

FOLLOW CHRIST THROUGH
HOLY WEEK

Prayers & Rituals

DAILY HOLY WEEK RITUAL
1. PALM SUNDAY

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It is recommended that at least part of every meal time be spent in listening to some reading.
(can be changed according family circumstances)

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PREPARING FOR THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

“But thou, O Lord,
knowest all their
counsel against me unto
death; forgive not their
iniquity, and let not
their sin be blotted out
from thy sight! Let
them be overthrown
before thy eyes, in the
time of Thy wrath do
thou destroy them, O
Lord our God!”
(Jeremias chapter 18).



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1. WALKING INTO THE FACE OF EVIL

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Lesson from Jeremias the Prophet
Chapter 18

In those days, the wicked Jews said to one another: “Come, and let us invent devices against the Just: for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us strike him with the tongue, and let us give no heed to all his words!”

The Just One responds: “Give heed to me, O Lord, and hear the voice of my adversaries. Shall evil be rendered for good, because they have dug a pit for my soul? Remember that I have stood in thy sight to speak good for them, and to turn away thy indignation from them. Therefore deliver up their children to famine, and bring them into the hands of the sword; let their wives be bereaved of children, and widows; and let their husbands be slain by death; let their young men be stabbed with the sword in battle. Let a cry be heard out of their houses; for thou shalt bring the robber upon them suddenly, because they have dug a pit to take me, and have hid snares for my feet.

“But thou, O Lord, knowest all their counsel against me unto death; forgive not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from thy sight! Let them be overthrown before thy eyes, in the time of Thy wrath do thou destroy them, O Lord our God!” (Jeremias chapter 18).

It makes us tremble to read these awful anathemas, which Jeremias, the figure of Christ, speaks against his enemies, the Jews. This prophecy, which was literally fulfilled at the first destruction of Jerusalem by the Assyrians, received a more terrible fulfilment at the second visitation of God’s anger upon this city of malediction.

This time, it was not because the Jews had persecuted a prophet; it was because they had rejected and crucified the very Son of God. It was to their long-expected Messiah that they had rendered evil for good. It was not a saint, like Jeremias, that had spoken good for them to the Lord, and besought Him to turn away His indignation from them; the Man-God Himself had, without ceasing, made intercession for them, and treated them with the tenderest mercy. But all was in vain; this ungrateful people seemed to hate their divine Benefactor in proportion to His love for them; and at length, in the transport of their fury, they cried out: "His Blood be upon us and upon our children!" (Matthew 27:25).

What a frightful chastisement they entailed on themselves by this imprecation! God heard and remembered. Alas! The sinner, who knows Jesus and the worth of His Blood, yet who again sheds this precious Blood, does not he expose himself to the severity of that same justice which fell so heavily on the Jews? Let us tremble and pray: let us implore the divine mercy in favor of those many obstinately blind and hardened sinners, who are hastening to destruction. Oh, that by the fervor of our supplications addressed to the merciful Heart of our common Redeemer, we could obtain a reversion of their sentence, and secure them pardon!

The enemies of Jesus have come to that pitch of hatred, which robs a man of his senses. Lazarus, who has been restored from death to life, is here standing before them; and instead of his resuscitation convincing them of Jesus being the Messiah, it sets them thinking how best to make away with this irresistible witness. O senseless men! That Jesus who raised him to life when dead, can again bring him to life if you murder him? Jesus triumphant entry into Jerusalem, which we are solemnly to commemorate tomorrow, adds to their jealousy and hatred.

Behold, say they, we prevail nothing: take whole world goes after Him. Alas! This ovation is to be born, followed by one of those reverses to which a populace is so subject. Meanwhile, however,

we have certain Gentiles, who desire to see Jesus. It is the beginning of the fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof" (Matthew 21:43).

Then shall the Son of man be glorified; then shall all nations, by their humble homage to the Crucified, protest against the sinful blindness of the Jews. But, before this comes to pass, it is requisite that the divine Wheat be cast into the ground and die. Then, the glorious harvest and the beautiful seed shall yield a hundredfold. And yet, Jesus feels, in His human nature, a momentary fear at the thought of this death He is to undergo. It is not the agony in the garden; it is a trouble of soul. Let us listen to His words: "Father! Save Me from this hour!"

It is our God who foresees all that He is about to suffer for our sake, and It fills Him with fear: He asks to be freed from it, though His will has decreed and accepted it. He immediately adds: "But for this cause I came unto this hour! Father! Glorify Thy Name!"

His soul is now calm; He once more accepts the hard conditions of our salvation. After this, His words bespeak a triumph; by virtue of the sacrifice about to be offered, Satan shall be dethroned: the prince of this world shall be cast out. But the defeat of Satan is not the only fruit of our Savior's immolation: man, earthly and depraved creature as he is, is to be raised from this Earth to Heaven.

The Son of God is to be the heavenly loadstone, attracting man to Himself: "And I, if be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all things to Myself!" He forgets His sufferings and the terrible death which just now troubled Him; He thinks but of the defeat of our implacable enemy, and of our being saved and glorified by His cross. These few words reveal the whole Heart of our Redeemer: if we attentively weigh them, they will suffice to inflame us with devotion as we celebrate the ineffable mysteries of Holy Week.

JERUSALEM ENDS UP PAYING DEARLY FOR KILLING CHRIST



“Arise, arise, stand up, O
Jerusalem, which hast
drunk at the hand of the
Lord the cup of His
wrath” (Isaias 51:17)



“For who shall have pity
on thee, O Jerusalem? or
who shall bemoan thee?”
(Jeremias 15:5)

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2. THE LAST DAYS APPROACH—FOR BOTH CHRIST AND JERUSALEM

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Jesus was drawing close to the end of His life and annihilation, but Jerusalem was also drawing closer to its own annihilation, because its inhabitants rejected Christ and His message! Do unto others as you would have them do unto you! Well, what Jerusalem would do to Christ, it would later find being done unto itself—in 70 AD when the Romans utterly destroyed it and slaughtered most its inhabitants, taking the few survivors away as slaves.

The Time Draws Near!

The Passover was only six days away, Jerusalem was crammed with people. All the talk was of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Everybody wanted to meet the miracle-worker—everybody, but the chief priests, who, instead, had decided to kill Lazarus along with the Man who had brought him back from the dead.

Despite everything....

The Sanhedrin Councillors had indeed compelled Jesus to fly from the Holy City, but they had not been able to blot out either the memory of His prodigies, or the authority of His language, or His Name now famous throughout the length and breadth of Judea.

While the Lord retired to spend His last few days in the Desert of Ephraim, very many Jews had gone up to the Temple in order to purify themselves before the Passover, and, ever since their arrival, they had been on the look-out for Jesus.

Their disappointment was lively on learning that He was no longer to be seen in Jerusalem, and that no one knew where He was. In the porches, where the numerous ablutions and sacrifices necessitated long hours of standing about for these crowds of visitors, the only topic of discussion was the young Prophet.

“*What do you think?*” they asked among themselves; “*is it really true that He will not come?*” The Councillors could overhear them speaking such words, could note the agitation of the first comers, and so must have congratulated themselves for having avoided the disturbances, with which the Festival was threatened, by thus getting rid of Jesus. Their satisfaction was destined to be of short duration; for just six days before the Pasch news reached their ears that the Savior was approaching. The Sabbath prevented the people from hurrying out immediately from the town, but as soon as sunset signaled the end of the hallowed repose, many went out as far as Bethany.

The Journey Begins

We can follow day by day, almost hour by hour, the steps of Jesus toward His consummation. Sunday, in April, we can imagine as one of those lovely spring mornings in Judea when, in the distant clear horizons, in the cool air filled with the scent of growing things, and in the song of a thousand larks, the human soul seems to feel the presence of the divine goodness.

On the Sunday morning Jesus began on the last two miles, taking the shorter way from Bethany, over the Mount of Olives. After walking part of the way, He commands two of His Apostles to go fetch the ass and her foal. For the first time we will see Him riding—He would be on a donkey.

The Ass and Foal

The road from Bethany to Jerusalem runs along the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and takes several hairpin bends before coming out upon the flat. Here there is a magnificent view of the city. Here the crowd of disciples and lookers-

on had collected. A short distance before this place was a scattered hamlet of a few houses bordering the track. It was known as Bethphage, “*The house of the figs,*” but the site shown today is of doubtful authenticity.

There Jesus made a gesture, of which the significance was not immediately appreciated, though not one of the Evangelists omits to record it (Matthew ch. 21; Mark ch. 11; Luke 19:29; John 12:14). He sent two disciples into the village and told them: “*The first thing you will find there will be a she-ass tethered, and a foal at her side; untie them and bring them to me. And if anyone speaks to you about it, tell him, The Lord has need of them, and he will let you have them without more ado.*”

Why an ass? Was it simply that He was tired? It hardly seems likely, for Jesus, throughout the Gospel narrative, seems to have been a very vigorous walker. Probably He wished to give some ceremony to His last entry into the city, but there was nothing very dignified in such a mount.

Whatever commentators may say about the Oriental ass being hardier than our own, and a much more dignified looking animal; and although asses are mentioned in Judges (10:4; 12:14) and Absalom is described as mounted upon an ass or a mule; although Homer says that Ajax was “*magnificent as an ass,*” it is certain that a Roman cavalryman, with his mount well in hand, would regard with contempt this rabble-rouser on a donkey.

The significance of the choice becomes evident when we remember that, throughout the Old Testament, the ass is the symbol of peace, humility and a quiet life, while the horse is the symbol of war, rapine and luxury. The Prophets reproached the Kings for putting their trust in horsemen. Jesus was King, but the King of Peace. The emphasis laid upon a colt “*on which no man has ever ridden*” underlines the religious character of the choice; it was widely believed in the ancient world that an animal, or an object, which had served some profane purpose, was

not fit for sacred use (Numbers 19:2; Deuteronomy 15:19 and 21:3; 1 Kings 6:7).

Above all, there is the Messianic prophecy of Zacharias (9:9): *“See where thy King comes to greet thee, a trusty deliverer; see how lowly He rides, mounted on an ass, patient colt of patient dam.”* By the choice of this humble mount, Jesus gave the Messianic gesture; the triumphal entry He was pre-paring was that foretold by the Prophet and He wished, upon this day when the strands of His destiny were knotting together, to proclaim the fact.

Behold Jerusalem...the King Cometh!

The roads that led to Jerusalem would have been thronged with the pilgrims who poured into the city for the great feast, from all Palestine, from all over the Roman world. Even while He was still some way from entering Jerusalem, His followers spread some of their garments on the donkey and others in the road in front of Him.

The excitement spread. Many people had come early along the road from Bethany to Jerusalem in the hope of hearing Jesus, for the rumor of His recent miracles, the restoration of sight to the blind man at Jericho, the raising of Lazarus after he had been dead for days, must have caused great excitement. Pilgrims, who had come to Jerusalem for the Pasch, cut branches from the trees and strewed them in the road. Meanwhile the news that He was on His way brought crowds out from Jerusalem to meet Him, carrying palms.

It was not a Roman triumph; there were no marching legions or captives in chains. Of the representations of the scene in art, Fra Angelico's is the most touching in its simplicity and sweetness. Spontaneously, the disciples and the curious onlookers organized themselves into a procession. *“Most of the multitude spread their garments along the way, while others strewed the way with branches cut down from the trees. And the multitudes that went before Him and that followed after Him cried aloud, Hosanna for the son of David, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in Heaven above.”*

The excitement grew toward frenzy, with the crowd shouting, *“Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David which is now coming.”* The Kingdom was indeed coming; He who was to come—the Messiah—was coming. At last. But the donkey should have warned them that it would not be the kingdom of their dreams—He was coming peaceably, not as for war.

Sad Prophecy of the Future

As He came within sight of Jerusalem, on the the Mount of Olives, where the road widens out before it descends rapidly along the western slope, Jesus came to a halt where the descent began. Jerusalem lay before Him. Before Him rose the city, a truly royal prospect. There is no better place to view Jerusalem than from the slopes of the Mount of Olives. The city, on a plateau which drops sharply from west to east above the brook Cedron, has a perfect stage-setting, but it did not look then as it does today, hedged by its crenelated ramparts of rose and gold, a medieval fortress, upon which the caprice of history has capped a perfect blue dome, the Mosque of Omar, and sown the white stamens of the minarets among the russet villas of the Western Europeans.

Jerusalem will go from Glory to Ruin

In Jesus' day it presented an even more striking spectacle. Then, it was a city built of stone and denuded of vegetation; It must have shone then with a dazzling splendor, for the magnificent tyrant Herod had spent his treasure and his grandiose fantasy in rebuilding the ancient capital of the Jews.

The gleaming white walls were formed of cyclopean blocks of stone; gold shone on the facade of the temple in front of Jesus' eyes; and the enormous mass of the sanctuary, with its courtyards, its porticos and its towers, dominated the whole scene in its symbolic super-imposition. To the right was the square tower of Antonia, the barracks of the Roman garrison.

The priests and the wealthy had built sumptuous palaces and below the town, guarding the approaches to the sea, the Tower of David, rebuilt on those same terraces where once the poet-king had sung his hymns of praise, rose to a height of over 150 feet, an invincible strong-point where, forty years later, the defenders of Israel were to make their last stand against Titus' legions.

This was the city as Jesus saw it and in His soul, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, the image of what was to come rose up in shuddering presentiment. This was the city of His most sacred memories; His forefathers had reigned here in this holy place, they slept down in the valley beyond, their white tombs hedged in by the dark cypresses. Here was the Temple, the only place in the world where the true God had always been worshiped: Jesus, more than anyone else, knew the full significance of this.

Stubborn Resistance to God

Why must it all end in a tragic dilemma between the providential design and the blind refusal? In the Greek of St. Luke we read that a sob rose up from Him: *"Ah, if thou too couldst understand, above all in this day that is granted thee, the ways that can bring thee peace . . . The days will come upon thee when thy enemies will fence thee round about, and encircle thee, and press thee hard on every side, and bring down flat to the ground, both thee and thy children that are in thee, not leaving one stone of thee upon another; and all because thou didst not recognize the time of My visiting thee"* (Luke 19:41-44). They must have seemed strange and mysterious words, and He did not explain them.

For the second time we hear of His weeping, seeing it so glorious there, seeing all that God had meant it to be, seeing what the Romans would do to it forty years later—*"leaving in you"*, He cried to the city, "not a stone upon a stone." And why? *"Because you have not known the time of your visitation."* He had wept for Lazarus, whom He loved. He wept for Jerusalem, for He loved Jerusalem too.

No one else beside Jesus foresaw this catastrophe at that moment. His disciples indeed saw Him weeping, they heard His predictions, and felt a momentary thrill of disquiet, but the impression was effaced shortly. So many times had the Lord's brow grown sad, and His tears had flowed freely before them so often, that they no longer felt much amazement at this spectacle

Pharisees in Anxiety and Anger

The Pharisees, who had spies everywhere, were alarmed. They had expected that Jesus would come to Jerusalem for the Passover, but they hoped He would arrive inconspicuously, as He had always done in the past. But, instead, He was being accorded a triumphal entry and ostensibly assuming the Messianic pose.

The Pharisees, witnessing the uproar at the approach of Jesus, were at a high point of fury. They could hardly argue with the crowds—the noise was too great, and all passions were running His way. But twice they urged Him to do something about an uproar so unseemly. The first time He answered that if the people fell silent, the very stones in the road would cry out. The second time was after He had actually reached the Temple. St. Luke (19:39) tells us that some of the Pharisees angrily besought Jesus to rebuke the acclaiming crowds. *"I tell you, if they should keep silence,"* He said, *"the stones will cry out instead."*

The men in authority showed their indignation at finding children too shouting *"Hosanna to the Son of David."* Children, they felt, should be seen and not heard. So at times they should. But not always: there are moments when even the children must speak. Jesus quoted a verse of the Psalms (8:3)—*"Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise."*

He must have entered the city by the Golden Gate, later walled up by the Crusaders, who built a chapel there. It is opened every year on Palm Sunday, when the Patriarch of Jerusalem makes a solemn entry, mounted upon an ass, while the crowd acclaim Him, spreading branches and garments in His path.

3. CLEANSING THE TEMPLE

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The tone of this first “Palm Sunday” gradually turns from glory and joy, to confrontation and sadness, as Jesus is not sidetracked by all the praise and adulation, but proceeds to work for His Father’s glory—an action that always brings Him more and more enemies.

Cleansing the Temple

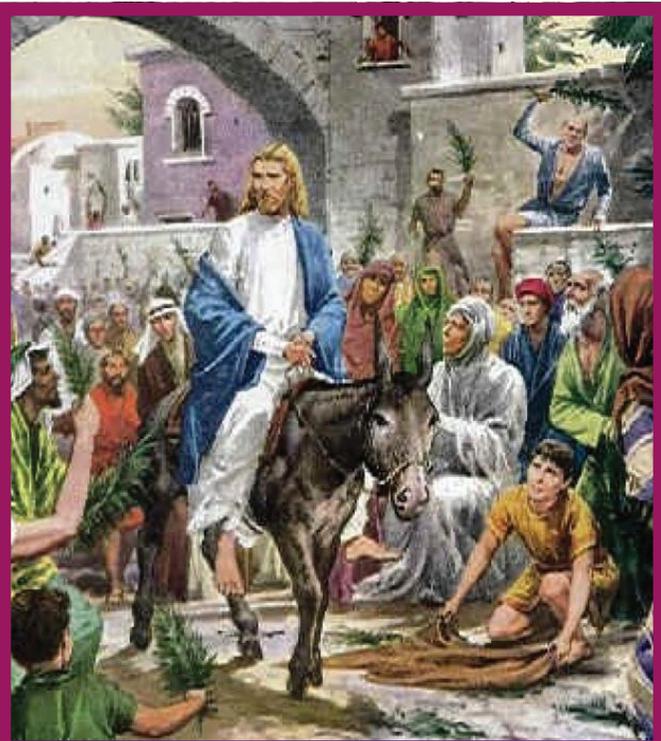
This gate is the nearest to the Temple, to which Jesus immediately went. He saw the same spectacle which had so incensed Him two years earlier, commerce making a good thing out of piety, the porticos turned into money-changing offices, the courtyards into cattle markets, the waiting rooms into provision stores, with a hideous din of sharp voices and animals bellowing throughout the holy place.

Again His anger rose up and He struck right and left to clear a path for Himself. Certainly His arrival was not going to be overlooked.

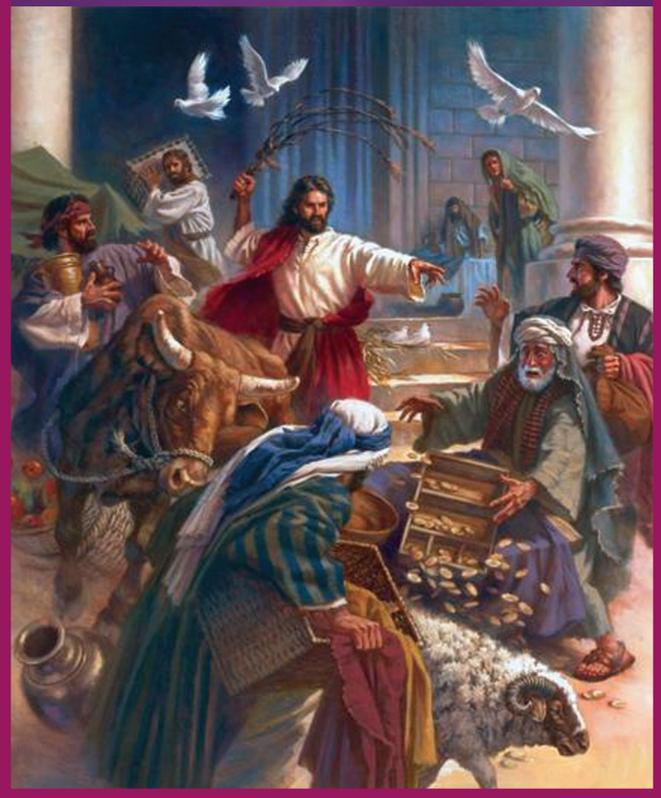
Remember and never forget that you, too, are a temple of God. Holy Scripture clearly states this:

“Know you not, that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are” (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). *“Or know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God; and you are not your own?”* (1 Corinthians 6:19). *“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God!”* (2 Corinthians 6:16).

What clutters your temple? What have you introduced into the temple of your soul that displeases God? Is your temple a worldly place?



**FROM JOY & GLORY
TO ANGER AND
CONFRONTATION**



How much worship time takes place in your temple?

The attitude of Christ does not change! If He found with the temple in back then, so also will He judge the temples of our souls today! Get your temple in order, before it is too late!

The Crowd Grows

Since He had brought a considerable crowd in with Him, it must have been easy for Him to clear the place. Ever since He left Bethphage, more and more people had joined the procession, not all of them converted, to be sure, and mostly activated by curiosity. But there were scenes of genuine enthusiasm. Children acclaimed Him (Matthew 21:15-16).

The Pharisees, growing more and more alarmed, muttered to each other: *“Do you see how vain are our efforts? Look, the whole world has turned aside to follow Him”* (John 12:19).

The Goal Firmly in Sight

But in spite of His triumph and amid all the enthusiasm displayed in this, the very heart of Jerusalem, with His name on everyone’s lips, Jesus never lost sight of the purpose for which He had come.

When His two disciples asked Him to show Himself to these Greeks who sought Him out with sympathetic curiosity He replied: *“The time has come now for the Son of Man to achieve His glory.”*

And as if He sensed the impatience, the ardent expectation of worldly triumph, He repeated it once, in greater detail; *“Believe me when I tell you this; a grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die, or else it remains nothing more than a grain of wheat; but if it dies, then it yields rich fruit. He who loves his life will lose it; he who is an enemy to his own life in this world will keep it, so as to live eternally”* (John 12:23-25).

Joy gives Way to Sadness

In that place and time, when the crowds of Jews and Gentiles around Him might be said to pre-

figure the future Christian Church, Jesus tried to explain the price by which this new life must be purchased. The image of the Redemption, the terrible salvation by blood, is clearly in all His thoughts.

Still His disciples failed to understand the nature of the triumph He promised them; they could not understand this extraordinary spiritual gamble by which he who loses gains. How could a man hate his life in this world? But Jesus knew. And because He was man, utterly and wholly man, He could not but feel human foreboding and human fear in the face of His destiny, so close now.

We recall that He was “troubled” when, in the solitudes of the wilderness, He was tempted by the Evil One. We shall see a few days later the dramatic reversal of fortune in the Garden of Gethsemane. In a few moving lines, St. John records the debate: *“And now My soul is distressed. What am I to say? I will say, Father, save Me from undergoing this hour of trial; and yet, I have only reached this hour of trial that I might undergo it”* (John 12: 27). There came a sound like a clap of the sudden spring thunder. *“Father, make Thy name known,”* He said, in total submission and, from the heavens, God replied.

And so this day, which had begun so brilliantly in the light of that triumphal morning, drew to its end in an atmosphere of vague disquiet. The crowd had heard the sudden thunderclap; some declared that they had heard the voice of an angel. *“It was for your sake, not for mine, that this utterance was made,”* said Jesus. *“Sentence is now being passed on this world; now is the time when the prince of this world is to be cast out. Yes, if only I am lifted up from the Earth, I will attract all men to Myself.”*

The terrible play on words was not understood. The Law had said that the Messiah would abide forever: He could not be announcing His own death! Lifted up? What did that mean? And who was this Son of Man?

The Day Draws to an End

They had been following Him all day and they were growing weary. The sun was setting, it would be about half past five, and behind the three towers, Phazael, Mariamne and Hippicus, which commemorated the three beings Herod had loved, the western sky loomed red.

There were not so many people around Jesus now, as He lingered on the Temple terrace; daily life goes on and people have work to do. The last rays of the sun touched the distant purple mountains of Moab.

The elder Simeon had spoken of a light to lighten all peoples when a little boy had been presented to him in the Temple. *“The light is among you still,”* Jesus said, *“but only for a short time. Finish your journey while you still have light, for fear darkness should overtake you; he who journeys in darkness cannot tell which way he is going. While you still have the light, have faith in the light, that so you may become children of the light”* (John 12:35-36).

The Gentiles Seek Jesus

Among the crowds were Gentiles, who had come to Jerusalem for the feast, proselytes probably, men who accepted the God of the Jews, who had been converted to monotheism, but had not had themselves circumcised. They asked to Jesus.

Certainly He was the man of the hour! They wanted to see the cause of all the excitement and they approached Philip—he had a Greek name, he was from Bethsaida, a town where Jew and Gentile mixed and mingled, he would have spoken Greek (John 12:21). Philip consulted Andrew, and they told Jesus. Did He give the Gentiles their interview? John does not tell us.

There is a tradition that these Gentiles were sent to Jesus by Abgar the King of Edessa, offering sanctuary in his small principality. Jesus thanked them, but declined and gave them the “miraculous portrait” already referred to. We do not know why these foreigners asked to see

Him.

Perhaps because He had just gone into the Court of the Jews, where they could not follow Him, for any uncircumcised heathen, who ventured to go into this part of the Temple, ran the risk of being killed.

A Tale of Two Men

For the crowds, Palm Sunday had been a full and frantic day. For the Twelve, too. But especially, and very differently, for two of them.

The sound of thousands of voices shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David” must have made Peter feel the Kingdom very close to its establishment, and of that Kingdom he, Peter the fisherman, had been promised the keys.

Judas, torn two ways, isolated in his own bleak thoughts, could not have shared the emotions of the others. If they glanced at him at all, they could only have been puzzled to see his look grow darker in concentration on the problem he could share with none of them. But perhaps he went off by himself to fight his solitary battle.

The Thoughts of Jesus

What did it all mean to Jesus Himself? The uproar, probably, not much. He knew people too well. When He had fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes, they had wanted to make Him King: but when the same people heard His teaching on the Blessed Eucharist they walked no more with Him. Now they were in a frenzy of excitement because He had raised a man to life, in what was practically a suburb of Jerusalem, but He knew how much hysteria was in their excitement.

His Way is Not the World’s Way

They were thinking of His triumph. So was He. But He knew in what it would consist—for Himself, for those who should follow Him. He tried to tell this to the Apostles (John 12:23)—*“The hour is come for the Son of Man to be glorified”*; but the entry into glory involves dying: leave a grain of wheat lying about and it remains simply that, a grain of wheat: it must be buried in the earth if

it is to bring forth abundance of new life.

That, He tells them, is the law for them too. They must not love this earthly life too much, for it must surely end; and, if it alone is loved, it will have no sequel of glory. *“If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me; and where I am there also shall My servant be.”*

In all that had happened so far, Jesus had been the self we know, calm at the heart of a whirlwind. Then it is as though the horror to come flooded in on Him. For this instant His control seemed close to breaking. Reading the Gospels we have seen Him angry, seen Him compassionate, seen Him sorrowful, seen Him grieving, but always master. For the first time we feel the mastery waver. Gethsemane was anticipated.

My Soul is Troubled

It is all in a single verse (John 12:27). *“Now is My soul troubled”* (compare with *“My soul is sorrowful even unto death”*). *“Father, save Me from this hour”* (compare that with *“Father, if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me”*).

Then, this time as in Gethsemane, comes resignation. *“But for this cause I came unto this hour”*—His whole life would have been stultified had that petition of a moment ago been granted: He would have been a grain of wheat which remained only that. But in His death, He would be made life-giving.

“Father,” He cried, *“glorify Thy name.”* We note that He does not say glorify My name but Thine. The Father was to be shown glorious in the Son’s glory. And a voice came from the sky: *“I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.”*

It was the Father, Who celebrated the triumph of His Son beforehand and did honor to Him, as formerly in the Jordan and again upon Mount Tabor. This evidence of His Godhead was not realized or understood at that time.

“It was thunder!” cried the crowds, though others added: *“An Angel spoke to Him!”*
“This Voice is not for Me, but for you,” Jesus

replied.

Our Lord’s next words were all of triumph. The moment of crisis was at hand, the supremely decisive moment for the whole world, never one like it before, never again to be one.

For Satan’s time as world ruler would be ended, with Christ raised on the Cross to be the vital center of a new humanity. *“Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, lifted up from the earth, will draw all things unto Me.”*

Heading Back to Safety in Bethany

As Palm Sunday ended, Jesus went back to spend the night at Bethany. Of the next four days—until the night of Holy Thursday—St. John tells us nothing; we read of them in the other three Gospels. Even as to Palm Sunday these give one episode not in Saint John’s account of the day.

The Temple was nearly empty now; the believers had gone. The priests returned for the sacrificial banquet, bare feet climbing up the steps to the sacred inner court. A cold air came in with the night.

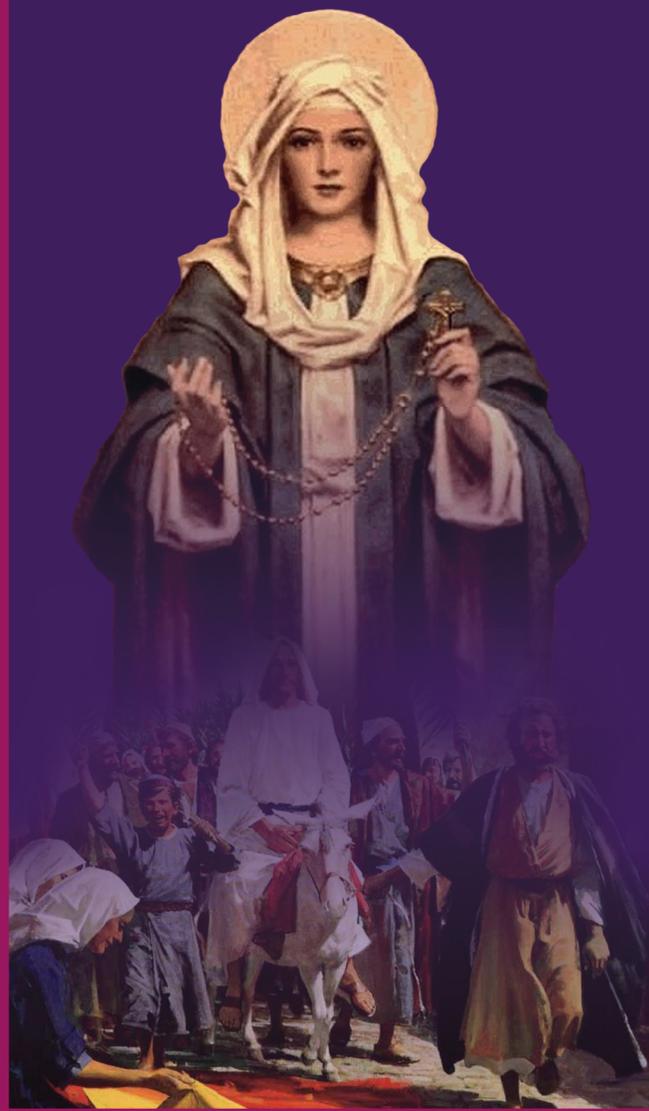
We wonder what the Twelve, who remained with their Master, were thinking. That it would not be today, at any rate, that they would raise the people and force Caiphas to recognize and consecrate this disconcerting Messiah?

So they followed Him down to the Golden Gate, out of the city and up the hill of the Mount of Olives, past Gethsemane and back to Bethany.

THE ROSARY

15 Meditations on Palm Sunday

**“But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.”
(Luke 2:19)**



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4. MEDITATIONS ON PALM SUNDAY

The Church and the Saints tell us that there is nothing more profitable than the meditation of the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Holy Week is that central and poignant scene in Christ's life on Earth. Holy Week and the Passion are like husband and wife. They go together, they live together, they think as one, they act as one. It is recommended that, during Holy Week, you stay with the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary for each day of the week—even if you say 10, 20, 30, 40 or more decades a day. To help you in that regard, here are some meditations to ponder for each of the fifteen decades of the Rosary. Each day's ritual will try to have meditations that reflect that particular day's events and happenings.

FIRST MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY “PLANS TO ELIMINATE JESUS”

The Passover was only six days away, Jerusalem was crammed with people. All the talk was of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Everybody wanted to meet the miracle-worker—everybody, but the chief priests, who, instead, had decided to kill Lazarus along with the Man who had brought him back from the dead.

The Sanhedrin Councillors had indeed compelled Jesus to fly from the Holy City, but they had not been able to blot out either the memory of His prodigies, or the authority of His language, or His Name now famous throughout the length and breadth of Judea.

While the Lord retired to spend His last few days in the Desert of Ephraim, very many Jews had gone up to the Temple in order to purify themselves before the Passover, and, ever since their arrival, they had been on the look-out for Jesus. Their disappointment was lively on learning that He was no longer to be seen in Jerusalem, and that no one knew where He was. In

the porches, where the numerous ablutions and sacrifices necessitated long hours of standing about for these crowds of visitors, the only topic of discussion was the young Prophet.

“What do you think?” they asked among themselves; *“is it really true that He will not come?”* The Councillors could overhear them speaking such words, could note the agitation of the first comers, and so must have congratulated themselves for having avoided the disturbances, with which the Festival was threatened, by thus getting rid of Jesus. Their satisfaction was destined to be of short duration; for just six days before the Pasch news reached their ears that the Savior was approaching.

**SECOND MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“HUMILITY OF THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY”**

On the Sunday morning Jesus began on the last two miles, taking the shorter way from Bethany, over the Mount of Olives. After walking part of the way, He commands two of His Apostles to go fetch the ass and her foal. For the first time we will see Him riding—He would be on a donkey.

Jesus made a gesture, of which the significance was not immediately appreciated, though not one of the Evangelists omits to record it. He sent two disciples into the village and told them: *“The first thing you will find there will be a she-ass tethered, and a foal at her side; untie them and bring them to me. And if anyone speaks to you about it, tell him, The Lord has need of them, and he will let you have them without more ado.”*

Why an ass? Was it simply that He was tired? It hardly seems likely, for Jesus, throughout the Gospel narrative, seems to have been a very vigorous walker. Probably He wished to give some ceremony to His last entry into the city, but there was nothing very dignified in such a mount.

Whatever commentators may say about the Oriental ass being hardier than our own, it is certain that a Roman cavalryman, with his mount

well in hand, would regard with contempt this rabble-rouser on a donkey.

The significance of the choice becomes evident when we remember that, throughout the Old Testament, the ass is the symbol of peace, humility and a quiet life, while the horse is the symbol of war, rapine and luxury. The Prophets reproached the Kings for putting their trust in horsemen.

Jesus was King, but the King of Peace. The emphasis laid upon a colt *“on which no man has ever ridden”* underlines the religious character of the choice; it was widely believed in the ancient world that an animal, or an object, which had served some profane purpose, was not fit for sacred use.

Above all, there is the Messianic prophecy of Zacharias (9:9): *“See where thy King comes to greet thee, a trusty deliverer; see how lowly He rides, mounted on an ass, patient colt of patient dam.”* By the choice of this humble mount, Jesus gave the Messianic gesture; the triumphal entry He was pre-paring was that foretold by the Prophet and He wished, upon this day when the strands of His destiny were knotting together, to proclaim the fact.

**THIRD MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“A PEACEFUL INVASION”**

The roads that led to Jerusalem would have been thronged with the pilgrims who poured into the city for the great feast, from all Palestine, from all over the Roman world. Even while He was still some way from entering Jerusalem, His followers spread some of their garments on the donkey and others in the road in front of Him.

The excitement spread. Many people had come early along the road from Bethany to Jerusalem in the hope of hearing Jesus, for the rumor of His recent miracles, the restoration of sight to the blind man at Jericho, the raising of Lazarus after he had been dead for days, must have caused great excitement.

Pilgrims, who had come to Jerusalem for the Pasch, cut branches from the trees and strewed them in the road. Meanwhile the news that He was on His way brought crowds out from Jerusalem to meet Him, carrying palms.

It was not a Roman triumph; there were no marching legions or captives in chains. Of the representations of the scene in art, Fra Angelico's is the most touching in its simplicity and sweetness. Spontaneously, the disciples and the curious onlookers organized themselves into a procession.

"Most of the multitude spread their garments along the way, while others strewed the way with branches cut down from the trees. And the multitudes that went before Him and that followed after Him cried aloud, Hosanna for the son of David, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in Heaven above."

The excitement grew toward frenzy, with the crowd shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David which is now coming."

The Kingdom was indeed coming; He who was to come—the Messiah—was coming. At last. But the donkey should have warned them that it would not be the kingdom of their dreams—He was coming peaceably, not as for war.

FOURTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY "JERUSALEM'S REJECTION WILL COST"

As He came within sight of Jerusalem, on the the Mount of Olives, where the road widens out before it descends rapidly along the western slope, Jesus came to a halt where the descent began. Jerusalem lay before Him. Before Him rose the city, a truly royal prospect.

It was a city built of stone and denuded of vegetation. This was symbolic of its hard-heart, which would reject Christ. It must have shone then with a dazzling splendor, for the magnificent tyrant Herod had spent his treasure and

his grandiose fantasy in rebuilding the ancient capital of the Jews. The priests and the wealthy had built sumptuous palaces and below the town, guarding the approaches to the sea, the Tower of David, rebuilt on those same terraces where once the poet-king had sung his hymns of praise, rose to a height of over 150 feet, an invincible strong-point where, forty years later, the defenders of Israel were to make their last stand against Titus' legions, before being destroyed in 70 AD.

This was the city as Jesus saw it and in His soul, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, the image of what was to come rose up in shuddering tragic presentiment. Why must it all end in a tragic dilemma between the providential design and the blind refusal?

In the Greek of St. Luke we read that a sob rose up from Him: *"Ah, if thou too couldst understand, above all in this day that is granted thee, the ways that can bring thee peace . . . The days will come upon thee when thy enemies will fence thee round about, and encircle thee, and press thee hard on every side, and bring down flat to the ground, both thee and thy children that are in thee, not leaving one stone of thee upon another; and all because thou didst not recognize the time of My visiting thee"* (Luke 19:41-44). They must have seemed strange and mysterious words, and He did not explain them.

For the second time we hear of His weeping, seeing it so glorious there, seeing all that God had meant it to be, seeing what the Romans would do to it forty years later—"leaving in you", He cried to the city, "not a stone upon a stone." And why? *"Because you have not known the time of your visitation."* He had wept for Lazarus, whom He loved. He wept for Jerusalem, for He loved Jerusalem too.

No one else beside Jesus foresaw this catastrophe at that moment. His disciples indeed saw Him weeping, they heard His predictions, and felt a momentary thrill of disquiet, but the impression was quickly forgotten. So many times had the Lord's brow grown sad, and His tears had

flowed freely before them so often, that they no longer felt much amazement at this spectacle

**FIFTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“THE ANXIETY OF HIS ENEMIES”**

The Pharisees, who had spies everywhere, were alarmed. They had expected that Jesus would come to Jerusalem for the Passover, but they hoped He would arrive inconspicuously, as He had always done in the past. But, instead, He was being accorded a triumphal entry and ostensibly assuming the Messianic pose.

The Pharisees, witnessing the uproar at the approach of Jesus, were at a high point of fury. They could hardly argue with the crowds—the noise was too great, and all passions were running His way. But twice they urged Him to do something about an uproar so unseemly.

The first time He answered that if the people fell silent, the very stones in the road would cry out. The second time was after He had actually reached the Temple.

St. Luke (19:39) tells us that some of the Pharisees angrily besought Jesus to rebuke the acclaiming crowds. *“I tell you, if they should keep silence,”* He said, *“the stones will cry out instead.”*

The men in authority showed their indignation at finding children too shouting *“Hosanna to the Son of David.”* Children, they felt, should be seen and not heard. So at times they should. But not always: there are moments when even the children must speak. Jesus quoted a verse of the Psalms (8:3)—*“Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise.”*

He must have entered the city by the Golden Gate, later walled up by the Crusaders, who built a chapel there. It is opened every year on Palm Sunday, when the Patriarch of Jerusalem makes a solemn entry, mounted upon an ass, while the crowd acclaim Him, spreading branches and garments in His path.

**SIXTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE”**

Immediately after entering Jerusalem, Jesus went to the Temple—*“Seek ye first God and His justice!”* Upon entering the Temple, He saw the same spectacle which had so incensed Him two years earlier, commerce making a good thing out of piety, the porticos turned into money-changing offices, the courtyards into cattle markets, the waiting rooms into provision stores, with a hideous din of sharp voices and animals bellowing throughout the holy place.

Again His anger rose up and He struck right and left to clear a path for Himself. Certainly His arrival was not going to be overlooked.

Remember and never forget that you, too, are a temple of God. Holy Scripture clearly states this:

“Know you not, that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are” (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). *“Or know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God; and you are not your own?”* (1 Corinthians 6:19). *“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God!”* (2 Corinthians 6:16).

What clutters your temple? What have you introduced into the temple of your soul that displeases God? Is your temple a worldly place? How much worship time takes place in your temple?

**SEVENTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“JESUS STAYS FOCUSED”**

Ever since He left Bethphage, more and more people had joined the procession, not all of them converted, to be sure, and mostly activated by curiosity. But there were scenes of genuine enthusiasm. Children acclaimed Him (Matthew 21:15-16).

The Pharisees, growing more and more alarmed, muttered to each other: *“Do you see how vain are our efforts? Look, the whole world has turned aside to follow Him”* (John 12:19).

But in spite of His triumph and amid all the enthusiasm displayed in this, the very heart of Jerusalem, with His name on everyone’s lips, Jesus never lost sight of the purpose for which He had come.

**EIGHTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“THE REAL TRIUMPH”**

Jesus sensed the impatience, the ardent expectation of worldly triumph, He repeated it once, in greater detail; *“Believe me when I tell you this; a grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die, or else it remains nothing more than a grain of wheat; but if it dies, then it yields rich fruit. He who loves his life will lose it; he who is an enemy to his own life in this world will keep it, so as to live eternally”* (John 12:23-25).

In that place and time, when the crowds of Jews and Gentiles around Him might be said to prefigure the future Christian Church, Jesus tried to explain the price by which this new life must be purchased. The image of the Redemption, the terrible salvation by blood, is clearly in all His thoughts.

Still His disciples failed to understand the nature of the triumph He promised them; they could not understand this extraordinary spiritual gamble by which he who loses gains. How could a man hate his life in this world? But Jesus knew. And because He was man, utterly and wholly man, He could not but feel human foreboding and human fear in the face of His destiny, so close now.

**NINTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“EVENING AND SADNESS DRAWS ON”**

We shall see a few days later the dramatic reversal of fortune in the Garden of Gethsemane. In a few moving lines, St. John records the de-

bate: *“And now My soul is distressed. What am I to say? I will say, Father, save Me from undergoing this hour of trial; and yet, I have only reached this hour of trial that I might undergo it”* (John 12: 27). There came a sound like a clap of the sudden spring thunder. *“Father, make Thy name known,”* He said, in total submission and, from the heavens, God replied.

And so this day, which had begun so brilliantly in the light of that triumphal morning, drew to its end in an atmosphere of vague disquiet. The crowd had heard the sudden thunderclap; some declared that they had heard the voice of an angel. *“It was for your sake, not for mine, that this utterance was made,”* said Jesus. *“Sentence is now being passed on this world; now is the time when the prince of this world is to be cast out. Yes, if only I am lifted up from the Earth, I will attract all men to Myself.”*

The terrible play on words was not understood. The Law had said that the Messiah would abide forever: He could not be announcing His own death! Lifted up? What did that mean? And who was this Son of Man?

**TENTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY
“JESUS THE LIGHT WILL BE PUT OUT”**

They had been following Him all day and they were growing weary. The sun was setting, it would be about half past five, and behind the three towers, Phazael, Mariamne and Hippicus, which commemorated the three beings Herod had loved, the western sky loomed red.

There were not so many people around Jesus now, as He lingered on the Temple terrace; daily life goes on and people have work to do. The last rays of the sun touched the distant purple mountains of Moab.

The elder Simeon had spoken of a light to lighten all peoples when a little boy had been presented to him in the Temple. *“The light is among you still,”* Jesus said, *“but only for a short time. Finish your journey while you still have light,*

for fear darkness should overtake you; he who journeys in darkness cannot tell which way he is going. While you still have the light, have faith in the light, that so you may become children of the light” (John 12:35-36).

ELEVENTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY “EVEN THE GENTILES SEEK JESUS”

Among the crowds were Gentiles, who had come to Jerusalem for the feast, proselytes probably, men who accepted the God of the Jews, who had been converted to monotheism, but had not had themselves circumcised. They asked to Jesus.

Certainly He was the man of the hour! They wanted to see the cause of all the excitement and they approached Philip—he had a Greek name, he was from Bethsaida, a town where Jew and Gentile mixed and mingled, he would have spoken Greek (John 12:21). Philip consulted Andrew, and they told Jesus. Did He give the Gentiles their interview? John does not tell us.

There is a tradition that these Gentiles were sent to Jesus by Abgar the King of Edessa, offering sanctuary in his small principality. Jesus thanked them, but declined and gave them the “miraculous portrait” already referred to. We do not know why these foreigners asked to see Him.

Perhaps because He had just gone into the Court of the Jews, where they could not follow Him, for any uncircumcised heathen, who ventured to go into this part of the Temple, ran the risk of being killed.

TWELFTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY “A TALE OF TWO MEN”

For the crowds, Palm Sunday had been a full and frantic day. For the Twelve, too. But especially, and very differently, for two of them. The sound of thousands of voices shouting “*Hosanna to the Son of David*” must have made Peter

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feel the Kingdom very close to its establishment, and of that Kingdom he, Peter the fisherman, had been promised the keys.

Judas, torn two ways, isolated in his own bleak thoughts, could not have shared the emotions of the others. If they glanced at him at all, they could only have been puzzled to see his look grow darker in concentration on the problem he could share with none of them. But perhaps he went off by himself to fight his solitary battle.

THIRTEENTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY “WRONG EXPECTATIONS OF JESUS”

What did it all mean to Jesus Himself? The uproar, probably, not much. He knew people too well. When He had fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes, they had wanted to make Him King: but when the same people heard His teaching on the Blessed Eucharist they walked no more with Him. Now they were in a frenzy of excitement because He had raised a man to life, in what was practically a suburb of Jerusalem, but He knew how much hysteria was in their excitement.

They were thinking of His triumph. So was He. But He knew in what it would consist—for Himself, for those who should follow Him. He tried to tell this to the Apostles (John 12:23)—“*The hour is come for the Son of Man to be glorified*”; but the entry into glory involves dying: leave a grain of wheat lying about and it remains simply that, a grain of wheat: it must be buried in the earth if it is to bring forth abundance of new life.

FORTEENTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY “A FLOOD OF SORROW”

Then it is as though the horror to come flooded in on Him. For this instant His control seemed close to breaking. Reading the Gospels we have seen Him angry, seen Him compassionate, seen Him sorrowful, seen Him grieving, but always master. For the first time we feel the mastery waver. Gethsemane was anticipated.

It is all in a single verse (John 12:27). *“Now is My soul troubled”* (compare with *“My soul is sorrowful even unto death”*). *“Father, save Me from this hour”* (compare that with *“Father, if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me”*).

Then, this time as in Gethsemane, comes resignation. *“But for this cause I came unto this hour”*—His whole life would have been stultified had that petition of a moment ago been granted: He would have been a grain of wheat which remained only that. But in His death, He would be made life-giving.

“Father,” He cried, *“glorify Thy name.”* We note that He does not say glorify My name but Thine. The Father was to be shown glorious in the Son’s glory. And a voice came from the sky: *“I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.”* It was the Father, Who celebrated the triumph of His Son beforehand and did honor to Him, as formerly in the Jordan and again upon Mount Tabor. This evidence of His Godhead was not realized or understood at that time. *“It was thunder!”* cried the crowds, though others added: *“An Angel spoke to Him!”* *“This Voice is not for Me, but for you,”* Jesus replied.

FIFTEENTH MEDITATION ON PALM SUNDAY “FINAL WORDS OF TRIUMPH”

Our Lord’s next words were all of triumph. The moment of crisis was at hand, the supremely decisive moment for the whole world, never one like it before, never again to be one. For Satan’s time as world ruler would be ended, with Christ raised on the Cross to be the vital center of a new humanity. *“Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, lifted up from the earth, will draw all things unto Me.”* As Palm Sunday ended, Jesus went back to spend the night at Bethany. Of the next four days—until the night of Holy Thursday—St. John tells us nothing; we read of them in the other three Gospels. Even as to Palm Sunday these give one episode not in Saint John’s account of the day.

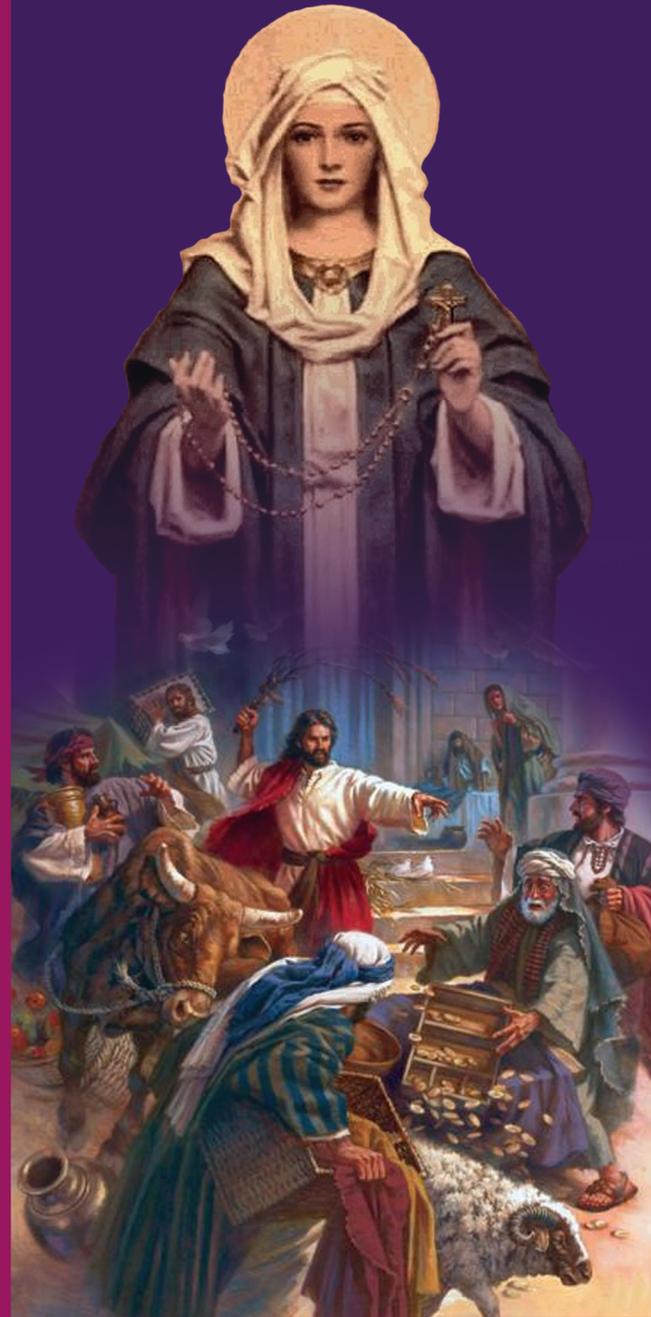
THE ROSARY

15 Meditations on Palm Sunday

***“But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.”
(Luke 2:19)***



HOLY WEEK ANGELUS



devotiontoourlady.com wishes you a Merry and “Mary” Christmas!

5. PALM SUNDAY ANGELUS

from devotiontoourlady.com

THE ANGELUS

- V.** The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
R. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost.
HAIL MARY....etc.
- V.** Behold the Handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.
HAIL MARY....etc.
- R.** And the Word was made flesh.
V. And dwelt amongst us.
HAIL MARY....etc.
- R.** Pray for us O holy Mother of God.
V. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech Thee O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. **R.** Amen.

A PRAYER OF UNITY

In rural parishes, when the parish Angelus bell tolled at noon, a person could scan the many fields and see people stopped in their tracks as they prayed the Angelus. In those days, the Angelus was so much a part of rural life that as soon as the first toll of the bell was heard, the horses stopped themselves without having to be told to do so by their drivers. What a wondrous sight it must have been to look out over the fields and, there, see your neighbor praying the same prayer you were praying at the same time of the day—giving a little token and a sense of feeling of unity in Faith.

IT COMES IN "THREES"

Since the Angelus is divided into three parts, we will have three parts to the article. Firstly, the spiritual part; then the historical part; and finally the practical part or its usage.

The Incarnation is a central dogma of the Faith. It is the launch-pad of the act of our Redemption and Salvation. It the foundation of all that follows. It is a mind-blowing event, where God humiliates Himself to take on our flesh and our nature. For us to reduce ourselves to the level and nature of tiny bug, is not even anywhere near the 'reduction' undergone by God in becoming man. It is something that we rightfully and justly should remember each day.

The Angelus reminds us of the Annunciation and Incarnation, when the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary with great, if somewhat startling, news! As we read in Chapter One of Luke's Gospel, (Luke 1:26-38) God wished Mary, truly a model of humility, to be the Mother of His Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ!

GENUINE HUMILITY

When we pray the first mystery of the Holy Rosary—the Annunciation—we often announce that the fruit of this mystery is humility. Mary's humility was genuine. As St. Alphonsus Liguori notes in his classic work *The Glories of Mary*, "*her only desire was that her Creator, the giver of every good thing, should be praised and blessed.*"

When Mary calls herself the handmaid, or the servant, of the Lord, in the Angelus (from Luke 1:38) it is with inspiring humility and sincerity. She thought of herself first and foremost as God's servant, seeking glory, not for herself, but rather for Him. Mary was happy to have God work through her. As she expressed it most famously in the canticle the Magnificat, "*My soul magnifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Savior*" (Luke 1:46-47).

St. Paul echoed this wonderful sentiment when he wrote that "*he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord*" (2 Corinthians 10:17). In so doing, Mary became, as St. Augustine put it rather poetically,

a "heavenly ladder, by which God came into the world," descending from Heaven to Earth, to become flesh in her womb. This brings to mind the line from Matthew's Gospel: "*Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted*" (Mathew 23:12).

"YES" TO GOD — "NO" TO THE WORLD

The Angelus pays tribute to a crucial aspect of Mary's role in the Incarnation, when it quotes from Luke's Gospel "*be it done to me according to thy word*" (Luke 1:38). This wonderful event could not have happened without her consent, without what is known as her fiat. By saying "yes" to God in allowing herself to become His mother, she showed us the ultimate example of trust in our Creator!

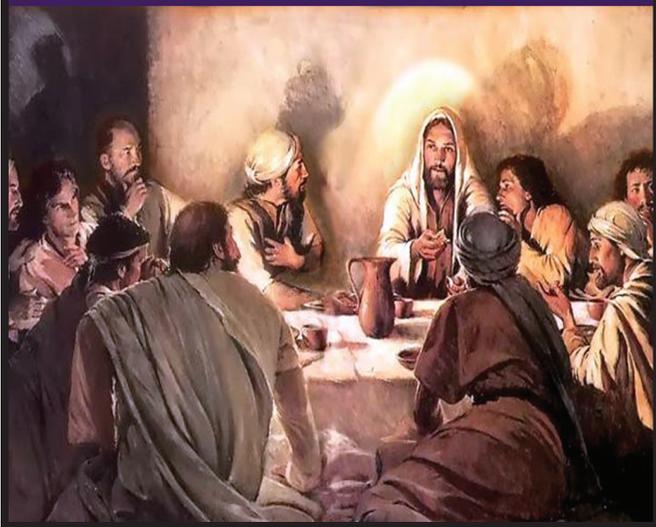
TOO TOUGH?

Do you think that having that kind of Faith is too daunting a task? Think about the ways in which God calls each of in our daily lives. Do we say "yes" when Christ wants to work through us, in showing His love to others? Or when He asks us to be graceful in trying and testing situations? Mary knew that the Messiah would be a "Man of Sorrows"—to accept being His Mother, meant that this was not going to be walk in the park or a picnic! This was going to mean trouble, real trouble; together with suffering, real suffering. Prayer and meditation on Mary's reaction, to the invitation in the Annunciation, can help us to do His will.

LOVE IS A UNION OF WILLS

Speaking of God's word, the Angelus completes its short summary of the Incarnation with the moving reference to our Lord from John's Gospel: "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us*" (John 1:14). As we read in the letter to the Hebrews, Christ was like us in all things but without sin (Hebrews 4:15). St. Bernard noted that our Lord came to show us His love, so that He might then experience ours—that we might say to Him, "Be it done unto me according to Thy word"—for love is a union of wills; it is wanting what the beloved wants.

HOLY WEEK PRAYERS TO BE SAID BEFORE AND AFTER MEALS



6. PRAYERS TO BE SAID BEFORE AND AFTER MEALS

Psalm 21:1-12

There are two versions to choose from:

- (1) The modern English “You and Your”**
- (2) The traditional “Thee and Thou”**

BEFORE MEALS

ALL MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Version 1

ALL: My God, my God, why have You forsaken me, far from my prayer, from the words of my cry? O my God, I cry out by day, and You answer not; by night, and there is no relief for me.

Yet You are enthroned in the holy place, O glory of Israel! In You our fathers trusted; they trusted, and You delivered them. To You they cried, and they escaped; in You they trusted, and they were not put to shame.

But I am a worm, not a man; the scorn of men, despised by the people. All who see me scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads: *“He relied on the Lord; let Him deliver him, let Him rescue him, if He loves him.”*

You have been my guide since I was first formed, my security at my mother’s breast. To You I was committed at birth, from my mother’s womb You are my God. Be not far from me! For I am in distress! Be near, for I have no one to help me!

Version 2

ALL: O God my God, look upon me! Why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my salvation are the words of my sins. O my God, I shall cry by

day, and Thou wilt not hear: and by night, and it shall not be reputed as folly in me. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, the praise of Israel. In Thee have our fathers hoped: they have hoped, and Thou hast delivered them. They cried to thee, and they were saved: they trusted in Thee, and were not confounded.

But I am a worm, and no man: the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. All they that saw me have laughed me to scorn: they have spoken with the lips, and wagged the head. "He hoped in the Lord, let Him deliver him: let Him save him, seeing He delighteth in him!"

For Thou art He that hast drawn me out of the womb: my hope from the breasts of my mother. I was cast upon Thee from the womb. From my mother's womb thou art my God! Depart not from me! For tribulation is very near: for there is none to help me!

LEADER: No one lives on bread alone.

ALL: But on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

LEADER: A time of penance has been granted us.

ALL: To atone for our sins and heal our souls.

LEADER: For our sake Christ was obedient, accepting even death.

ALL: Death on a cross.

LEADER: The eyes of all creatures look to you to give them food in due time.

ALL: You give it to them, they gather it up; you open your hand, they have their fill.

LEADER: Let us call on the name of the Father, Who always takes care of His children.

ALL: Our Father . . . but deliver us from evil. Amen.

LEADER: Bless us O Lord

ALL: And these Thy gifts which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

AFTER MEALS

LEADER: Lord, you have fed us with Thy gifts and favors.

ALL: Fill us with Thy mercy, for Thou art merciful and Thy mercies are above all Thy works.

LEADER: For the sake of Thy holy Name, O Lord

ALL: Reward those who have been good to us and give them eternal life. Amen.

LEADER: Our compassionate Lord has left us a memorial of His wonderful works.

ALL: He has given food to those who fear Him.

LEADER: God is blessed in all His gifts

ALL: And holy in all His works.

LEADER: We give Thee thanks almighty God

ALL: For all Thy benefits, Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

LEADER: May the souls of all the faithful departed

ALL: Through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.