

Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday
Year B, April 5, 2009

COLLECT

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The prophet encounters opposition as he boldly proclaims God's truth. His vindication is found though remaining steadfast in his calling.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens-- wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

PSALM 31:9-16 Page 623, BCP

- 9 Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; *my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.
- 10 For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; *my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed.
- 11 I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbors, a dismay to those of my acquaintance; *when they see me in the street they avoid me.
- 12 I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; *I am as useless as a broken pot.
- 13 For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; *they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.
- 14 But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. *I have said, "You are my God.
- 15 My times are in your hand; *rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.
- 16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, *and in your loving-kindness save me."

Even though he is the incarnate Word, Jesus freely humbled himself, living a life of service. His obedience to his Father, even unto death, is the reason for his exaltation in heaven.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death--even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.