

SAFFRON WALDEN AND VILLAGES TEAM MINISTRY
PRAYERS FOR PALM SUNDAY (6TH IN LENT), 5 APRIL 2020

Today we celebrate Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. If you have a palm cross at home from previous years, you might like to bring it out to wave during the first hymn: or to draw a cross on the palm of your own hand.

You might like to light a candle at home while you use this leaflet, symbolising Jesus as the Light of the World: and to say the prayers and readings out loud.

Introduction

We gather together, united in purpose though separate in place, in the name of God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, to celebrate the beginning of the most solemn week as Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour to suffer, to die and to rise again. May the palms which we hold be signs for us of his victory, that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life.

*We say together (or why not **sing!**) an opening hymn – holding up our palms :*

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 winged squadrons of the sky

Look down with sad and wondering eyes

To see th'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 Christ, Thy power and reign.

The Lord is here: **His Spirit is with us.**

We have come together as the family of God in this community. And especially we thank you, Heavenly Father, for your family, the Church; and for your love in sending us your Son Jesus to live and die and rise again to bring us close to you. Help us to pray to you in faith, to sing your praise with gratitude, and to listen to your word with eagerness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

God shows his love to us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Let us then show our love for him by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Lord our God, in our sin we have avoided your call. Our love for you is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes away early. Have mercy upon us; deliver us from judgement; bind up our wounds and revive us; in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hearing God's forgiveness

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Readings *We now follow the readings on the Grapevine:*

Collect (the special prayer for today)

Gospel reading: St Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 27, verses 11-54

Reflection *In a moment of quiet, reflect on the words of the Gospel, and thank Jesus for taking upon himself that agonising sacrifice, for all our sakes. May God help you live out that gratitude in your life this week.*

We declare our faith together

**We believe and trust in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.
This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Father of all, we pray for your world which your Son came to save: and for your Church throughout all nations, that we may be one to proclaim his word of life.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

God of compassion, be close to all who feel the darkness and agony of isolation, illness, fear, or sorrow: especially*remember those on your own heart.*

In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light. Give your strength, your skill, your sympathy and resilience to all who care for the sick, and wisdom to all who seek a cure.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

God of the poor, we pray for all who are working everywhere for justice and peace; for all governments and those administering tough laws in the interests of their people; for all relief agencies; and for all key workers, wherever they may be. At this time of global crisis, inspire the hearts of all peoples to turn from violence and recognize our common humanity as your children.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

True and humble King, hailed by the crowds as Messiah, grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may walk beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. Give us confidence in your triumph and uplift us in the knowledge of your salvation.

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

Sharing Christ's Peace

Once we were far off, but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood: for he is our peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

As you say this, hold in your mind all who are joining in these prayers today.

If you are joining in the Eucharist being celebrated live via Zoom, do follow the Eucharistic prayer being said by the priest with the standard responses.

While only the priest will be able to physically receive the consecrated bread and wine, you will all be invited to join in this prayer of Spiritual Communion, inviting Jesus to enter your deepest being.

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *Let us pray together as Jesus has taught us*
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

We ask God's grace for the week ahead

Heavenly Father, be with us through this week, in our joys and in our anxieties. As we follow the way of the Cross, point us always to the glory of Easter: for his sake who died and rose for us, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

We say (or sing!) a final hymn:

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 men made strange, and none the longed-for Christ would know.
But oh, 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.

They rise, and needs will 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.

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.

May the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, be with us all now and evermore: and may we go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

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