



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 29nd March 2026
Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion – Matthew 21:1-11

Relax

Make the Sign of the Cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. Then read the Gospel — preferably aloud and slowly — paying attention to any words that stand out to you.



Read

This Sunday's Gospel : JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM



When they were near Jerusalem and had come in sight of Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village facing you, and you will immediately find a tethered donkey and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, 'The Master needs them and will send them back directly.'" This took place to fulfill the prophecy: "Say to the daughter of Zion: look, your king comes to you: he is humble, he rides on a donkey and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." So the disciples went out and did as Jesus had told them. They brought the donkey and the colt, then they laid their cloaks on their backs and he sat on them. Great crowds of people spread their cloaks on the road, while others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in his path. The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed were all shouting: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heavens!" And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil. "Who is this?" people asked, and the crowds answered, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Did any words or phrases stand out to you in the Gospel? If so, take a few moments to meditate on them.

Reflect

Now read the Gospel again and consider what the Lord might be saying to you, or asking of you, through it. Then continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection...



Today's liturgy concentrates on two very different events, the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as Messianic King and the events of a few days later which culminated in his agonising and shameful death. This seeming end-point was to be reversed by the explosion of new life in the Resurrection after three days, an explosion which constituted God's vindication of Jesus' loving obedience and the affirmation that it has overcome and wiped out the sin of Adam, human sin. How much time did Jesus spend in Jerusalem? The Gospel of John recounts four separate visits to Jerusalem, whereas Mark (and Matthew and Luke, who follow Mark's outline) compresses all Jesus' Jerusalem ministry into one visit, inaugurated by the solemn entry, as narrated in the gospel we hear today before the procession with palms. This event is recounted by the evangelists in the light of their fuller understanding of Jesus after the Resurrection. We see the colourful, festal atmosphere of crowds going up to Jerusalem, waving palm branches as banners in their enthusiasm and singing as they march. Jesus and his disciples join in. But it may be only later that the significance of this event was grasped: this entry was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah about the Messiah coming into his inheritance, to complete his God-given mission and to proclaim peace to the nations. Matthew especially, writing for a community steeped in Judaism, actually quotes the prophecy and also the psalm-verse about 'him who comes in the name of the Lord'. He stresses that Jesus is this Son of David, whose eschatological kingship is about to be established. **Next week is known as Holy Week: how and when will you take time to listen to God and grow in holiness?**

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

Rest

Now call to mind the Lord's love for you, remembering that through this scripture the Lord is truly present. Then silently and prayerfully listen for God's voice and rest in God's love.



**Respond
&
Request**

Thank God for any insight you may have received, and respond by asking the Holy Spirit to bless you with a spiritual gift or help you to grow in a particular fruit of the Spirit. You might pray for wisdom, courage, faithfulness, self-control, patience, generosity, joy, kindness, love, peace, faith, chastity - or another grace - to help you live out your faith this week.



Remember

This Wednesday's words for our families are **HOLY WEEK**
 (To see the Family Version, please visit: wednesdayword.org)



As you pray for your loved ones, please remember to pray for the Church and for the families connected to our schools.

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.



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; he is 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.

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 hymn was probably not written by Paul himself, but taken up by him and placed into his letter 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, and it is won by his humiliation in death.

What would it be like to meet Jesus, a human being, yet divine? How would I react?

“ **To the glory of God the Father.** ”

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