

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

Hosanna in the highest!

The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 11th chapter

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and 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. ³If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!

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

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹¹Then 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

BLESSING OF PALMS;

The people raise their palm branches.

Bless these parade palms, O God of Celebration.

May they remind us of the simple joys of living.

May we remember the excitement that comes with following Christ.

Bless these protest palms, O God of Justice.

May they remind us that Empire is not a thing of the past.

May they make us bold and brave to stand up against injustice.

Bless these funeral palms, O God of Comfort.

May they remind us of the road that lies ahead.

May they encourage us in times of grief and pain.

We give you thanks for the parade, the protest, the processional.

Guide our steps through this holiest of weeks

as we cry out together "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna!" Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Refrain

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,

to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.

1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

Refrain

now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.
 cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.
 our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.
 To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

FROM PALM TO PASSION:

Reflection... After each sentence I read, I invite you to all respond with 'he kept on walking'.

Leader : Jesus knew that every step he took was one step closer to his death.

All: He kept on walking.

He knew that before he died he would have to confront the center of religious power, those who used God's name to manipulate and control and oppress.

He kept on walking.

He knew that he would be betrayed to death by one of his friends and companions on the road.

He kept on walking.

He knew that he would be falsely tried by a corrupt and unjust legal system.

He kept on walking.

He knew the crowds were fickle and likely to turn on him as they had the prophets before him.

He kept on walking.

He knew he would be mocked and humiliated.

He kept on walking.

He knew his dearest and closest friends would fail him, abandon him, deny him, and struggle to believe in him.

He kept on walking.

He knew he would be flogged and tortured almost beyond what he could physically bear.

He kept on walking.

He knew his mother's heart and the hearts of the men and women who loved him would be broken.

He kept on walking.

He knew he would suffer an agonizing death, and face the greatest confusion and darkness he had ever known.

He kept on walking.

He knew that if he was faithful to the end, he would know the greatest joy, of bringing redemption to the world.

He kept on walking.

He knew that when all of it was through, he would return to the One from whom he came, the One who is Perfect Love.

He kept on walking.

*Reflection...*In the next part of the liturgy we reflect on some of the people we have grown to love, the people whose plight has found a place in our hearts and in our prayers, and we imagine them walking this Way of the Cross, in the company of Jesus, and the Spirit of Jesus. With different levels of understanding, maybe, but with growing solidarity. To each of these groups I will say 'keep walking, keep walking' and then I invite you to respond with 'in the Spirit of Christ keep walking.'

Leader: We see those who have felt overwhelmed from this year's pandemic. Some are suffering stress and anxiety. Others are battling loneliness and depression. Some are battling COVID itself. Still others are grieving those whom they have lost to this pandemic.

Keep walking, keep walking.

All: In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We see how this year has opened up so many divisions in our country. We see those who are harmed by financial and social inequalities based on racism and sexism.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We see those who struggle to provide basic needs for themselves and those they love. We see the hungry and the homeless.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We see those who are seeking asylum walking the way of the cross. Treated as criminals or less than human, without a place, or protection, or provision.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We see neighbors battling isolation and depression walking the way of the cross. Carrying the cross of addiction, mental illness, broken relationships and lack of hope for change.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We see those walking aimlessly, lost and desperate for purpose and community. We know Jesus walks with them.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We see children, so vulnerable sometimes, and yet amazingly resilient. We see them so easily attracted to Jesus.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We see ourselves in all our messy mix of beauty and ugliness, courage and fear, insight and illusions, love and hate. With all our different personalities and creativity and passion.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

Now we name before you on our lips or hearts those who have not yet been named but need to hear this message of hope and perseverance.

Keep walking, keep walking.

In the Spirit of Christ keep walking.

We read that for the joy set before him, Jesus endured the cross. The joy of bringing us on the journey, and the joy of returning to be with the Father. And there must have been joy in the journey.

Jesus celebrated this meal with his closest friends before he was arrested... but he knew that in dying and rising again, he would bring a whole new meaning and power to this meal. That then we would be united by his Spirit, who would tear down the barriers between us and enable us to walk the path in solidarity, to share this meal as true brothers and sisters. That in the breaking of the bread we would recognize that we too are broken and blessed. And in the drinking of the cup we would recognize that all our sins have been forgiven, and we have entered into a covenant, in which God's Spirit can transform us from the inside out.

HOLY COMMUNION

Lord's Prayer

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,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

You are what God made you to be:
created in Christ Jesus for good works,
chosen as holy and beloved,
freed to serve your neighbor.
God bless you † that you may be a blessing,
in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.
 Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.
 Thanks be to God.