

FAITH CIRCLES *connect*

PASSION SUNDAY • YEAR B

1. Welcome your Guests

2. Share Food & Drink

3. Worship Song

4. Read the Sunday Gospel

MARK 15:25-30, 33-39

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, 'The King of the Jews.' And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, 'Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!'

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'Listen, he is calling for Elijah.' And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.' Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'

5. Personal Sharing

In the weeks before meeting today, a member of the group was invited to prepare a short, 5-7min, sharing on how this Gospel reading connects with their life and relationship with Jesus. The reflection questions below may assist in preparing for the sharing:

1. On Good Friday 'God enters the absence of God'. Jesus, God, experiences what it is like to feel totally abandoned and forsaken by God. Describe an experience where you have experienced an immense lack of God's presence? How did Jesus find you again, give you an experience of his love and bring you to life again.

6. Share in Smaller groups

Once your nominated speaker has shared their story, break into smaller sharing groups to reflect on the questions below. Each person shares their experience of God since last gathering in light of the Gospel message.

1. How is everyone going? (Consider "high/low")
2. What jumped out/touched/resonated with you from the personal sharing?
3. Have you experienced that in your life?
4. Was there another point from the Gospel that really struck you?

7. Worship & Prayer

Worship

Singing together as a group is a vital part of each connect group gathering. Our worship draws our focus to God and all that God has done for us. As St Augustine reflected 'the one who sings prays twice'.

Play a song or hymn as a way of entering into a time of prayer. You may like to use some of the resources provided in our music guide.

Pray for Each Other

Remain in your smaller discussion groupings of 3-5 people. Invite the Holy Spirit to be present and invite group members to pray aloud for each others' needs. Enable time for people to share their prayer intentions. Individuals might like to pray for themselves or ask someone else to pray for them.

Closing Prayer

After people have had time to pray for one another in their smaller groups close the evening with a final prayer in the large group. A suggestion might be:

Loving Father, we thank you for the love and care you have for each of us. Fill us with your Holy Spirit that we may continue to draw strength from you and follow your will in all we do. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen