

# Not Wearing a Costume

*This Week's Readings at Mass*

- ▶ Mark 11:1-10 - Welcomed with palms
- ▶ Isaiah 50:4-7 - The suffering servant
- ▶ Philippians 2:6-11 - Jesus, compassionate high priest
- ▶ Mark 14:1-15:47 - The passion of Jesus

Each Gospel writer tells the story of Jesus' passion and death slightly differently, emphasizing particular aspects of Jesus that each especially wants future generations to remember. Mark's gospel makes it very clear that Jesus suffered intensely, and that he experienced deep human emotions.

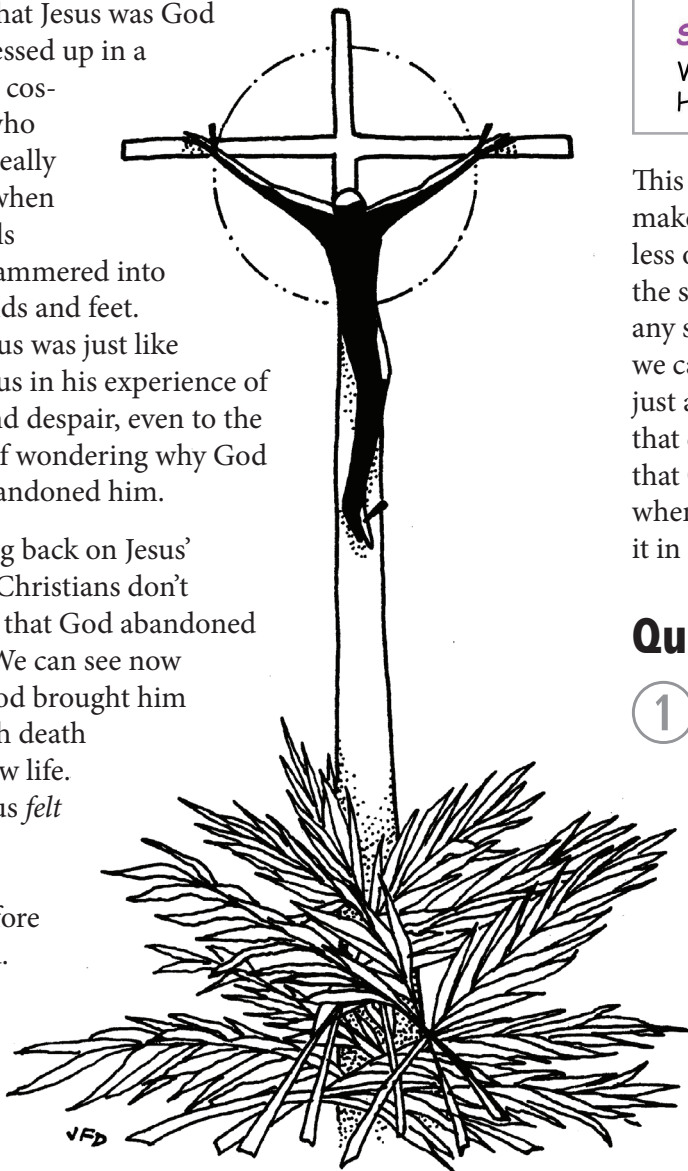
Mark does not want us to think that Jesus was God just dressed up in a

human costume who didn't really suffer when the nails

were hammered into his hands and feet.

No, Jesus was just like one of us in his experience of pain and despair, even to the point of wondering why God had abandoned him.

Looking back on Jesus' death, Christians don't believe that God abandoned Jesus. We can see now how God brought him through death into new life. Yet Jesus *felt* abandoned just before he died.



DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE EASTER EGG HUNT, LOUISE?

I'M GOING TO A DIFFERENT EASTER CELEBRATION.

ARE YOU GONNA HUNT FOR EGGS?

NOPE.

AT THE EGG HUNT, THE PRIZE IS A CHOCOLATE BUNNY. WHAT'S THE PRIZE AT YOUR CELEBRATION?

EVERLASTING LIFE.

SUDDENLY, CHOCOLATE SEEMS... SO...

FLEETING?

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"The Lord God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced."

**Sheepish Question:**  
What am I searching for as I approach Holy Week?

This point can remind us that our feelings do not make up all of reality. If we feel despairing or hopeless or that all is lost, we can remember that Jesus felt the same. If we are terrified of death, or we can't feel any sense of God's presence with us in our suffering, we can be assured that God has not abandoned us, just as God did not abandon Jesus. Sometimes all that can be done is to stay the course, remembering that God found a way to bring life out of death, even when Jesus and the others around him could not see it in the moment.

## Questions of the Week

- 1 Have you ever felt abandoned by God? Looking back on that time now, do you have a sense of how God was still present and active then? How?
- 2 Think of people in your life now who are suffering or despairing for any reason. How might you make yourself available to them so that they will know they are not alone?