

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

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Newsletter for the week of 24th March 2024

Sunday Readings Cycle B

Weekday Readings Cycle II

Readings for Palm & Passion Sunday Isaiah 50:4-7; Ps21; Philippians 2:6-11 Mark 14:1-15:47

Saturday 23rd March 5.30pm 1st MASS of PALM & PASSION SUNDAY- Blessing of Palms in C. Room

Sunday 24th March 10.30am MASS of PALM & PASSION SUNDAY - Blessing of Palms in C. Room

Monday 25th March

Tuesday 26th March

Wednesday 27th March 11.30am Spy Wednesday Mass of Holy Week

Thursday 28th March 7.00pm MAUNDY THURSDAY: MASS of the LORD'S SUPPER

Friday 29th March 3.00pm GOOD FRIDAY: CELEBRATION of the LORD'S PASSION

Saturday 30th March 8.00pm EASTER VIGIL MASS

Sunday 31st March 10.30am EASTER DAY MASS

Easter Vigil Readings: Exodus 14:15-15:1; Isaiah 54:5-14; Ezekiel 36:16-28; Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 16:1-7

Easter Day Readings: Acts 10:34,37-43; Psalm 117; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; John 20:1-9

(Readers for Good Friday's Passion readings Easter Vigil Readings should collect booklets from the sacristy)

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday 28th March 7.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper with procession to the Altar of Repose and with Communion under both kinds if it is possible. Watching at the Altar of Repose until 9pm

Good Friday 29th March 3.00pm Solemn Liturgy: Reading of the Passion, Solemn Intercessions, Veneration of the Cross, Holy Communion. Collection for the *Holy Places*

Easter Vigil 30th March 8.00pm: Paschal Fire outside & Candle brought in a darkened church with progressive lighting of congregation's candle; then "Exultet" Hymn sung. 3 O.T readings, one N.T reading & Gospel, Blessing of water with Renewal Baptismal promises. Liturgy of the Eucharist as normal. *Easter Clergy* Collection. Outgoing Collection for the *Holy Places*.

Easter Day 31st March 10.30am: Mass as normal with renewal of Baptismal Promises. *Easter Clergy* Collection. Outgoing Collection for the *Holy Places*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Last Sunday £240.44

Sunday Tea Sales £23.80

NEW SETS of ENVELOPES READY

Sets of Envelopes to start on Sunday 7th April are available. Some extra sets are available and if you would like a set please take one. Using envelopes for your offering doesn't commit you to giving any set amount or an offering that has a *Gift Aid tax* boost. It's a reminder that what you give is: "Offering to God and to work of his Church."

HOLY PLACES COLLECTION

More than ever this year with the destruction in Gaza & the West Bank we should try to give generous support for the *Holy Places*. It's not just to keep the fabric of the Holy Land shrines maintained but also to keep the Church communities alive and to survive in the land during this catastrophe of suffering where our Lord himself walked.

SACRAMENT of RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (the Making of a Contrite Confession & the Receiving of God's Forgiveness) can be sought after Maundy Thursday Mass, Good Friday 11.00 to 1.00pm and after the afternoon Solemn Liturgy. There is **none** on Holy Saturday.

RETURNING to NORMAL AFTER THE PANDEMIC.

The recent government statistics (UKHSA) issued weekly has shown a falling away of both the Covid19 & Flu winter wave of infections and could indicate the effective end for us of the Covid 19 pandemic. It is a good moment to withdraw any remaining restrictions of social distancing and bring back the human contact in the handshake in the sign of peace - and when possible Communion under both kinds.

GOOD FRIDAY FAST DAY Over & above the normal Friday *Abstinence* it's a day of *Fasting* for able-bodied adults- usually understood as only one full meal.

GET IN TOUCH QUICKLY -IF YOU ARE SICK If you or your relative enters Macclesfield Hospital let Fr. Peter know as soon as possible tel: 01625 423576 or by e-mail st.edmacc@gmail.com

DIARY of EVENTS

-Thurs 28th March Christ the King & All Hallows Schs. close.-Mon 8th April Christ the King & All Hallows reopen

-Sun 31st March start of B.S.T- clocks forward 1hr

-Sun 28th April Appeal for *Network for a Better World*.

How old is Palm Sunday?



WIKIPEDIA: IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

victory of martyrs, Jesus himself being the martyr par excellence.

But how long have Christians included palms in their liturgical commemoration of the beginning of the Holy Week? According to records, by the 8th century the liturgy of Passion Sunday was already quite elaborate. People would take their palms to a first church where the liturgy would begin, would walk in procession to a second church where the blessing of the palms took place, then returned to the first church where finally three deacons would read (chant, actually) the Passion. Of course, consequent renovations of the liturgy would modify this celebration throughout the centuries, finally arriving to the form used today.

But there is an even older document in which we already find Christian communities celebrating Palm Sunday around the 4th century in this very same way (that is, going in procession from one church to the other). This document, the famous *Itinerarium Egeriae* ("The Travels of Egeria," also known as *Peregrinatio at Loca Sancta*, "Pilgrimages to the Holy Places"), is a long letter addressed to a circle of women "back home."

Egeria's identity has been widely disputed. Some early editors of Egeria's work identify her with St. Sylvia of Aquitaine. Some claim she was, rather, a nun living in Gaul during the reign of Justinian, since she addresses her account to her "sorores" (Latin for "sisters"), but it is also known the term is popularly used by Christians to refer to their Christian acquaintances. It might be the case she was a lay woman too, since this kind of pilgrimage was not uncommon by then. Moreover, the fact that Egeria was able to go on such a long and expensive trip (and her good writing and extensive knowledge) has led some scholars to think she might have been an upper-class wealthy woman of her day. Her writings describe her journeys around the Holy Land, beginning in Mount Sinai and ending in Constantinople, with a three-year-long stay in Jerusalem.

It is here, in Jerusalem, where Egeria saw these early celebrations of Palm Sunday. We reproduce her account here:

"On the next day, that is, the Lord's Day, which begins the Paschal week, and which they call here the Great Week, when all the customary services from cockcrow until morning have taken place in the Anastasis and at the Cross, they proceed on the morning of the Lord's Day according to custom to the greater church, which is called the martyrrium (...) It is called the martyrrium because it is in Golgotha behind the Cross, where the Lord suffered. When all that is customary has been observed in the great church, and before the dismissal is made, the archdeacon lifts his voice and says first: "Throughout the whole week, beginning from to-morrow, let us all assemble in the martyrrium, that is, in the great church, at the ninth hour." Then he lifts his voice again, saying: "Let us all be ready to-day in Eleona at the seventh hour." So when the dismissal has been made in the great church, that is, the martyrrium, the bishop is escorted with hymns to the Anastasis, and after all things that are customary on the Lord's day have been done there, after the dismissal from the martyrrium, every one hastens home to eat, that all may be ready at the beginning of the seventh hour in the church in Eleona, on the Mount of Olives, where is the cave in which the Lord was wont to teach. And when the ninth hour approaches they go up with hymns to the Imbomon, that is, to the place whence the Lord ascended into heaven, and there they sit down, for all the people are always bidden to sit when the bishop is present; the deacons alone always stand. Hymns and antiphons suitable to the day and to the place are said, interspersed with lections and prayers. And as the eleventh hour approaches, the passage from the Gospel is read, where the children, carrying branches and palms, met the Lord, saying "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," and the bishop immediately rises, and all the people with him, and they all go on foot from the top of the Mount of Olives, all the people going before him with hymns and antiphons, answering one to another: "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." And all the children in the neighbourhood, even those who are too young to walk, are carried by their parents on their shoulders, all of them bearing branches, some of palms and some of olives, and thus the bishop is escorted in the same manner as the Lord was of old."



THE *Wednesday* WORD



Encountering Christ The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

1

Read

The Gospel for Sunday 24th March 2024

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

The Gospel for the Procession at the Beginning of Palm Sunday Mass

When they were approaching Jerusalem, in sight of Bethphage and Bethany, close by the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go off to the village facing you, and as soon as you enter it you will find a tethered colt that no one has yet ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you, 'What are you doing?' say, 'The Master needs it and will send it back here directly.'" They went off and found a colt tethered near a door in the open street. As they untied it, some men standing there said, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They gave the answer Jesus had told them, and the men let them go. Then they took the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on its back, and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, others greenery which they had cut in the fields. And those who went in front and those who followed were all shouting, "Hosanna! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest heavens!"

Taken from Mark 11:1-10 *Palm Sunday of the Lords Passion, Year B*

2

Reflect

After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

The procession of palms is joyful and sad at the same time. It is the triumphant entry of the Messiah as King into his holy city. The crowds were celebrating and singing the psalm for the festival as they entered the city, not knowing that they were in fact welcoming the Messiah who ushers in the Kingship of God. Often in Mark the actors in the story do not realise the full significance of their actions, as when the Roman soldiers later mock Jesus as King, not knowing that that is what he truly is. As Christians we believe that the Kingship of God was brought to fulfilment by the death and resurrection of Jesus. The drama, which begins with this entry into Jerusalem, ends with the story of the empty tomb. John tells us that it was only afterwards, when Jesus had risen from the dead, that the disciples realised the significance of the event. The resurrection at last made sense of everything, showed everything in a new light. John also tells us that this was the humble king of the prophecy, riding not on a triumphant war-horse but on a humble donkey.

As someone watching the drama of Holy Week unfold, how will you journey with the Lord in these days?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, joy, forgiveness, hope or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is PRAISE!

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 24th March 2024**



1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

The Song of the Servant

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.



In the Book of Isaiah there are four songs, of which this is the third, sung by a mysterious Servant of the Lord. It is not clear who this Servant is, but he is totally dedicated to the service of the Lord, a disciple who listens devotedly. Through suffering, this Servant brings to fulfilment the salvation which the Lord intends for Israel and for the world. Jesus saw himself in terms of this Servant, and the four songs feature throughout the liturgy of Holy Week.

As Christians we read the "I" who is the Servant as Jesus. Read the reading again slowly to help you share more deeply in the Passion of the Lord.



2nd Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Raised High through Suffering

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names, so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



This hymn was probably not written by Paul himself, but is likely to have been a very early Christian hymn taken up by Paul into his letter to the Church in Philippi. It celebrates the triumph of Jesus through his selflessness. The assertions at the end are staggering. The hymn claims for Jesus the titles and the worship which are due only to God. What is more, this acknowledgement of Jesus' authority does not detract from the glory of God, but is precisely 'to the glory of God the Father'. This is perhaps the fullest statement in Paul of the divine glory of Jesus, a glory won by his humiliation in death.

Why is humility important? How do we follow Jesus, the humble servant?



The triumph of Jesus through his selflessness.



The Wednesday Word Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**