

Palm Sunday

FutureChurch Online Liturgy of the Word

Commemoration of Jesus' Entrance into Jerusalem

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of God who is Mother and Father to us
In the name of Jesus, our brother and our friend
In the name of the Spirit who nourishes and guides us

ALL: AMEN

Greeting

Leader: May the peace of Jesus, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you,

ALL: And also with you.

Introductory Remarks

Leader: My dear friends,
Since the beginning of Lent we have been preparing,
By works of love and self-sacrifice
To celebrate Christ's paschal mystery.
Today, we enter into this celebration of Holy Week
In union with the whole Church throughout the world
and remember Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem,
To complete his work: to suffer, die, and rise again.

Let us recall this entry with lively faith
And follow in Christ's footsteps,
That uniting ourselves to him in our suffering,
We may also share in resurrection and new life.

Gospel:

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus and the disciples drew near Jerusalem
and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives,
Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them,
“Go into the village opposite you,
and immediately you will find an a donkey tethered,
and her colt with her.
Untie them and bring them here to me.
And if anyone should say anything to you, reply,
‘The Rabbi has need of them.’
And we will send them back at once.”

This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet
might be fulfilled:

*Say to daughter Zion,
“Behold, Your Sovereign comes to you,
meek and riding on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”*

So, the disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed.
They brought the donkey and the colt,
And after they laid their cloaks on the animals,
Jesus sat upon them and road toward the city.

The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road,
while others cut branches from the trees
and lay them on the road.

The crowds preceding him and those following
kept crying out and saying:

“Hosanna to the Heir of the House of David;
blessed is the one who comes in the name of God;
hosanna in the highest.”

As Jesus entered Jerusalem,
the whole city was shaken and asked, “Who is this?”
And the crowds replied,
“This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Litany and Procession with Palms

Leader: Let us acclaim Christ Jesus, the One who comes in the Name of God

Participants are invited to wave their "palms" (paper palms, branches, flowers, last year's palms, or towels, or whatever they have) as they respond at home:

Psalmist: Our response is: **"Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the Highest!"**

We thank you, O God,
For you are good, and your mercy endures for ever!
R: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the Highest!

With you at our side, O God,
Why should we fear? What can cause us harm?
R: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the Highest!

With your help, O God,
Even though darkness surrounds us, we shall overcome!
R: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the Highest!

You, O God, are our strength and our courage.
You have become our salvation!
R: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the Highest!

Open to us the gates of justice, O God,
And we will enter them, giving you thanks and praise.
R: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the Highest!

You give us light and life, O God,
And we are joyous in your presence.
R: Hosanna to God, Hosanna in the Highest!

Adapted from Psalm 118

Opening Prayer

Leader:

Let us pray.

Merciful God,

As we journey through Holy Week,

You invite us to remember Jesus' passion and death.

We bring our own suffering

and the suffering of our world during this time of pandemic

to you and to our contemplation of the Paschal mystery.

Stir up steadfast faith and trust within us, especially at this time,

That we may walk the way of the cross with Christ

And so share in the glory of resurrection,

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, our liberation and our hope,

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

God for ever and ever.

ALL:

AMEN

LITURGY OF THE WORD

****Texts have been adapted for inclusive/expansive language****

First Reading

Lector: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah,

The Most High has given me
a well-trained tongue,
that I might know how to speak a word
that will rouse the weary.

Morning after morning
God opens my ear that I may hear;
and I have not rebelled,
I have not turned back.

I gave my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who would humiliate me;
my face I did not shield
from insults and spitting.

The Holy One is my help,
therefore I am not disgraced;
I have set my face like flint,
knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

The Word of God

All: Thanks be to God

Psalm

Psalmist: Our response is "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**"
ALL: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Psalmist: We are despised by those who spurn us.
They shake their hands and say:
You trusted the Most High. Let the Most High save you.
If you are God's delight, let God deliver you.
R. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Indeed, evil surrounds us
Like a pack of wolves closing in.
Ready to attack, evil wants to tear us apart.
R. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Hostility and hatred
Strip the last shred of human dignity from us
And count on our destruction.
But you, O God, be close to us; hasten to our side.
R. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

We will tell the people what you have done.
We will praise you among your people:
"All who revere the Holy, praise our gracious God."
"All you children of the Most High, give thanks to God."
R. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Second Reading

Lector: A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians,

Christ Jesus, though he was in the image of God,
did not regard equality with God
something to be grasped.

But instead became completely empty,
and took on the image of oppressed humankind:
Born into the human condition,
Found in the likeness of a human being.
Jesus was thus humbled --
obediently accepting death,
even death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted Christ
and gave Jesus the name
which is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue proclaim the glory of God.

ALL: The word of God
Thanks be to God

Gospel

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus stood before the governor, Pontius Pilate, who questioned him,
“Are you the king of the Jews?”
Jesus said, “You say so.”

And when Jesus was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer.
Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?”
But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now on the occasion of the feast
the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd
one prisoner whom they wished.
And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.

So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them,
“Which one do you want me to release to you,
Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?”
For he knew that it was out of envy
that they had handed him over.

While Pilate was still seated on the bench, his wife sent him a message,
“Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of
him.”

But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and put Jesus to
death.

So when Pilate asked them, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”
They answered, “Barabbas!”

Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?”
They all said, “Let him be crucified!”
But he replied, “Why? What evil has he done?”
They only shouted the louder, “Let him be crucified!”

When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead,
he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying,
“I am innocent of this man’s blood. Look to it yourselves.”
And the whole people said in reply, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

Then he released Barabbas to them,
but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus inside the praetorium
and gathered the whole cohort around him.
They stripped off his clothes and wrapped him in a scarlet military cloak.
Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand.
And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head.
And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak,
dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him.

As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon;
whom they pressed into service to carry the cross.

And when they came to a place called Golgotha — which means Place of the Skull —,
they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall, which he refused.

After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots;
then they sat down and kept watch over him there.
And they placed over his head the written charge against him:
This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.

Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left.
Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying,
"You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days,
save yourself, if you are God's Own, and come down from the cross!"

Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said,
"He saved others; he cannot save himself.
So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now,
and we will believe in him.
He trusted in God; let God deliver him now if God wants him. For he said, 'I am God's Own.'"
The revolutionaries who were crucified with Jesus also kept abusing him in the same way.

From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land
until three in the afternoon, when Jesus cried out in a loud voice,
"Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Some of the bystanders who heard it said, "This one is calling for Elijah."
Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge;
he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink.

But the rest said, ‘Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him.’”

Once again, Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of holy ones who had fallen asleep were raised.

The centurion and the cohort who were standing guard, were terror-stricken and all that was happening, and said, “Clearly this was God’s own!”

A group of women were present, looking on from a distance. These were the same women who had followed Jesus from Galilee as ministers to him. Among them were Mary of Magdala; Mary, the mother of James and Joseph; and the mother of Zebedee’s children.

The Good News of Our Salvation

ALL: Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

– CWP Video: www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/04052020

FAITH SHARING

Questions for Shared Reflection:

1. *Beginning her reflection, Jessica Coblenz says, “Crises have a way of unraveling us—our presumptions, our expectations, our plans. Out of nowhere, they can suspend us in a helpless state of unknowing.” **What unraveling are you experiencing in the midst of this pandemic?***
2. *Today’s gospel and our preacher both invite us to enter into and sit with others in the grief of Palm Sunday: Jesus’ own suffering, as well as the suffering of those closest to him. **How have you been attentive to your own grief at this time? Whom or what are you grieving? With whom are you being invited to grieve?***

CONCLUDING RITES

Closing Prayer

Leader: Nourished by God's word and strengthened by this community,
Let us pray together,

ALL: Loving God, Holy One,

Your desire is for our wholeness and well-being.

We hold in tenderness and prayer the collective suffering of our world at this time.

We grieve precious lives lost and vulnerable lives threatened.

We ache for ourselves and our neighbors, standing before an uncertain future.

We pray: may love, not fear, go viral. Inspire our leaders to discern and choose wisely, aligned with the common good.

Help us to practice social distancing and reveal to us new and creative ways to come together in spirit and in solidarity.

**Call us to profound trust in your faithful presence,
You, the God who does not abandon,**

**You, the Holy One, breathing within us, breathing among us,
breathing around us, in our beautiful yet wounded world. AMEN**

"Prayer during a Pandemic" by Sr. Chris Koellhoffer, IHM

Leader: And may the God of hope fill us with every comfort and joy in believing.
May the peace of Christ abound in our hearts and minds.
and may the Holy Spirit gift and guide us
(making Sign of the Cross) now and forever,

ALL: AMEN