



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
5th April 2020

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish, this Sunday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

ENTRANCE WITH PALMS

Leader: Today is the beginning of Holy Week: let's remember how Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem, and hear of the events leading up to his death on Good Friday.

GOSPEL

Matthew 21:1-11

When they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village facing you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her: untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord has need of them," and he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying, *'Tell the daughter of Sion, Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass.'* The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!' And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, 'Who is this?' And the crowds said, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.'

If you have young children, it might be fun to process from the garden into your house, waving palm branches or any other branches and singing "Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising!" On arriving back inside:

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray. Almighty ever-living God, who as an example of humility for the human race to follow caused our Saviour to take flesh and submit to the Cross, graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering and so merit a share in his Resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate, the governor, and the governor put to him this question: "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "It is you who say it." But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him, "Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?" But to the governor's complete amazement, he offered no reply to any of the charges. At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at that time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate said to them, "Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. Now as he was seated in the chair of judgement, his wife sent him a message, "Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him." The chief priests and the elders, however, had persuaded the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when the governor spoke and asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them: "But in that case, what am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said: "Let him be crucified!" Pilate asked: "Why? What harm has he done?" But they shouted all the louder, "Let him be crucified!" Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression, that in fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said, "I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern." And the people, to a man, shouted back, "His blood be on us and on our children!" Then he released Barabbas for them. He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified. The governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort round him. Then they stripped him and made him wear a scarlet cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him. On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink mixed with gall, which he tasted but refused to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him. Above his head was placed the charge against him; it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said, "So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!" The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way, saying: "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the king of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He puts his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants him. For he did say, 'I am the son of God.'" Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way. From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" That is, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood there heard this, they said, "The man is calling on Elijah." and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink. The rest of them said: "Wait! See if Elijah will come to save him." But Jesus, again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

Here all kneel (if you can) and pause for a short time.

At that, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people. Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said, "In truth this was a son of God."

REFLECTION

Leader: How quickly the people turn against Jesus! From "Hosanna" on Sunday to "Crucify" on Friday is such a dramatic change. Why did they reject him? Because he was not the Messiah they thought he would be – he didn't fit their picture. They see him as weak, a failure, a disappointment. And the moment of his death on the cross seems to confirm that. And yet we know that his death was not the end: his emptiness was a moment of triumph. By giving all away, he had won everything. The paradox of the cross is part of our lives too, as we face up to disappointments and things that do not fulfil our expectations or go as we planned. Can we embrace a moment of the cross – seeing our failures or disappointments as the gateway to new hopes and graces?



A THOUGHT FOR OUR YOUNGER FRIENDS: Today starts off so joyfully – waving our palm branches to remember how happy the people were to see Jesus – but it gets sad very quickly as we hear the story of how Jesus died. But in a way we have to be joyful about the death of Jesus too – yes, it is sad, but it did something very special for us: by dying on the cross (and rising again – that's next Sunday!) Jesus has given us the hope of eternal life. What a wonderful thing – worth singing another "Hosanna" for!

INTERCESSIONS

Leader: Let us pray for deeper trust in Jesus, who loved us to the end.

Leader: Let us pray for Pope Francis and the Church throughout the world, sharing in this prayer today. Lord, hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Leader: Let us pray for all people who are persecuted or condemned unjustly, as Jesus was. Lord, hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Leader: Let us pray especially today for anyone we know who has died, that they may have life with Jesus. Lord, hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

Leader: Hear us, almighty God, and, having instilled in your servants the teachings of the Christian faith, graciously purify them by the working of your grace. Through Christ our Lord.

PREPARATION FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Leader: Loving Father, though innocent, Jesus your Son suffered willingly for sinners and accepted unjust condemnation to save the guilty. His Death has washed away our sins, and his Resurrection has purchased our justification. The night before he died he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION



All: My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

THANKSGIVING PSALM

Leader: All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend.'

All: **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet
I can count every one of my bones.

All: **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

They divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me!

All: **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory. Revere him, Israel's sons.

All: **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

FINAL PRAYER AND BLESSING

Leader: Through the Passion of your Only Begotten Son, O Lord, may our reconciliation with you be near at hand, so that, though we do not merit it by our own deeds, yet by this sacrifice made once for all, we may feel already the effects of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: **Amen.**

