

Sixth Sunday of Lent:
Palm Sunday

Liturgy of the Palms
and

Liturgy of the Passion

Palm Sunday

Notes

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of the 'Great Week', the highpoint of the Church calendar, in which we celebrate the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus. The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, riding a donkey from the Mount of Olives to the acclaim of the crowds, fulfils messianic prophecies and gives expression to his kingship. His triumph is not complete until he has been crucified and raised from the dead. On this day Jesus is hailed by the pilgrim crowds, reflecting their expectation of liberation by a king of David's dynasty. The events of Palm Sunday, while confirming the identity of Jesus as the heir of David, are the prelude to a sequence of events in which popular Jewish notions of messiahship are quite fundamentally reinterpreted: Jesus is deserted, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross, and buried in the tomb of a stranger, before he is raised to glory, his kingship universal and eschatological.

The liturgy of Palm Sunday has two emphases: the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and the Passion as a whole, of which this forms the prelude.

Where possible, the triumphal entry is recalled liturgically with a procession. If convenient, the congregation may gather in a hall or at an outdoor venue where the Liturgy of the Palms may begin. Where this is not possible, the procession takes place in the church, the Liturgy of the Palms being conducted near the main door.

Crosses made from palm leaves are now carried during the Palm Sunday procession in many churches. But the green

branches of real palms, the olive tree, willow, rosemary, or yew, may just as appropriately be used.

The Gospel of the Passion should be read at the principal Eucharist in every congregation on this day; and if the Eucharist cannot be celebrated, then at the Service of the Word.

If there is an *additional* celebration of the Eucharist, *without a procession*, the Gospel of the Liturgy of the Palms may be read at section 11 in *Scottish Liturgy 1982*; either or both the collects may be used at section 8; and palms can be distributed as the congregation departs after the Dismissal.

Liturgy of the Palms:

The Commemoration of the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem

Greeting

Blessed be God:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:

**And blessed be God's kingdom,
now and for ever. Amen.**

The presiding celebrant introduces the liturgy:

Dear friends in Christ, in our observance of Lent we have been preparing, by self-examination and spiritual discipline, to celebrate the mystery of our Lord's death and resurrection. In baptism we are marked with the cross of Christ. Today we begin the solemn celebration of our salvation through his death on the cross and his resurrection to glory. We now recall our Lord's entry as king into Jerusalem, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us follow him, that, as we died with Christ in our Baptism, so we may share his risen life.

Collect

Assist us Lord God of our salvation:

that we may enter with joy

into the celebration of those mighty acts

whereby you give us life and immortality;

through Jesus Christ, our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, world without end.

Amen.

Gospel of the Palms

When the Gospel is introduced:
Glory to Christ our Saviour.

<i>Year A</i>	<i>Year B</i>	<i>Year C</i>
Matthew 21. 1-11	Mark 11. 1-11	Luke 19. 28-40

At the end:

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.
Praise to Christ our Lord.

Distribution of the Palms

Palms and/or other branches are brought to the presiding celebrant, who says:

Almighty and everlasting God,
may these palms [*and branches*] be for us
a sign of Christ's victory over sin and death;
and may we who have been baptised in his name,
worship him as king, obey him as Lord,
and follow him in the way of the Cross,
which leads to eternal life.

We ask this through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Psalm or hymn may be sung, during which the palms are distributed to the congregation.

The Procession

Almighty God,
whose most dear Son went not up to joy,
but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:
mercifully grant, that we,
walking in the way of his cross,
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Let us proceed in peace.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

The procession to the church begins.

'All glory, laud and honour' or some other appropriate hymn is sung.

Liturgy of the Passion

On reaching the church, the Eucharist continues at section 8 in Scottish Liturgy 1982, with the Collect of the Passion.

If there is no Eucharist, the Service of the Word continues at section 5.

Collect of the Passion

Almighty God,
who, in your tender love for the human race,
sent your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,
to take our nature upon him,
and to suffer death upon the cross,
giving us the example of his great humility:
mercifully grant,
that we may both follow the example of his passion,
and also, be made partakers of his resurrection;
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end.

Amen.

The Gospel of the Passion

After the First and Second Readings and the Psalm, the Gospel of the Passion is read without the usual opening and closing responses which accompany the Gospel on other days.