

SUNDAY PLUS

Prepare the way



By Sr Janet Fearn
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According to tradition, Sir Walter Raleigh saw Elizabeth I, surrounded and distracted by courtiers and admirers, about to step into a puddle. Immediately

the gallant explorer removed his cloak and laid it before the Queen. His gesture ruined his expensive garment, but kept the royal feet dry – and gained Elizabeth's approval. For what? He brought glittering triumph and wealth, tobacco and potatoes back to England. However, Raleigh was finally arrested and executed for destroying a Spanish

outpost in South America, violating the 1604 peace treaty. His death kept Spain happy.

On Palm Sunday, crowds in Jerusalem scattered palm branches and cloaks before Jesus as he rode a donkey into the city. They greeted him as the Messiah and the Son of David – but that was on Sunday. On Friday, they would call for his

execution, not because Jesus had damaged their cloaks, but because his preaching threatened the Jewish authorities and Pontius Pilate. Jesus would die because it was politically expedient to silence him.

What good did Palm Sunday do for Jesus? Not much! Perhaps the real question is what good Palm Sunday did for us.

Raleigh's action promoted his own cause, guaranteed royal attention and paved the way to an iconic career path, even if it ended in his execution. It was worth losing a cloak.

On Palm Sunday, Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was not governed by self-interest. He knew the crowds would soon change their cries and call for his death. Yet, as he would declare on Thursday, the greatest sign of love is self-sacrifice on behalf of others. Love marks the difference between Jesus and Sir Walter Raleigh.

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Prayer of the cross

Lord Jesus, help us to see in your cross all the crosses of the world:
the cross of those who hunger for bread and for love;
the cross of those who are alone and abandoned, even by their own children and relatives;
the cross of those who thirst for justice and peace;
the cross of the elderly who bear the weight of the years and of solitude;
the cross of migrants who find doors closed due to fear, and hearts armoured by political calculations;
the cross of the little ones, wounded in their innocence and their purity;
the cross of humanity that wanders in the darkness of uncertainty and in the obscurity of the culture of the momentary;
the cross of families broken by betrayal, by the seductions of the evil one or by murderous lightness and selfishness;
the cross of the consecrated who seek tirelessly to bring your light in the

world and who feel rejected, mocked and humiliated;
the cross of the consecrated who along the way have forgotten their first love;
the cross of your children who, believing in you and seeking to live according to your word, find themselves marginalised and rejected even by their relatives and peers;
the cross of our weaknesses, of our hypocrisies, of our betrayals, of our sins and of our many broken promises;
the cross of your Church who, faithful to your Gospel, struggles to bring your love even among the baptized themselves;
the cross of the Church, your bride, who feels continually assailed from within and without;
the cross of our common home that withers gravely before our selfish eyes, blinded by greed and power.
Lord Jesus, revive in us the hope of the resurrection and of your definitive victory against every evil and every death. Amen!

Way of the Cross at the Colosseum 2019

“Let us gaze upon Jesus on the cross and say to him: ‘Lord, how much you love me! How precious I am to you!’ Let us be amazed by Jesus so that we can start living again, for the grandeur of life lies not in possessions and promotions, but in realising that we are loved. This is the grandeur of life: discovering that we are loved. And the grandeur of life lies precisely in the beauty of love. In the crucified Jesus, we see God humiliated, the Almighty dismissed and discarded. And with the grace of amazement we come to realise that in welcoming the dismissed and discarded, in drawing close to those ill-treated by life, we are loving Jesus. For that is where he is: in the least of our brothers and sisters, in the rejected and discarded, in those whom our self-righteous culture condemns.”

Pope Francis

Today:

Procession: Luke 19:28-40
Mass: Isaiah 50:4-7
Philippians 2:6-11
Luke 22:14 – 23:56

Monday:

Isaiah 42:1-7
John 13:21-33.
36-38

Tuesday:

Isaiah 49:1-6
John 13:21-33.
36-38

Wednesday:

Isaiah 50:4-9
Matthew 26:14-25

Thursday:

Chrism Mass:
Isaiah 61:1-3. 6. 8-9
Apocalypse 1:5-8
Luke 4:16-21

Evening Mass:

Exodus 12:1-8. 11-14
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

Friday:

The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord:
Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1 – 19:42

Saturday:

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night:
Genesis 1:1 – 2:2
Genesis 22:1-18
Exodus 14:15 – 15:1

Isaiah 54:5-14
Isaiah 55:1-11
Baruch 3:9-15. 32 – 4:4
Ezekiel 36:16-28
Romans 6:3-11
Luke 24:1-12

Next Sunday:

Acts 10:34. 37-43
Colossians 3:1-4 or
1 Corinthians 5:6-8
John 20:1-9