

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday Patchwork Group meet @ 12.30pm  
Tuesday Friendship Group meet @ 10am  
Wednesday Golf Group meet @ 6.15am  
Thursday Maundy Thursday @ 7pm  
Friday Good Friday @ 9am  
Easter Day Services @ 7.30 and 9am

**FLOWERS FOR EASTER** – if you'd like to make a donation towards the flowers for Easter please speak with either Bobbie or Irene. Thank you.

**PUT THE BINS OUT** – would someone be willing to do this task every Tuesday afternoon/evening? A huge THANK YOU to Sue for undertaking this job over the last few years.

**SWAN VALLEY TRIP** – if you'd like to go on 17<sup>th</sup> April between 10 – 3pm, we'll visit three venues and have lunch at a vineyard, please put your name on the Notice Board. If we have enough people, we'll get a bus.

**Please pray for:** Paul; Frances; Isla; Albert, Ivan; Peggy; Peter; Stephen; Barry; Fred & Jocelyn; Ron; Cameron; Joan; Doug F; Paul L; Keith & Hilary



*Happy birthday to Jean Jones on 31<sup>st</sup>*

<b>Wardens -</b>	Phil Goulding	Phone: 9247 4978
	Judith Smith	Phone: 9246 3745
<b>Parish Priest –</b>	the Reverend Josie Steytler	Phone: 0421 115 438

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## Welcome to Worship

## Passion/Palm Sunday

28<sup>th</sup> March 2021

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**We are a warm-hearted community who are delighted to have you worshipping with us today ...**

**Our Mission is to**

- **Know God personally**
- **Love and respect one another deeply**
- **Disciple and serve those around us**

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**Sentence:** At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bend, 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.  
*Philippians 2:10-11*

**Collect of the Day**

God of all,  
you gave your only-begotten Son  
to take the form of a servant,  
and to be obedient even to death on a cross:  
give us the same mind that was in Christ Jesus  
that, sharing in his humility,  
we may come to be with him in his glory,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

**Today's readings:**

Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 31:9-18  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Mark 14:1-15:39

**Next Week:**

Acts 10:34-43  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
John 20:1-18

## Passion/Palm Sunday – Mark 14:1-15:27

### The Blessing and Procession of Palms: Mark 11: 1-10

Mark's account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is the most subdued version of the event in Scripture. The donkey plays a central role in the Mark's story – Mark relates with surprising detail how the disciples found the donkey colt as Jesus told them.

It was the custom for pilgrims to enter Jerusalem on foot. Only great kings and rulers would “ride” into the city, and usually on great steeds and horses. Jesus, the King of the New Jerusalem, chooses to ride into the city – not on a majestic stallion but on the back of a young beast of burden. By being led through the city on the back of a lowly, servile donkey, Jesus comes as a King whose rule is not about being served but centred in generous and selfless service to others; his kingdom is not built on might but on compassion. The little donkey Jesus mounts mirrors how the prophet Zechariah foretold this scene five centuries before: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey ...”

In **John's** shorter account, Jesus is enthusiastically welcomed as the Messiah-King by the crowds, many of whom had seen or heard about Jesus' raising of Lazarus. John makes specific reference to Zechariah's prophecy that the Messiah-king will enter the city seated on “a donkey's colt.”

### The Passion: Mark 14: 1 – 15: 47

Jesus' entry into the holy city and his “cleansing” of the temple with the demand that it be restored as a “house of prayer for all people” will bring his clash with the ruling class to a head. In his account of the Passion, Mark portrays the anguish of Jesus who has been totally abandoned by friends and disciples. Mark's Jesus is resigned to his fate. He makes no response to Judas when he betrays him or to Pilate during his interrogation (and Pilate makes no effort to save him, as the procurator does in the other three Gospels). As he does throughout his Gospel, Mark pointedly portrays the utter failure of the disciples to provide any assistance or support to Jesus or to even understand what is happening. The “last” disciple who flees naked into the night when Jesus is arrested is a powerful symbol in Mark's Gospel of the disciples who left family and friends behind to follow Jesus and now leave everything behind to get away from him.

### Reading 1: Isaiah 50: 4-7

Reading 1 is taken from Deutero-Isaiah's “Servant songs,” the prophet's foretelling of the “servant of God” who will come to redeem Israel. In this third song, Isaiah portrays the servant as a devoted teacher of God's Word who is ridiculed and abused by those who are threatened by his teaching.

### Reading 2: Philippians 2: 6-11

In his letter to the Christian community at Philippi (in north-eastern Greece), Paul quotes what many scholars believe is an early Christian hymn (Reading 2). As Christ totally and unselfishly “emptied himself” to accept crucifixion for our sakes, so we must “empty” ourselves for others.

There is a certain incongruity about today's Palm Sunday liturgy. We begin with a sense of celebration: we carry palm branches and echo the *Hosannas* (from the Hebrew “God save [us]”) shouted by the people of Jerusalem as Jesus enters the city. But the Passion story confronts us with the cruelty, injustice and selfishness that led to the crucifixion of Jesus. We welcome the Christ of victory, the Christ of Palm Sunday – but we turn away from the Christ of suffering and of the poor, the Christ of Good Friday. These branches of palm are symbols of that incongruity that often exists between the faith we profess on our lips and the faith we profess in our lives.

In his account of the Passion, Mark portrays a Jesus who has been totally abandoned by his disciples and friends. There is no one to defend him, to support him, to speak for him. He endures such a cruel and unjust death alone. Yet, amid the darkness, a light glimmers: The prophecy of a new temple “not made by human hands” is fulfilled in the shreds of the temple curtain; a pagan centurion confesses his new-found realisation that this crucified Jesus is indeed the “Son of God”; and a member of the Sanhedrin, Joseph of Arimathea, is emboldened to break with his fellow councillors and request of Pilate the body of Jesus. The Passion of Jesus should be a reason for hope and a moment of grace for all of us as we seek the reign of God in our own lives – however lonely and painful our search may be.

The Gospel calls us to take on what Paul calls the “attitude of Christ Jesus” (Reading 1) in his passion and death: to “empty” ourselves of our own interests, fears and needs for the sake of others; to realise how our actions affect them and how our moral and ethical decisions impact the common good; to reach out to heal the hurt and comfort the despairing around us despite our own betrayal; to carry on, with joy and in hope, despite rejection, humiliation and suffering.

In our remembering the events of Holy Week, Jesus will turn our world and its value system upside down: true authority is found in dedicated service and generosity to others; greatness is centred in humility; the just and loving will be exalted by God in God's time.

Today's liturgy confronts us with the reality of the cross of Christ: by the cross, we are reconciled to God; by the cross, our lives are transformed in the perfect love of Christ; by the cross, Jesus' spirit of humility and compassion become a force of hope and re-creation for our desperate world.