

# Sunday Readings

29<sup>th</sup> March 2026

## GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:1-11

L

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

*Glory to you, O Lord.*

When Jesus and his disciples drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord needs them", and he will send them at once.' This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

Say to the daughter of Sion,  
"Behold, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." '

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting,

'Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest!'

And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, 'Who is this?' And the crowds said, 'This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

## FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord GOD has given me  
the tongue of those who are taught,  
that I may know how to sustain with a word him  
who is weary.

Morning by morning he awakens;  
he awakens my ear  
to hear as those who are taught.  
The Lord GOD has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious;  
I turned not backwards.  
I gave my back to those who strike,  
and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard;  
I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.  
But the Lord GOD helps me;  
therefore I have not been disgraced;  
therefore I have set my face like a flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

## Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 21:8-9,17-20,23-24 Response v.2

**R/. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

All who see me deride me.  
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.  
He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;  
Let him release him if this is his friend.' **R/.**

Many dogs have surrounded me,  
a band of the wicked beset me.  
They tear holes in my hands and my feet  
I can count every one of my bones. **R/.**

They divide my clothing among them.  
They cast lots for my robe.  
O Lord, do not leave me alone,  
my strength, make haste to help me! **R/.**

I will tell of your name to my brethren  
And praise you where they are assembled.  
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;  
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.  
Revere him, Israel's sons. **R/.**

## SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul  
to the Philippians

2:6-11

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Phil 2:8-9

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.  
Christ became for us obedient to the point of death,  
even death on a cross.  
Therefore God has highly exalted him  
and bestowed on him the name that is above every  
name.  
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

# PALM SUNDAY

Lectionary Year A

The Word of God

Poem of the Week

*“Blessings on the King who comes, in the name of the Lord!”*

The central figure of Palm Sunday is our Blessed Lord. His teaching on this day is simple for His followers, but difficult for the bystander: peace. The Prince of Peace proclaims that His kingdom is one of peace. There is no violence, no retaliation, no retribution in His kingdom. Palm Sunday teaches us to absorb all the hurts, heartaches and the heaviness, otherwise peace will never reign in us or in the world. Peace comes from turning the other cheek, going the extra mile and giving and giving of self and time to others.

So Palm Sunday gives us the opportunity to examine our own faithfulness to Christ. On this wonderful day when we process and wave our palm branches and take our palm crosses home for yet another year, it is all so easy to be caught up with the excitement of it all and get carried along by the very moving Palm Sunday liturgy. The test comes the next day. Are we prepared to stay with Our Lord in Jerusalem as the atmosphere changes towards Him? Do we dare to stand by Him as He faces constant conflict with the religious leaders? Do we love Him enough to want to bathe His weary feet? Do we stay with Him in prayer in the Garden? Are our bodies and souls drained as He dies on the Cross? All these encounters should be included in our cry of “Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” to-day.

As well as Palm Sunday piercing our souls for faithfulness for the whole of this Holy Week, it also should pierce our conscience in relation to our overall faithfulness. Again like Palm Sunday festivities, it is rather easy to strive towards holiness when everything seems to be going well but when the bolt out of the blue strikes, what then? When we have to suffer endlessly whether through physical or spiritual pain, especially if it is inflicted on us by others, what then? When God seems far removed from us and all is dark and despondent, what then? When life seems empty and aimless, what then? Has our faith rooted itself deeply enough to help us cope with these situations, so that they do not control us? Can we see such situations as growing times in holiness or better still more Christ-like?

As we welcome our Lord this day with our palm branches and sing our “Hosannas”, may it be done with sincerity and in the knowledge that before we welcome Him as our Risen Lord on Easter Day, our knees must watch and pray with His in His agonized moments in Gethsemane, our feet must tread with His along the streets of Jerusalem, and our souls must experience His anguish and grief on the cross. May we receive His grace to follow Him to Calvary. Amen.

## Palm Sunday

Astride the colt and claimed as King  
that Sunday morning in the spring,  
he passed a thornbush flowering red  
that one would plait to crown his head.

He passed a vineyard where the wine  
was grown for men of royal line  
and where the dregs were also brewed  
into a gall for Calvary's rood.

A purple robe was cast his way,  
then caught and kept until that day  
when, with its use, a trial would be  
profaned into a mockery.

His entourage was forced to wait  
to let a timber through the gate,  
a shaft that all there might have known  
would be an altar and a throne.

**Marie J. Post (1919-1990)**



## Prayer of the Week

### The Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.  
Body of Christ, save me.  
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.  
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.  
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
O Good Jesu, hear me.  
Within thy wounds hide me.  
Suffer me not to be separated from thee.  
From the malicious enemy defend me.  
In the hour of my death, call me  
and bid me come to thee,  
that with thy saints I may praise thee  
for ever and ever. Amen.