Then the high priest tore his clothes, and said, “He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?” They answered, “He deserves death.” Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, saying, “Prophesy to us, you Messiah! Who is that you are striking?”

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, “You also were with Jesus of the Galilean.” But he denied it before all of them, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about.” When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” Again he denied it with an oath, “I do not know the man!” After a little while, the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.” Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know the man!”

At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: “Before the cock crows three times, I will deny you three times.” Then he went out and wept bitterly.

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood; and now I am full of guilt for what I have done.” But they said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself!” Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.” After questioning them, they used them to buy the potter’s field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord directs.”

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You say so.” But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?” But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner to the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?” For he knew that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that innocent man.” For he knew that Jesus had been declared by him to be innocent. The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, “Sir, we remember what your servant said while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ Therefore command the tomb to be secured until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and the last deception would be worse than the first.” Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.” So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Christ.

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Collect
Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect
BCP 357
Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give thanks to the Lord and praise his name.
Celebrant: It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; *his mercy endures for ever.
2 Let Israel now proclaim, *“His mercy endures for ever.”
19 Open for me the gates of righteousness; * I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the Lord.
20 “This is the gate of the Lord; * he who is righteous may enter.”
21 I will give thanks to you, for you answered me * and have become my salvation.
22 The same stone which the builders rejected * has become the chief cornerstone.
23 This is the Lord’s doing; * it is marvelous in our eyes.

The Collect
BCP 357
Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Celebrant: Let us pray.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Matthew 26:14—27:66
One of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What will you give me if I betray him to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?” He said, “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover with your house at which my disciples will prepare.’”

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.” And they were greatly distressed and began to say to him, “Lord, is it I?” He answered, “The one who dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him; but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one if he had not been born.” Judas, who betrayed him, said, “Surely not I, Rabbi!” He replied, “You have said it.” When they went out, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

When they had sung the song, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, “You will all become desectors 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 am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” Peter said to him, “Though all become desectors because of you, I will never desert you.” Jesus said to him, “ Truly I tell you, today, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.” Peter said to him, “Even though I must die with you, I will never deny you.” And so said all the disciples.

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.” And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.” Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Again he went away and prayed, and took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee; and he came to them and said, “My Spirit is at strife within me; stay awake and pray that you may not enter into that time of trial.” So he came to the disciples again, and said, “Still are you sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going; my betrayer is at hand.”

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived with a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.” He came up to Jesus with a kiss, and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him. Jesus said to him, “Friend, do you what are you here to do.” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?” At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, “Have you come out, with swords and clubs, as though I were a bandit Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the court of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the servants in order to see how this would end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death; but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, “Understand that he said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’” The high priest stood up, and said, “Have you any testimony against him?” But none of the ones who examined him gave testimony against what he said, for their mouths were stopped. The high priest then said to him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” He said, “You have said so.” The high priest said, “I adjure you by the living God, that you tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said so.”