



A Family Easter
Liturgy
The Passion Week

Introductory thought: one of the main purposes of these liturgical readings is to retell the events leading up to the crucifixion and resurrection by focusing on Christ's work as a priest. It also attempts to remind us of the tension between the apparent conflict between Christ's kingship and priesthood. That is why the readings, for example, keep returning to the lone child asking about Christ's talk of priesthood while everyone is rejoicing in kingship.

☐ Red wine and chocolate are famously wonderful together; they are a great sign of celebration and are central to this liturgy. Parents will need to plan ahead by having a glass of wine and several small chocolates for each person and reading during the week, except Friday and Saturday. On Thursday, the wine and chocolate will be present but actually taken away in "frustration" from each person midway through the readings; on Friday and Saturday, only empty wine glasses sit in front of each person, but the emptiness is important; on Sunday, champagne and special chocolate show up.

The following reading parts need to be assigned beforehand: one officiant (usually head of household); three Scripture/poem readers; one Question reader (nice to make the youngest child memorize the repeated line).

A Family Easter Liturgy The Passion Week

Monday: The King has Come! (Atonement as Expiation)

Officiant: Opening Prayer of Thanks for Christ's Kingship

First Cycle:

All Sing: All hail the power of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall; bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all; Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all. pg. 292, Verse 1

Reader One: Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. "And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'" So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!" And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

All Respond: Hosanna in the highest! The son promised to Abraham, Moses, and David has come. He is king over all kings! Rejoice in celebration! (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Second Cycle:

All Sing: Crown him, ye martyrs of your God who from His altar call; Extol the stem of Jesse's rod, and crown him Lord of all; Extol the stem of Jesse's rod, and crown him Lord of all. pg. 292, Verse 2

Reader Two: And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee." Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of thieves." Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And

Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?'"

All Respond: The king has come to put down all His enemies. He has cleared the temple in His zeal. Who can stand against Him? Rejoice in celebration! (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Third Cycle:

All Sing: Ye seed of Israel's chosen race, Ye ransomed of the fall, Hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all; Hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all;

Reader Three: Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit." And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" . . . When the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them (Matt. 21:33-40, 45).

All Respond: Hosanna! The King has come. Let us rejoice in his victory. The landowner has come to reclaim his land. Rejoice in celebration! (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Reader One: The lion scatters evil with his roar;
a sentence strikes a lamb with silent eyes;
and bold kings victor by the priestly kneel.

Reader Two: But how can kneeling undo wrath?
Or how can bleeding conquer death?

Reader Three: Night's guilt and sin entwine with python's grip.
Unblemished blood unlocks the blackened bulk;
it limps and falls upon the victor's strength.

All Respond: But victor's bloody back can bear the snake;
the darkness melts before His shining blood;
and we race side by side His lion sprint.

All Sing: Let every kindred, every tribe, on this terrestrial ball, to him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all;
to him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all.

All Respond: Hosanna! Christ has come to rescue His people. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. Rejoice in celebration (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate).

Officiant: Closing prayer of thanks for celebration of Christ's entry into Jerusalem as promised

*A Family Easter Liturgy
Holy Week*

Tuesday: The King Will Come in Judgment (Lesson on Propitiation)

Opening Prayer of thanks for Christ's Kingship

First Cycle:

All Sing: Psalm 110, "Jehovah to My Lord Has Said", pg. 150, Verse 1

Reader One: The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, 'See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.'" But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding." So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests (Matt. 22:2ff).

All Respond: Hosanna in the highest! The King has invited us to the wedding. He has prepared His feast. Let us eat, drink, and rejoice (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Second Cycle:

All Sing: Psalm 110, "Jehovah to My Lord Has Said", pg. 150, Verse 2

Reader Two: While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore (Matt. 22:41-46)

All Respond: The Son of David has come. All His enemies will submit beneath His feet. He sits at God's right hand. Who can stand against Him? Rejoice in celebration! (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Third Cycle:

All Sing: Psalm 110, "Jehovah to My Lord Has Said", pg. 150, Verse 3

Reader Three: Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth,

from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!" (Matt. 23:33-39)

All Respond: Hosanna! The King has come. Let us rejoice in his victory. The landowner has come to reclaim his land. Rejoice in celebration! (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Reader One: The lion scatters evil with his roar;
a sentence strikes a lamb with silent eyes;
and bold kings victor by the priestly kneel.

Reader Two: But how can kneeling undo wrath?
Or how can bleeding conquer death?

Reader Three: In justice, water wraths to form a flood;
and lightning hunts for rebel fists; no sin
can stand before His priestly anger white.

All Respond: But priestly blood is ark and thickest shield;
it turns the flood; deflects the hottest wrath.
We cling to laughing victor in dry shade.

All Sing: Jehovah to my Lord has said, "Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thy foes a stool where on Thy feet may stand." Jehovah shall from Zion send The septer of Thy pow'r. In battle Thine enemies be Thou the conqueror. pg. 150, Verse 1

All Respond: Hosanna! Christ has come to set up His kingdom and crush His enemies. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. Rejoice in celebration (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate).

Closing prayer of thanks for Christ's as Lord of Lords

*A Family Easter Liturgy
Holy Week*

Wednesday: The King Will Come in Mercy (Atonement as Reconciliation)

Opening Prayer of thanks for Christ's kingship

First Cycle:

All Sing: Psalm 2, "Why Do the Heathen Nations Vainly Rage?", pg. 4-5 Verse 1

Reader One: When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me." Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?" And the King will answer and say to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me." (Matt. 25:31ff).

All Respond: Hosanna in the highest! The King is a king of mercy. He honors those who are merciful in His name. Let us eat, drink, and rejoice (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Second Cycle:

All Sing: Psalm 2, "Why Do the Heathen Nations Vainly Rage?", pg. 4-5 Verse 2

Reader Two: Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, "You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified. Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him." But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people." And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor." But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her." Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him (Matt. 25:2-16).

All Respond: Rejoice and pour out perfume on the King. He is worthy. But wait. His enemies plot against Him. His friend betrays Him. Surely He will overcome. (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Third Cycle:

All Sing: "The nations come; You are the only Heir, the ends of earth will be Your own possession and broken with a rod of iron there, rebellious pottery comes to destruction." Now serve the Lord, with fear and gladness trembling, and therefore, O ye kings, seek wisdom here. How blessed are those who trust without dissembling, Who kiss the Son and bow in reverent fear. Psalm 2, pg. 4-5, Verse 3

Reader Three: To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in You; Let me not be ashamed; Let not my enemies triumph over me. Indeed, let no one who waits on You be ashamed; Let those be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause. Show me Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day. Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses, For they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; According to Your mercy remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O LORD. Good and upright is the LORD; Therefore He teaches sinners in the way. The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way. All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth, To such as keep His covenant and His testimonies (Ps. 25:1ff)

All Respond: Hosanna! Mercy to those who keep God's covenant. God remembers his tender mercies and His lovingkindness. Rejoice in celebration! (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: But why does the king tell us He must also be a priest?

Reader One: The lion scatters evil with his roar;
a sentence strikes a lamb with silent eyes;
and bold kings victor by the priestly kneel.

Reader Two: But how can kneeling undo wrath?
Or how can bleeding conquer death?

Reader Three: The python's guilty bond unwinds at touch
of Holy Blood. The sin invited wrath
has turned away. But peace we seek.

All Respond: With guilt and wrath now vanquished by that priest,
we sit to meat, and drink His aged wine,
and laugh and point as chocolate stains our lips.

All Sing: Why do the heathen nations vainly rage? What prideful schemes are they in vain devising? The kings of earth and rulers all engage in evil plots, and in their sin contriving, they take their stand against our God's Messiah; they claim they will not keep His binding chains. The one enthroned in highest heaven, higher, mocks them to scorn, on them derision rains. Psalm 2, pg.4-5, Verse 1

All Respond: Hosanna! Christ has come in judgment and mercy. But why is His friend betraying Him to His enemies? Yet He is Lord of lords and King of kings, so rejoice in celebration (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate).

Closing prayer for God's mercy on us

A Family Easter Liturgy
Holy Week

Thursday: The King is Betrayed (Atonement as Redemption)

Opening Prayer of thanks for Christ's kingship

First Cycle:

All Sing: O sacred head now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down; Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown; O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine! Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine. To the tune of pg. 263

Reader One: Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples."' So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. Now as they were eating, He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?" He answered and said, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, is it I?" He said to him, "You have said it." (Matt. 26:17ff).

All Respond: The King feasts with His apostles, and yet one of them is a betrayer. Where shall His people go? We will stand by Him! We feast by His side. (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Second Cycle:

All Sing: What thou my Lord hast suffered was all for sinners' gain; Mine, mine was the transgression, but thine the deadly pain. Lo, here I fall my Saviour! 'Tis I deserve thy place; Look on me with thy favor, Vouchsafe to me thy grace. pg. 263, Verse 2

Reader Two: And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." (Matt. 26:26ff.)

All Respond: The priest brings us a New Covenant. Will the priest shed His own blood? The Shepherd will be struck and the sheep will be scattered. (Everyone drinks a sip of wine; eats one chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Third Cycle:

All Sing: What language shall I borrow to thank thee dearest Friend, For this they dying sorrow, Thy pity without end? O make me thine forever; And should I fainting be, Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to thee.

pg. 263, Verse 3

Reader Two: (Out in the garden of Gethsemane) Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will" . . . Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand." And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" (Matt. 26:33ff.).

All Respond: The enemy betrayed Christ with a kiss, and his disciples have all fled. Sorrows have fallen upon us all. The King is to be silenced by evil men. (Head of household collects the chocolate and the wine glasses.)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Reader One: The lion scatters evil with his roar;
a sentence strikes a lamb with silent eyes;
and bold kings victor by the priestly kneel.

Reader Two: But how can kneeling undo wrath?
Or how can bleeding conquer death?

Reader Three: With heads hung down, we slaves recall a home
so far away; we line the wall to work
again in burning sun. Yet that priest smiles.

All Respond: We hear his reddened bag; it clinks and sings
with coins of jubilee, with ransom gold.
He joins us in a dance upon those chains.

All Sing: Be near when I am dying, O show thy cross to me; and for my succor flying, Come Lord to set me free:
These eyes new faith receiving, From Jesus shall not move; For he who dies believing, dies safely through thy love.

To the tune of pg. 263

All Respond: Our hosannas have turned to mourning. Our laughter has turned to tears. They have taken the King; they mock him. What will become of Him and His kingdom. (wine and chocolate are gone).

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb.

All Sing: O sacred head now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down; Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown; O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine! Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine. To the tune of pg. 263

Closing prayer for mercy

A Family Easter Liturgy
Holy Week

Friday: The King is Crucified (the crucifixion account)

Opening Prayer of thanks for Christ's servanthood

First Cycle:

All Sing: O sacred head now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down; Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown; O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine! Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine.

pg. 263, Verse 1

Reader One: And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?" But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!" Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? They answered and said, "He is deserving of death." When morning came, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

(Matt. 26:57-27:2ff).

All Respond: This Jesus is condemned by the authorities. Has He blasphemed? Will they come after us too? Was He the promised one? (no wine; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Reader One: Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood." And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. (Matt. 27:3-8).

All Respond: This Jesus is condemned by the authorities. Has He blasphemed? Will they come after us too? Was He the promised one? (no wine; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Second Cycle:

All Sing: What thou my Lord hast suffered was all for sinners' gain; Mine, mine was the transgression, but thine the deadly pain. Lo, here I fall my Saviour! 'Tis I deserve thy place; Look on me with thy favor, Vouchsafe to me thy grace. pg. 263, Verse 2

Reader Two: Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" So Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" (Matt. 27:11ff.)

All Respond: He says He is the King of the Jews. Our Shepherd was struck and the sheep were scattered. Jesus is taken from us. We can rejoice no longer. (no wine; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Reader Two: While he [Pilate] was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that

they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!" Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children." Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus (Matt. 27:20ff.)

All Respond: They say, "His blood be on us and our children." Our Shepherd was struck and the sheep were scattered. Jesus is taken from us. We can rejoice no longer. (no wine; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Third Cycle:

All Sing: What language shall I borrow to thank thee dearest Friend, For this they dying sorrow, Thy pity without end? O make me thine forever; And should I fainting be, Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to thee. pg. 263, Verse 3

Reader Three: Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified. Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink. Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS (Matt. 27:27-37).

All Respond: He is now on the cross; His hands and feet are nailed. Our Shepherd was struck and the sheep were scattered. Jesus is taken from us. We can rejoice no longer. (no wine; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is betrayed, and the priest is taken away like a Lamb?

Reader Three: Mat 27:38 Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." . . . Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" . . . And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split (Matt. 27:38-51).

All Respond: His God, Our God, Why have You forsaken Him? He is slain. Let us be silent before heaven (all sit silently for a while; no wine; no chocolate).

All Sing: Be near when I am dying, O show thy cross to me; and for my succor flying, Come Lord to set me free: These eyes new faith receiving, From Jesus shall not move; For he who dies believing, dies safely through thy love. To the tune of pg. 263

All Respond: Our hosannas have turned to mourning. Our laughter has turned to tears. They have crucified the King.

All Sing: O sacred head now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down; Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown; O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine! Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine.

pg. 263, Verse 1

Closing prayer for mercy

*A Family Easter Liturgy
Holy Week*

Saturday: The King in the Tomb (Summary of Atonement)

Opening prayer of thanks for God's faithfulness in adversity

First Cycle:

All Sing: When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride. pg. 267, Verse 1

Reader One: On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first. Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard. (Matt. 27:62ff).

All Respond: They have buried the King in death, and yet they still send guards against Him. They have spilled innocent blood and crucified the Lord of Glory. (Empty wine glasses sit on table; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is in His tomb, and the priest has been slain?

Second Cycle:

All Sing: Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God: all the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood. pg. 267, Verse 2

Reader Two: In the Old Testament Psalms, written long before Christ's time on earth, we read: "Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help. Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots. But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me!" (Ps. 22:11ff)

All Respond: Ancient David saw his Son and Lord upon the cross. David saw His son nailed to that cross and His bones yet whole (Empty wine glasses; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is in His tomb, and the priest has been slain?

Third Cycle:

All Sing: See, from his head, his hands, his feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled down; did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown? pg. 267, Verse 3

Reader Three: Ancient Isaiah foresaw the sacrifice of Christ and declared: But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked; But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities (Is. 53:10ff).

All Respond: Ancient Isaiah foretold of our King's death. He was like a Lamb taken to the slaughter; He was bruised for our sins, and by His stripes we are healed. And the Father was pleased to lay our sins upon Him. (Empty glasses; no chocolate)

Question Reader: The King is in His tomb, and the priest has been slain?

Reader One: The lion scatters evil with his roar;
a sentence strikes a lamb with silent eyes;
and bold kings victor by the priestly kneel.

Reader Two: But how can kneeling undo wrath?
Or how can bleeding conquer death?

Reader Three: His holy blood cannot be mixed with death,
or else the wrath remains, the guilt recoils,
no peaceful wine, no dancing on our chains!

All Respond: But all is vain; He rots within that hole.
Our hope is dead without His priestly life.
Corruption shall not hold Him in Sheol.

All Sing: Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small; love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all. pg. 267, Verse 4

All Respond: Our King remains in His tomb. We have no hope, and death appears to have conquered Him. What did David mean that the Father would not leave the soul of the Holy One in Sheol? (No wine; no chocolate).

Question Reader: The King is in His tomb, and the priest has been slain?

All Sing: When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, and
pour contempt on all my pride. pg. 267, Verse 1

Closing prayer for God to vindicate hope

*A Family Easter Liturgy
Holy Week*

Sunday: The King and Priest has Risen!

Opening of thanks for God's glorifying of His name

First Cycle:

All Sing: Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia! Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia! Who died once upon the cross, Alleluia! Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Reader One: Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalen and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold there was a great earthquake: for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat on it. His countenance was like lightening and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. (Matt. 28:1ff).

All Respond: The angel rolled back the stone, and the Father raised the King from death. Eat, drink, and rejoice in celebration! (Everyone takes a sip of *champagne* and eats a special chocolate.)

Question Reader: Rejoice! The King is risen. He has conquered sin and death and made atonement.

Second Cycle:

All Sing: Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia! Unto Christ our heav'nly King, Alleluia! Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia! Sinners to redeem and save, Alleluia!

Reader Two: But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead. . . . And as they went to tell the disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me." (Matt.28:5ff)

All Respond: Death could not hold Him. His atonement for us is now perfect and complete. Eat, drink, and rejoice in celebration. (Everyone takes a sip of champagne and eats a chocolate.)

Question Reader: Rejoice! The King is risen. He has conquered sin and death and made atonement.

Third Cycle:

All Sing: But the pains which he endured, Alleluia! Our salvation have procured, Alleluia! Now above the sky he's King, Alleluia! Where the angels ever sing, Alleluia!

Reader Three: He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:20ff).

All Respond: He was raised for our justification. Christ came as the High Priest and shed His own blood to atone for our sins and obtain eternal redemption. Now we can stand before God boldly. Eat, drink, and rejoice in celebration. (Everyone takes a sip of champagne and eats a chocolate.)

Question Reader: Rejoice! The King is risen. He has conquered sin and death and made atonement.

Responsive Reading (selections from John Chrysostom, A.D. 400)

First Group:

Let no one grieve at his poverty,
for the universal kingdom has been revealed.
Let no one mourn that he has fallen again and again;
for forgiveness has risen from the grave.
Let no one fear death, for the Death of our Savior has set us free.
He has destroyed it by enduring it.

Second Group:

He destroyed Hades when He descended into it.
He put it into an uproar even as it tasted of His flesh.
Isaiah foretold this when he said,
“You, O Hell, have been troubled by encountering Him below.”

First Group:

Hell was in an uproar because it was done away with.
It was in an uproar because it is mocked.
It was in an uproar, for it is destroyed.
It is in an uproar, for it is annihilated.
It is in an uproar, for it is now made captive.

Second Group:

Hell took a body, and discovered God.
It took earth, and encountered Heaven.
It took what it saw, and was overcome by what it did not see.
O death, where is thy sting?
O Hades, where is thy victory?

All Together:

Christ is Risen, and you, o death, are annihilated!
Christ is Risen, and the evil ones are cast down!
Christ is Risen, and the angels rejoice!
Christ is Risen, and life is liberated!
Christ is Risen, and the tomb is emptied of its dead;
for Christ having risen from the dead,
is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.
To Him be Glory and Power forever and ever. Amen!

Question Reader: Rejoice! The King is risen. He has conquered sin and death and made atonement.

All Sing: Sing we to our God above, Alleluia! Praise eternal as his love, Alleluia! Praise him, all ye heav'nly host,
Alleluia! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia! (finish any remaining champagne!).

Closing prayer of thanks for the resurrection