

SUNDAY OF THE PASSION/PALM SUNDAY April 2, 2023

THE PROCESSION WITH PALMS

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest!

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: MATTHEW 21:1-11 *Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem*

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

'Tell the daughter of Zion,

Look, your king is coming to you,

humble, and mounted on a donkey,

and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

'Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

BLESSING OF PALMS

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Let us go forth in peace,

In the name of the Lord.

The people receive palms and wave them during the hymn

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

**All glory, laud and honour, to you, redeemer, king,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.
You are the king of Israel and David's royal Son,
Now in the Lord's name coming, our King and Blessed One.**

**The company of angels are praising you on high;
Creation and all mortals in chorus make reply.
The multitude of pilgrims with palms before you went.
Our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present.**

**To you, before your Passion, they sang their hymns of praise.
To you, now high exulted, our melody we raise.
Their praises you accepted; accept the prayers we bring,
Great Author of all goodness, our good and gracious King.**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest.!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

ISAIAH 50:4-9a

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens— wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

HYMN "Go to Dark Gethsemane," stanza 1

**Go to dark Gethsemane, all who feel the tempter's pow'r;
Your Redeemer's conflict see; watch with him one bitter hour;
Turn not from his griefs away; learn from Jesus Christ to pray.**

THE PASSION ACCORDING TO MATTHEW MATTHEW 27:11-54

Pilate Questions Jesus

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?' But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Barabbas or Jesus?

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two

do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'

Pilate Hands Jesus over to Be Crucified

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' Then the people as a whole answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

HYMN "Go to Dark Gethsemane" stanza 2

**Follow to the judgment hall; view the Lord of life arraigned;
O the worm-wood and the gall! O the pangs his soul sustained!
Shun not suff'ring, shame, or loss; learn of him to bear the cross.**

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself!

If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.’ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, 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 trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, “I am God’s Son.” ’ The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

The Death of Jesus

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.’ Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, ‘Truly this man was God’s Son!’

HYMN "GO TO DARK GETHSEMANE," stanza 3

**Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb; there adoring at his feet,
Mark the miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete:
"It is finished!" hear him cry; learn of Jesus Christ to die.**

SERMON

Period of Silence

HYMN JESUS, I WILL PONDER NOW

**Jesus, I will ponder now on Your holy Passion;
Let Your Spirit now endow me for meditation.
Grant that I in love and faith may the image cherish
Of Your suffering, pain and death that I may not perish.**

**Make me see Your great distress, anguish, and affliction,
Bonds and stripes and wretchedness and your crucifixion;
Make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails, did wound You,
How You died for those, O God, who with thorns had crowned You.**

**Let, O Lord, not thus alone make me see your Passion,
But its cause to me make known and its termination.
For I also and my sin wrought your deep affliction;
This the shameful cause has been of Your crucifixion.**

**Let me view Your pain and loss with repentant grieving,
Nor prepare again your cross by unholy living.
May I give you love for love! Hear me, O my Saviour,
That I may in heav'n above sing your praise forever.**

THE CELTIC CREED

**We believe in God above us, maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon, of water and earth, of male and female.**

**We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ, the word made flesh,
born of a woman, servant of the poor, tortured and nailed to a tree.
A man of sorrows, he died forsaken.**

He descended into the earth to the place of death.

On the third day he rose from the tomb.

**He ascended into heaven, to be everywhere present,
and His kingdom will come on earth.**

**We believe in God within us, the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church, Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of resurrection and of eternal life. Amen.**

PRAYERS

**Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer our prayers for the church, the
world, and all in need.**

a brief silence

**We pray for the church, called to follow Jesus in the way of the cross. Make
us unflinching servants of the gospel. Be our strength in hardships we may
encounter as we confront the forces of injustice and practice radical
compassion.**

Merciful God, receive our prayer.

We pray for the earth and all its inhabitants and environments. Train us to recognize your divine presence and goodness in the world around us. Rouse in us a reverence for creation and make us wise stewards of its resources, Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for those in positions of authority and power, and for the peoples they are meant to nurture and protect. Call their hearts and imaginations to works of compassion and healing. We pray for the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Palestine, and all places where corruption and violence rules.

We pray merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for all those who look to you for mercy and consolation. Uphold those who feel abandoned or betrayed, or have been wrongly accused. Hear our prayers for those whom we love and whose needs we know: Wayne and Yvonne, Bryan, Harold and Margaret, Ingrid And others we hold before you in our hearts. Console us with the promise that everything can be made new.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for Christians of all denominations around the world who prepare to observe this week of journey to the cross. Reveal to us again the earth shaking power of humble service, unmerited forgiveness and sacrificial love. We pray also for our Muslim neighbours as they observe the fast of Ramadan. Lead us all from death to life, and to the peace you desire for all people and all creation.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We remember those who have died and have been commended into your hands. Remember us when we have come into your kingdom, and prepare a place for us with you in paradise, merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers we bring on behalf of a world in need, for we pray in the name of Jesus whose walk of faith we follow. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

The offering will now be received and may God bless the gifts of your life

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Let us pray.

Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation. Now we gather at your feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Saviour Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

We pray, ***Come, Holy Spirit. Come, Holy Spirit.***

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

We pray, ***Come, Holy Spirit. Come, Holy Spirit.***

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.

Forgive us our trespasses

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

This is food and drink for the journey. Take and be filled.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY COMMUNION

you are invited to eat your bread and drink your wine as you hear the words

“the body of Christ given for you” “the blood of Christ shed for you”

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us always in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life. Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

You are children of God,
anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey.
Almighty God, motherly, majestic, and mighty, + bless you this day
and always. **Amen**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace into this Holy Week.
Journey to the cross and await the power of the resurrection.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE