

Reflection

Today's reading combine both a sense of triumph and tragedy. We read of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem knowing that later in the week we will read the long tale of sufferings and indignities to which Jesus was subjected. The Hosannas sung as Jesus our King entered Jerusalem, would very soon turn to hate and it will be difficult to recognise our King in the battered, scourged, crowned-with-thorns, crucified remnant of a human being.

Yet through it all Jesus' dignity, power and authority keep shining through, making his captors seem to be the ones on the defensive. After the prayer in the garden, Jesus stands up to face those arresting him full of an inner strength and authority. He stands in silent dignity before his judges, refusing to be intimidated. In the midst of his own pain and indignities, he can continue to think of the needs of others and can, after his own teaching, pray for and forgive his enemies.

When, like Jesus in the garden, were we filled with fear, only to be filled with a fearless courage and joy as we turned to our Lord? At this time of social distancing and self isolation, do you continue to think of others and how you can serve them? Are we more focused on what we can't do that we fail to see the opportunities God is giving us to be community? The death of Jesus, which we commemorate this week, was not in the end a sign of failure. It was Jesus' moment of triumph and victory. The same can be true for us, even though our churches might be closed.

So, as we participate in our Holy Week devotions, let us not concentrate simply on the sufferings. Those sufferings only have meaning because they lead to resurrection, new life and new joy. The pain and sufferings of our lives are not the punishments of God. They become, however, sources of good when they help us to become more mature, more loving, more caring, more sympathetic people — in other words when they lead us to be more like Jesus himself, when we love as he loved us.

The Lord be with you.



Anglican Parish of the Otways Newsletter

Palm Sunday
5th April, 2020

Priest in Charge — Rev'd Jenny Brandon

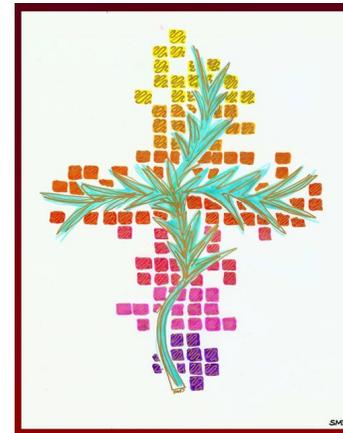
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**Anglican Parish of the
Otways**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today we enter the most holy week of our Christian year. It is going to seem very strange for us as public worship plays such an important role in our spirituality on any “normal” Holy Week. It’s a time when we pay our own devotion to God but also make a public display of our faith and the true meaning of Easter to our community through our ecumenical events.

So how are we going to do this when we pretty much have to stay home. Well I have ideas!

When we lived remotely, and getting to church was impossible, this is what we did to highlight the events of Holy Week for ourselves and the children.

On Palm Sunday, we placed a palm cross (if I have been able to get them to you) in our sacred space in the home. We would also put a few sprigs of greenery in a vase to remind us of the branches waved as Jesus entered Jerusalem.

On Maundy Thursday we would have a simple seder meal, instructions for which are in your Otway Oracle. This would remind us of the whole salvation story and the institution of the Lord’s Supper.

On Friday we would put three nails in our sacred space, and fast from all but the most basic essentials. Of course a hot cross bun was an essential! We would also let the children build an Easter garden rearranging it from crucifixion to burial to resurrection!

ON Saturday evening we would have a bonfire! Now I don’t think a bonfire in your back yard is a good idea, remember we lived in the middle of nowhere, but you could place a candle or lamp in your window to tell the world Christ, the light of the world, has risen.

Then on Saturday, Flowers were placed in the sacred space. If you do this, then when we stop at 10am to say our prayers, we will feel truly connected with God and each other. Enjoy an Easter egg and then ring someone to share the joy of Easter with them.

As for our more public announcement of the true meaning of Easter, well, Richard and I will be decorating the outside of St Aidan’s with palm branches this week, on Good Friday, we will strip them down and place the large plain wooden cross in front of the church, and then on Easter Eve we will hang our flags, bunting and put our Christmas lights up. We will announce the truth of Easter!

I trust you have a holy and reflective Holy Week.
Blessings, Jenny.



Prayer of the Week

Almighty and everlasting God,
of your tender love towards us
you sent your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,
to take upon him our flesh,
and to suffer death upon the cross,
that all should follow the example of his great humility:
mercifully grant
that we may both follow the example of his patience,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Readings for Holy Week

Instead of printing the readings for this week I have listed a reading for each day to help you in your daily reflection through Holy Week. I hope it helps.

Palm Sunday— Matthew 21:1-11—Jesus Triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

Monday in Holy Week—John 12:1-11 –Mary Anoints Jesus

Tuesday in Holy Week—John 12:20-36—

Some Greeks wish to see Jesus

Wednesday In Holy Week—John 13:21-32—Jesus foretells his Betrayal.

Maundy Thursday—John 13:1-17, 31-35—The Last Supper

Good Friday—Matthew 26 & 27—The Events of Good Friday

Easter Day—Matthew 28—The First Easter.