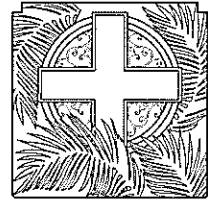


# PALM SUNDAY



## Suggested service of Prayer and Word

for use of Families at home or in small groups.

### SETTING THE SCENE AS REALISTICALLY AS POSSIBLE

[It is suggested that only three 'aids' are needed - a lighted candle, a crucifix, and a copy of Matthew's version of the Gospel.]

[The Leader may wish to share the following thoughts - if judged necessary some points may be explained to the younger ones present]

THIS Palm Sunday requires that everyone present in the home needs to be wide awake and sharply focussed. In all our lifetimes we have never been in a situation quite like the present one. In some strange but real way the national lock down has YANKED us out of our comfort zones. One simple example should help to emphasise this. On each and every Ash Wednesday in the past we have been signed with ashes which came from the dried palm leaves blessed the previous Palm Sunday.

Where are the ashes for Ash Wednesday 2021 to come from? I have no doubt that some appropriate plan will be forthcoming. However, perhaps this Palm Sunday we could 'burn' something of ourselves - some prejudice, animosity, intolerance, selfishness, or resentment?

LEADER:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest!

LEADER: Our celebration of this Palm Sunday is both different and challenging. We all have to make a special effort to see Christ, our brother, as all of Messiah, Saviour and King. He is the one who will fulfill our deepest hopes. At the same time we must be honest enough to admit that so very often our own response to the reaches of Christ's love is both shallow and wanting.

[ALL NOW SPEND A FEW MINUTES IN PERSONAL SELF-EXAMINATION. FOCUS ON YOUR SINS AND FAILURES IN FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND PARISH LIFE]

**LEADER:** Yet where sin abounds, God's favour abounds even more;  
for the love of our God far surpasses our wayward hearts.

**ALL:** Lord, in genuine sorrow for our sins and unfaithfulness we  
are full of trust in the mercy of your love.  
May we accept the Christ you have sent.  
Open our eyes and our hearts that he may enter our lives.  
May we hear his voice when he calls to us.

AMEN!

**LEADER:** LET US PRAY

Almighty Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
you sent your Son,  
to be born of a woman and to die on a cross,  
so that through the obedience of one man,  
estrangement might be dissolved for all.

Guide our minds by his truth  
and strengthen our lives by the example of his death,  
that we may live in union with you  
in the kingdom of your promise.  
Through the same Christ our Lord:

**ALL:** AMEN!

**LEADER:** Father,  
to you we lift our minds and hearts  
as we listen to the reading of Jesus' Passion and death.  
Stretch forth your own life-giving hands to bless us, your people.

[The Reading of the Passion according to Matthew 26: 14 - 27: 66. If judged necessary the SHORTER form of the Passion may be read - 27: 11 - 54. Where possible allow the verses to be distributed between various members of the group, and ensure that after each reader there is a short period of silence. However, after the words He yielded up his spirit, a much longer period of silence is observed.]

[the first reader starts the reading]

[When the reading is completed, and after a significant period of silence]

**LEADER:** Father, your only Son has gone before us  
to show us the way to you.  
We pledge ourselves now to follow him  
wherever he may lead us.  
Through him we give you praise and glory  
now and for ever.

**ALL:** AMEN!

**LEADER:** Let us now be aware  
that we are unable to receive Eucharist today.  
However, we are able to  
reach out to Jesus in our minds and hearts.  
Let us now ask him to come into us  
so that we may be nourished  
to grow as faithful disciples in word and deed.

[Allow time for silent prayer.]

Blessed are you, God our Father.  
We ask that you keep us loyal to you,  
that we may do whatever you ask of us.  
As the passion of your Son is relived in our lives,  
may our trust in you never falter.  
We ask this through the same Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** AMEN.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Hosanna to the Son of David.

