They love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by other people. ⁸ However, you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’! For you have only one Teacher, and you are all brothers. ⁹ Do not call anyone on earth ‘Father’! For you have only one Father, He who is in heaven. ¹⁰ Do not be called ‘teachers’! For you have only one Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹ He who is the greatest among you shall be your servant! ¹² He who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

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 42:6-24

Joseph, as the ruler of the country, was selling grain to all the people of the country. So, when Joseph’s brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces on the ground. ⁷ When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognised them. However, he kept his identity from them and spoke harshly to them. He asked them, “From where have you come?”

They answered, “From the land of Canaan, to buy food.”

⁸ Although Joseph recognised his brothers, they did not recognise him.

⁹ Joseph remembered the dreams that he had had about them. He told them: “You are spies. You have come to find out where the country is undefended.”

¹⁰ They answered him: “No, my master! Your servants have come to buy grain for food. ¹¹ We are all the sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies.”

¹² However, he told them, “No! You have come to find out where the country is undefended.”

¹³ They answered him: “Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. In fact, the youngest is now with our father and one

is no more.”

¹⁴ However, Joseph told them: “It is just as I have told you. You are spies.

¹⁵ This is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. ¹⁶ Send one of you to fetch your brother. The rest of you shall be kept in prison, that what you are saying may be tested, to see whether you are telling the truth! If not, as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies.”

¹⁷ So, he put them in prison for three days. ¹⁸ On the third day Joseph told them: “Do this and live! I too fear God. ¹⁹ If you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody! The rest of you, go and take grain for your hungry families! ²⁰ You shall also fetch me your youngest brother, that what you are saying may be confirmed! Then you will not die.”

So, that is what they did. ²¹ Then they told one another: “Surely we are bearing the consequences of our guilt concerning our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he was pleading with us for pity, and we would not listen. This is why this distress has come on us.”

²² Reuben answered them: “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy!’? However, you would not listen. Yes, you see, we are being called to account for his blood.”

²³ However, they were not aware that Joseph understood them. For he had been speaking to them through an interpreter. ²⁴ Joseph turned away from them and wept. When he came back, he spoke to them. Then he took Simeon from them and had him arrested while they were watching.

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 4

So they took Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor’s quarters. It was early in the morning. The Jews themselves did not go into the governor’s quarters, to avoid becoming unclean, and to enable them to eat the Passover. So Pilate came outside to them, and asked, “What accusation are you bringing against this Man?”

They answered him, “If He were not a criminal, we would not have handed Him over to you.”

Pilate therefore told them, “You take Him, and judge Him according to your Law!”

The Jews answered him, “We are not permitted to execute anyone.”

This happened that the statement that Jesus had made might be fulfilled, when He indicated the kind of death He was going to die.¹

They began to accuse Him: “We found that He makes our people disloyal, keeping them from paying taxes to Caesar, and saying that He is Christ, a King.”²

Then Pilate went into the governor’s quarters again and called for Jesus. He asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered, “Are you saying this of yourself, or have others told you about Me?”

Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and the chief priests have handed You over to me. What have You done?”

Jesus answered, “My kingdom does not belong to this world. If My kingdom belonged to this world, My attendants would fight, to prevent Me from being handed over to the Jews. However, now My kingdom is not from here.”

Therefore Pilate asked Him, “Then are You a king?”

Jesus answered, “You are correct in saying that I am a king. I have been born for this reason, and I have come into the world for this reason, that I may testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice.”

Pilate asked Him, “What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again, and told them, “I do not find any ground for complaint in Him.”³

While the chief priests and elders were accusing Him, He did not answer at all.

Then Pilate asked Him, “Do You not hear how much testimony they are bringing against You?”

However, Jesus made no reply to him, even about a single statement, so that the governor was very amazed.⁴

Pilate told the chief priests and the crowd, “I do not find this Man guilty at all.” However, they kept insisting, “He stirs up the people by teaching all over Judea. He began in Galilee and has come here.” When Pilate heard that, he

¹ John 18:28-32

² Luke 23:2

³ John 18:33-38

⁴ Matthew 27:12-14

asked if the Man was a Galilean. When he found out that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, because for a long time he had wanted to see Him. For he had been hearing about Him, and was hoping to see some miracle done by Him. Herod asked Him many questions, but Jesus did not answer him at all. The chief priests and the scribes were standing there and accusing Him vehemently. Herod and his soldiers treated Jesus with contempt and mocked Him. They put a splendid garment on Him and sent Him back to Pilate. On that very day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other. For before this they had been enemies of each other.

Then Pilate called the chief priests, the rulers, and the people together. He told them, "You have brought this Man to me as one who is inciting the people to rebellion. Now, look! I have examined this Man before you and found Him innocent of the charges that you are making against Him. No, neither has Herod. For he has sent Him back to us; and, as you can see, He has done nothing to deserve death. Therefore, I shall chastise Him and release Him."⁵

At every feast the governor used to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they chose. At that time they were holding a well-known prisoner called Barabbas. He had been in prison with the rebels who had committed a murder in the rebellion. Pilate knew that the chief priests had handed Jesus over because they were jealous.⁶

Pilate asked them, "Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called 'Christ'?"⁷

The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus put to death.⁸

The governor asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?"⁹

The whole crowd then began to shout aloud: "Away with this Man! Release Barabbas for us!"¹⁰

⁵ Luke 23:4-16

⁶ Matthew 27:15-16; Mark 15:6-10

⁷ Matthew 27:17

⁸ Mark 15:11

⁹ Matthew 27:21

¹⁰ Luke 23:18

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent someone to tell him, “Do not have anything to do with that innocent Man! For I have suffered greatly today in a dream because of Him.”¹¹

Pilate spoke to them again, because he wanted to release Jesus.¹² He again asked them, “Therefore, what am I to do with the One whom you call ‘the King of the Jews’?”

They shouted back, “Crucify Him!”

Pilate asked them, “Why? What wrong has He done? I have found nothing in Him to make Him deserve to die. I shall therefore chastise Him and release Him.”¹³

M: Here ends the reading.

The congregation stands.

¹¹ Matthew 27:19

¹² Luke 23:20

¹³ Mark 15:12-14; Luke 23:22