

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER – PALM SUNDAY
16th March 2008

THE EUCHARIST

Is. 50:4-9a

THE PROCESSION WITH PALMS

Dear friends in Christ, for five weeks of Lent we have been preparing, by works of charity and self-sacrifice, for the celebration of our Lord's paschal mystery. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the whole Church throughout the world. Christ entered in triumph into his own city, to complete his work as our Messiah: to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us remember with devotion this entry which began his saving work and follow him with a lively faith. United with him in his suffering on the cross, may we share his resurrection and new life.

The priest then says one of the following prayers.

Let us pray

(Pause for silent prayer)

Almighty God, we pray you

bless these branches

and make them holy.

Today we joyfully acclaim

Jesus our Messiah and King.

May we reach one day the happiness

of the new and everlasting Jerusalem

by faithfully following him

who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Let us pray

(Pause for silent prayer)

Lord,

increase the faith of your people

and listen to our prayers.

Today we honour Christ our

triumphant King

by carrying these branches.

May we honour you every day

by living always in him,

for he is Lord for ever and ever. **Amen.**

GOSPEL

Mtt. 21:1-11

✠A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

For the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Christ.

After the gospel, a brief homily may be given. Before the procession begins, the celebrant may address the people in these or similar words:

Let us go forth in peace praising Jesus our Messiah, as did the crowd who welcomed him to Jerusalem.

The procession then begins. During the procession hymns are sung.

First Reading

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

I did not cover my face against insult and I know I will not be ashamed.

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens — awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 22(21)

Response: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

All who see me deride me.

They divide my clothing among them.

They curl their lips, they toss their heads.

They cast lots for my robe.

"He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;

O Lord, do not leave me alone,

let him release him if this is his friend."

my strength, make haste to help me! **R.**

R.

Many dogs have surrounded me,

I will tell of your name of my people and praise you where they are assembled.

a band of the wicked beset me.

They tear holes in my hands and my feet

"You who fear the Lord give him praise;

I can count every one of my bones. **R.**

all children of Jacob, give him glory.

Revere him, children of Israel." **R.**

Second Reading

Phil. 2:5-11

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians

He humbled himself to become like us and God raised him on high.

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory.

Christ became obedient for us even to death, dying on the cross.

Therefore God raised him on high and gave him a name above all other names

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Matthew 26:14-27:66 or 27:11-54