

INTRODUCTION

The story of the Passion of the Lord is sung or proclaimed by three voices, one taking the role of Christ (✠), another that of the narrator or story-teller (N), and the last, that of the people (C), or synagogue (V). The assembly may take the part of the crowd.

The Passion is to be presented by deacons, or, in their absence, by priests, or in their absence too, by lectors. In the last case, however, the part of Christ should be reserved for the celebrant.

For the singing of the Passion, three empty lecterns are placed on the floor of the sanctuary.

Incense and candles are not to be used.

While the Verse before the Gospel is being sung, the deacons, carrying the book of the Passion at chest level, and accompanied by two acolytes or other ministers, bow before the celebrant and, in a subdued voice, ask for a blessing: **Father, give me your blessing.**

The priest responds in a subdued voice:

May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you worthily announce his Gospel. In the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.

The deacons respond: **Amen.**

If the lectors are not deacons, they do not ask for a blessing. At a Mass, however, at which a bishop presides, priests who sing or proclaim the Passion story in the absence of deacons, ask for and receive the blessing from the bishop.

Following this, the deacons with the acolytes make the usual reverence and proceed to the lecterns. The deacon who takes the role of Christ stands in the middle; to his right, whoever takes the part of the narrator and to the left, whoever takes the part of the people.

The Passion of the Lord is begun directly: **The Lord be with you** is not said, nor is the response, **Glory to you, Lord.** When the deacons begin to sing, they sign neither themselves nor the book.

