

REMEMBERING JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

**"Hosanna in the highest!" that ancient song we sing,
for Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven our King.
O may we ever praise Him with heart and life and voice,
and in His blissful presence eternally rejoice!**

We pause and remember that our God is in our midst,
always remembering us, always caring for us, always loving us.
Holy is God, holy and mighty, holy and living forever!

Mark 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples and said to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, "Why are you doing this?" just say this, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and He sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, 'Hosanna!

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

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!

Then He entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when He had looked around at everything, as it was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.



Why Palm Branches?

In the ancient Middle East kings could enter a city in two ways. Horses were used for war, so if the king rode on a horse, it usually meant trouble. If they came in peace, they would ride a donkey, a humble act. Jesus was sending two clear messages to the people of Jerusalem. The first was that he is a king; the second message is that His intentions were peaceful. The point was not lost on the religious leaders.

Jesus came down the Mount of Olives into the Kidron valley, to the east of the temple. It is a very steep descent. The road was a dirt path. The spring rains made the passage slippery. The people hailing Jesus placed branches and clothing on the road so that the footing was safe. John is the only gospel that mentions that the branches were from palm trees. Matthew and Mark only refer to "branches". Luke leaves out the branches entirely and simply says that the people put their clothes on the road. In medieval Europe, people used willow and other branches to celebrate this day, rather than palms which were rare. Some people braid three or more strips of palm to make crosses or crowns of thorns. Next year we will burn the palms to make ashes for Ash Wednesday.

Psalm 24

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;

for He has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?

And who shall stand in His holy place?

Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,

who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully.

They will receive blessing from the Lord,

and vindication from the God of their salvation.

Such is the company of those who seek Him,

who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, O gates!

and be lifted up, O ancient doors!

that the King of glory may come in.

Who is the King of glory?

The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O gates!

and be lifted up, O ancient doors!

that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

Reflection of Saint John Baptist de La Salle for Palm Sunday

So that Jesus may reign in your soul, you must wage war under His leadership against the enemies of your salvation, who are also His enemies. For since He wishes to establish His peace within you, a peace, which according to Saint Paul, ought to reign in your hearts, He must overcome – and you must overcome with Him and by His help anything that is able to be an obstacle, such as, your passions and evil inclinations.

You must eliminate within you all sin that has reigned in you and deliver yourself from the shameful slavery to which sin has reduced you.

Open yourself fully to Jesus Christ today by abandoning yourself to His guidance and by allowing Him to reign over your heart and mind so that you can say that it is no longer you who live but Jesus Christ Who lives in you.

Intercessions

That we may always make Jesus the King and Center of our hearts, we pray:

That all peoples will come to realize that You are the One God
and no idols that we create will ever take Your place, we pray:

That we continually strive to put on the mind and heart of Jesus, we pray:

That we will be faithful to our baptismal promises
and live as committed and active followers of Jesus the Messiah, we pray:

That we will never turn away from our Christian commitment
because of ridicule or persecution, we pray:

That those who rule peoples and nations will take Jesus as their model, we pray:

That those who do not know Jesus or will not hear His Gospel message
may open their hearts to Him, we pray:

Prayer:

Lord Jesus we come before You on this Palm Sunday and give You thanks.

We remember how You set your face firmly towards Jerusalem, with a single eye and pure intention, knowing what lay ahead but never turning aside. We remember how You rode into Your city in triumph, we thank You that You enjoyed the Hallelujahs and Hosannas of ordinary people, living fully in that moment of delight, and accepting their praise. We thank You that You went into the heart of our evil, and pain, along a way that was both terrible and wonderful as Your kingship became Your brokenness, and Your dying became love's triumph.

Lord, in Your mercy - Hear our prayer.

Hymn: *Ride On Jesus Ride*

Ride on, Jesus, ride. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on Jesus, ride.

King Jesus rides on a milk white colt. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

The River Jordon He did cross. Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on, Jesus, ride.

My Jesus lifted His throne above. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

See His mercy and His love. Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on, Jesus, ride.

The children of Jerusalem. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

Strewed their branches on His way. Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on, Jesus, ride.

Blessings on the Holy One! Ride on, Jesus, ride.

Blessings on the Saving One! Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on, Jesus, ride.

Ride to set Your people free. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

Ride the road to Calvary. Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on, Jesus, ride.

Ride obedient unto death. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

Ride to break the chains of death. Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on, Jesus, ride.

Ride again in the hearts of us. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

Ride again in the hands of us. Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on Jesus, ride.

Now beyond all time and space. Ride on, Jesus, ride.

Now in every land and race. Ride on, Jesus, conquering King, ride on, Jesus, ride.

Philippians 2: 5-11

Have among yourselves the same attitude

that is also yours in Christ Jesus,

Who, though He was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.

Rather, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave,
coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance,

He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death,
even death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted Him

and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name,

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,
of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

What Are We Cheering About Anyway?

When the Lord Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem less than a week before He went to the cross, were the people all excited about having Him come? They cried "HOSANNA" which means "SAVE US NOW"! What did they want Jesus to save them from? Did they want Him to save them from their sins (which is the very reason He came)? Did they want Him to save them from living wrongly, thinking wrongly and acting wrongly? Did they want to be saved from the terrible judgment of a righteous God who hates sin?

The Jewish people were looking for the CROWN

A King who can save us
from the Romans and help
make life less miserable.

but they did not really see the need for the CROSS

A Savior who can save us
from our sins and who can
give us a new life.

They wanted Christ to be King of the world

but they did not really want Him to be King of their life.

At this time the Romans ruled the world and the Jewish people wanted Jesus to set them free from the Romans. They did not really want Jesus to set them free from SIN, which is even a more terrible bondage.

When Jesus entered the city, the people shouted, "BLESSED IS THE CHRIST!" Less than one week later, what did they shout? First THEY WANTED HIM TO BE KING. Then a few days later THEY WANTED HIM DEAD!

The Jews wanted Jesus to change their world (make things better on the outside) but Jesus wanted to change their heart (make things right on the inside). They did not understand that it is man's heart that needs to be fixed.

Do you think Jesus was fooled by the excited shouts of the crowd as He entered the city? Even though the people were shouting for joy, what was Jesus doing? The Lord knew that the people were going to reject Him. He knew what was in their hearts! The crowd rejoiced but the Savior wept. The Savior stretched forth His hands to the people of Israel to give them His very best, but because they were disobedient and rebellious they refused.

When Jesus came into the city, He did not sneak in unnoticed. He did not enter silently by night. He did not disguise Himself. He did not try to avoid the crowds.

But when Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem in the final days before His death, He acted as if He wanted the whole world to know!!

The time for Jesus to march to the cross had come, and the Lord bravely and boldly entered the city where He would soon die. Even though the people would reject Him, Jesus openly presented Himself as their King and as their Savior. The Lord was no coward who had to act in secret.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the city was packed with people! The celebration of the Passover was near at hand and large crowds had come to Jerusalem to celebrate. Jesus did not enter the city unnoticed and Jesus did not die in secret! The death of Jesus the Christ was one of the most public events that the world has ever witnessed!

If the Lord was willing to die publicly for you, are you willing to live publicly for Him?





We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world.

Saint John Baptist de LaSalle
and all you holy Brothers you have gone before us,
help us to always venerate the cross of Jesus
which we carry on our persons.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!