

Prayers & Reflections for Palm Sunday 5th April 2020

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory.

Psalm 118:19-24 (from the Liturgy of the Palms)

- 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, ♦
that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord.
- 20 This is the gate of the Lord; ♦
the righteous shall enter through it.
- 21 I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me ♦
and have become my salvation.
- 22 The stone which the builders rejected ♦
has become the chief cornerstone.
- 23 This is the Lord's doing, ♦
and it is marvellous in our eyes.
- 24 This is the day that the Lord has made; ♦
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Prayer

Jesus, Lord of the journey,
we thank you
that you set your face firmly towards Jerusalem,
with a single eye and a pure intent,
knowing what lay ahead
but never turning aside.

Jesus, Lord of the Palms,
we thank you
that you enjoyed the shouts of 'Hosanna!'
from the ordinary people,
living fully in that moment of welcome
and accepting their praise.

Jesus, Lord of the Cross and the Empty tomb,
we thank you
that you have entered the heart
of our evil and our pain,
along a way that was
both terrible and wonderful,
as your kingship became your brokenness,
and your dying became
the triumph of undying love.

Reflection

Among these resources for worshipping at home this Holy Week and during our coronavirus isolation, I recommend the Examen as a really useful tool to deepen our relationship with God, creation and all humanity.

The Examen is a simple meditation that helps us in our relationship with God and with others and cultivates gratitude. During this time when our daily struggles may have increased due to coronavirus it may be of special benefit. It is a prayer of review – a short reflection back over the day, recalling events and taking note of your feelings.

The purpose is to become more aware of the ways in which God has been present to you, the times when the Holy Spirit is drawing you towards life.

Sit or stand and let God look at you.
Breathe in God's love.
Breathe out into God how you are right now.
Ask for God's light as you look over the day.
What makes you glad? Breathe it in.
What makes you feel sad? Let yourself feel it. Do not be afraid.
Breathe in God's love.
What do you need to help you? Let God know.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be.
Amen.

Prayers for ourselves and for others ...

Lord Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages curing every disease and illness.
At your command, the sick were made well.

Come to our aid now,
in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus,
that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus.
May they regain their health and strength.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents neighbours from helping one another.
Heal us from our pride,
which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Good Lord, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

May those who have died from the virus rest in peace and rise in glory.
Be with the families of those who are sick or have died.

As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers, all medical professionals,
and all who work in hospitals, care homes and in the community
who seek to heal and help those affected
and who put themselves at risk in the process.

May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations.

Give them the foresight to act with prudence and charity
for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve.

Stay with us, Lord, and grant us your peace.

Amen.

Spiritual Communion

One who is unable to receive Communion physically may make a spiritual communion and be certain that Christ comes to them in this way as surely as in communion.

Blessed be God,
by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened,
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.
Blessed be God for ever.

Come to my heart, Lord Jesus.

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day.
Amen.

after the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples,
'I am with you always'.
Be with me today, as I offer myself to you.
Hear my prayers for others and for myself,
and keep me in your care.
Amen.

Blessing

Go in peace.
And may the god of grace encircle your soul,
the God in Christ reach out to touch you
and the Spirit shine light on your path.
Amen.