

Church of the Divine Love

**Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday**

**April 2, 2023 10:15 A.M.**

**Holy Eucharist, Rite II**

**The Liturgy of the Palms** (in parish hall)

see lectionary sheet insert

Processional Hymn #154 – **All glory, laud and honor**

see song insert-verse one sung in procession to the church

**The Word of God**

Opening Acclamation for Lent page 355

Collect for Palm Sunday – lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Isaiah 50:4-9a**

**Psalm 31:9-16**

Second Reading: **Philippians 2:5-11**

Gradual Hymn #474 – **When I survey the wondrous cross**

**PASSION OF OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW**

(the congregation may be seated until the verse which mentions the arrival at Golgatha)

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Confession page 360

The Peace      Welcome and Announcements

## **The Holy Communion**

Offertory Hymn – **Blessed Assurance** (on insert)

Doxology

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer A      page 361

Sanctus

The Lord's Prayer      page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer      page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn #325 – **Let us break bread together**

Post Communion Prayer      page 365

Prayer for Peace – on insert

Prayer of St. Francis      page 833

Dismissal Hymn #313 – **Let thy Blood in mercy poured**

Dismissal

### **Sermon Sunday April 2, 2023**

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 27:11-54.

### **Sisters and brothers in Christ,**

Today is a strange mixture of gospel readings, emotions, and contrast. We began with a parade; shouts of "Hosanna," a declaration of praise and a cry for salvation; and the waving of palms, the ancient symbol of victory and triumph. We end with a death march, a cry of forsakenness, and a last breath.

The liturgy is holding before us the reality of our world and our lives. We know what it's like to live in the tension of victory and defeat, joy and sorrow, life and death. At the center of this tension lies Jerusalem, Jesus' destination. Today marks Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. It is a threshold place and it is the most troubled place in the world; a place of division, struggle, conflict, and confrontation. Jerusalem, however, is not located only in Israel. Within every human heart there is a Jerusalem.

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is then, in reality, his entry into the depths of our life and being. This is never clearer or challenging than it is in Holy Week. It is not about choosing between life or death, palms or passion; but about choosing life and death, palms and passion. That's the tension of this day. The challenge is to remain fully embodied and present to that tension, not as spectators but as participants, not just this week but every week. Jesus was not quick to resolve the tension, nor should we be. It is out of that tension that new life will ultimately be birthed. There is, however, no birth without pain. To stand in the tension means we must choose to empty ourselves of anything that might keep us from fully embracing the events of this week and the life of God. That's what Jesus did. He did not use his status as God's son as an escape or something to be exploited. Instead, he emptied himself and chose obedience to the point of death. In so doing he fully embodied God's life and, consequently, human life.

Self-emptying allows full embodiment and presence. That is the triumph and victory of this day. There is, however, more to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem than today's first gospel reading. Jesus will enter Jerusalem four times this week. With each entry, Jesus empties himself and is more fully present than he was the time before. In the first entrance, today's reading, Jesus comes to Jerusalem, goes to the temple, looks around and leaves. The next day, Monday, he returns to Jerusalem, the second entrance, and cleanses the temple, overturning the tables and chairs of the money changers and merchants. Again, he leaves Jerusalem. The following day, Tuesday, Jesus goes to Jerusalem and enters the temple a third time. He teaches and again leaves. Thursday is Jesus' fourth entry. He comes back to Jerusalem with his disciples to eat the Passover meal.

These four entrances are distinct but not separate. Their unity is found in the self-emptying that allows Jesus to more fully embody and be present to God's life. If this is Jesus' entry into Holy Week, then it must also be ours. Each of Jesus' entrances calls us to enter into the depths of our own heart, for that is where Holy Week happens. Each entry offers us a means by which we might more fully embody and be present to the life of God within us. Upon his first entrance, Jesus looks around the temple, turns and leaves. There's nothing there for him. It is bereft of life, like a fig tree that produces no fruit. It offers no meaning. There is nothing worth staying for. You and I know those places too. They are physical places as well spiritual and emotional places. We often stay there longer than is good for us. Sometimes there are simply places from which we must turn and leave. They offer us nothing and only drain us of life. They are not fruitful places for us. Leaving these places is how we turn our life towards God.

Jesus refuses to buy in to the status quo during his second entrance into Jerusalem. This entry asks us to consider what needs to be purified and cleansed in us; thoughts, words, actions. How has our life

become a series of transactions rather than relationships of intimacy, vulnerability, and love? In what ways have we become gatekeepers of life and faith, demanding rather than offering obedience? It is not enough, however, to just clean out and throw away. Jesus' third entry fills the temple with his own interior wisdom. He challenges us to consider what teaching and wisdom guide and fill our life. Is it only external rules of behavior, or is it also sacred knowledge that transforms and leads to God? Have we let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus? Jesus enters Jerusalem a fourth time to share the Passover meal with his disciples. It is a night of tension. Jesus not only eats the Passover he will become the Passover. He shares himself to the point of allowing himself to be betrayed. He risks it all. His fourth entry is our call to self-giving, to hold nothing in reserve, to offer all that we are and all that have. What are the parts of ourselves we hold back and hide from God and others? Do we live by fear or by faith?

Each entry asks of us difficult questions, real-life questions. We must engage life with brutal honesty and move past superficial niceties. We must empty and embody. We can do that only because with each entry, Jesus empties himself that he might more fully embody and reveal God's self. He detaches from the temple structure. He cleanses and purifies the old ways. He interiorizes God's law and teaching. He becomes holy food for holy people. Each time he is more fully himself than he was the time before. Each entrance is a form of dying. Jesus was killed on the cross but he died in the triumphal entry.

I suspect the crowds that followed Jesus weren't so different from us. A ride on a borrowed donkey, songs of celebration and praise, garments and branches that fall before Jesus like the confetti of a ticker tape parade; now that's a triumphal entry. It was for them and it is for us. Most of us are probably pretty happy to leave it at that. Despite what we see, our expectations and hopes for the day, and even what we want to believe, the city itself, Jerusalem, has a very different experience of and response to Jesus' triumphal entry. "When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?'" Jesus and turmoil seem to go together. I wonder if Jerusalem sees and understands something we don't. I wonder if we are too easily distracted by the donkey, hosannas, and palms so that we miss what is really happening. I wonder if the city's response just might be the most faithful and appropriate response. Maybe we should all be in turmoil this day. Maybe turmoil is today's good news. Maybe the turmoil Jesus brings is exactly what we need.

The turmoil of this day is also the triumph of this day. The triumph of Palm Sunday is not in the donkey, the hosannas, or the palms. It is Christ's earth-shaking entry into our world and our lives. It is a triumph that will continue to be revealed throughout this week. It is a triumph that happens whenever and wherever Jesus is present. He empties that he might embody. So, it is for us too. Emptying and embodying are the way of Jesus and the way of this holy week. Emptying and embodying are Jesus' entry into humanity's heart. Emptying and embodying are our way into God's heart. **Amen!**

THE SUNDAY OF THE PASSION/PALM SUNDAY

10:15 AM LITURGY OF THE PALMS  
Beginning in the Parish Hall with procession to the church  
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)  
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

MONDAY 8:30 PM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

MAUNDAY THURSDAY

7:00 PM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)  
8:30 PM AA MEETING

GOOD FRIDAY 7:00 PM GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY (also on zoom)  
With Communion from the reserved sacrament

HOLY SATURDAY

7:00 PM THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER (also on zoom)

THE SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION/EASTER DAY

10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)  
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Jess Berbeck	Deb Giordano
Coffee Hour	Janet Croft	Jess Berbeck

### PARISH PRAYER LIST

Give to all who suffer the refreshing waters of your compassion and healing. Make them dwell in the safety of your care even in the midst of all that troubles them. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Lourdes S.	Bob Curley
John Mulligan	Arlene Goodenough	Celeste
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Gabriel
Barbara Stinson	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Anthony
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Ciara	Robert Sweat	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
People of Haiti	Christopher & Family	Julia
Mary & Family	People of Ukraine	Tim
Nathan Treadwell	Vincent	Art
Margaret	Kaylee	Judy
Phil Ryder	Amy	

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.  
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

#### Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the  
spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you,  
from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that  
with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may  
worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ  
our Lord. Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,

Lay my life before you,

How I love you.

(Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus  
and third verse starting with Spirit.)

#### Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn

but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions and glory, now and for ever. Amen