

# Holy Week

## Youth Liturgy of the Word

### The Face Of Mercy



*Artwork by Dorothy Woodward rsj*

**Please Note:** This resource may be integrated into a Eucharistic Liturgy or adapted for a School Assembly or Class Prayer.

#### **Website Background & Information:**

- Background reading on Holy Week can be found from the Brisbane Liturgical Commission. The following links refer to Liturgy Lines articles:
  - <http://liturgybrisbane.net.au/liturgylines/two-holy-weeks-29th-march-2015/>
  - <http://liturgybrisbane.net.au/liturgylines/holy-week-processions/>
  - <http://liturgybrisbane.net.au/liturgylines/why-is-this-week-called-holy/>
- At the beginning of the liturgy, all students who are participating in various ways of during the liturgy can process in with palm branches representing Palm Sunday.
- This Liturgy can be celebrated at one time or could be spread over 3 shorter liturgies in the week of Holy Week. If broken into 3 days, the sequence could follow:
  - Day 1: Welcome, Opening Prayer, Penitential Rite, Gospel 1, Breaking Open the Word, Prayers of the Faithful, Concluding Rite
  - Day 2: Welcome, Opening Prayer, Penitential Rite, Gospel Scene 2, Breaking Open the Word, Prayers of the Faithful, Concluding Rite
  - Day 3: Welcome, Opening Prayer, Penitential Rite, Gospel Scene 3, Breaking Open the Word, Prayers of the Faithful, Concluding Rite
- If spreading the liturgy over 3 days:
  - the procession of palms would only take place on the first day.
  - the same Penitential Rite and Opening Prayer can be used each day or it can be alternated between a spoken and sung Lord Have Mercy as suggested.
  - Invite students to write their own prayers of the faithful for the other liturgies.
  - The same concluding prayer can be used.
  - Suggestions for alternative hymns/songs are included at the end of this liturgy.
- As an alternative reflection after the readings, Students can prepare a movie clip on the Faces of Mercy ... people or agencies doing the work of God in our world.

#### **Introductory Rite**

##### **Welcome & Introduction:**

**Leader:** We gather to celebrate and remember this holiest of weeks. We see the human face of God in the scriptures of Holy Week. Let us open our

hearts and our minds to these words so that we not only hear a story but we truly see the face of Mercy in the suffering Christ.

**Gathering Hymn:**

*All students who have specific parts in the liturgy can process in with palm branches and line them along a wall or appropriate space.*

**Sing Hosanna** (Josh Blakesley – Spirit & Song Disc G)

OR **Hosanna to the Son of David** (Tom Booth - Spirit & Song Disc G)

**Penitential Rite:**

**Lord Have Mercy: Mass of the Desert** (Tom Booth – Spirit & Song Disc A)

**Lord Have Mercy: Mass of the Renewal** (Curtis Stephan - Spirit & Song Disc A)

Or

**Leader:** Lord, you came so that we may be reconciled with the Father.

Lord, have mercy,

**All:** Lord, have mercy.

**Leader:** Lord, you heal the pain of the world. Christ, have mercy.

**All:** Christ, have mercy.

**Leader:** Lord, you will lead us to everlasting life. Lord, have mercy.

**All:** Lord, have mercy.

**Leader:** May almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins

and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** Amen.

**Opening Prayer:**

God of mercy,

You call us into the mystery of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Give us the grace to live this holiest of holy weeks with a renewed

understanding of love and sacrifice in anticipation of the newness of life that is to come.

We make this prayer in Jesus' name.

**All:** Amen.

**Liturgy of the Word:**

*The Liturgy of the Word will be specific scenes from the Holy Week events. These will be divided with a song in between. These can be celebrated in one liturgy or spread over 3 days.*

**1.**

**Gospel:** John 13:3-5; 12-15 *The Washing of the Feet*

*As the Gospel is being read, students can act out this scene or have a freeze of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples.*

**Song:** **A New Commandment** (Invitation Music – The Worship Collection Vol. 9)

**Leader:** Jesus, you gave us the example of service to others - to live for others and not for ourselves. Grant us your mercy so that we can grow in our service to others.

## **2.**

**Gospel:** John 18:25-27 *Peter's Denial of Jesus*

*As the Gospel is being read, students can act out this scene or have a freeze of Peter first standing warming himself and at the end of the reading fall with face in hands.*

**Song:** **Above All** (Lenny LeBlanc, Paul Baloche – Spirit & Song Disc G)

**Leader:** **Jesus, we can be so much like Peter – embarrassed and scared of what people might say when we say that we are your friend. Grant us your mercy so that we can grow stronger and authentic in our faith.**

## **3.**

**Gospel:** John 19:16-20 *Jesus' crucifixion*

*As the Gospel is being read, students can act out this scene or have a freeze of Jesus falling under the cross.*

**Song:** **Behold the Cross** (Bob Hurd – Spirit & Song Disc G)

**Leader:** **Jesus, we can't even begin to imagine the pain and humiliation you went through – and you did it all for us. Grant us your mercy so that we can grow in our understanding and gratitude of this awesome sacrifice of love.**

### **Breaking Open the Word:**

*Two options to Break Open the Word have been provided below.*

#### **Reflection with Images:**

*In lieu of words at this time, a reflection on the Faces of Mercy in our modern world can be shown to quiet music or an appropriate song, e.g.,*

***The Eyes and Hands of Christ*** (Tom Kendzia – Spirit & Song Disc K) or

***Open My Eyes*** (Jesse Manibusan – As One Voice Vol 1)

*Students can prepare a movie clip on the Faces of Mercy ... people or agencies doing the work of God in our world.*

#### **Reflection with Words**

- Since the beginning of Lent we have renewed our lives by focussing on the call to fasting, almsgiving and prayer. Have we lived out what we promised to do?
- In case we haven't, it's still not too late. That's the thing with God. It is never too late.
- We have heard three stories ...
  - Jesus washing the feet of his disciples
  - Peter denying knowing Jesus
  - Jesus' walk to Golgotha
- In each of these stories we see the face of God's mercy.

#### ***Jesus washing the feet of his disciples***

- When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples he exemplifies what it truly means to be a leader. A leader doesn't boss, direct, overpower or control. A true leader following the footsteps of Christ serves, empowers, guides and

allows people to grow from their mistakes. Is this how we are with others? If not, close your eyes, then see the mercy in God's face as you imagine Jesus washing your feet. Give thanks for his mercy and be like Jesus.

### ***Peter denies Jesus***

- Peter denied Jesus not once, not twice, but three times. Jesus told Peter that this would happen but Peter responded, 'as if I would ever do that!' Sure enough, Peter denied Jesus. Jesus knows what we are going to do before we even do it.

But Jesus had mercy on Peter. How do we know this? Jesus empowered Peter and made Peter the rock of the Church. Peter was the first Pope. Jesus knew all of Peter's faults yet still trusted him to lead his Church.

We are not perfect. We probably have denied Jesus – turned away from Jesus at times in our lives. Can you recognise those times? Close your eyes, then see the mercy of God's face as we say sorry for denying Jesus in our lives. Give thanks for his mercy and hold Jesus close to your heart.

### ***Jesus' walk to Golgotha***

- Jesus' walk to Golgotha was long and hard and torturous. The people who had welcomed Jesus the week before in Jerusalem, the people who had praised him as king, the people who had waved palms in joy were now the people who wanted Jesus crucified. They watched as Jesus suffered.

How often do we go to Church or attend a prayer ritual at school one day, say all these prayers and then the next day we act as if none of what we said matters? Are we the people who welcome Jesus into our lives at one time and then say I don't want to know you the next? Close your eyes, then see the mercy of God's face in Jesus' face, bloody and sweaty, fallen under the weight of the cross. Give thanks for his mercy and know that the death of the Jesus on the cross is God's mercy and love for you.

### **Prayer of The Faithful:**

#### **OPTION 1:**

**Leader:** With all our heart and mind let us share our requests before God.

**Reader:** We pray for our Church in this holiest of weeks for her guidance and unity to all who come seeking love and comfort. Lord, hear us,

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray for an everlasting peace for our world brought about in the hope of Jesus. Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray for all those who are suffering and long to seek the face of mercy and love. Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray that each one of us do not lose sight of Jesus' love and mercy and know God's love for us always. Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray that in this Year of Mercy we can be agents of mercy to others as well as being receptive to your abounding grace and mercy. Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray for whatever it is that is in the quiet of our hearts. *{pause}*  
Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Presider:** Lord, your mercy and love for us is overflowing. Hear these prayers we offer, through Christ our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

### **OPTION 2:**

**Leader:** Lord, you know our deepest of thoughts. Hear our prayers we offer to you...

**Reader:** For all who seek comfort amidst their suffering ... Lord, hear us,

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** For an everlasting peace in the face of war ... Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** For those who long to see the mercy of God ... Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** For strength not to turn away from God's love ... Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** For the unspoken words in the quiet of our hearts. *{pause}* Lord, hear us.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Presider:** Lord, your mercy and love for us is overflowing. Hear these prayers we offer, through Christ our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

## **Concluding Rite**

### **Final Prayer & Dismissal:**

**Leader:** Lord, grant to us your abundant blessings as we celebrate the life and death of your Son in the anticipation of eternal life in his resurrection.

Let our eyes be open to the face of mercy in Jesus, and may comfort and peace be granted to us knowing that in you, there is always hope.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** Go in love, in anticipation for the hope of the Resurrection.

### **Concluding Hymn/Song:**

*The students can leave in silence in anticipation for what is to come.*

Or **Foot of the Cross** (Rob Galea – What A Day)

**Suggested Songs if Needed:**

**Were You There** (Tom Booth – Spirit & Song Disc G)

**At the Cross** (Rueben Morgan – As One Voice The Next Generation)

**You Were on the Cross** (Matt Maher – Alive Again)

**Jesus, Face of God** (James Maher – As One Voice The Next Generation)

**Until We See the Cross** (Geoff Bullock – As One Voice The Next Generation)

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