

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024

# The Sixth Sunday of Lent



Today, we have two Gospel readings. This is the first – the Gospel of the Palms. It comes from St John’s Gospel, chapter 12, verses 12-16 and tells the story of what happened on Palm Sunday. You will hear it very near the beginning of our service, during the procession.

**The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!’**

**Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:**

**‘Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.**

**Look, your king is coming,  
sitting on a donkey’s colt!’**

**His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.**

The crowd who went out to meet Jesus, waving branches of palm trees and shouting, were welcoming Jesus to Jerusalem as a king. As far as they were concerned, that day, they were hailing the King of Israel with words of triumph, victory and celebration.

Jesus, however, knew differently. By choosing to ride into Jerusalem on a young donkey, rather than a conquering hero’s warhorse, Jesus was fulfilling prophecy and showing that he had come to bring peace.

Sadly, the crowd didn’t get it. Despite being aware of the words of the prophet Zechariah about the expected Messiah riding on the foal of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9), this was not what they expected and, within days, the same crowds were demanding Jesus be executed. Jesus was not the sort of king the crowd wanted. He was a servant king and the crown for this king would be a crown of thorns.

## Hosanna!

Do you know the meaning of this word that the crowd were shouting?

The word 'Hosanna' in Hebrew means 'save us'! On Palm Sunday the crowd welcomed Jesus as their Messiah, God's anointed one, whom they were expecting to be their saviour. How do you think Jesus was different from their expectations?

## Holy Week

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week. As we journey together through this week, we see, in the gospels, the rapidly evolving situation for Jesus and his companions and we can follow the daily events through reading the gospels and through our daily services.

By Maundy Thursday, we see more clearly the sort of king Jesus knew himself to be. The name "Maundy" comes from the Latin word 'Mandatum', meaning 'commandment'. In John's Gospel (chapter 13, verses 1-20) we read how Jesus washed his disciples' feet (something that would normally be done by a servant) and gave them a 'new commandment'. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you. By this will all people know that you are my disciples, if you love one another". Our Maundy Thursday celebration is very poignant, as we recall these events, together with Jesus's command to "Do this in remembrance of me", as he shared the Passover meal with his followers and gave us the sacrament of the Eucharist, Holy Communion, or Lord's Supper.

On Good Friday, we find Jesus wearing the crown of thorns, as he is taunted and tortured, before being crucified. The second Gospel reading today is from Mark's gospel, telling part of the story of Good Friday.

If we can, it is good to follow the whole story of Holy Week, to journey with Jesus through these events, so that we can fully celebrate the joy of Easter. You might like to read Mark's gospel from the beginning of chapter 14 through to chapter 15, verse 47.



### A prayer for Holy Week:

Dear God, thank you for the story of Jesus riding into Jerusalem. We thank you that he came to be the saviour for everyone. As we travel through this week, help us to draw closer to Jesus and to learn more about him. Amen.

Can you write your own prayer for Holy Week?



If you don't finish all this week's activities during the service, please take the sheets home to use during Holy Week.

# Guide to Holy Week



## Palm Sunday

Sunday before Easter. Celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Observed with palm branches, parades, and celebration.



## Maundy Thursday

Thursday before Easter. Commemorates the Last Supper. Often observed with foot washing, stripping of the altar, and overnight prayer vigil to keep watch with Jesus in the garden.



## Good Friday

Friday before Easter. Most solemn day of the church year. Observes the day Jesus was crucified. Observed by praying the Stations of the Cross and three hours of silent prayer while Jesus was on the cross.



## Holy Saturday

Saturday before Easter. Observes the day Jesus was in the tomb. This is a day of somber reflection, reflecting on what we'd miss in a world without Jesus.



## Easter Sunday

Hallelujah! Christ has risen! This day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Sing hallelujahs and celebrate with great joy.



# Puzzle Sheet

Jesus travelled into Jerusalem on a colt – a baby donkey. Can you match these adult animals to their babies? The first one has been done for you.

- |                 |       |                |
|-----------------|-------|----------------|
| <b>cat</b>      | ..... | <b>calf</b>    |
| <b>horse</b>    |       | <b>joey</b>    |
| <b>dog</b>      |       | <b>piglet</b>  |
| <b>lion</b>     |       | <b>kitten</b>  |
| <b>sheep</b>    |       | <b>tadpole</b> |
| <b>pig</b>      |       | <b>cub</b>     |
| <b>kangaroo</b> |       | <b>lamb</b>    |
| <b>cow</b>      |       | <b>foal</b>    |
| <b>frog</b>     |       | <b>puppy</b>   |

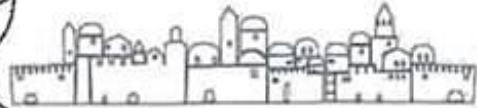
Can you fit the words below into the grid? CLUE: If you are struggling begin with the shortest word.

Jesus  
donkey  
crowd  
Hosanna  
Jerusalem  
palm  
Passover

Help Jesus find his way through the maze into Jerusalem



start here



How many palm leaves can you count on the page?

Answer: There are eleven palm leaves on the page







**Jesus said to his disciples.  
"Do this in remembrance of me."**



Jesus Carries His Cross