

Service for Week 18th -24th March 2024

Palm Sunday By Chaplain Andy.

Opening Prayer



Lord Jesus Christ on this coming Palm Sunday we remember how you entered Jerusalem to shouts of joy and celebration. But we remember too how quickly that welcome evaporated, how soon the mood of the crowd changed.

Lord Jesus Christ, we know all too well that we are no different, our commitment to you is so often short-lived, superficial and self-centered. Help us to welcome you into our lives with true gladness, and to go on serving you now and always. **Amen**

Say to yourself- The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Amen

Bible Reading Lk 19:28-40

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.'"

Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the

colt?" They replied, "The Lord needs it." They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.

As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," He replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

This coming Sunday- Palm Sunday is when we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. (and the palm crosses remind us of that event) In our reading, we heard how people welcomed Jesus and I am sure at that time of celebrating the Jewish feast of the Passover, there was a feeling among Jesus' followers that something was going to happen soon. Jesus their Messiah was going to bring about a real change in their fortunes – he would break the occupying power the Romans had over the Jewish people – and restore the Jewish authority.

But Jesus has a different agenda

and has a different message for his disciples. Jesus tells them a parable about the owner of a vineyard. The owner goes away and rents the vineyard to a group of farmers. Then sends a servant to collect what is rightfully his – a share of the fruit. But they beat him and send him away empty –handed. And he sends a second servant, then a third but the same thing happens –they are beaten and sent away empty –handed.

Finally, in desperation he thinks I will send my son – they will surely take notice of him and give him what is due to me. But do you know what happens? – The farmers kill his son thinking that they will be able to take over the vineyard – but instead the owner makes sure that the farmers are killed and thrown out of the vineyard.

It is a story that Jesus told to warn the disciples that – things would not go as they might expect. His message was that we have rejected in the past the people sent from God to remind us of our duty- the Old Testament prophets, holy and righteous people down through the ages. –but they were not listened to. So, Jesus came from God to tell us about God’s love for us. To remind us of our duty to God and the earth he created. To assure us of God’s forgiveness for our wrongs and bring us back into a relationship with him.

And what happened, as we shall hear

over this Easter period – is that as the parable, the Son is rejected and killed – by those that think they can do without God. But unlike the parable Jesus returns from the dead. As Jesus said (from Psalm 118) ‘The stone the builders rejected will become the capstone’

That is to say, that out of the terrible death of God’s Son Jesus will come something new – of which Jesus is the foundation. It is a new form of faith, not based on rules and laws, but based on love. And it is that love that God has for everyone, expressed in Jesus that is the ultimate triumph.

I am sure there were many who thought that Jesus on his entry into Jerusalem would bring about an immediate change in that part of the world. Little did they realize that Jesus through his dying and resurrection would bring for us all a lasting change in our lives- here and throughout the whole wide world. **Amen**

Closing Prayer. Lord Jesus Christ, as I remember your triumphant entry into Jerusalem, I am reminded of how easy it would have been for you to have been the sort of Messiah the crowds hoped you would be. But you stayed true to your calling despite the consequences. Give me the courage Lord to walk the way of discipleship and by your grace to stay true to you, come what may. **Amen.**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett