

The Parishes of St Andrew's Cathedral
and *Our Lady of Good Counsel*



Dear Friends and Parishioners,

The Golden Gate in the eastern wall of Jerusalem gave access to the courtyards of the Temple from the Kedron Valley. One of the great memories of a visit to the Holy Land is of standing in the Garden of

Gethsemane and seeing that gate, through which Jesus travelled in his Palm Sunday entry into the city. Ideally we might like to be there in a procession, entering Jerusalem this Sunday. Truth is of course we can't even gather together in our own Churches here. But we must still follow Jesus during this Holy Week, in mind and in heart. I will bless the palms during the live stream Palm Sunday Mass and you will receive your palm when it is safe to do so.

We can follow Jesus this week by reading **St Matthew's account of the Passion**. It is of course in your Missal at the Palm Sunday Liturgy texts, and in the Bible the reference is Matthew 26:14 - 27:66. It is always helpful to have a bit of background to the text before you read it, so here goes! By the time Matthew's Gospel was written, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD had taken place. Following the great dispersal of the Jewish-Christian community and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, this community needed **reassurance**. The old centre of their universe was gone. Jesus was now the focus of every promise, the fulfilment of the law and the prophets. So, Matthew writes to show that every prophecy is indeed fulfilled, the paschal lamb is now slain, Jesus' own sacrifice has brought an end to the need of temple animal sacrifices. The Son of Man is lifted up, the Messiah is now revealed as the *Suffering Servant* whom Isaiah prophesied, who *sets his face like flint*, who *knows he shall not be shamed*. (Do also read the first and second Mass readings for this Sunday: Isaiah 50:4-7 and Paul to the Philippians 2:6-11.)

Our reading of the Passion this Sunday draws us into the mystery of God made visible in a crucified Christ amidst our own struggles and those of our society and the world at this time. Paradoxically, the three hours of crucifixion are the most productive and purposeful hours of Jesus' earthly life. Everything Jesus taught is now shown on the cross. His death is the culmination of a whole life of *giving himself away* for the sake of the community. Every parable is illuminated, the buried treasure is discovered, the grain falls to the ground and dies, the bread is broken, the cup is poured.

Read the **particular elements** of Matthew's Passion story this Sunday with particular interest. Pilate's wife's dream reminds us of the dreams of Joseph and also of the Magi at the time of Jesus' birth. The Magi and Pilate's wife also are Gentiles with insights that the Jews lack. Matthew's Passion Narrative has some unique details: the sum of money Judas was paid for betraying Jesus, and his suicide; Pilate's wife and her dream; Pilate washing his hands; the four dramatic apocalyptic occurrences after Jesus' death; the placing of a guard at Jesus' tomb. All this correspond to the picture of Jesus and his Kingdom which Mathew paints and which we are hearing throughout this year.

We have been pilgrims on the road of Lent, and now we are nearing Jerusalem—not that place in the Holy Land, but certainly that heavenly Jerusalem, the meeting place of God and humanity for all eternity. Our anticipation in the Easter feast will be very different this year, with our gatherings as God's family - the very expression of our being the Church - are completely curtailed, the liturgies, even those live streamed are truncated. But, all the aspirations we have been immersed in during the liturgies these Sundays of Lent - the thirst of the woman at the well, the plight of the blind man, the gift of life to Lazarus - are drawn together in the journey of Jesus to Calvary and resurrection and our faith journey in these so different days. We are pilgrims on the same road, with the woman, the blind man, and Lazarus and his sisters. Our stories are now merging as we walk in the same faith towards the same destination. We may feel isolated, separated at this time, but spiritually we're not alone, and I'm very aware that you sense this too. We are renewing our individual surrender, in order to live together as a people of faith more intensely when we are able to be back together announcing the joy of the Lord's resurrection and lifting our voices in songs of praise.

So let's carry each other in our minds and hearts and pray for one another in this Passion Week.
With my love,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single blue stroke.

Keeping Palm Sunday holy with a Home Liturgy

Take time to be still and know that our Lord is with you.

Set the Palm Sunday scene by reading Matthew 21: 1-11

A prayer to begin

O God, for whom all things are possible, you have shown your love for a fallen world

by raising the cross of your Son over our very lives and hearts, as a sign of victory and compassion.

As we begin the journey of this Holy Week, so different this year for us all, may we stand spiritually naked before you, that we may feel the full effects of Christ's glorious passion.

With Mary our Mother and the evangelists guiding us and praying for us, may the Jesus who enters his holy city, washes our feet, shoulders his cross and bleeds in his liturgy, dies for us and breaks the bonds of death truly be our Saviour and Lord; and through our good example, may every knee bend at his name, and every tongue proclaim that he is Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

Read the Scriptures of the day

Isaiah 50:4-7: *The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue.*

Psalms 22: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

Paul to the Philippians 2:6-11: *His state was divine, yet Jesus did not cling to his equality with God.*

The Passion of Matthew 26:14 – 27:66: *The veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.*

Reflection:

Take time to reflect silently or share on the immense love and self giving shown in the passion of Jesus, who fulfils all the scriptures of old as he obediently goes to the cross. Then bring to mind all those whom you want to pray for today and conclude this section by praying the Lord's Prayer.

A prayer to close your prayer time:

Your Servant, Lord our God, speaks the word that all the weary long to hear. Your Son humbles himself to carry the cross that your people long to embrace. As we enter this holiest of weeks, let the same mind be in us that was in Christ. Empty us of ourselves, and draw us close to the cross of the Saviour, that, looking on the One forsaken, we may acknowledge this man to be truly the Son of God, and confess him as Lord. Amen.

The Easter Triduum Liturgies

Towards evening on Holy Thursday, Lent ends and the Church enters Easter Triduum. We would normally gather a number of times over three days of the Triduum to pray and celebrate in ritual as the biblical drama unfolds in the Liturgy, our worship reaching its highpoint in the Easter Vigil.

There will be live stream of the Palm Sunday Mass from Lawside Convent Chapel at 10.30am this Sunday.

Watch through the Diocesan website **www.dunkelddiocese.co.uk**

- On Holy Thursday the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper will be streamed at 7pm.
- On Good Friday the Liturgy of the Passion will be streamed at 3pm.
- On Holy Saturday the Easter Vigil will be streamed at 8pm.
- On Easter Day, Mass (as on this Sunday, Palm Sunday) will be streamed at 10.30am.

For those who perhaps don't have internet and so are unable to take part via the live streaming I am sending (with this newsletter, by post) a leaflet which might help you keep the days of the Easter Triduum holy in your own home. Your own Missal will give the fuller versions.

Our Prayers for: those who have died recently: Pam MacKinnon, Mike Branney, Father Joe Millar, Lawrence McAreavey; **those whose anniversaries fall at this time:** Winifred Sreenan, Rene Paine, Mina Dailly, Milagros Mailla Dalis; **all those who are sick** and especially those suffering from Covid 19; **all** our medical and health care staff, all those keeping public and social services going, all workers who place themselves in situations of potential risk; all others serving and caring, all those in positions of leadership.

Thanks to those who accepted the invitation in last Sunday's newsletter to apply as volunteers for the City Council care initiative.

Your Offertory contributions: The new tax year is about to begin! For those who pay their offertory contribution by the envelope system, I'm aware you cannot yet collect your new envelopes in Broughty Ferry, and in the Cathedral the new envelopes are due to start on Sunday 3 May. My sincere thanks to those who have already sent in their offerings to the Church via cheques. Would you consider swapping your envelope to a monthly standing order from your bank account for your offertory contribution? This is very easy to set up. If you would consider this, please email me – kevinjamesgolden@hotmail.com - or call me on 01382 225228 and will send you the form. Standing Order makes it supremely easy for us to reclaim the tax on your offerings. However, even if you do **not** pay tax you can still pay by standing order. May I ask you to consider this? Kevin