



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD (B)

Sunday 28th March 2021

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.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

For our prayers today you might like to begin in the garden (if you have one) or another room in your house, with a branch of something green in your hand!

Sign of the Cross

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

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: 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.

First Gospel

John 12:12-16

A great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the king of Israel!' And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as is written, 'Fear not, daughter of Sion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass's colt!' His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him.

If you have young children (and even if you don't!), it might be fun to process into your usual prayer space, waving branches and singing "Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising!" On arriving back inside:

Opening Prayer

L: 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.

A: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Passion Reading

Mark 15:1-39

First thing in the morning, the chief priests together with the elders and scribes – in short, the whole Sanhedrin – had their plan ready. They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him: "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered, "It is you who say it." And the chief priests brought many accusations against him. Pilate questioned him again: "Have you no reply at all? See how many accusations they are bringing against you!" But, to Pilate's amazement, Jesus made no further reply. At festival time Pilate used to release a prisoner for them, anyone they asked for. Now a man called Barabbas was then in prison with the rioters who had committed murder during the uprising. When the crowd went up and began to ask Pilate the customary favour, Pilate answered them "Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?" For he realised it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over. The chief priests, however, had incited the crowd to demand that he should release Barabbas for them instead. Then Pilate spoke again: "But in that case, what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews?" They shouted back, "Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Why? What harm has he done?" But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!" So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, having ordered Jesus to be scourged, handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together. They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And

they began saluting him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes. They enlisted a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull. They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it. Then they crucified him, and shared out his clothing, casting lots to decide what each should get. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The inscription giving the charge against him read: 'The King of the Jews.' And they crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said, "Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself: come down from the cross!" The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way. They said, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe." Even those who were crucified with him taunted him. When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood by heard this, they said "Listen, he is calling on Elijah." Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink, saying: "Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down." But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

All kneel and pause for a moment.

And the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he had died, and he said, "In truth this man was a son of God."

Reflection

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?

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!

If gathering as a family, perhaps now continue to discuss what this Gospel passage means to you. If alone, think about what key message you take from the Scriptures today.

Intercessions

L: Let us pray for deeper trust in Jesus, who loved us to the end. Let us pray for Pope Francis and the Church throughout the world, sharing in this prayer today. Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

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

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

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

A: 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 COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

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

A: 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.

L: 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 his sacrifice made once for all, we may feel already the effects of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

Before Spiritual Communion

L: 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.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Thanksgiving Psalm

A: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

L: 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.'

A: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

L: 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.

A: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

L: 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!

A: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

L: 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.

A: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray.

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.

A: Amen.

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

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!

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