

Our Service Together



An Acclamation for the Season

All: Hosanna to the Son of David, the King of Israel. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's
holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Our Confession

Let us come to the light of Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to
you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us
our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his
kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. **Amen.**

The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

The Psalmody Psalm 118.1-2 and 19-29 *We say the psalm aloud*

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures for ever.
Let Israel now proclaim, 'His mercy endures for ever.'

Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.
I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have become my salvation.
The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.
This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
Come, O Lord, and save us we pray. Come, Lord, send us now prosperity.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord.
The Lord is God; he has given us light; link the pilgrims with cords right to the horns of the altar.
You are my God and I will thank you; you are my God and I will exalt you.
O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures for ever.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Gospel Mark 11.1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³ If anyone says to you, "Why are you doing this?" just say this, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately."' ⁴ They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵ some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' ⁶ They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Then those who went ahead and

those who followed were shouting,

'Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

¹¹ Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

at the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A Reflection for the day

Jesus entered Jerusalem in the middle of the Passover celebration, a time when people remembered the great saving act of God that brought their ancestors out of slavery in Egypt and gave them a new identity as the people of God. The manner of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem says much about who he is and the nature of his mission.

Jesus chose to ride on a colt; as a humble and unbroken animal, the colt was expected to be defiant and stubborn. But it not only tolerated the cloaks put on it, it also allowed Jesus to mount on its back. It obediently proceeded along the road into Jerusalem through the lively and noisy crowds. This fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, which predicted the Messiah's entry into Jerusalem on a colt, and interpreted it to mean he came in peace and humility rather than with conquest and power to demonstrate that his kingdom is not of this world's standards.

The word humility suggests a lack of arrogance or pride, and a readiness to accept others or serve them without seeking attention or recognition for oneself. Humility is often associated with traits such as selflessness, modesty, and a willingness to learn from others. It involves a sense of being grounded and an understanding of one's place in relation to others and the world around them. And Jesus certainly knew who he was, Son of the Father, and that he came to bring life, and life abundantly. He asked questions when people approached him, 'What do you want me to do for you,' for example, and didn't just assume what they wanted. It's also interesting to notice how people reacted to him. They spread their cloaks and palm branches on the road to honour and respect him as they hailed him with shouts of "Hosanna" and "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The crowd's acknowledgement of Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah, and the fulfilment of the Davidic promise, showed their hope of political liberation from Roman domination. Unfortunately, their understanding of Jesus as the Messiah was more formed by their circumstances and earthly models of power, especially Pax Romana (Roman peace) which established itself by conquest, rather than the prophetic images of Isaiah about the servant king. So they could not see Jesus for who he truly was.

It wasn't only the people who missed the point of who Jesus was because their understanding was shaped by their circumstances. The Pharisees, too, misunderstood him. They considered the honour he was receiving from the crowd a threat to them because to them honour was a commodity which was limited and Jesus gaining of honour meant they lost their share. As a result, Jesus' entry into Jerusalem led to his crucifixion and resurrection.

Mark invites us to two revolutionary acts. First, asking ourselves 'What is it that is shaping our understanding of Christ?' We are challenged to examine if we are more influenced by our political climate and models of

understanding, by desire for personal gain, or by fear of loss. Second, is our life a mirror of Christ's humility, of lack of arrogance or pride, and a readiness to accept others or serve them as Christ did? Or are we primarily concerned with our existence and continuation of our own lives and practices?

While there are no simple answers and we need to acknowledge we are all in the making, Lent seems to provide a good time for prayerful reflection on these matters.

The Creed

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Prayers *We make our intercessions*

God of truth, we pray for all whom you call to the task of being prophets.

To those crying for justice in a world controlled by material profit.
Holy God bring strength and perseverance.

To those imprisoned for having dared to challenge the powers,
Holy God bring courage and hope.

To those vilified or misunderstood for threatening closely held assumptions,
Holy God, bring wisdom and determination.

To those ridiculed or ignored for speaking peace in the midst of violence,
Holy God, bring a sense of your Kingdom.

And to your Church, unsure how to speak and be heard, but struggling to find a prophetic voice;
Holy God, bring faith and confidence that comes from confessing Christ as Lord, Amen.

The Collect

All: 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 your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All: 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.

A prayer as we enter Holy Week

Lord, take our hearts as yours. Fill them with your joy, fill them with your passion for this world, fill them with your purpose.

Jesus may we be ready to walk your way, follow with our cross, be your friends, be your servants. Amen

The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me, Christ over me; Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me. Amen.