

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, RASTRICK

Morning Praise

Sunday 5th April 2020 Palm Sunday

Click on the underlined links to take you to safe content on the internet. Some of the readings are audio click the arrow to start follow them in your own bible and stop the reading at the relevant verse.

Introduction

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We have come together in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Prayer of Penitence

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Together we pray:

**Lord God, we have sinned against you.
we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore to us the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn: [Make Way, Make Way for the King of Kings](#)

Make way, make way, for Christ the King
in splendour arrives;
fling wide the gates and welcome him
into your lives.

*Make way (make way),
make way (make way),
for the King of kings
(for the King of kings);
make way (make way),
make way (make way),
and let his kingdom in!*

He comes the broken hearts to heal,
the prisoners to free.
the deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,
the blind shall see.

And those who mourn with heavy hearts,
who weep and sigh,
with laughter, joy and royal crown
he'll beautify.

We call you now to worship him
as Lord of all,
to have no gods before him,
their thrones must fall.

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The Word of God

Reading [Psalm 118](#) His Steadfast Love endures for ever

Gospel Reading [Matthew 21: 1-11](#) Read by David Suchet

Reflection - Prepared by Julia Tum

Are we like an individual in the crowd outside the city walls, or from the crowds within the city?

Video: [Jesus on his way to Jerusalem](#)

Who were the people who were crowding around Jesus as He travelled to Jerusalem? Outside Jerusalem Jesus had an adoring crowd and reception. He had walked from Jericho and had healed two blind men. Now there was a large number of people, possibly Galileans, following Him.

Jesus would appear more as a servant, riding on an animal which is more used to be carrying goods, than as a triumphal future king. The crowd threw branches into the centre of the road for the colt to walk over and they chanted 'Hosanna' i.e. "save us". They chanted "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" a phrase which comes from Psalm 118 traditionally sung at Passover.

Video: [*Jesus Entering Jerusalem on a Donkey*](#)

As He entered Jerusalem the crowd changed from proclaiming and worshipping Him to be a hostile crowd. We read in verse 10 that the whole city was stirred or shook up asking "who is this?" To which the crowds inside disparagingly replied "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee". We start to get a foretaste of the fear inside the city and of enemies lurking in the background who were prepared to challenge Jesus and trap him with trick questions. The "inside" crowd primarily Judeans, would tend to look down on anyone from Galilee i.e. as if from the "sticks"—lacking sophistication and not like themselves. Their identification of Jesus as a prophet from Nazareth was a mocking remark since how could a king come from there?

This joyous and noisy crowd would make even Pilate quake and make him wonder how this "king" attracted so much adulation when entering the city on a donkey. Was this man going to be his enemy and set himself up as King of the Jews? Pilate may have laughed at the thought that this man could take his throne since he would know that they had no swords. The crowd did not cry out as they would have done in a rebellion, but they sang songs from religious verses taken out of the Psalms.' 'Oh!' Pilate would say, 'the whole thing is contemptible and ridiculous.'"

[*Hosanna - A Palm Sunday Song*](#)

Are we in the crowd outside the city walls, honouring and loving Jesus, or are we on the inside mocking Him and leading Him to His crucifixion? Or just being indifferent?

Jesus, as a living man on this earth, did not herald His entry into Jerusalem with trumpets and wild fabulous visions of God. Those images are left for His

second coming, as revealed in Revelation, with angels as His courtiers and attendants, and clouds as His chariots.

Jesus was not too ashamed to ask for items, he asked for a donkey and colt, which were not His, He asked for a room in which to celebrate the Passover.

We should not be ashamed or too proud to ask God for help in our lives.

Jesus told the disciples what to say if challenged about taking the donkey, God will also guide our thoughts when facing difficult situations. Do we ask and then listen intently for a reply?

The crowd laid down their cloaks and adorned the roadway. How can we make Jesus welcome in our lives?

So varied were the words and shouts of the crowd, ranging from glory, to wonderment, to astonishment, to unbelieving that this was the expected King and that he should arrive on a colt. How varied are our own ways of proclaiming our love for God and for Jesus?

[Reflection : He Has Come](#)

Hymn: [Hosanna, Hosanna](#)

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

Lord, we lift up your name,
with hearts full of praise.

be exalted, O Lord, my God!

Hosanna in the highest!

Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings!

Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings!

Lord, we lift up your name,
with hearts full of praise.

be exalted, O Lord, my God!

Glory to the King of kings!

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The Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,**

suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of intercession. – prepared by Margaret Ellis

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith.

As we approach Holy Week hearing again, in its entirety, the story of Christ's passion, may it help us to truly understand the sacrifice he made for us as we reflect on some aspects of his passion, a story which fills us with hope and confidence that there will be an end to the chaos of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Holy God teach us to be generous. Teach us to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that we do your will.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Almighty God, please help us never to abandon someone in their time of greatest need. Help us to forgive those who have wounded and abandoned us in times of crisis. Cleanse our hearts from bitterness and resentment so that we can be more like Jesus, who was abandoned and betrayed by those closest to him.

Lord in your mercy, *hear our prayer.*

Everlasting God, your son was tortured, beaten and humiliated, and sentenced to an agonizing death though he had done no wrong. We pray for all prisoners throughout the world and ask you to be with them in the darkness of their

prison cell, in the loneliness of separation from those they love and in their fear in the face of torture, execution and death.

Lord in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

We pray for our church family, as we enter an interregnum, and especially as our churches are closed. We especially pray for our PCC and those who are working to find new ways of bringing services to the congregation and trying to maintain contact with all. We pray especially for our neighbours and friends and all those who live in our community, as they come to terms with isolation and solitude. May they be aware of your presence and know that you are with them.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

We pray for our Queen and the Royal Family, members of Parliament and all in authority; that they may govern our country with wisdom and understanding and for the good of your Church and all people.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer***

Loving God, strengthen our innermost being with your love that bears all things even the weight of this global pandemic, even the long haul of watching for symptoms, of patiently waiting for this to pass, watching and waiting, keeping our gaze fixed on you, and looking out for our neighbours near and far. Instil in our shaken souls the belief and hope that all things are possible with your creative love for strangers to become friends, for science to source solutions, for resources to be generously shared so everyone, everywhere, may have what they need, for your perfect love that knows no borders may cast out any fear and selfishness that divides. May your love that never ends be our comfort, strength and guide for the wellbeing of all and the glory of God.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer***

We give thanks for the health workers tending the seriously ill, for the scientists working on a vaccination, for the researchers analysing data and identifying trends, for the media outlets working to communicate reality, for the supermarket workers, hygiene and sanitation providers, for the good news stories of recoveries and effective planning, for the singing from balconies by locked-down communities, for the recognition that isolation doesn't need to mean loneliness, for the notes through letterboxes offering help and support, for the internet and telephones and technology that connects, for the awakened appreciation of what is truly important.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer***

We pray for those who are unwell and concerned for loved ones, for those who were already very anxious, for those whose immune systems are suppressed or compromised, for those vulnerable because of underlying conditions, for those in the 'most at risk to coronavirus' categories, for those watching their entire income stream dry up, for those who have no choice but to go out to work, for those who are afraid to be at home, for those who are more lonely than they've ever been, for those who are bereaved and grieving. God be their healer, comfort and protection, be their strength, shield and provision, be their security, safety and close companion.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer***

Loving God, we pray for all whose lives are affected with illness, grief or despair. Bring healing to every broken life, relief to all who are in pain, hope to the dying and strength to all who care for them.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer***

Father, we commend to your eternal presence those who have recently died. Comfort them and all who mourn; give them a patient faith in this time of darkness and strengthen them with the knowledge of your love.

Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer***

Father, thank you for providing us with the encouragement and inspiration we need. Give us the grace to trust your will for us.

Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

A Prayer for Church Growth

God of Mission

Who along brings growth to your church,

Send your Holy Spirit to give

Vision to our planning

Wisdom to our actions

And power to our witness.

Help our church to grow in numbers,

In spiritual commitment to you,

And in service to our local community,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

The Collect for today

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you and love you,
that we may be found beside you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory.

Hymn: [Ride on, ride on in majesty!](#)

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
Hark, all the tribes hosanna cry;
Thy humble beast pursues his road
With palms and scattered garments strowed.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die:
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
O'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
The wingèd squadrons of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
Thy last and fiercest strife is nigh:

The Father, on his sapphire throne,
Expects his own anointed son.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die;
Bow thy meek head to mortal pain
Then take, O God, thy power and reign.

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Final Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,
and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:
give us the mind to follow you
and to proclaim you as Lord and King,
to the glory of God, the Father. Amen

Our service ends with the Grace,

**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the Love of God,
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.**