

Act I – Current Events (multimedia presentation)
Adulterous Woman/Blessing Children/Rich Young Ruler/Blind Healed
Audience Location – Andreasen Wellness Center Gym

In the temple courts. As the lights come up, JESUS and his DISCIPLES are on stage in freeze frame. The action begins with a piercing offstage scream from MARY, as the PHARISEES drag her onstage through the HOUSE RIGHT stage door. The PHARISEES rudely escort MARY to JESUS, throwing her to the ground in the midst of the crowd.

(John 8)

Pharisee 1: Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The Law of Moses commands us to stone such women. Now what do you say?

[JESUS looks at the PHARISEES and MARY for a moment, then silently bends down and starts to write on the ground with His finger.]

Pharisee 2: Well should we follow the laws of Moses or not?

Jesus: *[standing up]* Alright, stone her. But let those who have never sinned throw the first stones. *[He stoops down again and writes in the ground.]*

[The accusers step forward to see what JESUS is doing. Then, beginning with the older ones, they gasp and steal away. The surrounding CROWD presses in, reads the writing and also gasps, looking at remaining PHARISEES and exclaiming to each other. As PHARISEES continue to leave, the CROWD retreats until Jesus and MARY are left alone.]

Jesus: *[wipes away what he has written, stands and addresses MARY]* Where are your accusers?

[MARY, still on the ground where the PHARISEES tossed her, can only sob. The sound echoes painfully in the temple. JESUS waits for at least 10 long seconds.

Jesus: *[kneels by MARY and asks tenderly]* Does no one condemn you?

Mary: *[continues to sob for a few moments, then slowly raises her head. She looks around and sees no one. Then, falteringly]* No one, Lord.

[Looking at MARY with forgiveness and perfect love, JESUS smiles and touches MARY'S shoulder. MARY recoils in fear at the touch, cowering and sobbing again, but JESUS' look remains constant and reassuring.

Jesus: Then neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin.

[Placing his hand back on MARY'S shoulder, JESUS waits for a few beats, then stands up. Just as his hand leaves MARY'S shoulder, MARY suddenly darts up with both hands, grabs JESUS' hand and hangs on for dear life.

Mary: *[just above a whisper]* Wait!

JESUS stops and turns around.

Mary: *[beat]* Why would you do this? Those men were ready to... *[she chokes on the thought and cannot continue]*

Jesus: *[pulls MARY up and looks directly into her eyes]* I know.

MARY gasps and turns away for a moment, but cannot resist looking back to JESUS. Suddenly MARY begins to cry tears of joy and embraces JESUS.

Mary: Thank you! Oh, thank you, Jesus!

The DISCIPLES come forward and are suddenly around JESUS and

MARY on all sides. Seeing them, MARY releases JESUS and steps away, embarrassed.

John: Lord, do you need help?

Peter: Let us keep this harlot away from you!

Jesus: Peter, she is a child of God. Mary, these men are my disciples. This is Peter,

John, Thomas—

Judas: *[suddenly steps forward with a broad smile and a gaze that is just a shade too intense.]* Hello, I'm Judas.

Mary: *[acutely aware of her "place" as a woman, quietly]* Uh, hello.

Child: Jesus, Jesus, there He is!

Suddenly several CHILDREN and their MOTHERS run onstage to be blessed by JESUS.

The DISCIPLES start really trying to protect JESUS and keep the people away. Some of the CROWD try to squeeze in past the DISCIPLES, who rebuke the children and try to keep them away from JESUS.]

(Mark 10:13-16)

Children: *[ad lib...]*It's Jesus! I want to see him up close. Me too...

Mothers: *[ad lib...]*Rabbi, Jesus, please won't you bless my son. Yes, and my children too...

Peter: Children, children, stay with your parents; don't crowd the master.

Judas: *[to the women]* Can't you see he is too busy to talk to you now? Take your children and...

Jesus: *[speaking over the noise]* Let the children come to me. Don't stop them!

[JESUS brings a CHILD to his lap and hugs him or her] For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I assure you, anyone who doesn't have the faith of a child will never get into the Kingdom of God.

[Jesus touches and blesses each child. The children are happy and the mothers are grateful.]

A well-dressed, rich young man (RYM) comes through the crowd and approaches Jesus.]

(Matthew 19:16-30; Luke 18:18-30)

RYM: Good teacher, what should I do to get eternal life?

Jesus: *[continues blessing the CHILDREN and interacting with them as he speaks to RYM]* Why do you call me good?

[RYM is taken aback. JESUS looks his way for a few seconds, watching him trying to find an answer.]

Jesus: Only God is good. But to answer your question, you can receive eternal life if you keep the commandments.

RYM: Which ones, rabbi?

Jesus: Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not testify falsely, *[bending down with a smile and addressing one of the children standing near]* honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself.

RYM: *[proudly]* Excellent! I've obeyed all these commandments since I was a boy.

What else must I do?

Jesus: If you want to be perfect, go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor,

[he gestures to the crowd or audience] and you will have treasure in Heaven. *[JESUS grips*

RYMs shoulder and looks intently into his eyes] Then, come follow me.

[The RYM thinks for a moment, struggling with this decision. He leaves sadly. Still looking at the man, JESUS speaks to his disciples.]

Jesus: I tell you the truth, it is very hard for a rich person to get into the kingdom of Heaven. *[DISCIPLES murmur agreement]* In fact, I will say it again—it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!

[At this, all the DISCIPLES are astonished.]

Thomas: Then who in the world can be saved?

Jesus: *[smiling]* You're right, for man it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.

Peter: We've given up everything to follow you. What will we get out of it?

Jesus: *[Jesus begins to speak as he walks. The crowd follows.]* I assure you that when I, the Son of Man, sit upon my glorious throne in the Kingdom, you who have been my followers will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or property, for my sake will receive a hundred times as much in return and will have eternal life. But many who seem to be important now will be the least in the kingdom, and those who are considered least here will be

the greatest! *[As he says this, JESUS picks up a CHILD who has been following and carries him/her a short distance.]*

As JESUS and the CROWD walk, a blind man, BARTIMAEUS, begins to shout.]

(Luke 18:35-43)

Bartimaeus: *[sitting down on HOUSE LEFT] Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me! [He repeats this several times.]*

James: Quiet. You are causing a commotion.

Simon: You're in the way, blind man. Back off. *[PERSON directs BARTIMAEUS toward OFFSTAGE away from JESUS]*

Bartimaeus: Yes, help me! *[clutches PERSON's tunic and pulls himself up to standing]*

Where is He? Where is Jesus?

Simon: *[gently but firmly struggling to get free from BARTIMAEUS' grip] No, let me go.*

Leave me alone! *[to JAMES] Help me! Please let me go! Help! ...*

Bartimaeus: *[undeterred, shouts even louder] Jesus, Son of David! Have mercy on me!*

Jesus!

Others: *[ad lib...]* Shh I want to hear...

Bartimaeus: Jesus, have mercy on me!

Jesus: John, bring him to me.

John: *[grins]* Yes, Lord. *[to a non-speaking disciple]* Matthew, give me a hand. *[to BARTIMAEUS]* Shh... He's calling for you. Here, let us help... *[The two disciples bring BARTIMAEUS to JESUS]*

Bartimaeus: *[not realizing he is standing right in front of JESUS, BARTIMAEUS shouts even louder]* Jesus, Son of David! Have mercy on me!

Jesus: *[winces, then smiles]* What do you want me to do for you?

Bartimaeus: Lord, I want to see.

Jesus: *[gives a short, delighted laugh at this show of faith]* All right, you CAN see!

Your faith has healed you.

[Immediately BARTIMAEUS receives his sight.]

Bartimaeus: I can see. I can see your face...and people...and the sun! I can see. *[ad lib as desired]* Thank you, Jesus. *[He hugs JESUS]* Thank you. Oh, praise the God of heaven.

Praise the God of heaven! Thank you!

[He continues to rejoice in his new sight. He follows JESUS as the entire assembly, joining in the praise, exits down the stairs, off stage right and out the door.]

Tour Guide: *[Looking in Jesus' direction]* Jesus. Everywhere he goes he brings light and life.

And everyone who meets him is changed in different ways. Come on, let's follow Jesus to

Jerusalem. It is the spring of the year A.D. 30. The city is bustling with people celebrating the festival of Passover. Most are from Judea, but others have come even farther for this occasion.

Follow me—you don't want to get lost in the crowds!

Act II –Marketplace
Audience Location – Grove next to Seminary Building

Tour Guide: On Sunday Jesus triumphantly entered the city and went to the temple. There, he drove out the moneychangers and merchants doing business in the temple court. He taught in the temple each day for the rest of the week, then on Thursday sent his disciples to arrange for the Passover meal. This is a special occasion—Passover reminds us of the time our forefathers covered the doorframes of their houses in Egypt with the blood of a lamb and were passed over by the angel of death. What followed was our miraculous delivery from bondage in Egypt. Now let's follow the disciples into the city and to the upper room for the Passover meal. Remember, the Romans control Jerusalem now, so we'll have to pay their tax when we enter. Be sure to get a record of payment. And of course, as we make our way through the marketplace, feel free to look around. When you hear the shofar horn sound, it means the shops are closing, and we will need to move on.

Act III – Catching Barabbas/Roman Barracks
Location – In Front of Lamson Hall

Tour Guide: As you know, we are under the rule of Rome, and the Romans don't care much for us Jews. Please stay on your best behavior when they are around and perhaps they will leave us alone for now. Roman soldiers are constantly patrolling to "keep the peace," as they say, and they are quick to arrest and send prisoners to execution. At the moment, I am told they are looking for Barabbas, a local man and "freedom fighter" wanted for robbery and murder – maybe you've heard of him? Anyway, you DON'T want to be mistaken for Barabbas, and you don't want to meet him, either. Barabbas always causes trouble at our Feasts of Tabernacles,

Passovers and so forth, so the Romans have increased security to try and capture him. Please hold onto your purses and valuables, because if he is in the area, there is no telling what might happen.

CROWD passes through checkpoint, and GUARDS inspect the crowd, searching for BARABBAS. As the CROWD is mostly through the checkpoint...

Woman 1: Help! Soldiers! That man stole my bag! He's getting away! Stop him!

Soldier: *[on horseback]* It's Barabbas. Seize him!

[Three FOOT SOLDIERS who have been working near the road (under the watch of SOLDIER) run after BARABBAS. They catch him and take him into custody.]

Tour Guide: *[to SOLDIER]* What will happen to Barabbas now?

Soldier: He'll appear before Governor Pilate to stand trial.

Tour Guide: What will happen if he is found guilty?

Soldier: We already know he is guilty. He will be crucified.

[The SOLDIER lets his last words hang in the air for a few moments, eyeing the TOUR GUIDE and the CROWD suspiciously.]

FOOT SOLDIERS 1 & 2 march off with Barabbas toward the encampment. FOOT SOLDIER 3 returns to work area, where CROWD is gathered.]

Footsoldier 3: *[picks out three capable people from CROWD]* You, come here. Carry these bags. Come on, let's go!

Tour Guide: Please remain calm. Do as he asks. I'm sorry, but Roman soldiers have a right to use us as pack animals. At least Barabbas is in custody and the Romans won't let him get away.

Perhaps the soldiers will not detain us long and we can still join Jesus and his disciples as they enjoy the Passover meal together.

[The SOLDIERS lead BARABBAS and the CROWD to a Roman camp/barracks. Banners and standards flutter by a few tents. A SERGEANT comes out of his tent to inspect the CROWD, who is forced to file past him in single file. SERGEANT yells at CROWD MEMBERS WITH PACKS to put them in certain tents, and asks others if they paid their tax. BARABBAS is bound to a post or bench in the camp where all can see him. A cooking fire burns with a suspended pot over it by a centrally located tent. As the CROWD walks through the camp, the COOK and SOLDIERS threaten any crowd members who try to see what's cooking – they yell “Keep moving!” and ask, “You wanna help him?” with coarse laughter. CROWD exits camp and heads toward Student Center.]

Act IV – Last Supper

Location – Outside Student Center

*Outside of the Student Center on the northeast corner – The twelve are already reclined at the table, watching Jesus with amazement, confusion and shame. Jesus is carrying a towel and washing feet. As the crowd arrives he begins to wash the feet of Judas. At the end of Tour Guide's introduction, Jesus turns to Peter.
(John 13, Matthew 26, Luke 22, Mark 14)*

Tour Guide: It is customary for a servant to wash the dusty feet of dinner guests when they arrive. There is no servant here today for this ignoble task, and certainly none of the disciples are considering volunteering for such a humble chore. Foot washing is a job reserved for slaves—even the paid servants are not required to stoop so low. But Jesus, as a lesson for his disciples, and to show them the full extent of his love, is performing this service for them. And now Peter is the only disciple left.

[JESUS turns from JUDAS and stoops next to PETER to wash his feet. PETER jumps up and backs away.]

Peter: Lord no! Why are you doing this?

Jesus: You don't understand now; someday you will.

Peter: No, you will never wash my feet!

Jesus: But if I don't wash you, you won't belong to me.

PETER thinks this over for a second, then kneels in front of JESUS, bows his head and holds out his hands.

Peter: Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!

Jesus: A person who has bathed all over only needs to wash their feet to be entirely clean. *[PETER sits, JESUS washes his feet.]* And you are clean. *[JESUS places footwashing supplies in a corner, puts on an outer garment and reclines at table.]* But that isn't true of everyone here. Not all of you are clean. *[Looking at JUDAS, JESUS fixes him with a piercing stare.]* The truth is that one of you, one of my twelve chosen, will betray me.

Disciples: Is it me? Am I the one? *[Etc.]*

[PETER motions to JOHN to ask JESUS who would do this.]

John: Lord, who is it?

Jesus: It is the one with whom I dip the bread in the sauce.

Andrew: What does that mean?

Philip: I'm not getting ANY sauce!

James: I have no idea.

Bartholomew: Does He mean in the same bowl or just dipping at the same time?

[JESUS and JUDAS dip simultaneously. Other DISCIPLES immediately go silent in amazement.]

Judas: *[absently]* Sorry Jesus. *[slowly comprehending what just happened]* Teacher, if you knew it was me...? *[JUDAS trails off]*

Jesus: What you are planning to do, do quickly.

[JUDAS opens his mouth to protest but cannot find a word. He slowly places the piece of bread in his mouth, gets up and leaves. DISCIPLES begin eating.]

Matthew: Where is he going?

Nathaniel: What is he going to do?

Thaddeus: I don't know.

Simon: Well, he does have the
moneybag...

Jesus: I have looked forward to this hour with deep longing, anxious to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering. I tell you now that I won't eat it again until it comes to fulfillment in the Kingdom of God.

Philip: Lord, no!

Bartholomew: Don't say that!

Jesus: *[pays no attention to this, but takes the bread and raises it to heaven, giving thanks. After breaking the bread he passes it to his DISCIPLES.]* Take it and eat, this is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

[The DISCIPLES, who were about to eat on JESUS' command, are shocked when JESUS declares the bread to be His body. ALL look at JESUS in surprise.]

Andrew: What?

Nathaniel: Your body?

Thaddeus: Lord, what you do mean?

[Seeing JESUS calmly eat the bread, the DISCIPLES follow suit. Then JESUS takes the cup, gives thanks and offers it to them.]

Jesus: Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people.

Matthew: Jesus!

James: Your blood?!

Simon: No it's not.

Matthew: I would never!

Jesus: It is poured out to forgive the sins of many.

Andrew: YOUR blood??

Philip: Why are you talking like this?

Jesus: I tell you, I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom.

Nathaniel: *[to SIMON]* What does that mean? *[Disciples drink.]*

Simon: I have no idea.

Jesus: Tonight all of you will desert me. For the Scriptures say, 'God will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

James: No, Lord, please!

Jesus: But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there.

Peter: Even if everyone else deserts you, I never will. I would die for you!

Jesus: Die for me? Oh Peter, before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.

Peter: *[smacks his hand on the table and jumps up]* No! Not even if I have to die with you! I will never deny you!

[Other disciples echo sentiment, vowing the same.]

Jesus: Don't be troubled. *[motions for PETER to sit]* You trust God-- *[JESUS looks intently at PETER, using eye contact to make this a question.]*

Peter: Yes.

Jesus: *[continuing]* Now trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know where I am going and how to get there.

Thomas: No, we don't know, Lord. We have no idea where you're going, so how can we know the way?

Jesus: I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you really have known me, you will know who my Father is. From now on you know Him and have seen Him!

[Jesus and the DISCIPLES exit stage left.]

[After they leave, JUDAS enters from behind the set with two of the PHARISEES, who are holding a small bag of silver.]

Judas: You need to know that it is hard for me to do.

Pharisee 1: *[Brusquely]* All you need to know is that you're doing what's right. Now tell us, where will he be?

Judas: The Garden of Gethsemane. It's a peaceful place. Far away from the crowds.

Pharisee 2: We're not asking your opinion. We just needed to know where to find him, and you know his movements. Here. *[He shoves the bag to JUDAS' chest and the PHARISEES walk away.]*

Tour Guide: Jesus knows his life on this earth is drawing to a close. Let's follow as he and the disciples go to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Act V – Garden of Gethsemane/Arrest
Location –Garden Across the sidewalk from Harrigan Hall

Jesus and the disciples walk towards the garden, talking. As they get closer, Jesus becomes quiet as he begins to feel increasing agony. The disciples support him when he stumbles while he walks.

(Mark 14)

Jesus: Sit here while I go on ahead to pray. *[All twelve DISCIPLES stop. JESUS walks on, his breathing labored and steps halting. After several paces, JESUS turns, nearly overcome with pain and anguish.]* (Softly) Peter, John, James, please, come with me.

[They rush to him and give support. Together the four continue.]

Jesus: My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and watch with me. *[He walks farther and falls with his face to the ground.]* Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine. *[He returns to the three DISCIPLES with him. They are sleeping.]* Peter! John! James! Are you asleep? Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour? Keep alert and PRAY! Otherwise temptation will overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak. *[He goes to pray a second time.]* My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away until I drink it, your will be done. *[He returns to find the DISCIPLES sleeping again. He does not*

wake them but goes back to pray a third time.] Father! Please take this cup from me! But if I must drink it, Your will be done. *[He returns to the DISCIPLES again.]*

Jesus: Still sleeping? Still resting? Enough! The time has come. I, the Son of Man, am betrayed into the hands of sinners. Come, let's get going. See, my betrayer is here!

[As JESUS is speaking, JUDAS arrives with a large CROWD armed with swords and clubs.]

Judas: Greetings, Rabbi! *[kisses JESUS]*

Jesus: *[grabs JUDAS by the sleeve before he can back away]* Judas, would you betray me with a kiss?

Disciples: Lord, should we fight? We brought swords!

Peter: Don't worry Lord, we're going to fight for you!

[As the disciples ask, PETER doesn't wait. Drawing his sword as men from the crowd step forward and seize JESUS, he cuts off the ear of the high priest's SERVANT. The SERVANT screams in pain and puts a hand to his ear. Blood trickles through his fingers.]

Jesus: *[Shouts]* Put away your sword! *[More quietly]* Don't resist anymore. *[JESUS steps between the DISCIPLES and the CROWD, and heals the SERVANT's ear. To SERVANT]* You're all right.

Servant: *[realizing it too]* I believe so, Jesus.

Jesus: *[turning to PETER who stands holding his sword, breathing heavily]* Peter. Put your sword away. Those who live by the sword will die by it. Don't you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and He would send them instantly?

[All DISCIPLES murmur in amazement at this. The SOLDIERS chuckle quietly in ridicule.]

John: Then do it!

Jesus: But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now? *[To the CROWD]* Am I some dangerous criminal, that you come armed to arrest me? Why didn't you arrest me in the Temple? I was there teaching every day. But these things are happening to fulfill what the Scriptures say about me.

Servant: *[Gathers himself, remembering his position]* Take him to the high priest.

[JESUS is taken out of the garden as the CROWD follows. The DISCIPLES scatter but PETER and JOHN follow at a distance.]

Tour Guide: Jesus is being taken to the high priest for a trial before the Sanhedrin. The disciples have scattered just as Jesus predicted. Peter, however, follows the crowd at a distance to see what the outcome will be. He has not completely abandoned Christ, at least not yet. Quickly now, let's follow the crowd.

[The audience proceeds in the direction the crowd has gone. As they approach Harrigan Hall the TEMPLE GUARDS block the path, saying the CROWD cannot proceed past in that direction. A rooster crows in the background. PETER runs past the audience back towards the art building.]

Peter: *[weeping bitterly]* I have betrayed him. I have denied my Lord. Oh, God! Please... Please forgive me.

John: *[runs after Peter]* Peter, wait! Peter!

[The audience then turns towards East Campus Circle Drive and moves on around Harrigan Hall to the Graphic Design building.]

Tour Guide: It is early Friday morning, and it comes as no surprise that the chief priests and elders have decided to have Jesus put to death. When Judas, the betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests. He told them, "I have sinned. For I have betrayed innocent blood." But the priests said, "What is that to us? That's your responsibility." Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

Act VI – Before Pilate

Location – Art and Design Center

JESUS stands before PILATE and the PRIESTS (on the roof of the Graphics Design building)

(Luke 23)

Tour Guide: Jesus is now before Pilate, the Roman governor of Israel. The priests have asked for the death penalty. Let's see what Pilate will decide.

Priest 1: We have found this man subverting our nation.

Priest 2: He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar.

Priest 3: And, he claims to be Christ, a king.

Pilate: Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus: It is as you say.

Pilate: *[surprised by this comment, he stares into JESUS' eyes for a long moment and JESUS touches his soul]* I find no basis for a charge against this man.

Priest 2: He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teachings!

All the PRIESTS ad lib in agreement.

Pilate: Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you? *[JESUS gives no response]* Still no reply – not even to a single charge? *[JESUS is still silent]* I must say—you amaze me, Jesus. *[To the PRIESTS and CROWD]* As you know, every year at this time it is my custom to release a prisoner. *[SOLDIERS present BARABBAS below while PILATE speaks]* Which one do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?

[A MESSENGER enters and hands PILATE a note.]

Messenger: My Lord, an urgent message from your wife..

[The PRIESTS encourage the crowd to choose BARABBAS while PILATE turns away to read the note silently.]

Wife's Voice: Leave that innocent man alone, because I had a terrible nightmare about him last night. Terrible things will happen if you kill him.

Messenger: Does this message require a response, my lord?

Pilate: *[After a pause]* No. *[To the crowd]* Which of the two do you want me to release to you?

Crowd: Barabbas!

Pilate: Which one?

Crowd: Barabbas!!

Pilate: But if I release Barabbas, what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Crowd: Crucify him!

Pilate: Why? What crime has he committed?

Priest 1: Kill him!

Priest 2: He says he's God

Priest 3: He's a blasphemer!

Crowd: *[shouting louder and louder]* Crucify him! Crucify him!

[PRIESTS wave their arms at the CROWD as they shout, rousing them to more anger.]

Pilate: *[To himself]* What am I to do? You see the choice they are making?

[CROWD murmurs]

Pilate: *[To JESUS]* I can see what you see. The choice should be so clear, *[he gestures toward BARABBAS, who snarls at him]* yet they choose him.

Priest 1: Yes, give us Barabbas!

[PILATE raises his arms, disgusted.]

Pilate: And how will it go for me to set him free?

Priest 3: *[screaming]* This man must die! We want Barabbas!

[All PRIESTS join in, "Yes, Barabbas!..." and quickly begin to chant "Bar-ab-bas! Bar-ab-bas! Bar-ab-bas! Bar-ab-bas!" PRIEST 3 runs up and down the CROWD/AUDIENCE line, hyping them as if they were a coliseum crowd. BARABBAS begins to dance happily to the rhythm. As mob mentality begins to take over, PILATE steps back to his platform to silence the crowd.]

Pilate: For the last time, I give you this choice. Who do you want among you, this criminal *[he gestures to Barabbas, who cackles delightedly and leers at the crowd]* or Jesus?

Crowd: We want Barabbas!

Pilate: Then what of Jesus?

Crowd: Crucify him! *[Again PRIESTS hype the crowd]* Crucify him!

[As PILATE thinks, the voice of PILATE'S WIFE echoes again.]

Wife's Voice: Leave that innocent man alone, because I had a terrible nightmare about him last night.

Pilate: *[He thinks for a brief second, then turns to CROWD.]* I have found no grounds for the death penalty. *[CROWD murmurs, PILATE raises his hands for control]* Therefore, I will have him flogged, and then release him.

Priests and Crowd: No, crucify him! Cru-ci-fy! Cru-ci-fy! Cru-ci-fy!

Pilate: *(pointing accusingly at the crowd)* What do you mean by this! You would crucify your king?

Priest 1: *(yelling of behalf of crowd)* We have no king but Caesar!
[Again the chant begins. Angrily, PILATE signals for a SERVANT to come forward with a bowl of water. Chant dies away.]

Pilate: *[washing his hands in front of the crowd]* I am innocent of this man's blood. Let his blood be on YOU! *[still angry, PILATE flings the water on his hands over the CROWD]*

Man: Let his blood be on us!

Woman: And on our children!

Crowd: Yes, let his blood be on us and our children!

Pilate: *[To the SOLDIERS, defeat and exhaustion in his voice]* Take him away and have him flogged. Then, *[sighs]* He is to be crucified. *[JESUS and the SOLDIERS immediately begin to leave. Then to the PRIESTS and CROWD]* I am innocent!

Tour Guide: The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the judgement hall, called the Praetorium. *[sounds of a whip cracking and agonizing screams – seven or more times]* The whole company of soldiers gathered around. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. *[sounds of SOLDIERS laughing and mocking – Hail king of the Jews!]* They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to be crucified. This won't be pretty, but let's be with Jesus in his final moments.

Act VII – Crucifixion

Audience Location – Bottom of hill by Harrigan Hall

JESUS reappears coming out of the building with the SOLDIERS. He is carrying a cross. They walk toward the hill (next to AIM building). JESUS is bloody, bruised and weak. He falls several times. SIMON THE CYRENE is ordered to carry the cross the rest of

the way. JESUS' outer garments are stripped away. He is nailed to the cross and lifted off the ground. Two other PRISONERS are already hanging on crosses. JESUS' cross is in the middle. It has a sign above that reads "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS." MARY the mother of Jesus, MARY MAGDALENE and another WOMAN are close by. They are crying. JOHN and a man named JOSEPH are there also. JOSEPH is trying to comfort the women.

Jesus: Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.

[After a pause...] I'm thirsty.

JESUS is offered wine mixed with gall on a sponge. After tasting it, he refuses to drink. The SOLDIERS divide up the clothes and cast lots for them. As the CROWD passes by, they shake their heads. Some hurl insults. MARY the Mother of Jesus stands at the foot of the cross with two other women and JOHN.

Woman: You, who said you would destroy they temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself.

Man: Come down from the cross if you are the Son of God.

Priest 1: He saved others but he can't save himself.

Priest 2: He's the King of Israel! Let him come down from the cross right now, and we will believe in him.

Priest 3: He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants, for he said, I am the Son of God.

Criminal 1: Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!

Criminal 2: Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence? We deserve to die. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus: Today I tell you the truth, you will be with me in paradise.

The women are still crying, and the groups draws closer to the cross.

When JESUS sees them, he speaks.

Jesus: *[to MARY]* Mother, he is your son. *[to JOHN]* John, she is your mother.

MARY the Mother of Jesus begins to wail.

Soldier 1: *[after a moment; to SOLDIER 2]* This darkness is eerie. It's been this way since the sixth hour, and now it's almost the ninth.

Jesus: Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani!

Soldier 2: What does that mean?

Centurion: It means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.”

Woman 2: No, he’s calling Elijah.

Jesus: I thirst!

A SOLDIER runs to get another sponge. He lifts it up to JESUS, who tries to lean forward to drink.

Man 2: No, leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.

[Still looking at JESUS, SOLDIER deliberately throws the sponge and stick on the ground.]

Jesus: *[in a loud voice]* Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. *[beat]* It is finished!

JESUS bows his head and dies. An earthquake rumbles under Calvary.

Centurion: *[a few beats]* Surely this was the Son of God.

[After a moment, the CENTURION takes a spear and stabs JESUS’ side. SOLDIERS break PRISONER’s legs. SOLDIERS, working gently now, begin taking JESUS’ cross down and removing his body. A song should play softly in the background while SOLDIERS work.]

Tour Guide: A man named Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus’ body and was granted his request. Jesus was taken down off the cross, wrapped in a clean linen cloth, and carried to the tomb. Please, follow me as we go to pay our respects.

Act VIII – Resurrection

Audience Location – Johnson Gym

The audience is brought to the doors of the gymnasium.

Tour Guide: The chief priests and Pharisees remembered that Jesus prophesied he would rise again. They asked Pilate to have Jesus’ tomb made secure. Pilate agreed, so they sealed the tomb and posted soldiers to stand guard.

[The audience is brought into the gym and seated while “Adagio for Strings” plays. Lights up to reveal the open tomb. “World Trade Center Choral Piece” plays PETER, JOHN, THOMAS and JAMES enter DOWN THE CENTER AISLE, carrying JESUS’ body and weeping. MARY the mother of Jesus and MARY MAGDALENE are with them. After placing the body in the tomb, ALL pause in front of the tomb to weep and comfort each other.

Suddenly SOLDIER 1 AND GUARDS 1 & 2 begins a brisk march from the back of the gym. They quickly tramp down the center aisle and onto the stage. The DISCIPLES gather together in front of the tomb to protect the body in whatever way they can.]

Soldier 1: Halt! *[SOLDIERS stop near DISCIPLES and tomb.]* I think we found it. *[SOLDIERS chuckle. SOLDIER 1 steps over to DISCIPLES, leering at them, and picks out JOHN.]* Yeah, I recognize this one. I saw him with ‘em!

John: What... what do you mean?

Soldier 1: *[to OTHERS, sarcastically]* Ha! That’s how you know you got the right guys, when they start playing dumb. *[to DISCIPLES]* So where’s the body? You were Jesus’ followers, what’d you do with it?

Peter: He’s already in the tomb. Why can’t you just leave us alone? You’ve done enough already.

Soldier 1: It is, eh? *[He looks briefly into the tomb.]* Good! Saves me the trouble. All right, roll that stone across there.

Thomas: He’s dead! What more do you want from us?

Soldier 1: I have my orders. You want me to give YOU some? *[All the guards but one suddenly move forward and point their spears at DISCIPLES.]* Now do as you’re told! *[DISCIPLES go to work, struggling with the stone’s weight. Meanwhile, SOLDIER 1 turns to SOLDIERS. He picks one at random, then the one who didn’t point his spear.]* All right, you and... you.

Guards: Yes sir. *[They step out of the group.]*

Soldier 1: Stand guard. Make sure they don’t get up to anything. *[SOLDIER 1 goes to seal tomb, chasing DISCIPLES away.]* Go on, get out of here. There! *[He applies seal.]* Nobody touches it. Come on.

Other SOLDIERS leave. DISCIPLES and WOMEN are already gone.

GUARDS wander downstage.

Guard 1: Well, this’ll be easy, eh?

GUARD 2 does not respond, but looks around a bit uncomfortably.

MARY re-enters, supported by MARY MAGDALENE. They walk to tomb and stares at it for a minute, crying.

Mary: Jesus...son... God, why?

Guard 1: Quiet, woman.

Mary: *[completely ignores GUARD]* How could this happen? This wasn't supposed to happen. He was supposed to be king! My son was to be king.

Guard 1: *[mutters under his breath, barely audible]* Tell it to Caesar.

Guard 2: *[mutters back]* Will you lay off?

Mary: *[MARY moves downstage, away from the tomb. She is on the edge of crying.]*

After everything he did... *[GUARD 1 snorts in derision.]* Oh my son! My firstborn! *[beat; to GUARDS]* Please, please... may I see him one more time? Just once more.

Guard 1: Listen lady...

Guard 2: *[cuts him off]* I'm sorry, but the tomb is already sealed.

Guard 1: As long as we're here this body will never see the light of day!

MARY exits, crying.

Guard 1: When is this going to be over? These nights are too long.

Guard 2: *[absently]* Yeah, know what you mean.

Guard 1: *[glances at the other guard with a twinkle in his eye]* Good thing we've only got another ten hours to go.

Guard 2: *[beat, looks at GUARD 1 in surprise]* Ten hours?

Guard 1: Ha! Gotcha! *[he claps GUARD 2 on the back]*

Guard 2: *[still distant]* Cut it out, will you?

Guard 1: Oh come on. You've been out of it all night. What's up?

Guard 2: Nothing.

Guard 1: Oh, okay. Nothing. Yeah, sure.

Guard 2: What?

Guard 1: Last time you said nothing was wrong was when your mother packed up and moved to Crete with that ex-gadiator! Come on, what's going on?

Guard 2: Ugh. Thanks for reminding me. Nice of you to bring it up.

Guard 1: Don't mention it... So what is it this time? Something serious?

Guard 2: I don't know. I'm just thinking about what the captain said yesterday.

Guard 1: That's it?! I thought maybe she'd run off with someone else! Like the great Augustus Caesar himself... *[Laughs]*

Guard 2: Come on, I'm serious!

Guard 1: About what?

Guard 2: Remember? Right after this guy died, the captain looked up at him and said, "Surely this man was the Son of God."

Guard 1: Yeah, that was funny!

Guard 2: It's IMPOSSIBLE to talk to you.

Guard 1: Sorry, sorry. You were saying?

Guard 2: Well, Governor Pilate couldn't find anything wrong with him, either. I guess I'm just wondering, what if the captain was right?

Guard 1: *[really cracks up at this]* About THIS guy? How could he be? Do you know what's behind that rock?

Guard 2: His body...

Guard 1: Exactly! There's your answer! The real messiah is some kind of savior for the Jews. But this guy's dead, and who's in control? That's right, we are. Romans rule. Plus the Jews are always coming up with some savior or another.

Guard 2: Yeah, I know. It's just... there's something more to it. I can't put my finger on it, but something doesn't add up.

Guard 1: Aww, you're thinking too much. I've warned you about this before.

Guard 2: No, this isn't like that! I mean, how many times have we had to guard a dead body?

Guard 1: First time for everything.

Guard 2: Will you lay off? How many of those other "messiahs" *[he makes quotes in the air with his fingers]* have we guarded, alive or dead? There's something different about this guy.

Guard 1: The difference is this guy actually claimed he was going to rise from the dead. That's why we have to be here, to make sure his followers don't steal the body and try to say he's alive. Don't you get it?

Guard 2: No! I don't get it! Even if this guy was a nobody, He didn't deserve this. And if he was who the captain said he was, then we're right in the middle of a horrible mistake here. I don't understand it, but I feel like everything's about to change.

[Arise My Love begins playing. More SOLDIERS march in down the center aisle and take up positions in front of the audience. ANGELS move up the aisle. SOLDIERS collapse at the ANGELS gesture. ANGELS roll away the stone. JESUS comes out of the tomb. Full spots on JESUS as song ends. Lights fade to black. JESUS and ANGELS leave the stage as recording plays.]

Jesus (recording): All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.

[Lights and house lights come up on empty stage..]

Recording: Thank you for joining us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Please join us in the hospitality tent out the doors to your right.

[Doors are opened on HOUSE RIGHT. Crowd is ushered out doors to the hospitality tent]