

St Mary's, Barton-upon-Humber: Readings, prayers and notices for the week April 5-April 12

Palm Sunday Collects

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

or

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,
and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:
give us the mind to follow you and to proclaim you as Lord and King,
to the glory of God the Father.

Palm Sunday readings

Matthew 21.1-11 (the Triumphal Entry)

Isaiah 50.4-9a; Philippians 2.5-11, Matthew 26.14-27.66 or 27.11-54

Meditation

A man walks down the street and is acclaimed by large crowds of people. He's viewed as some sort of hero who will make their lives better. Just a few days later, the same man has been deserted by the crowds, and even his friends, and was physically alone and isolated. Sound familiar in these very strange days? Then read on

Today's gospel is an action story and those actions speak very loudly. Firstly, the action of Jesus in coming to Jerusalem. Then there was the action of the disciples preparing the way, and the use of an animal, a humble donkey. There was considerable action among the crowds as they spread their garments in the way, and waved their palms. Of course the action of the crowds takes on a totally different aspect later in the week.

Jesus knew that his entry into Jerusalem would be the way of suffering and yet he still set his face to go to that place. It required a mighty act of bravery and commitment to go there; many other men would have gone the other way, or found another way round, but Jesus went straight forward.

The disciples were sent on ahead to prepare the way. Most likely they didn't realize the lasting significance of the action as they went to the village and found the

donkey tethered with the foal beside her, untied them and brought them to the Master. It was of course the action of using that particular animal, the lowly donkey, on which to enter Jerusalem that really gave significance to this picture. It was a Messiah's greeting that the crowds gave Jesus as he entered, but he was the Messiah on the beast of burden, and not on some war horse. The Messiah entered the Messiah's city, meek and riding on a donkey. The crowds of course joined in the action as well. They carpeted the roadway with their cloaks and some cut branches from the trees to wave, and to spread in his path. This was enough to show how they received him – it was the reception of a king. They added to their actions with words "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" These words, by themselves, would have had much less impact without the actions to accompany them.

And so the Son of David entered David's city, acclaimed, feted, mobbed, cheered. How fickle these crowds were. How soon they were to change their allegiances. How soon we hear the shouts of "Crucify!" How often do we see today marches and demonstrations start out peacefully and peaceably, only for a few hot-heads to cause trouble and the whole event descends into unrest or even worse. How often do we see in sport that a manager who is the best thing since sliced bread one week can be hounded by the press and supporters after a couple of defeats. How fickle people are.

Action of course is still required of us. Do we sit and merely listen, or perhaps not even do that? If Jesus is to come now, to reign in the hearts of his people **now**, he still needs us, his present-day disciples, to prepare the way. If we feel that perhaps we are like that humble donkey, useless and helpless in so many ways, then we are wrong – the Lord needs us just as he needed that lowly donkey. Are we, on this Palm Sunday morning, among those who are ready, not only to prepare his way, but to greet him when he comes? Or are we going to change our palm cross into a clenched fist?

Let us be ready to offer ourselves to carry him into the world in which he still seeks to come. Let us be ready to prepare the way for him. Let us pray that we will have the courage to set ourselves forward and not change direction.

Unfortunately this year we can't come together physically this Holy Week to the usual Communion or United services. However, we can use the time to pray for others. To pray for those people actively in the front line of the Coronavirus, often putting themselves in danger, and sometimes sacrificing their own lives. We can still walk with Jesus (only once a day of course) in our journey through this week. May you have a blessed and truly holy Holy Week.

Alan.

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For your prayers

Church: Our keeping of Holy Week. Chaplains in the NHS. That we may welcome Jesus among us, and crown and exalt him as our King, walking with him as he takes the road to the cross.

World: Health workers, all those involved in keeping essential services running. Our own political leaders. Those charged with peace-keeping and peace-making. The governments & peoples of China, Syria and the Middle East, North Africa. All seeking to resolve the issues surrounding protection of the environment, of infection control and of migrancy.

Our Community: Those who care for the Church - caretaker, cleaners, flower rota, etc.

Those in need: Those whose lives or livelihoods are endangered by Coronavirus. Those who fear the prospect of isolation.

All who live in areas of conflict or tension; the homeless, the poor, the sick, the enslaved, the hungry and the abused. Victims of terrorism.

Those for whom our prayers are asked: Kate Eaton, Mike Page-Chestney,

Julie Newton, Penny Archer, Melissa Milbourn, Brenda Skinner, Sally, Abby, Jan, Nell

Departed: Ron Fox. Those who have died as a result of CORVID-19 infection, especially those who work in the caring and medical communities.

Gospel Readings for Holy Week:

Monday: John 12.1-11

Tuesday: John 12.20-36

Wednesday: John 13.21-32

Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12.1-4, (5-10), 11-14, Psalm 116.1, 10-17,

Corinthians 11.23-26, John 13.1-17, 31b-35

Good Friday

Isaiah 52.13 - 53.1, Psalm 22, Hebrews 4.14-16; 5.7-9, John 18.1 - 19.42

Holy Saturday

Matthew 27.57-66

Next Sunday, Easter Day.

Acts 10.34-43, Psalm 118.1-2, 14-24, Colossians 3.1-4, John 20.1-18 or Matthew 28.1-10

Updates

Palm Sunday Crosses: The Archbishops are keen that the Church be Responsible in the current situation and be seen to do nothing which might transmit the virus so have declared that palm crosses should not be distributed. They will be blessed today (Palm Sunday) and I'm working on a way of hygienic distribution - please keep an eye out for updates.

Foodbank is still operating, but unable to take donations in the usual manner. We are accepting cash donations to help run things slightly differently during the present situation.

Christian Aid: donations may still be made

Those in need. Please help us keep our intercessions up to date, and let the clergy know of any urgent needs for prayer. Obviously at the moment the usual pastoral work of our ministers, lay and ordained, is rather disrupted but it's still important that we know what's going on. Please do continue to leave requests for prayer - either by email to david.rowett@lincoln.anglican.org, or the phone, or even a note through my door, and encourage others likewise.

Coronavirus Provisions

Now we can't keep St Mary's open, we'll be relying on a mix of things to keep in touch.

If you have internet access, aside from all the resources on the diocesan website there's also Barton FM's contributions from Fr Robert -

Weekdays: 8am - 'Prayer for the Day' - A short comment and prayer (different for each day), which opens the broadcasting day for the radio station.

Midday - 'The Lord's Prayer' - styled akin to that heard in Minsters and Cathedrals, The Lord's Prayer is prayed every lunchtime every day of the week.

10pm (midnight on Weds & Sats) - 'Night Prayer'

Sundays: 8am - 'Morning Prayer' from Common Worship

Midday - 'The Lord's Prayer'

6pm - 'Evening Prayer' from Common Worship

10pm - 'Night Prayer'

All prayers and services are available at all times on Barton FM - search YouTube for Barton FM Radio, where listeners can pick whatever they wish to listen to. Vanessa Wright has also provided a link to a Taizé style service but we're having trouble accessing it. When we get it working it will appear on our FB page.

In the porch, on the website and available (we hope) through your letterbox, there's a set of prayers which you (or anyone else) might find helpful or useful, and a short order of worship which can be used in the home as you see fit. You may find it supportive if you pray at the normal time for 'your' church service, be it 8, 9.30 or 6, in the knowledge that other members of St Mary's will be joining you from their own homes. There is also a simple cycle of prayer drawn up for this time, which simply calls to mind different groups caught up in the emergency on a seven-day cycle. All of this can be emailed - if we have your email address!

There will be an 8.00 service on Sundays on local radio

Our websites and FB pages contains details of how to join others online for prayer, worship, study, and community life. The Diocesan Website in particular carries material of all sorts, and our own website carries a number of resources also. David hopes to get some extra meditative material for Holy Week on to it for Monday

See: www.lincoln.anglican.org

www.stmarysbarnton.org.uk

www.facebook.com/StMarysChurchBarton

www.facebook.com/Bartonparishes/