

Palm Sunday

Lectionary readings for Sunday, 5 April 2020

Matthew 21: 1 - 11

Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey

Philippians 2: 5 - 11

Imitating Christ's humility

Reflection

Everything is fast moving at the moment, the reversal of normal political thinking, the new prescriptions about behaviour, the anxieties about the future, and painful separations from those we love and are anxious about. A week can seem a very long time. Our world seems to change day by day, and we are very uncertain of how our lives will be from day to day. In this uncertainty it seems a long time before we can plan for the future

Palm Sunday is the beginning of Holy week, probably the most significant week in the Christian calendar, and it ends on Easter Day. That is a week that turned the world upside down. It began on Palm Sunday with cheering crowds believing that the Messiah was here to free them from the Romans, and ended with Easter Day, when that defeated and crucified so called Messiah revealed Himself His frightened disciples as the Risen Lord. He changed

them, and has gone on changing men and women by that Risen presence, and through His suffering and death creating a new humanity.

Holy week, as a whole, is also referred to as 'The Passion.' That is a strange word. What does it mean? Passion, in normal language is deep and strong emotion, we are passionate about some things that matter to us, we exhibit passion in rage and anger, and it enables us to be destructive, or to fight for a cause of injustice in a sacrificial way. We feel passionate when we fall in love, and that leads us into close committed relationships that become the most important relationships in our lives, partners, husbands and wives, parents, and the depth of family ties and friendships. These passions cause our lives to change and call for the deepest sacrifices and commitments.

'The passion of Jesus', was His commitment to the world, a commitment of the deepest love, suffering love, and the sacrifice of Himself on the cross to redeem us and save the world. That passion draws us to Him, and enables us to be committed to Him and the world, our brothers and sisters whom we love in His name. That passion in our world now can motivate us to see that we remain united to one another, and build our society again to be a better place. Or we destroy it all, if we forget that we belong

together. We have to live at the moment separated from all but our closest relationship. We cannot physically gather together for worship or friendship groups, and it is all the more important that we do not forget others, and care for them remotely. We see the sacrifice of so many working in health and social care, in essential services to provide what we need. We are more aware of our dependence on others for our lives. We are aware of all what that means, and also of our dependence on the Risen Christ to strengthen and enable us to survive and care for one another. Let us be the disciples who know His Risen presence in the world, and are passionate about our commitment The Good news of the Gospel.

Let us travel together this week, acknowledging Christ as King, sharing His suffering, and the suffering around us, and experiencing the joy of Resurrection.

Prayer STF 795 Saviour of the World

Jesus, Saviour of the world,
Come to us in your mercy:
We look to you to save and help us.

**By your cross and your life laid down,
You set your people free:
We look to you to save and help us.**

When they were ready to perish, you saved your disciples:

We look to you to come to our help.

In the greatness of your mercy, loose us from our chains,

forgive the sins of all your people.

Make yourself known as our Saviour and mighty deliverer;

Save and help us that we may praise you.

Come now and dwell with us, Lord Jesus Christ:

Hear our prayer and be with us always.

And when you come in your glory:

make us to be one with you

And to share the life of your kingdom.

From Common Worship

We lift to God our world in its need

Those suffering from Corvid 19

Those working in health services to bring healing and hope

Those working to maintain society with food and essentials, supplying heat and power, maintaining order and wellbeing

Those who are anxious and afraid, those mourning loved ones and caring for others

Young people disturbed by the changes to their lives and uncertain about their futures

For ourselves that we might be faithful.

O God, holy and eternal, you permit us to enter into the fellowship of Jesus' suffering, by which He conquered sin and death. May we celebrate the remembrance of His passion, and accept the cross as His disciples, and fulfil your will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Glennys Bamford



Hymn for Palm Sunday (StF 277)

My song is love unknown,
my Saviour's love to me,
love to the loveless shown,
that they might lovely be.

O who am I,
that for my sake
my Lord should take
frail flesh and die.

He came from his blest throne,
salvation to bestow;
but they made strange, and none
the long-for Christ would know.

But O my friend,
my friend indeed,
who at my need
his life did spend!

Sometimes they strew his way,
and his sweet praises sing;
resounding all the day
Hosannas to their King.

Then 'Crucify!'
is all their breath,
and for his death
they thirst and cry.

Why, what has my Lord done?
What makes this rage and spite?

He made the lame to run,
he gave the blind their sight.

Sweet injuries!
Yet they at these
themselves displease,
an 'gainst him rise.

They rise, and needs must have
my dear Lord made away;
a murderer they save,
the Prince of Life they slay.

Yet cheerful he
to suffering goes,
that he his foes
from thence might free.

In life no house, no home,
my Lord on earth might have;
in death, no friendly tomb
but what a stranger gave.

What may I say?
Heaven was his home;
but mine the tomb
wherein he lay.

Here might I stay and sing,
no story so divine:
never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine!

This is my Friend,
in whose sweet praise
I all my days
could gladly spend.