



Service for Week 7th-13th
April 2025 Palm Sunday.
By Chaplain Andy

Our Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, 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

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,.....

Amen

Bible Reading Luke 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 is Palm Sunday the day we remember people shouting, cheering and laying down palm branches on the road (and the palm crosses remind us of that event) as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey.

Why, we may think, did he choose to ride on a donkey into Jerusalem? The answer to this we find in the Old Testament, in the book of Kings we read that King David put his son Solomon on a mule (bred from a donkey) to



signify that Solomon was going to become King. So, in affect Jesus was the descendent of David who was chosen to be king.

The people in Jerusalem would have known from their scriptures about Solomon riding a mule to signify that he was king, and would have seen Jesus' actions as significant and the fulfilment of prophesy.

Jesus was in a very modest way declaring himself to be the chosen one -the Messiah. It was not to be a political gesture that would anger the Roman administration but one of peace. However, I am sure there was a feeling among Jesus' followers and the people there that 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. The people shouted 'Hosanna!' a Hebrew phrase meaning 'save now' so at that time could be understood to mean- God save us now from the Roman occupation.

But that was not Jesus' mission or message. It was not about political conflict and force but one of peace. When the people fully realised this, they turned against Jesus as we

know from the events of Good Friday.

Palm Sunday is when the people in Jerusalem were celebrating the arrival of Jesus the Messiah, but true to our fickle human nature that quickly turned to one of denial and hate which brought about his death on a cross. Little did they realise that Jesus through his dying and resurrection would bring about a lasting change for us all in every situation- throughout the whole wide world.

Jesus brought us a new and true understanding of God, not based on rules and laws, but based on love. And it is that love of God for everyone, expressed in Jesus that is the ultimate triumph. It is a love which we can understand and connect with and it is a love which overcomes suffering and death.

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