

# THE *Wednesday* WORD



## Encountering Christ The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

*Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families*



**Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions.** Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



**Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

### 1

#### Read

#### The Gospel for Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024

#### JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

##### *The Gospel for the Procession at the Beginning of Palm Sunday Mass*

When they were approaching Jerusalem, in sight of Bethphage and Bethany, close by the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go off to the village facing you, and as soon as you enter it you will find a tethered colt that no one has yet ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you, 'What are you doing?' say, 'The Master needs it and will send it back here directly.'" They went off and found a colt tethered near a door in the open street. As they untied it, some men standing there said, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They gave the answer Jesus had told them, and the men let them go. Then they took the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on its back, and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, others greenery which they had cut in the fields. And those who went in front and those who followed were all shouting, "Hosanna! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest heavens!"

Taken from Mark 11:1-10 *Palm Sunday of the Lords Passion, Year B*

### 2

#### Reflect

**After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.**

The procession of palms is joyful and sad at the same time. It is the triumphant entry of the Messiah as King into his holy city. The crowds were celebrating and singing the psalm for the festival as they entered the city, not knowing that they were in fact welcoming the Messiah who ushers in the Kingship of God. Often in Mark the actors in the story do not realise the full significance of their actions, as when the Roman soldiers later mock Jesus as King, not knowing that that is what he truly is. As Christians we believe that the Kingship of God was brought to fulfilment by the death and resurrection of Jesus. The drama, which begins with this entry into Jerusalem, ends with the story of the empty tomb. John tells us that it was only afterwards, when Jesus had risen from the dead, that the disciples realised the significance of the event. The resurrection at last made sense of everything, showed everything in a new light. John also tells us that this was the humble king of the prophecy, riding not on a triumphant war-horse but on a humble donkey.

**As someone watching the drama of Holy Week unfold, how will you journey with the Lord in these days?**

*Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB*

### 3

#### Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, joy, forgiveness, hope or something else.

### 4

#### Pray for Families

**This Wednesday's word for our school families is PRAISE!**

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

**St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

# WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 24th March 2024**



1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

## The Song of the Servant

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.



In the Book of Isaiah there are four songs, of which this is the third, sung by a mysterious Servant of the Lord. It is not clear who this Servant is, but he is totally dedicated to the service of the Lord, a disciple who listens devotedly. Through suffering, this Servant brings to fulfilment the salvation which the Lord intends for Israel and for the world. Jesus saw himself in terms of this Servant, and the four songs feature throughout the liturgy of Holy Week.

**As Christians we read the "I" who is the Servant as Jesus. Read the reading again slowly to help you share more deeply in the Passion of the Lord.**



2nd Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

## Raised High through Suffering

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names, so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



This hymn was probably not written by Paul himself, but is likely to have been a very early Christian hymn taken up by Paul into his letter to the Church in Philippi. It celebrates the triumph of Jesus through his selflessness. The assertions at the end are staggering. The hymn claims for Jesus the titles and the worship which are due only to God. What is more, this acknowledgement of Jesus' authority does not detract from the glory of God, but is precisely 'to the glory of God the Father'. This is perhaps the fullest statement in Paul of the divine glory of Jesus, a glory won by his humiliation in death.

**Why is humility important? How do we follow Jesus, the humble servant?**



**The triumph of Jesus through his selflessness.**



**The Wednesday Word** Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church  
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**