Palm Sunday 2020
St John’s Canberra

Call to worship and greeting
Awake to the day of triumph for our Saviour!
Give thanks for this day that leads to the cross!
Come with your branches, hosannas, and songs!
Fill the air with welcome to the Lord!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.  (Ps. 118:26a)

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Today begins the Great Week of the Christian Year. With Christians throughout the world, we come together this week to call to mind, and to express in word and action, the centre of the Easter mystery: our Lord’s Passover from death to life. When Jesus entered into Jerusalem to loud hosannas, he already knew that he faced betrayal at the hand of the one he called his friend. In his last moments, alone and in pain, and deserted by his followers, he still trusted in your promise of new life. Today we commit ourselves to walk the way of the cross, so that, sharing his sufferings, we may be united with him in his risen life.

Confession and Absolution
Let us face this day of palms and Jesus’ passion with honesty, confessing our sin before God.

We confess that we have sinned,
and although we would like to deny it,
we have forsaken you.
We are horrified by the suffering we cause –
to you, ourselves, and the world you have created.
Open the gates of your forgiveness
and restore us in your love,
for the sake of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  Amen.
(Feasting on the Word Worship Companion Year B)

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  Amen.
**Prayer of the Day**
Holy God, you reveal the truth about your people
and the ways of our world
in the suffering of the Son and his steadfast love.
Show us again the image of humility you desire for us,
and teach us obedience,
so that self-emptying may be our pathway,
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

*(Feasting on the Word Worship Companion Year A)*

**A reading from Philippians, chapter 2, beginning at verse 5 (5—11)**

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

For the word of the Lord
**Thanks be to God**

**Palm Gospel**
The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke chapter 19, commencing at verse 28 (28-40)

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, “Why are you untying it?” just say this: “The Lord needs it.”’

So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, ‘Why are you untying the colt?’ They said, ‘The Lord needs it.’ Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road.

As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, ‘Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!’
Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, order your disciples to stop.’ He answered, ‘I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.’

This is the gospel of our Lord,

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

*Please go the parish website again for the YouTube link for the second half of the service.*

**Homily**
Canon Paul Black, Rector

**Prayers of the People**
Loving God,
in all our prayers today we speak and pray through the lens of a world stopped by an invisible virus. That such a thing so small could hold so much power has astounded us. We pray for our world, our community and our church knowing that many people are facing fear – of illness, or unemployment, or homelessness, or isolation, or deteriorating mental health or physical violence. We all face an uncertain future.

And so we pray for our world, for leaders who are making decisions that will affect life and death, for people who are divided by fear and uncertainty. We ask your help and peace at this time, and guidance for all decision makers and peace keepers.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

As we find ways to continue to be church, we ask your blessing on us all Lord. Please be with Paul, Margaret, Kevin, Kimberley and Michael as we work from home. Bless Vicky Cullen and David Hill and Geoffrey Sibly and they continue to minister among our community. Be with all our volunteers, both in the office and beyond, as they keep the wheels turning.

Guide the leadership team of Parish Council and Wardens as they make hard decisions about our future operations considering reduced finances.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We isolate in the comfort of our homes and our hearts are saddened by those near and far who do not have the luxury of feeling safe and protected. Be with them Lord, help us find ways to continue to help others in need.

We remember especially all those seeking asylum, refugees and all who cannot return to their homes. May your compassion rule at this time, remind us of your mandate to help the widow, orphan and strangers on our midst.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.
As some of us still look at our loved ones across the dinner table, we remember all who sit alone this day, those who are separated from family and support. Be with those who yearn to hold loved ones in their arms, to sit with loved ones who are dying, to know loved ones are safe. Give comfort to all who are alone. Enfold them in your love, Lord – may they know your presence.
Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the extraordinary gestures of kindness we learn about. Help us all to remain generous and continue to support our missions and charities. Bless all who are working in St John’s Care especially Sarah and Jason. May their latest appeal be successful so they can continue their work in this time of need.
Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We pray for all the healthcare workers, hospital staff, community workers and aged care workers as they look after the isolated, sick and dying. Bless their selflessness and dedication and keep them and their families safe.
Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

And Lord, at this time, life and death continues. To those who are ill this week, to those who are dying, send your Spirit of comfort and hope and assurance that your love ascends all, and lasts for eternity.

**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 for ever.  Amen.

*The sending out of God’s people*  
Loving God, we thank you for hearing our prayers,  
feeding us with your word,  
and encouraging us in our meeting together.
Take us and use us
to love and serve you
and all people,
in the power of your Spirit
and in the name of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing
Go in peace, assured of God’s presence with you,
with the mind of Christ Jesus as your path and guide,
and the constant companionship of the Holy Spirit;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

(Feasting on the Word Worship Companion Year A)

Some parts of the Service are from A Prayer Book for Australia, Broughton Press, and the Anglican Church of Australia Liturgical Commission.
Bible readings are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible.