

Service at Home

Lent 5 29/3/2020

The following prayer invites the Holy Spirit to be a part of our devotions

God of the festival,
we come to worship you with joy and thanksgiving. God of
peacemaking,
we search to find you in our midst to bring peace this day.
God of mystery and encounter,
we begin this Holy Week journey, attentive to your voice,
seeking your way, your wisdom,
and your word for this time and place.
Be with us as we journey together. Amen.

A Prayer of Confession, where we reflect on our sinful nature and ask God
to forgive us as God has promised to do.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Reflect on the following as we become aware of God's forgiveness

Jesus, on the day of the festival,
you were not what people expected,
but then again you never are.
Forgive us when we seek a Messiah who rides a horse not a donkey,
who represents the powerful and not the vulnerable.
Jesus,
on the day of the festival,
people crowded the streets to catch a glimpse of you,
even if only for a moment.
Forgive us when we carry on with our lives,
forgetting to even look for you among us.

Jesus, on the day of the festival,
people shouted praises to you,
loud and clear, strong and unashamed.
Forgive us when we forget to honour you
or we are unwilling and embarrassed to use your name.

Be with us as we reimagine the festival, remembering the scenes of heightened emotion, heightened devotion, heightened passion, heightened tension, heightened risk. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE:

Jesus was an unexpected Messiah riding a donkey.
Jesus was the one who emptied himself of power,
and was filled with love.
Christ's arms are stretch out wide in forgiveness.
We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.

The readings for you to read before your reflection

Psalm 118:1-2 & 19-29

A Song of Victory

- ¹ O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!
- ² Let Israel say,
"His steadfast love endures forever."
- ¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.
- ²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.
- ²¹ I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
- ²² The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.
- ²³ This is the LORD'S doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
- ²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it. □
- ²⁵ Save us, we beseech you, O LORD!
O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!
- ²⁶ Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD. □
We bless you from the house of the LORD.
- ²⁷ The LORD is God,
and he has given us light.
Bind the festal procession with branches,

- up to the horns of the altar. □
- 28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.
- 29 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

This is a word from our God, Thanks be to God!

You are invited to use the following practice to process the scripture.

1. What are you hearing in this scripture?

- Don't try to figure it out, rather try to a word for you
- Are there words or phrases that stand out?

2. Reflect of the Scripture

- Read a second time reflecting on the way your life is touched by this reading.
- What is it in my life that needs to hear this reading now?

3. Respond to message given to you.

- What difference will this make to my life?
- Has this scripture touched my life?
- Have I been motivated to react or act differently?
- Do I need to reflect further on this scripture?

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:1-11

¹When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately. □" ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵ "Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,

and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹⁰When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

**This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Praise to You Lord Christ!**

A Reflection on the readings:

You are invited to use the following practice to process the scripture.

1. What are you hearing in this scripture?

- **Don't try to figure it out, rather try to a word for you**
- **Are there words or phrases that stand out?**

2. Reflect of the Scripture

- **Read a second time reflecting on the way your life is touched by this reading.**
- **What is it in my life that needs to hear this reading now?**

3. Respond to message given to you.

- **What difference will this make to my life?**
- **Has this scripture touched my life?**
- **Have I been motivated to react or act differently?**
- **Do I need to reflect further on this scripture?**

REFLECTION

A few years ago, performing artist Joshua Ladgrove developed an improvisational comedy show called *Come Heckle Christ*. The premise was that Ladgrove would dress as Jesus and people would be encouraged to jeer at him, ask questions or throw things at his head. Many people were outraged, including some Christian communities and the show hit the headlines. Two days after the initial newspaper article came out condemning the show, another article was printed. The new headline was that ticket sales to the show had increased by 60%. If you had the chance to go to "heckle" Christ, what would you yell out at Joshua Ladgrove dressed as Jesus? If you had the chance to yell out in the crowd at Jesus, what might you say?

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Jesus Christ, who journeyed through Jerusalem to the cross and beyond, we pray for those whose burden is heavy and whose fear is great.

We pray for people who are swayed by public opinion or through peer pressure, to make unwise choices. Bring wisdom, loving God.

You came to bring peace and were crucified unjustly for your message of love.

We pray for peacemakers in our world and those who seek justice at great personal cost. Bring courage, loving God.

You came into the city to the shouts of the crowd and the palpable emotion of the city spilled over into violence.

We pray for places of protest this day. For those whose voices are silenced or ignored, and for those who have power but are disconnected from the people. Jesus Christ, your road was difficult, and your path held much suffering.

We pray for those who suffer this day.

We bring before you those who are close to us who face particular challenges at this

time. Bring peace and strength, loving
God.
Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ we pray.
Amen.

**Please pray for those known to you who are sick and have asked
for prayer.**

**You might like to pray for health workers and all those working in
the lives of those who are sick.**

Lord hear our prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done,

On earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

As we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

And deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours

Now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

Please Lord be with me this week and all those I love.

Be with our congregation, family and friends

Go into the world in peace,
embraced by the steadfast love of God,
blessed by the humility and courage of Jesus Christ
and filled with the immeasurable power of the Holy Spirit.

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord.