

## Temptation: Don't Follow the Crowd

### **Luke 23:13-33**

13 Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, 14 and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. 15 Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. 16 Therefore, I will punish him and then release him."

18 But the whole crowd shouted, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!" 19 (Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder.)

20 Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. 21 But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

22 For the third time he spoke to them: "Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore I will have him punished and then release him."

23 But with loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed. 24 So Pilate decided to grant their demand. 25 He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, the one they asked for, and surrendered Jesus to their will.

26 As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. 27 A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. 28 Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' 30 Then "they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!"

and to the hills, "Cover us!"

31 For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

32 Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. 33 When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

### **P: Thanks be to God.**

- Today is Palm Sunday, the day we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
  - Fulfilled prophecy.
  - Political meaning.
  - "Red carpet treatment."
- Today is also Passion Sunday, when we remember Jesus' suffering.
- It is the crowd that ties these stories together.
  - The crowd that greets Jesus as King on Palm Sunday is the same crowd that demands his crucifixion on Good Friday.
- During Lent we have been talking about temptation.

- We have seen that temptation begins with questioning God's Word and God's goodness.
- We have seen that Jesus overcomes temptation by standing on God's Word.
- We have seen that we can overcome temptation by submitting to God and resisting the devil.
- We have seen that overcoming temptations helps us to grow in our faith.
- Today, as we come to the end of Lent, we are reminded to not follow the crowd.