



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 20th March 2016 - Palm Sunday

1 Relax & Remember

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. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably 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.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for Sunday 20th March 2016 - Jesus Enters Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-40)

Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. Now when he was near Bethphage and Bethany, close by the Mount of Olives as it is called, he sent two of the disciples, telling them, "Go off to the village opposite, and as you enter it you will find a tethered colt that no one has yet ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you are to say this, 'The Master needs it.'" The messengers went off and found everything just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owner said, "Why are you untying that colt?" and they answered, "The Master needs it." So they took the colt to Jesus, and throwing their garments over its back they helped Jesus on to it. As he moved off, people spread their cloaks in the road, and now, as he was approaching the downward slope of the Mount of Olives, the whole group of disciples joyfully began to praise God at the top of their voices for all the miracles they had seen. They cried out: "Blessings on the King who comes, in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens!" Some Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Master, check your disciples," but he answered, "I tell you, if these keep silence the stones will cry out."



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

This reading announces the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem at the end of his long journey. In Luke the cheers are concentrated not merely on the Kingdom, but on the King himself, who comes in the name of the LORD. Their cries of the people echo (and excel) those of the angels at the nativity, 'Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heaven!' For Luke, Jerusalem is the hinge: it is the turning-point where the gospel ends and the Acts of the Apostles begins, and the Good News is spread to the ends of the earth. During the previous ten chapters of the Gospel all the concentration has been on this journey up to Jerusalem, where Jesus is to suffer and so rise again. There has been an air of tragedy about the journey: Jesus' death has been constantly in mind, for it has been stressed that no prophet can perish away from Jerusalem. As Jesus enters the city, he weeps over its refusal to accept him, just as he had done earlier on his journey (13:34-35) and as he will do as he leaves Jerusalem for execution.

How do I welcome the Lord into my life? Do I constantly recognise his presence with me?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 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. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 20th March 2016



First Reading: *The Song of the Servant*

Isaiah 50:4-7

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 to God. Through suffering, this Servant brings to fulfilment the salvation which the Lord intends for Israel and for the world. Jesus saw himself in the terms of the language used of this Servant, and the four songs in Isaiah feature throughout the liturgy of Holy Week.

How can I be more positive about bearing suffering for the sake of Christ?

Second Reading: *Raised High through Suffering*

Philippians 2:6-11

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 part of the letter is a hymn; it was probably not written by Paul himself, but quoted by him as he writes to the Philippians. It is a very early Christian hymn. It celebrates the triumph of Jesus through his selflessness. The assertions at the end of the hymn 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 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 himself, a glory which is won by Jesus' humiliation in death.

What does this reading tell us about Jesus and what it is for us to have 'the mind' of Jesus (see Philippians 2:1-5)?

“To the glory of God the Father.”

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