**Mark 15:1-15** (NIVUK)

**Jesus before Pilate**

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ asked Pilate.

‘You have said so,’ Jesus replied. The chief priests accused him of many things. So again Pilate asked him, ‘Aren’t you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.’ But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. A man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder in the uprising. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did. ‘Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?’ asked Pilate, knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to get Pilate to release Barabbas instead.

‘What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?’ Pilate asked them. ‘Crucify him!’ they shouted.

‘Why? What crime has he committed?’ asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder,

‘Crucify him!’ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.