

# *The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus, according to Matthew*

Felix Just, S.J. – Religious Education Congress – February 29, 2008



## I. One Jesus, Four Gospel Portraits

- ❖ **Matthew:** Son of Abraham, Son of David, Beloved Son of God, Great Teacher like Moses
- **Mark:** Christ/Messiah, Son of God, Miracle-worker, Suffering Son of Man, Crucified and Risen
- **Luke:** Anointed by God's Spirit, Savior of all Peoples, esp. Poor, Outcast, Women, Sick, Sinners
- **John:** Logos/Word made Flesh, Only-begotten Son, Sent from the Father, "I Am," "Equal to God"

## II. Readings from Matthew's Gospel in the Lectionary for Mass (Year A)

- Sundays of Ordinary Time – semi-continuous readings; selections from chapters 3 to 25
- Other Sundays & Feasts – selected readings in Advent, Christmas, and first part of Lent
- Palm Sunday: Procession with Palms – **Matt 21:1-11** ("Son of David" enters into Jerusalem)
- Palm Sunday: Passion Proclamation – **Matt 26:14-27:66** (or short form: Matt 27:11-54)
- Easter Vigil – **Matt 28:1-10** (Women disciples at the empty tomb; Jesus appears to them)
- Ascension of the Lord – **Matt 28:16-20** (Jesus' final appearance to the disciples in Galilee)

## III. Matthew's Portrait of Jesus

- **Son of Abraham, Son of David** = fully Jewish; legitimate King of the Jews (unlike the Herodians)
- **Beloved Son of God** = voice from heaven (at Baptism & Transfig.); strange incidents at Crucifixion
- **Great Teacher, like Moses** = upholding & explaining "Torah" (God's Instructions/Teachings/Precepts)

## IV. The Passion Narrative in Matthew's Gospel (26:1-27:66)

- Jesus enters Jerusalem (Matt 21:1-11); Jesus teaches in Jerusalem (Matt 21-25)
- Authorities plot to kill Jesus (26:1-5) – *two days before Passover*; "passion prediction"; **Caiaphas** introduced
- Jesus is anointed at Bethany (26:6-13) – *anon. woman (not a "sinner")* anoints Jesus **head**; burial preparation
- **Judas Iscariot** plans to betray Jesus (26:14-16) – *in all Gospels, but only Matthew has 30 pieces of silver*
- Disciples prepare the Passover meal (26:17-20) – *the time is at hand*; the **Teacher** will eat with his **disciples**
- At Last Supper: Jesus foretells **Judas'** betrayal (26:21-25) – Judas: "**Is it I, Lord?**"; Jesus: "**You have said so!**"
- At Last Supper: Jesus blesses bread & wine (26:26-29) – "**Drink of it, ... for the forgiveness of sins**"
- Jesus foretells Peter's denial (26:30-35) – *after supper*; Peter: "**I will never fall away... I will not deny you.**"
- Jesus prays at Gethsemane (26:36-46) – "**My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done**"
- **Judas** arrives, and Jesus is arrested (26:47-56) – Judas: "**Greetings, Rabbi**"; Jesus: "**Friend, why are you here?**" "**All who take the sword will perish by the sword**"; "**twelve legions of angels**"; "**scripture must be fulfilled**"
- Jesus is interrogated in Caiaphas' house (26:57-68) – "**Christ, the Son of God**"; "**Son of Man**"; **blasphemy**
- Peter denies knowing Jesus (26:69-75) – "**Jesus the Galilean? from Nazareth?**"; "**I don't know the man!**"
- Jesus is condemned & taken to Pilate (27:1-2) – *at dawn, priests & elders decide to have Jesus killed*
- **Judas** repents & hangs himself (27:3-10) – **returns 30 pieces of silver**; **money used to buy "Field of Blood"**
- Jesus is tried before Pilate (27:11-23) – *King of the Jews? release Jesus or Barabbas? Pilate's wife's dream*
- Jesus is convicted, scourged, mocked (27:24-31) – **Pilate washes his hands**: "**I am innocent of his blood**"
- Jesus is led to Golgotha, where he is crucified (27:32-37) – *charge*: "**This is Jesus, the King of the Jews**"
- On the Cross: Various groups taunt Jesus (27:38-44) – "**If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross**"
- On the Cross: Jesus' last words before he dies (27:45-50)
  - ❖ Matthew 27:46 – "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" (also Mark 15:34)
  - Luke 23 – "**Father, forgive them**"; "**You'll be with me in paradise**"; "**Into your hands I commit my spirit**"
  - John 19 – "**Woman, behold, your son / Behold, your mother**"; "**I am thirsty**"; "**It is finished**"
- Effects of Jesus' Death; Witnesses (27:51-56) – **temple curtain torn**; **earthquake**; **tombs open**; **dead raised**
- Jesus is buried & his tomb guarded (27:57-61, **62-66**) – **chief priests tell Pilate**: "**disciples might steal his body**"

## V. Recap of Emphases in Matthew's Passion

- **Portrayal of Jesus:**
  - Cruelly Mistreated: suffering, scouring & crucifixion
  - Royal Son of David: the only legitimate “King of the Jews”
  - Great Teacher (like Moses): faithful to God & to his disciples
  - Beloved Son of God: as attested by divine signs
- **Roles of Characters in the Narrative:**
  - Caiaphas & Pilate – political schemers, avoiding responsibility
  - Judas & Peter – betrayer & denier; but both repentant
  - Other male disciples – play fairly minor roles; flee
  - Mary Magdalene & other women – faithful witnesses
  - Joseph of Arimathea – courageous, charitable disciple
- **Familiar Episodes NOT in Matthew's Passion?**
  - **In Luke and John, but *not* Mark or Matthew:**
    - Much longer dialogues at the Last Supper (Luke 22:24-38; John 13-16)
    - Pilate stresses Jesus' innocence (Luke 23:4, 13-16, 22; John 18:38b; 19:4, 6, 12)
  - **Only in Luke:**
    - Jesus is tried before the Sanhedrin at dawn (22:66-71)
    - Jesus is taken and questioned before Herod (23:6-12)
    - Jesus speaks with women on the Way to Calvary (23:26-33a)
    - Jesus forgives those who are crucifying him (23:34a)
    - Jesus speaks with the “repentant thief” (23:39-43)
  - **Only in John:**
    - Jesus washes his disciples' feet (13:1-20)
    - Jesus' long prayer to the Father (17:1-26)
    - Jesus has a much longer trial before Pilate (18:29-19:16)
    - Jesus' last words on the cross (see above; 19:26-27, 28, 30)
    - After Jesus' death, his side is pierced, but his bones not broken (19:31-37)

## VI. The Resurrection Accounts in Matthew's Gospel (28:1-20)

- Two Marys find the tomb empty (28:1-8) – earthquake; angel descends, rolls back stone; dazzling appearance  
“*Don't be afraid... you seek Jesus... He is not here; for he has risen... Come, see; then go, tell his disciples...*”
- Jesus appears to the women on the way (28:9-10) – “*Don't be afraid... go tell my brothers...*”
- Guards report to the authorities (28:11-15) – “*Tell people, his disciples came by night and stole his body*”
- Jesus appears in Galilee (The “Great Commission”; 28:16-20) – “*Go, make disciples, baptize, teach...*”
  - ❖ **Jesus' Final Words in Matthew (28:20):** “*Lo, I am with you always, until the end of the ages*”

## VII. Application: What Can We Learn from Matthew?

- How can I apply this in my own life as a Christian, as a disciple of Jesus?
- How can this help me in my ministry as a Catechist or Religious Educator?
- *Your Questions? Reflections? Discussion?*
- Thanks for coming! God bless you and your ministries!

