

Sunday 28th March 2021

Palm Sunday

Please join us in worshipping 'together' wherever you are on Sundays at 10 am. However, if you can't use this material then, you can of course use it at any other time. We suggest that you prepare a suitable space for worship and have available a candle to light at the beginning and some suitable music to play at the end during the 'Offering of ourselves to God'

If you are joining in this service as a group, please designate one person as the leader reading the normal print with everyone joining in the text in bold type.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. **Amen**

Candle Lighting

A candle may be lit as a focus for worship during the service using the following words

Eternal Light shine in our hearts through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen

Hymn-

1
The royal banners forward go;
the cross shines forth in mystic glow;
where He in flesh, our flesh who made,
our sentence bore, our ransom paid:

2
There whilst he hung, his sacred side
by soldier's spear was opened wide,
to cleanse us in that precious flood
of water mingled with his blood.

5
To Thee, eternal Three in One,
let homage meet by all be done;
as by the cross thou dost restore,
so rule and guide us evermore. Amen.

3
Fulfilled is all that David told
In true prophetic song of old.
how God the sinner's king should be;
for God is reigning from the tree.

4
O tree of glory, tree most fair,
ordained those holy limbs to bear,
how bright in purple robe it stood,
the purple of a Saviour's blood.

Text: Venantius Fortunatus (520-609) trans. John Mason Neale (1818-1866) et al
Music: Percy Carter Buck (1871-1947)
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Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

A time of silence as we call to mind our sins and weaknesses, before we confess them to God.

Confession

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart
God will not despise. Let us admit to God the sin that always
confronts us

**Lord God, we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.**

We are sorry and repent.

Have mercy upon us according to your love.

**Wash us from our wrongdoing
and cleanse us from our sin.**

**Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lord have mercy. **Christ have mercy.** Lord have mercy

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins
and bring us to everlasting life Amen

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Gospel Reading – *Mark 11:1-11*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

Glory to you, O Lord

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

This is the Gospel of the Lord **Praise to you, O Christ**

Reflection

This morning we celebrate Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

What would we have seen if we had been there on that day: crowds of people from Jerusalem coming out to acclaim Jesus as King, an enormous mass demonstration with all the people shouting and waving palms?

If we had been there on the day, we may have seen something somewhat different. The account in St Mark's Gospel seems to suggest that it was the people who were travelling with Jesus who were doing the shouting and the waving, that is the disciples and Jesus' followers, pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem. Not quite the enormous crowds from Jerusalem.

But even if there weren't great crowds, Jesus' own actions were unusual. Pilgrims entered Jerusalem on foot not riding donkey's. By riding a donkey Jesus is revealing himself as Jerusalem's King. He is consciously enacting the words of Zechariah 9:9

“Daughter of Zion rejoice with all your heart shout in triumph, daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king is coming to you, his cause won, his victory gained, humble and mounted on a donkey On a colt the foal of a donkey.”

For Mark this is a significant event but it is significant because not only is Jesus revealing himself as King, but the daughters of Jerusalem do not come forth rejoicing and shouting in triumph.

Far from acclaiming Jesus the people of Jerusalem particularly the scribes and Pharisees are plotting his death. They are preparing to reject their King.

There is a sense in Mark that the rejection of Jesus by the Jews is what allows him to become the Messiah for the world and for him to be really identified as the son of God.

It is only at the point of death that there is a full realisation of who Jesus is, not by the Jews of Jerusalem, not by the disciples, not by any of the crowd who had accompanied Jesus but by the Roman centurion standing by the cross.

‘Truly this man was the son of God!’.

At the beginning of St Marks Gospel the evangelist tells us that he is writing the ‘Good news of Jesus Christ the Son of God’. It seems terrible to say that we have to come all that way and only by his death can Jesus really be seen to be the Son of God. hem.

If we follow Mark, we cannot bypass the cross and see it as an unfortunate incident on the way to the resurrection. Discipleship for Mark is based fairly and squarely on the cross.

At the time Mark was writing the Christians of Rome were undergoing persecution. Life was not easy they were suffering. Mark’s answer to the age-old question ‘why us?’ is that the rejection and persecution of the Christian community simply reflects the rejection and suffering of Christ. If they wish to share in the life and glory of the risen Christ, they should expect to identify with his suffering and persecution. For Mark being a Christian isn’t about having an easy life. If Christ suffered and he was the son of God, then how can we expect to avoid the suffering if we follow him.

In our lives we may not face outright rejection, persecution and execution. It is more likely for us to face indifference and charges of irrelevance. But is it irrelevant to believe that no one is outside the love of God, whatever their race colour, social status, sex, sexuality age and so on, or that God’s forgiveness is open to all people even those who have committed the most

heinous crimes? In his life Jesus was concerned with the tax collectors, the prostitutes, the sinners, the gentiles and the lepers all of whom were excluded in some way from the society of his day. Who are the equivalents in today's society? These people from the outskirts of society became Jesus followers. So there is good reason to believe that it them and their like who were accompanying Jesus as he entered Jerusalem. It was them who raised the shouts of Hosanna and waved branches on that first Palm Sunday. So it was as their King that Jesus died. Amen

Ian Fisher

Responsorial - Psalm 31:9-16

R My God, my God why have you forsaken me

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; *my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly. For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; * my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed. **R**

I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbours, a dismay to those of my acquaintance; * when they see me in the street they avoid me. I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; * I am as useless as a broken pot. **R**

For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; * they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life. But as for me, I have trusted in you, O Lord. * I have said, "You are my God. **R**

My times are in your hand; * rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Make your face to shine upon your servant, * and in your loving-kindness save me." **R**

Prayers of intercession

Please pray in the way that comes most naturally to you, either in silence or out loud we end with the Lord's Prayer

Traditional

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. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Modern

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Thanksgiving

We give you thanks and praise, Father in heaven, through Jesus Christ, your only Son, our Lord. Through him you created the world. Through his word the universe is sustained. Father in heaven **we give you thanks and praise.**

Through him we come near to you, with sincere heart and sure faith. Because of the death of Jesus we come into the holy place. Father in heaven **we give you thanks and praise.**

By his own blood he entered once and for all into the holy place. He obtained eternal salvation for us. He is our perfect sacrifice. Father in heaven **we give you thanks and praise.**

So we come by that living way, the new way he opened for us, to receive mercy and grace, and to join with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest. *cf Hebrews 1.3; 4.15,16; 9.12; 10.19-22*

Hymn Samuel Grossman (1624-83)

1
My song is love unknown,
my Saviour's love to me,
love to the loveless shown,
that they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake
my Lord should take, frail flesh, and die?

2
He came from his blest throne,
salvation to bestow;
but sin made blind, and none,
the longed-for Christ would know.
But O, my Friend, my Friend indeed,
who at my need his life did spend'

3
Sometimes they strew his way,
and his sweet praises sing;
resounding all the day
hosannas to their King.
Then 'Crucify!' is all their breath,
and for his death, they thirst and cry.

4
Why, what hath my Lord done?
What makes this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run,
he gave the blind their sight.
Sweet injuries! yet they at these,
themselves displease, and 'gainst him rise.

5
They rise, and needs will have,
my dear Lord made away;
a murderer they save,
the Prince of Life they slay.
Yet cheerful he to suff'ring goes,
that he his foes, from thence might free.

6
Here might I stay and sing:
no story so divine;
never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine!
This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise
I all my days, could gladly spend.

Words: Samuel Crossman (c.1624-1684) © Public Domain

Music: John Ireland (1879-1962)

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Offering ourselves to God

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

After the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester

Soul of Christ, sanctify me, body of Christ, save me, blood of Christ, inebriate me, water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear me: hide me within your wounds and never let me be separated from you. From the wicked enemy defend me, in the hour of my death, call me and bid me come to you, so that with your saints I may praise you for ever and ever. Amen

Anima Christi (14th century)

Music

A suitable piece of music may be played to enable reflection on the offering we are making

Blessing

May Christ crucified draw us to himself, to find in him a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sins forgiven; and may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with now and always **Amen** ...

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