

Possible Prayer of Church [6th Sunday in Lent] *Palmarum* ✠ March 3.29.26

As people redeemed by the King who entered Jerusalem on a donkey so that He could leave carrying a Cross, let us pray for ourselves, for our brothers and sisters in Christ, and for those who cannot pray for themselves.

Almighty God, You have given us the peace that passes understanding in Christ, our Lord. Manifest His peace among the nations to bring an end to war and violence, unite Your Church in peace and harmony, and give Your calm to the troubled hearts of Your people, that they may serve You in peace and quietness. *Hosanna to the Son of David, C: Hosanna in the highest.*

Heavenly Father, You have revealed the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations. Guard Your Church against all her enemies. Empower her in the proclamation of the saving Gospel and in the works of mercy that make known Your love to those still in darkness and the shadow of death. *Hosanna to the Son of David, C: Hosanna in the highest.*

Merciful Lord, sustain all fathers, mothers and children; husbands and wives; friends and neighbors; laborers and employers; and teachers and students. Enable us all to serve our neighbors in godly vocations, delighting in the Lord's lovingkindness. *Hosanna to the Son of David, C: Hosanna in the highest.*

Lord God, our King, Your Son entered Jerusalem as the true ruler, ready to lay down His life for His people. Grant this same mind to those in authority over us, that they would discharge their duties even for the least among us, and so receive Your commendation. *Hosanna to the Son of David, C: Hosanna in the highest.*

O God, draw near to those in trial and peril. Forsake not the broken-hearted, nor those in any kind of need. Hear their humble cries, come quickly to their aid and rescue those who delight in You [*especially Faith & Our Savior Prayers*] ...and all those we each name and keep in our hearts in personal prayer. *Hosanna to the Son of David, C: Hosanna in the highest.*

Father, You reveal Your righteousness in the suffering and kingly death of Your Son, Jesus. By this Sacrament, increase our faith. Fill us with Your righteousness, and lead us to proclaim His death until He comes. *Hosanna to the Son of David, C: Hosanna in the highest.*

O Lord, as once Your Son was welcomed with palms and hosannas so open the hearts of all who hear Your Word, that by the Holy Spirit they may believe in Jesus Christ and come to Him. Restore the fallen, and bring back to the faith those who have rejected the Gospel for the prison of error and idolatry. *Hosanna to the Son of David, C: Hosanna in the highest.*

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! We praise You, Father, that You have sent Your Son not in wrath but in mercy. As we enter this most Holy Week and ponder together the mysteries of Your great salvation, show us the answer to Your people's prayers of "Hosanna" in the Passion of our LORD, Jesus Christ. Into Your gracious care, Heavenly Father, we place ourselves and everyone for whom we pray, through Jesus Christ, our King and LORD. **Amen.**

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY Matthew 21:1-9 *FADING HOSANNAS* 3.29.26 F.OS.L

GREETING *Dear fellow Redeemed by Him Who is your Entering "King," Amen.*

A SUNDAY TO A THURSDAY The "Hosannas" faded away quickly. Those who stood at the side of the road, cheering Jesus as He rode into Jerusalem not many days after would stand in the courtyard of the governor. Their shouts then would change from "**Hosanna!**" to "**Crucify Him!**" Jesus had disappointed them. On that first Palm Sunday they thought He had come into the city of Jerusalem to proclaim that His kingdom now would be established. They thought that His journey would take Him to the Temple on the summit of Mount Zion to be crowned King of the Jews. But, how let down they were that His destination was not the heights of Zion, but a much smaller hill shaped like a skull... **Golgotha.**

WE SING HOSANNA We, too, stand with these people this morning. The *Sanctus* in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar has us sing along with them: **Hosanna. Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the LORD; Hosanna in the highest.** There we show that we recognize it is into the bread and the wine that our Lord's true Body and Blood will come and be present before us, just as He physically entered Jerusalem. And, seeing that truth with the eyes of our faith, we will come forward to eat and drink for forgiveness.

WE DISAPPOINTED?! But, **how long** does our faith in the unseen last? With the people lining the streets of Jerusalem, do we sometimes become disappointed when our lives aren't changed as greatly as we think they ought? After all, shouldn't we who have the wonderful opportunity to eat Jesus' very Body and Blood have something really special to show for our devotion to Him?

HE COMES TO US! This question and many like it get at the heart what Palm Sunday is all about. This morning we ask, "**Just Who is it that is coming in the Name of the Lord? (and) What good does He do for Me today?**" And, seeing Jesus riding lowly on the donkey, Jesus Who comes invisibly in simple bread and wine, Who died that shameful death on the Cross; by God's power we come to the conclusion which is contrary to our own reason. Instead of the powerful, glorious appearing Savior so many people want, **it is the humble Jesus Christ Who comes TO US in the Name of the LORD**, and by Him we are saved!

I. He comes to save our sins in the Name of the LORD

[BEGINNING AND] END Today, the journey which our Lord began in Bethlehem where He was born is coming to an end in Jerusalem as He enters that Holy City [Jerusalem] where He will die. But this is not how the people of Jerusalem saw the Palm Sunday events.

GIVE US MORE... Their hearts were so consumed with the trappings of the world, its power, its wealth, its glory. They were so enthralled by the glitter of gold that their eyes saw in Jesus the One Who could get them more of **what they wanted**. So many had seen Jesus perform miracles -- raising the dead, feeding 4000 and 5000 people, healing the sick -- so many saw these things that they didn't look beyond them to see **Who it was that did them**. They saw only one who could give earthly treasures and ignored the heavenly truths of forgiveness and salvation which He so clearly taught. As a

result, they missed the seeming contradiction in the picture of the King of the Jews riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. They saw what they wanted to see, and so the truth was hidden from them. As **St. Luke** tells us in his account of Palm Sunday [19:37]: **The whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen.** Since the Feast of the Passover was the time in which kings traditionally were crowned by the Jews, they wanted to make Christ their earthly King, and nothing else. Their joy was only in what they had seen Him do and not in the Word He spoke. So, their faith was little or no faith as shown by their shouts of “Crucify Him!” which came from their throats later in the same week.

JESUS WEPT But there **was sadness** at the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem despite the seeming joy of the day. Indeed, as Jesus was nearing Jerusalem and travelling over the Mount of Olives, we read this from the pen of **Luke [19:41]** “*Now as Jesus drew near, He saw the city and wept over it.*” On this day when there seemed to be so much festivity and rejoicing, **Jesus was crying!** As the throngs waved their palm branches, tears rolled down our LORD’S cheeks as He rode on the donkey’s back! And this sadness came from Jesus’ knowledge that these who called praises to Him, would soon reject Him for He would not fit in with their image of a Savior.

MISGUIDED PURPOSE You see, the whole purpose of Christ’s coming was **not** to give an **earthly** kingdom back to the Children of Israel. The time for that had passed. But, despite all the prophecies that stated the contrary, these Children of Israel believed that that would happen. They wanted the power, the riches, the glory of an earthly kingdom. They had become convinced that their sins were paid for because they were Abraham’s children and they thought they lived [relatively] perfect lives.

HE DID HIS JOB Jesus, though, was not that kind of Savior. Moses came to give the Children of Israel a **physical** kingdom so they could worship God in spirit, set apart from the world. But Christ came to give a **spiritual** kingdom which, on the Last Day, would result in a physical kingdom not of this world. Jesus came in the Name of the LORD to live perfectly, then to suffer and die to pay the penalty owed by our sins. **That’s it.** And while that is not a glorious-sounding mission to undertake, our LORD did undertake it and He accomplished it. As our **Epistle** Lessons stated: **Christ Jesus made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a Servant, and coming in the likeness of a Man. And being found in appearance as a Man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him** [He did what He came to earth to do!] **and given Him a Name which is above every name.**

II. He comes into our hearts in the Name of the LORD

WHAT ABOUT ME, NOW? How nice it is that Jesus lived perfectly and died horribly and has since Risen from the dead and Ascended into Heaven. But **what about us, here, now, today?** What benefit is there for us in all this? Forgiveness is all well and good, but where are the **visible** results of what Jesus has done for us? These questions are asked by many and, sadly, many have come up with answers that are totally wrong. What we **do** learn this Palm Sunday, though, is that even if it feels like everything tells us it **isn’t** so, in reality Jesus Christ **does** enter into our hearts in the Name of the LORD.

LIVE OUR CONFESSION The danger is always present for us **not** to believe this. We look at our lives and the troubles that are continually heaped upon us, and we see nothing that would tell us that Christ is present anywhere for anyone! So many of us, as one writer put it, “...**Shout Hosanna on Sunday and run from the Garden on Thursday night. Many spread tender, devotional statements before Him and call Him Savior, Prince of Peace, King of Kings, and LORD of lords; but refuse to do His will in family or business relationships. Many vow allegiance like Peter and then deny. Many dispute who is the greatest and think it extravagant to wash men’s weary feet.**” Our human nature compels us to act this way. We seek some tangible proof that following Christ will benefit us, but when we see none, we begin to doubt. We start seeking proof elsewhere than in God’s Word. We fall away as did those who first shouted out “**Hosanna!**” on a Sunday, and then [we] cry “**Crucify Him!**” on **our** Friday **by our thoughts, words, deeds and lives.**

SAME ONE [CHRIST] COMES Jesus, though, does not promise observable, empirical proofs of our salvation. No, rather the proof of our forgiveness is hidden under things which **appear simple, humble - incapable** of giving anything of lasting value. **The Christ Who comes to us today is the same Person** Who sat with a **filthy soldier’s robe** about His Neck and a **mock king’s scepter** in His Hand. Who had the **spit** of mocking soldiers running down His Face. Who had the **crown of thorns** pushed into His Head. He does not come as other kings come, but He is a King nonetheless. Just as the mocking, angry, hatred of men cannot change the truth of who Jesus was, none of **our own doubts** today can change who He is and how He comes to us.

HE COMES TO... The blessings, despite what our eyes tell us, really **are** there, fellow Redeemed. **What we see is not what is.** What God tells us **IS WHAT IS.** As one commentator put it: *This is the Palm Sunday theme: The Savior comes to save us from our sins, to enter our hearts and homes, and to make His Light shine on all our human tangles. Let Hosannas ring for Him! He comes, riding on in lowly pomp to die on the Cross, where He gave Himself to open the gates of Heaven to let us in. He has been coming through the centuries.* Indeed, Jesus has been coming to the world in this humility since He left the earth by His Ascension. In His Word He comes, though it is spoken by weak ones such as we are. His forgiveness is proclaimed, though it is spoken by frail men who are as weak and sinful as those whom they forgive.

COMES TO BLESS US In this way the benefits of Jesus’ Life and death **are made our own** and **we are remade into faithful people** of God who look beyond what our eyes to see the reality which God has called into existence. Our LORD Jesus, though He appeared humbly as a human being, though He entered into Jerusalem, not riding on a white steed but on a lowly donkey; Jesus, despite His humility and the humble way He comes to us, **still IS our Savior from sin, death and the devil.** And we may live confidently in this truth even though we are assailed on all sides with temptation and doubt. Being strengthened through the powerful Word that forgives us all our sins, we are made into those **whose Hosannas will NOT FADE with time**, who throughout eternity will stand before Jesus’ Throne, palms in our hands as we stand with that **host arrayed in white.** Forever then, just as we do today, we will say of our Lord Jesus: **Blessed is He Who COMES STILL in the Name of the LORD!**
I’N, Amen. SDG