

# ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac  
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**Sunday 5 April 2020      Palm Sunday**  
**A prayer for the Coronavirus outbreak**

Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy,  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
Amen.

## Marking Holy Week and Celebrating Easter

You may feel that our Lenten journey has been rather overshadowed, even eclipsed, this year by the Coronavirus epidemic. Good Friday and the feeling of desolation and suffering may come rather more easily than penitence, but it will be difficult to celebrate Easter when we are isolated and anxious.

I am convinced however that "*in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose*" (Romans 8.28). So, somewhere amidst the strange, fearful and unique circumstances that we find ourselves in this Holy Week there are places where God is ready to speak to us, to challenge and change us, to reassure us and to give us life and hope - if we are ready to listen and respond.

Originally the benefice Ministry Team had planned a series of daily services at both our churches to take us all through Holy Week - but obviously we can't meet as we had expected. Instead we have put together a booklet of the weeks Gospel readings together with some short reflections and prayers for you to use at home daily - although we cannot *meet* together we can *pray* together. In addition you will be able to see and hear members of the Ministry Team with their reflection for that day if you check into our website or our Facebook pages. Your booklet will be sent to you by email.

We are also working to embrace technology in order to help us all share together in *worship* and at the same time. All being well, and God willing, we will broadcast a service of Compline (Night Prayer) on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, at 9pm on our Facebook pages, as well as Morning Prayer (9am) and Evening Prayer (5pm) on Easter Eve, Saturday 11th April. On Easter Day morning I shall be celebrating the Eucharist in church on behalf of us all - although sadly without you all gathered with me, so do check the website and join in our worship together.

There are many other websites and television programmes that can help you to mark Holy Week and celebrate Easter Day - whatever you choose to do, can I urge you to take the time each day to mark the final journey of our Lord towards the cross, and then into the new life of the resurrection? Surely this is a journey that we are all being called to make this Lent and Eastertide.

very best wishes for a blessed Easter  
*Adrian*

## **FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS**

**All services and meetings are cancelled for the foreseeable future. The church is closed until further notice.** Benefice wide plans for spiritual, pastoral and practical support during these difficult times are being put in place. We have set up contact between members of the congregation. **If you would like to keep in touch by telephone with others in the same situation for a chat and support please contact Tina.** 0116 2707485 Email: churchwardens@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

**FOR YOUR PRAYERS** Please remember those whom we have been asked to keep in our prayers. Please remember those who have died recently and keep their families in your prayers. For other prayer requests, please contact a churchwarden.

**Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Malawi. At present there are no confirmed cases of Corona virus in the country but there are cases in all its neighbours. Pray that this will last and that simple medical systems will get the necessary support they need should the pandemic reach the country.**

### **On-line worship**

**Sundays at 10am.** Every Sunday at 10am on the [@DioceseofLeicester Facebook page](#) there will be a short pre-recorded video providing an opportunity to engage with the Gospel reading of the day. There will be simple prayers, a reading, a brief devotional homily and a creative interpretation of the Bible story by an artist, and a closing blessing. Just follow the Diocese of Leicester Facebook page and join with others around our diocese in experiencing God's word in a slightly different way.

The Community of the Tree of Life, our own Diocesan prayer community based near the Cathedral, is praying three times a day at 8am, noon and 9pm with a short and very simple service. You can hear more by going to this page on the internet: [www.leicestertreeoflife.org](http://www.leicestertreeoflife.org) and also their Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/LeicTreeofLife/](https://www.facebook.com/LeicTreeofLife/)

The Church of England also has a dedicated web page for information about a range of options for praying and worshipping together: [www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online) 'Pray As You Go' ([www.pray-as-you-go.org/](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org/) ) each morning for a simple Bible reflection

## **Staying Connected-Social Media/ Facebook**

To engage a congregation and wider community without physical contact relies upon us using social media. Facebook is a helpful 'platform' which can host conversations, images, events and even live services. If you are interested in joining St Guthlac's 'Page'-you will need a Facebook account. Please see last week's attachments for details about how to join Facebook and St Guthlac's and St Mary's Facebook profiles. Any problems, please do contact Matthew by phone or email who is happy to help. (See front cover)

**BBC 1 Sunday Worship 11.00am** (time may vary please check TV guide)

This is also available for catch up on BBC iPlayer. The order of service is available at [bbc.co.uk/orderofservice](http://bbc.co.uk/orderofservice).

**BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship 8.10am**

You can listen to a Sunday service on the radio at 8.10am, or if you have the 'Sounds' App you can listen to it whenever you want.

## **COLLECT FOR PALM SUNDAY**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
who in your tender love towards the human race  
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ  
to take upon him our flesh  
and to suffer death upon the cross:  
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,  
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen

## READINGS

### Liturgy of the Palms

#### Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11

<sup>1</sup>When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.' <sup>4</sup>This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, <sup>5</sup>'Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.' <sup>6</sup>The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; <sup>7</sup>they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. <sup>8</sup>A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup>The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!' <sup>10</sup>When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' <sup>11</sup>The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

### Liturgy of the Passion

#### Gospel: Matthew 27:11 – 54 (or Matthew 26:14 – 27:66)

<sup>11</sup>Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.' <sup>12</sup>But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. <sup>13</sup>Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?' <sup>14</sup>But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

<sup>15</sup>Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup>At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. <sup>17</sup>So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' <sup>18</sup>For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. <sup>19</sup>While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' <sup>20</sup>Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. <sup>21</sup>The governor again said to

them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' <sup>22</sup>Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' <sup>23</sup>Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'

<sup>24</sup>So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' <sup>25</sup>Then the people as a whole answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' <sup>26</sup>So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

<sup>27</sup>Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. <sup>28</sup>They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup>and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' <sup>30</sup>They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup>After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

<sup>32</sup>As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. <sup>33</sup>And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), <sup>34</sup>they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. <sup>35</sup>And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; <sup>36</sup>then they sat down there and kept watch over him. <sup>37</sup>Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'

<sup>38</sup>Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>39</sup>Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, <sup>40</sup>'You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' <sup>41</sup>In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, <sup>42</sup>'He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup>He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's Son."'<sup>44</sup>The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

<sup>45</sup>From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>46</sup>And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli,

lema sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ <sup>47</sup>When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’ <sup>48</sup>At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup>But the others said, ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.’ <sup>50</sup>Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. <sup>51</sup>At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup>The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. <sup>53</sup>After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup>Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, ‘Truly this man was God’s Son!’

### **'Thought for the Day' ...Palm Sunday.**

'Go into the village ahead of us...' (Matthew 21:1-11)

Here on Palm Sunday, Jesus gives his disciples a command. Moreover, he 'foresees' the scenario and already 'knows' the outcome.

Some scholars suggest that Jesus had an arrangement with the donkey's owner(!), but contextually, Matthew is wanting us to assume Jesus' supernatural foreknowledge, a prophecy made and fulfilled in a very short space of time befitting this prophet from Nazareth(v11) , and of course, more.

The disciples are drawn into this in a very specific way, a way not seen until now even in Matthew. In a few minutes of obedience, they are drawn into the 'story of salvation' in a way which 'just has to be', playing a specific vital role which continues in one way or another throughout the Passion Narrative, and throughout our own Holy Week.

Our prayer lives, both in their variety of disciplines and types, have within them an insight... how we each can be obedient and guided by the Spirit as we 'go into the village ahead of us' even when such promptings seem initially pointless. (I myself would be asking why Jesus wants a donkey anyway!) Awkward me!!!

But often for each of us, it is only after the obedient 'doing' do we often discern the resultant 'why', which of course, is as uncomfortable as it is faithful.

As we tread the path of the Cross this week, let us enter into 'the doing' as best as we can, and then in hindsight try to discern any 'whys' after we 'go ahead' as Jesus' present day disciples. SAF

**PALM CROSS** Please find attached instructions for making a paper palm cross. *Fiona*

### **JIGSAW LOAN**

Are you desperate for a different jigsaw puzzle to do? Do you have a complete puzzle that you could lend out? If you do, please contact Matthew 07754 961997 or his [email revgough@gmail.com](mailto:revgough@gmail.com). We have been donated a range of landscapes, city-scapes and iconic images-500-1000 piece. Matthew can deliver or you can collect from his house. The puzzles are left in his garage for 5 days for any potential hazardous bacteria to die off, then bagged up for delivery or collection.

**ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING: this has been postponed.** Three PCC members and two Deanery Synod representatives will be elected when the meeting eventually takes place and new people are encouraged to get involved. If you would like to stand for election to the PCC or Deanery Synod, or would like to find out what is involved, please speak to Lesley Meakin .

### **WELLBEING TIPS**

MIND have produced a range of really helpful tips and factsheets to support us during the Coronavirus situation.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse80ef2>

**FOR THE NEWSLETTER** Please send material to be included in the next newsletter by **Thursday 10pm** to [administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk](mailto:administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk)