



There is no question that the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is one of the most profound depictions of God's Reign in the New Testament. In contrast to the usual displays of military might, and the pomp and ceremony with which conquering monarchs entered the cities of their captors (as Pilate may well have on the same day from the other side of town), Jesus enters with humility, festivity, and peace, demonstrating the "upside-down" nature of God's Reign. Nevertheless, this subversive realm is not easily stopped, as the Pharisees discovered.

May our Palm Sunday worship confront us with the challenging call of God's subversive Reign.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

*For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines*

## **THE LITURGY OF THE PALMS**

### **Luke 19 : 28-40**

Jesus rides into Jerusalem as the people offer praises. The Pharisees though are unimpressed, calling on Jesus to silence the crowd.

### **The Psalm - Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29**

A celebration of God's goodness and faithful love, answering prayer, turning the rejected stone into the capstone, and inviting people into God's presence.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

[http://bible.oremus.org/?show\\_adj=no&passages=Luke%2019:%2028-40%0Acw%20Psalm%20118:%201-2,%2019-29](http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Luke%2019:%2028-40%0Acw%20Psalm%20118:%201-2,%2019-29)

## **COLLECTS OF THE DAY**

### **Collect One**

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Almighty and everlasting God,  
who, of thy tender love towards mankind,  
hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
to take upon him our flesh,  
and to suffer death upon the cross,  
that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility;

Mercifully grant,  
that we may both follow the example of his patience,  
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;  
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

### Collect Two

Almighty and everlasting God,  
who, in your tender love towards the human race,  
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ  
to take upon him our flesh  
and to suffer death upon the cross:  
Grant that we may follow the example  
of his patience and humility,  
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*Presider or deacon*

As we journey this week with Christ and celebrate the paschal mystery of his death and resurrection, let us earnestly pray to God for those following the way of the cross and for all peoples everywhere.

*Deacon or other leader*

For the holy catholic church throughout the world, sharing the death and resurrection of Christ.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For *N* our bishop, for presbyters and deacons and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For *NN* our catechumen(s) and *NN* their sponsors(s).

**Lord, have mercy.**

For all nations, peoples, tribes, clans, and families.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For justice, mercy, and peace in all the world.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For all who are tempted, oppressed, afflicted, or in need.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the dying and the dead, and for those who mourn.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our families, friends, and companions, and for all those we love.

**Lord, have mercy.**

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Remembering Saint *N*, and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ. **To you, O Lord.**

*Presider*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, whose Son humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death. Receive the prayers we offer this day for all those in need in every place; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### POST COMMUNION

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.

### PRAYERS

Holy Father, you have shown us that the brave bearing of the cross is the beginning of wearing your crown: help us by your grace to bear patiently our pains and disappointments, as your beloved Son bore His; and to offer them to you as the pure gift of our faithfulness to our crucified Lord. **Amen**

As on this day we keep the special memory of our Redeemer's entry into the city, so grant O Lord than now and ever, He may triumph in our hearts. Let the King of Glory enter in, and let us lay ourselves and all we are in full and joyful homage before Him, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen** *Bishop Moule, 1841-1920*

Father God, During Lent we have been preparing for the celebration of our Lord's Paschal mystery. On this day Jesus Christ entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph. The people welcomed Him with palms and shouts of praise, but the path before Him led to self-giving, suffering and death. Today we greet Him as our king, although we know His crown is thorns and His throne a cross. We follow Him this week from the glory of the palms to the glory of the resurrection by the dark road of suffering and death. Unite us with Him in His suffering on the cross; may we share His resurrection and new life. **Amen**

Christ crucified draw you to himself, to find in him a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sins forgiven; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

As we journey this week with Christ and celebrate the paschal mystery of his death and resurrection, let us earnestly pray to God for those following the way of the cross and for all peoples everywhere. Blessed are you, Lord our God, who sent your Son among us to bear the pain and grief of humankind. Receive the prayers we offer this day for all those in need in every place and as we near the holy mountain grant us strength on our journey. Glory to you for ever. **Amen**

Holy Father, you have shown us that the brave bearing the cross is he beginning of wearing your crown: help us by your grace to bear patiently our pains and disappointments, as your beloved Son bore His; and to offer them to you as the pure gift of our faithfulness to our crucified Lord. **Amen**

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Christ, Saviour of all life, you come to us always. Welcoming you in the peace of our nights, in the silence of our days, in the beauty of creation, in the hours of combat within, welcoming you is knowing that you will be with us in every situation, always. **Amen**

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Grant us, Lord, not to be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, while we are placed among things that are passing away, to hold fast to those things which last for ever; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O God our dance, in whom we live and move and have our being: so direct our strength and inspire our weakness that we may enter with power into the movement of you whole creation, through our partner Jesus Christ. **Amen**

O God, you are my rock, my rescue, and my refuge, I leave it all quietly to you. **Amen.**  
*George Appleton (1902-93)*

Lord may I prefer the truth and right by which I might seem to lose, to the falsehood and wrong by which I might seem to gain. **Amen.** *Maimonides (1135-1204) Spain.*

God our Father, we come today to worship you and confess that devotion to you is often far from our minds. This morning may we refocus our attention upon our love for you and how we show that love. Help us Lord to be more willing to pour out our lives as fragrant offerings of love. We lay our lives before you and ask that we might know that love which does not count the cost. Amen

Lord God, as we wait upon you now, as we listen for your voice in the silence of hearts and as we offer our prayers to you we think of those people in our lives who have loved us with a generous love we think of those who like Mary have not counted the cost of what they have given us; of those who given all of themselves to us as Christ gave himself for the world; and we thank you for them - and ask you to bless them and for you to make us like them. Amen

As we go into this week, O God, help us to have a focus, a purpose that is beyond that of just getting by; beyond that of just trying to make it through another week; show us we pray what you would have us do; reveal to us our own personal and unique ministry—and help us to do it. Amen

Bless O God those in our midst and those around the world whom we name in our hearts before you at this time; we especially ask for those who are poor in the basic needs of daily living; and for those who are poor in love; hear too the prayers we ask for those who need healing or hope in their lives, those who need justice, and those who require mercy. Amen

### OFFERTORY PRAYERS

Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

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Hosanna! Bless these gifts and our lives, O God, for we offer them in the name of Jesus, our Lord. He emptied himself that we might be filled. He humbled himself that we might be lifted up. We pray that these gifts be used to proclaim the gospel which fills lives that are empty and lifts up those who need help. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

We thank you Father for thy son Jesus Christ, who for our sake became poor that we might be rich. We thank you for the fact that he gave himself up to death so that we might rise to life. Accept our gifts of thanksgiving now O Lord, and use them so that they might bring blessings unto your name. Amen

### BENEDICTION

Go into the world in peace,  
embraced by the steadfast love of God,  
blessed by the humility and courage of Jesus Christ  
and filled with the immeasurable power of the Holy Spirit.  
Christ crucified draw you to himself, to find in him a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sins forgiven; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen**

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### LECTIONARY NOTES - Liturgy of the Palms

#### REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

The heart of the Palm Sunday celebration this year is God coming to God's people in faithfulness and love. Jesus enters Jerusalem as the one who will suffer – this is the doorway to his passion – and in his suffering invites people into God's grace and presence. And this arrival of God will not be resisted or stopped. It can only be received and enjoyed. It is interesting to note that only Luke includes the Pharisees' plea for Jesus to ask the crowds to be silent, and Jesus' response that if the people were to stop singing, the stones would cry out. It is most likely that the Pharisees were concerned for how Rome would interpret this procession and the songs the people were singing. The last thing they wanted was a revolution – for both personal and national reasons. But, Jesus' response demonstrates Luke's understanding of God's salvation that comes in Christ. God's Reign, which for Luke is the expression of God's salvation, and the reality into which the saved are brought, is unstoppable. It is personal and social, and is as concerned with justice as it is with personal restoration and forgiveness. In proclaiming that even the stones would cry out, Jesus declares that God's Reign will not be silenced by the powers that be, and that it includes and impacts the whole of creation. When God's Sent One comes, the entire created order knows it and responds to it. In a similar way, we who witness this event

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again at Palm Sunday, are called to know and respond to the One who brings God's irresistible Reign into our world.

### CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

**GLOBAL APPLICATION:** This week we are startled into seeing God's Reign afresh, as the subversive, empire-challenging reality that it is. Even as the Pharisees try to silence the praises, and as the people fail to understand what they're celebrating, Jesus just keeps coming, embracing the suffering to come, and manifesting God's new way of being and reigning. The Reign of God continues to infiltrate our world; its message still being proclaimed and revealed; and the powers-that-be still try to silence it – with death if necessary. But, our call, as followers of Christ, is to refuse to be silenced. To continue to challenge unjust empires and to hold open the door to God's Reign to all who will come, refusing to bow to the threats of factions, religious exclusivity or political expediency.

**LOCAL APPLICATION:** In every life and community, the Reign of God enters as a disruptive and invitational influence. It subverts every petty power-struggle, turf-war and personal empire that we might set up, and calls us to embrace this new self-giving, inclusive, God-connected way of being. The challenge for us is to take this message seriously, and strive, daily, to embody God's Reign in every interaction, every decision, and in how we live together in community. When we allow our faith to be drawn into the service of political, economic, or even religious agendas other than God's Reign, we are guilty of trying to silence the praise, and we find ourselves outside of God's transforming purposes. The work of justice is done as much in the small unseen conversations and justice-supporting actions as in the big moments.

### SERMON OUTLINE 1

#### Lk 19:29-40 near Bethphage...

It is one of the most moving experiences to climb the Mount of Olives & to look down on the city - & to imagine how Jesus felt as he began his Triumphal Entry – the final journey to the cross at Calvary....

**1. The Colt of Bethany 29-35:** *he sent 2 of the disciples to collect it - Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup>If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it."* They found it just as Jesus had predicted & the query too – with the answer - 'The Lord needs it.' <sup>35</sup>Then they brought it to Jesus... It was sacred for service – never had been ridden before (Mark 11)... Using their cloaks as a saddle <sup>v35</sup> they set Jesus on it

**2. The Courage of Jesus 36:** *As he rode along – facing certain death.... He knew all that lay ahead of him in the city – betrayal at the hands of Judas – arrest in the garden of Gethsemane – trials by the authorities – scourging & abuse by the soldiers – desertion by his disciples – death in the most horrendous of executions...*

**3. The Comments of the crowds 37-40:** 2-fold reaction

**a) the Desire of his supporters:** *praised God joyfully with a loud voice: 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, & glory in the highest heaven!'*

**b) the Dissension of the Pharisees:** *'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.'* <sup>40</sup>He answered, *'I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.'* - no way to stop praise!

Cf image of today's world – accept or reject Jesus as king...

*By Norman Porteous*

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### SERMON OUTLINE 2

The triumphant entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem before His passion, was celebrated with particular solemnity since the first centuries of Christianity. In the Byzantine Rite it is considered to this day to be one of the twelve Major Feasts of the liturgical year. It is always celebrated on the Sunday before Easter with the blessing of branches. From ancient times, palm-branches were symbols of victory and triumph. The Romans used to reward their champions of the games with palm-branches and military triumphs, were observed with palms. It seems that the Jews followed the same custom (Lev. 23:40; I Macc. 13:37) of carrying palm-branches on their festive occasions. That is what happened during the solemn entry of Jesus into the Holy City before His last Passover.

From Jerusalem this celebration of palms spread to Egypt, then to Syria and Asia Minor. By the fifth century the feast was celebrated in Constantinople, where the Emperor and his household used to take part in a solemn procession on Passion Sunday. There, besides palms, the faithful were given olive and lilac branches. During the sixth and the seventh centuries the procession took place in the morning. It was at this time that the blessing of palms and other branches was introduced. The feast then spread to the West, where it received its present name- Palm Sunday.

On Palm Sunday Jesus was finally recognised by the Jewish people as their Messiah. When He arrived in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, they greeted Him with a triumphant welcome, a fulfilment of a prophecy (Mt. 21:4-5). When the Apostles saw the enthusiastic crowds, they brought a donkey foal for Jesus to ride on, while other people spread their coats and cloaks and threw "branches from the trees" on the road in front of Him. Others took "branches of palms" in their hands and, cheered, crying out: "Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" As Jesus was entering the city, surrounded by the excited crowds, the Scribes and the Pharisees became alarmed and decided to stop Him at any cost.

Jesus' presence sets Jerusalem in turmoil (eseisthe - the word used for earthquake), just as it was at His birth and would be at His crucifixion several days later. The event was to be 'of earth shattering significance. Jesus was not entering a foreign city, nor entering the city of 'the Jews'. He was a Jew. He was entering the city which symbolised in His faith and His scriptures, God's promise to Israel. To confront one's own faith and its traditions is painful. This is part of the drama of the event, both in Matthew's account and in the earlier forms of the story, not least in the event itself. For some, Jesus' approach to Jerusalem has become a symbol of the confrontation they must make in their own lives, including the confrontation with themselves. The issues at stake are not ultimate control or power, though it is easy to give this impression: Jesus is the rightful king, they are about obedience, fulfilling the work of God, and doing our part in His calling to us.

The true signs of servanthood have much less to do with glory, palms and crowns, which ultimately must be subverted into irony on the cross, and more to do with acts of healing, wholeness, justice and compassion. Without the crucifixion and resurrection, the entry story is ambiguous, a potential disaster, which realises itself in every generation in the name of piety and self righteousness. But a radically subverted model of power, exercised in gentleness and compassion challenges the systems of not only the first century Roman world but also their equivalents in our own world today. Its this subversive, radical power that Christ unleashes on the world through the events of the coming week, and through the imperfect, but forgiven and redeemed band of people called the Church. The Church

*By Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman*



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### ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

"Everyone Loves a Parade," the Rev. Marek Zabriskie, Day 1  
[http://day1.org/5721-everyone\\_loves\\_a\\_parade](http://day1.org/5721-everyone_loves_a_parade)

"Walk through Holy Week with Jesus," the Rev. Whitney Rice, Sermons that Work  
<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/03/23/palm-sunday-a-2014/>

Palm/Passion Sermons, Pastor Edward F. Markquart, Grace Lutheran Church, Seattle, Washington - Sermons from Seattle  
[http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/palm\\_passion.htm](http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/palm_passion.htm)

### CHILDREN

Worshiping with Children, Palm/Passion Sunday, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown  
<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2014/02/year-passionpalm-sunday-april-13-2014.html>

Children's Sermons, Palm Sunday, Faith Formation Journeys  
<http://faithformationjourneys.blogspot.co.uk/2011/04/palm-sunday-childrens-sermon-2011.html>

Coloring Pages/Puzzles. Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Coloring Pages, Puzzles. [Sermons4Kids.com](http://www.sermons4kids.com).  
<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>