

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD



Singing Hosanna

Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
bless our branches and make them holy.
You who have blessed our lives
by your goodness in the world,
so bless us today as we proclaim
Christ our King.
May we proclaim your majesty anew

and welcome you into our cities and homes
as ruler, as prophet, and as our Messiah.
Strengthen our hearts to be with you
in the coming days;
May we not abandon you, but continue to
praise you
with our Hosannas.
Through Christ our Savior and Lord,
for ever and ever. Amen.

April 9, 2017

Humbled and Exalted

Today's Readings: Matthew 21:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-7; Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66. In the beautiful canticle from Philippians that comprises today's Second Reading, the dichotomy of humility and exaltation is highlighted. This is the tension of Palm Sunday: we welcome Christ as a king entering the grand city of Jerusalem, and then we proclaim the Passion account where our voices say, *Crucify him*. Christ Jesus, God and man, is exalted as both a human king and the Messiah, Savior of us all. We clutch our palms tightly and remind ourselves that he is indeed our king.

Hosanna is not just a welcome to the city. *Hosanna* is our Eucharistic proclamation in which we verbally wave our

palms. Palm Sunday is the opportunity to raise our palm branches as we process into church, as we stand in awe and horror through the Passion account, and as we sing once again "Hosanna in the highest."

Throughout the world, whatever branches are in season are gathered and waved today: olive branches, palm branches, pussy willows, flowering bushes. Palm Sunday begins our last few days of Lent. As we approach the Sacred Paschal Triduum, today is our prelude to the glory that is Death-Resurrection. Palm and Passion weave a tension that highlights Christ Jesus, who humbled himself in obedience to the Father, to death on the Cross, and who, because of his Death is greatly exalted.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 10

The Meal at Bethany

As you reflect on today's readings, you might want to take time to visualize the meal at the home of Lazarus in Bethany. Martha is serving; Lazarus is at the table; Mary is anointing Jesus' feet with perfume; Judas is protesting Mary's action; and Jesus is quieting Judas. The scene occurs just before Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and his Passion and Death. How are you preparing to spend time with Jesus as Holy Week begins? Will the week center on prayer? *Today's Readings: Isaiah 42:1-7; Psalm 27:1, 2, 3, 13-14; John 12:1-11.*

Tuesday, April 11

Betrayal and Denial

The setting for today's Gospel takes us to another meal, a meal very unlike the one in Bethany. At this meal, Judas leaves early to betray Jesus and Peter is told that he will deny the Lord. As we move closer to Good Friday, we need to consider our faithfulness. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalm 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 14, 17; John 13:21-33, 36-38.*

Wednesday, April 12

Servanthood

"It is the Lord GOD who helps me." Throughout today's First Reading, Isaiah attributes what he has and does to God. Because of what God has done, Isaiah can sustain the weary with his words and listen "as those who are taught." These are the thoughts of a servant who humbly acknowledges his place before God. Do you recognize what God is doing in your life? *Today's Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 69:8-10; 21-22, 32, 33-34; Matthew 26:14-25.*

Thursday, April 13

Holy Thursday

The Sacred Paschal Triduum begins this evening. As we observe the washing of feet tonight, we consider how our reception of the Eucharist calls us to service. May we not only serve but allow others to serve us. *Today's Readings: Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15.*

Friday, April 14

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion

Our focus is on the Cross. We spend time in silence from noon until 3 PM, to unite ourselves to Christ's suffering. At the service in the parish, we hear the Passion of the Lord proclaimed and we adore the cross. Today is not business as usual, for we commemorate Christ's Death. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42.*

Saturday, April 15

Easter Vigil

At the Easter Vigil, we hear the story of salvation history, the account of how God has remained faithful to us. To prepare for the night, spend time in prayerful reflection with at least one of the readings. Consider how the reading tells of how God keeps the covenant with his people. Sit quietly as you prayerfully respond. *Today's Readings: Genesis 1:1-2:2; Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24-35; Genesis 22:1-18; Psalm 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11; Exodus 14:15-15:1; Psalm: Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18; Isaiah 54:5-14; Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13; Isaiah 55:1-11; Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11; Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28; Psalm 42:3, 5; 43:3, 4; Romans 6:3-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Matthew 28:1-10.*

