

**The Visitation, Taynuilt
and St Dun's, Ballachulish
& The Good Shepherd, Kinlochleven**

5th April 2020 – Palm Sunday (A)

No Public Masses this week

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| Monday | In Holy Week |
| Tuesday | In Holy Week |
| Wednesday | In Holy Week |
| Thursday | Thursday of the Lord's Supper |
| Friday | Friday of the Passion of the Lord |
| Saturday | Holy Saturday at the Tomb of Christ Easter Vigil in the Holy Night |
| Sunday | Easter Sunday |

Confession

Is available at the Chapel House on request

Divine Office – Vol 2. Week 2 with proper of the season

Weekday readings: for Holy Week

Please remember the sick of the parish in your prayers.

We remember all the faithful departed in our prayers. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace.



The Season of Lent closes with Holy Week. The Liturgy is not afraid of tragedy. It makes us live the hour of Jesus, that hour at once dark and glorious from which he said he had come. We follow his every footstep, from the triumphant entry into Jerusalem acclaimed by the crowd of his followers, to the loneliness of Golgotha where he is abandoned by almost everyone, even those he himself had chosen and for whom he gives his life. Everything happens quickly and seems to collapse.

All seems lost, all is about to begin.

Parish News

Palm Sunday and Holy Week

It's very odd that we celebrate Palm Sunday of the Passion of our Lord and so enter Holy Week, but without access to our churches and our liturgy. There are many resources on-line that allow you to follow the liturgy that immerses us in the Passion, Death and Resurrection of our Lord and I encourage you to try, as best you can, to follow the mystery of Holy Week.

Stations of the Cross

The earliest Christians desired to travel to Jerusalem and meditate on Christ's Passion by walking in his footsteps. In the Middle Ages paintings of the various events – or Stations – of the first Good Friday were displayed in Churches thus allowing everyone to pray this devotion. Meditating on the Passion reveals the depth of Jesus' love, deepens our love for Jesus and encourages us to enter into our own Paschal Mystery. The Stations of the Cross are an ideal Lenten devotion and can be prayed anywhere including our homes. There are now five recordings of different meditations on our Diocesan Website so that you can choose to pray various versions as and when it suits you. You can access the Stations via the link on the Diocesan Website.

Spiritual Communion

Prayer of St Alphonsus Liguori

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul

so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever.

Amen.

Covid 19

During these dark and difficult days please remember that I offer Mass for you each and every day.

Collection

Taynuilt – we raised £600.00 from Direct Debits
Ballachulish – we raised £258.00 from Direct Debits
Many thanks to you.

To all of you who will be struggling financially at this time, you can see that our parish is with you.

King? Really?

There are two main sections in “Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion.” Palms and Passion.

But these make a jarring contrast to each other, and most of us never notice it! Time to get things straight.

The *First Main Section* consists of the blessing of palms and the procession with them into church. An extra Gospel is read.

In it, Jesus enters the city Jerusalem as a king would. He rides on a colt—an animal used for the entrance of royalty into a city.* His disciples spread their cloaks over the colt's back as they would for a sovereign. Crowds along the way smooth their robes onto the roadway and strew out palm branches, cut from the fields. Symbolically, these are to soften the pathway. They cry out, “blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,” even as we do in the Sanctus at every Mass. This is surely a king come among us.

At Mass a ritual procession of palms commemorates this entrance. The priest and ministers make their way to the altar.

Then begins *the Second Section*, the Mass itself. For its Gospel we hear the Passion Reading from Mark. We stand in silence as the soldiers ridicule Jesus' so-called kingship, shouting in their rough voices, “here is the King of the Jews”!

They are not praising him. They are ridiculing this poor, ridiculous captive. They jam a mocking “kingly” crown on his head, and they say in effect what the condemned monarch in Shakespeare's Richard II said: “Farewell King!” They wrap a fake purple robe around his wounds—again, the colour reserved for kings. They cackle like clowns and spit on him.

What a “kingdom of God” this had turned out to be. The two contrasting sections of Sunday's mass show the great irony to us.

Why would the King of Kings allow all this to happen?

Look to the First Reading.

I have not rebelled, have not turned back; I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who tore out my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. (Is 50:5)

These words, actually written many centuries before Jesus, represent a passive surrender. Is it a kingly action, this passive surrender? You or I would have shouted, “my God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” The Responsorial Psalm says exactly these words, and Jesus too will say them from the cross.

Are they the words of a king?

The Second Reading answers this question with the famous passage from Paul's letter to the Philippians, Chapter 2, stating that Jesus did not regard being in the form of God as something to cling to—for safety or honour or whatever other reason. As the greatest king of all, he was able to empty himself out, to become like a slave, obedient even to death on the cross.

Isn't this the complete opposite of kingliness as we think of it. Isn't it a mockery of kingship?

No. It is the true basis of leadership, even though we do not see it very often in today's world. Serve the people, no matter what. Pull a kingdom together, making it safe, a place of abundance. Jesus, the true leader, lets go of everything in allegiance to God and in service of the people.

Let us be still this Sunday and listen.

John Foley, SJ

https://liturgy.slu.edu/Passion_A040520/relections_foley.html