

Catholic Digital Resources Presents

FORGIVEN: A Passion Play of Peter and Judas

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CAST:

Jesus Christ
Simon Peter
Judas Iscariot
James
John
Andrew
other disciples
Jewish townspeople
blind person or people
lame people
Man #1, #2
Woman #1, #2
Pharisees #1, #2
other Pharisees (optional)
Roman soldiers

PROPS:

Costumes
Crutches, walking sticks
Palm leaves
Table or altar
Uncut loaf of bread
Ceramic chalice
Other props for Last Supper
Sets are optional (use a lightly staged sanctuary
or build set pieces according to local skills)

MUSIC:

Selections are chosen by the Music Director,
according to its familiarity with the local
audience or to best utilize the choir and/or
musical talent that is locally available in the parish.

PERUSAL COPY

SCENE 1

Instrumental music of the Director's choosing begins five minutes before the play starts, and ends when Jesus, Peter, and the other disciples walk onto the stage. The disciples are talking quietly amongst themselves. Jesus is in the lead, looking pensive.

From seats in the audience, the townspeople stand up, recognize Jesus, and exclaim things such as: "Look! It's him! The healer! I heard he's a prophet! He's a miracle worker! He's a great prophet! Jesus heal me!" They hurry to him, some limping, some using crutches or walking sticks, some blind and being led by friends. They surround Jesus, causing Jesus and the disciples to stop.

Jesus smiles warmly and lovingly reaches out to touch each person. The disciples watch in awe from the background, occasionally pointing at people who are healed, whispering joyfully to each other. The townspeople react to his healing touch in various ways: some kneel in awe, those who were limping jump freely, others throw down crutches and run, the blind discover they can see, etc. The people wander off as they're healed, leaving through the various aisles of the church.

Jesus is left alone with his disciples, who gather around him, congratulating him with pats on the back, etc. They are excited. Jesus quiets them.

Jesus: Why are you still amazed? You've been with me for three years, now.

Peter (*enthusiastically*): Master, for all of my life I've heard the prophets in the scriptures promise that the kingdom of God would one day come to Israel in power, but I never believed I would see it happen with my own eyes. I used to think that miracles belonged to the times of Moses and Elijah. But you've changed my faith. My faith grows every time I watch you perform a miracle. When you heal people, when you cast out demons, when you multiply the loaves of bread and the fish, my faith grows again! I need to keep seeing these things.

Jesus (*looking at all the disciples*): Who do the people say that I am?

Andrew: Some say you're John the Baptist.

Judas: Others say you're Elijah.

James: Jeremiah.

John: A prophet!

Jesus: And who do *you* say that I am?

All pause to think.

Peter (*with certainty and reverence*): You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Jesus (*putting a hand on Peter's shoulder and smiling*): Blessed are you, Simon. Your human reasoning could not have revealed this to you. It was my Father in heaven who told you this. And so I say to you, you are Peter. The name indicates that you are a rock of faith. Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Peter, I give to you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Jesus takes his hand off of Peter and speaks to the whole group.

Jesus: Do not -- do not! -- tell anyone that I am the Messiah. The time will come later for the world to find out. First, I must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly.

The disciples look surprised and unhappy. A few mumble briefly to each other. At the same time:

Peter: No!

Jesus: I must suffer at the hands of the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes.

Peter: Don't let that happen, Master. Everything's been going great so far. Don't let anything change that! As the Son of God, you have the power to protect yourself and your ministry.

Jesus: Hear me and remember what I tell you. If you understand my words, you will avoid needless anguish. I *will* suffer, and I will even be killed (*the disciples all gasp and their mumbling gets louder*), but on the third day I will be raised.

Peter (*taking Jesus by the elbow to pull him away from the noisy group*): Suffer and be killed?! Jesus, listen to me. God forbid such evil should happen to you! That cannot possibly be God's plan. What would we do without you? What about all the good you've been accomplishing? You must not let anything stop your ministry. Suffering and death? No way!

Jesus (*yanking free from Peter's hold*): Get behind me, Satan! You're an obstacle to me. Simon, beware: you're thinking not as God does, but as human beings do. You've become a tool of the devil.

Peter stares back at Jesus in shock and disbelief. The other disciples continue discussing the matter amongst themselves, looking shocked and confused. Jesus softens his expression and waits for Peter to understand. Peter, however, looks away, unable to bear the loving gaze of Jesus. He quickly turns and walks offstage. Jesus follows him more slowly. The others follow behind Jesus, except Judas.

Judas: What's the matter with Jesus? I thought he was going to save Israel from Roman tyranny! I think he's lost sight of God's priorities. (*After a pause, he follows the others.*)