



A DARK TIME

(MARK 14:1-15:47)

The Gospel of Mark has been described as “a Passion Narrative with a long introduction”. The cross casts its shadow over this account of Jesus’ life and ministry.

At the beginning of the story, we hear of the violent treatment and unjust execution of John the Baptist and the growing hostility towards Jesus, which reaches its climax in the plot of the religious and political leaders to do away with him. Jesus predicts his death three times, but the disciples do not understand. Discipleship is presented as taking up the cross and following Jesus, later illustrated by Simon of Cyrene.

It is a feature of Mark’s Gospel that no one understands who Jesus really is. Jesus does not accept Peter’s confession that he is the Christ, as this is, presumably, founded on Jesus performing miracles. This is corrected at once by the first prediction of the passion. One of Jesus’ inner circle arranges to hand him over to the hostile religious authorities. Jesus accepts his fate as the fulfilment of the scriptures after his struggle in Gethsemane, during which he receives no answer from God.

A distinctive feature of Mark’s account is the mention of the young man who “follows at a distance” and runs off naked when Jesus is arrested and all his disciples abandon him. This would-be disciple does not give up everything to follow Jesus, but rather leaves everything behind in order to escape.

Mark’s depiction of the crucifixion is unremittingly bleak: there is no hint of sympathy from any quarter. Even those crucified with him taunt him along with the passers-by. Jesus is abandoned by everyone – including, it seems, by God. His cry from the cross is one of despair. But at the moment of his death comes God’s answer, the tearing of the Temple veil which separated the divine presence from the people. Now Jesus will be the focus of God’s presence for Jew and Gentile. It is at this point, when there can be no further misunderstanding, that the Gentile centurion accurately proclaims Jesus as “the Son of God”. It is the cross, not the miracles, which reveals Jesus’ true identity. ■

REFLECT

We must read each Gospel version according to the viewpoint of the individual evangelist. We may find the idea of Jesus apparently despairing on the cross uncomfortable, but that is precisely the reason why we should think about it more deeply. If we believe that Jesus was truly human, we should read Mark’s account without importing elements from the other evangelists which soften the picture. Mark tells us that Jesus experienced being totally abandoned, which may well help some of us who feel that way; that, in Jesus, God has experienced this feeling and so can understand our situation.

We notice that Mark mentions the women from Galilee who witness the crucifixion and includes by name Mary Magdalene as they observe where Jesus is buried. This prepares the way for the events of Easter morning. The cross and Calvary are not the end of Jesus’ story. ■

SAY

My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

(Mark 15:34/Psalm 21:1)

DO

Take your palm in your hand. Reflect on the change in the attitude of the crowd from Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem and their calling for his death a few days later. Do you see a similar manipulation of people today?



LEARN

Mark’s presentation of the passion of Jesus is very bleak, suggesting that Jesus is totally abandoned and has to suffer alone.

The cross dominates the Gospel according to Mark.

Each evangelist has his own understanding of who Jesus is: we should read each account according to the appropriate point of view.

1. THE SOLEMN ENTRANCE**ANTIPHON**

Hosanna to the Son of David;
blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord, the King of Israel.
Hosanna in the highest.

As the Lord entered the holy city, the
children of the Hebrews proclaimed the
resurrection of life.

Waving their branches of palm, they cried:
Hosanna in the Highest.

When the people heard that Jesus was
coming to Jerusalem, they went out to meet
him.

Waving their branches of palm, they cried:
Hosanna in the Highest.

2. THE SIMPLE ENTRANCE**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

Six days before the Passover,
when the Lord came into the city of
Jerusalem,

the children ran to meet him;
in their hands they carried palm branches
and with a loud voice cried out:

*Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed are you, who have come in your
abundant mercy!

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.

Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is this king of glory?

He, the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.

*Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed are you, who have come in your
abundant mercy!

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who as an example of humility for the human
race to follow
caused our Saviour to take flesh and submit
to the Cross,
graciously grant that we may heed his lesson
of patient suffering
and so merit a share in his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 50:4-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 21

Response:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

1. All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
"He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend."
(R.)

2. Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet.
I can count every one of my bones. (R.)

3. They divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me! (R.)

4. I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.
"You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons." (R.)

SECOND READING Philipians 2:6-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Philippians.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!

**Christ 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
names.**

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!

GOSPEL

Mark 14:1-15:47

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

(all bow during the next two lines)

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living
and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.**

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Through the Passion of your Only Begotten
Son, O Lord,
may our reconciliation with you be near at
hand,
so that, though we do not merit it by our own
deeds,
yet by this sacrifice made once for all,
we may feel already the effects of your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my
drinking it,
your will be done.**

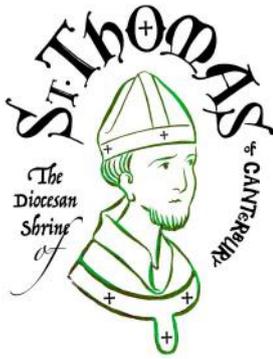
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished with these sacred gifts,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,
that, just as through the death of your Son
you have brought us to hope for what we
believe,
so by his Resurrection
you may lead us to where you call.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Lent is like a long "retreat" during which
we can turn back into ourselves and listen
to the voice of God, in order to defeat the
temptations of the Evil One. It is a period
of spiritual "combat" which we must
experience alongside Jesus, not with pride
and presumption, but using the arms of
faith: prayer, listening to the word of God
and penance. In this way we will be able to
celebrate Easter in truth, ready to renew the
promises of our Baptism.

Pope Benedict XVI

NEWSLETTER



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

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Web Site: <https://stthomasofcanterbury.com> St Thomas of Canterbury

Parish Priest: Canon Anthony Charlton email: anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Fr John Howard

email: johnhoward@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Administrator: Miss Linda Scott

St Thomas' Shop (01227 462896): OPEN SUNDAYS FROM AFTER 9.30 MASS UNTIL 12 NOON

University of Kent Chaplaincy: Fr Tom Herbst (01843 230 774) email: tjherbst@gmail.com

St Thomas' Catholic Primary School: Head Teacher: Miss Lisa D'Agostini (01227 462539)

St Anselm's Catholic Secondary School: Exec Prin: Mr M Walters; Academy Prin: Mr J Rowarth (01227 826200)

The Parish Office is Closed & Linda is working from home. Linda can access emails via the church email so please contact her this way initially.

ALL MASSES ARE LIVESTREAMED

6pm (Vigil): Ray Scott - RIP & Bertha Pople - welfare (Betty)

Sunday 28th Mar: Palm Sunday Mk 14:1-15:47

8.00am: People of the Parish

9.30am: Welfare of Ellen Reynolds (Mary Reynolds)

11.00am: Catherine (Kath) Packer - RIP (Bernard Packer)

12.15 *Baptism of Zayne Cabulo*

3.00 pm: Stations of the Cross

4.00 pm Polish Community Mass

6.00 pm: Todd Family welfare (Jenny Todd)

Monday 29th Mar: Monday of Holy Week Jn 12: 1-11

7.30 am: Kripa Jomon - birthday wishes

10.30am: Church open for private prayer & adoration

12 noon: Frederick Prior - RIP (Kathleen Prior)

1.00 pm: Funeral Mass of the late Patricia Gill

6.00 pm Live streamed Prayer

7.30 pm Parish Reconciliation Service

Tuesday 30th Mar: Tuesday of Holy Week Jn13:21-33,36-38

10.30am: Church open for private prayer and adoration

10.30am: Reconciliation

12 noon: Stanley Metcalfe - RIP (Pat Metcalfe)

6.00 pm Live-streamed Prayer

Wednesday 31st Mar: Wed of Holy Week Mt 26: 14-25

7.30 am: Pat Balshaw - RIP (Pauline Ventress)

6.00 pm Live streamed Prayer

Thursday 1st Apr: MAUNDY THURSDAY Jn 13: 1-15

10h30 - 12h30: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

THE EASTER TRIDUUM

8.00pm: The Mass of the Lord's Supper

- Joseph McKee - RIP (McKee Family)

Friday 2nd Apr: GOOD FRIDAY Jn 18:1-19:42

9.00 am: Morning Prayer

11.00am: Stations of the Cross

3.00 pm: The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord

5.00 pm: The Passion, Veneration and Communion

6.00 pm Live streamed Prayer

8.00 pm: Stations of the Cross with Veneration

Saturday 3rd Apr: HOLY SATURDAY Mk 16: 1-7

9.00 am: Morning Prayer

10.30am - 11.30pm: Reconciliation

12 noon: Polish Community Blessing of the Food

8.00 pm: The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

- Colin Stone on his birthday

Sunday 4th Apr: EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD Jn 20: 1-9

8.00am: Helena Tomala - RIP (Dabrowska Family)

9.30am: Frances & Michael-Joe Keavney (Mary & Geraldine)

11.00am: David Heap - RIP (Christine Heap)

6.00 pm: Luisa Piccarretta (Serv. of God) - RIP

PARISH MATTERS

Please remember in your prayers:

Marie Strong, Angeline Frizell, Alan Skeet, Louisa Ward, Janette Hughes, Barbara Brett, Mary Dittrich, Pat Gibson, Jenni Aldridge, Mary Reynolds, Brian Wicker, Joan Sutton, Audrey Martin, Elizabeth Gilhenny, Bill Parker, Lucy Purbrick, Josie Carr, Simon Lam, Sr Anne Bross (formerly of our parish), Pippa Swan, Fr John Slater, Jennifer Lang, Pauline Lilford, Barbara Markham, Patricia Gray, Patrick Sellars, Fr Kevin Alban O.Carm, Sr Margaret McGrath, Angela Nichols, Jean Boyce

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Carol Mary Kidby, Anna Hesketh, Tom Hodges, Rebecca Judge, Gertraude Katherine Brock, Vera Fletcher, Maria Daniels, Maria Prado, Hannelore Hall, Bernie Fisher, Joseph McKee, Tony Kenny, Michael Jones, Douglas Ricketts, Maurice Crosland, Patricia Collins, Andrzej Czupkowski, Chris Bateman, Pia Iannacci, Antonio Iannacci, Ellen Fitzgerald, Anna Koeller, Fr Michael Gwinnell, Ann Sexton, Paulina Manfredini, Fr Michael Boland, Fr George Webster, Theresa Ramsundar, Canon Frank O'Sullivan, Margaret Willis, Rev Paul Saunders, Sylvia Guy, Pat Gill, Baby Layla Green and Paul Card

Please pray for those whose 1st anniversaries are this month:

Danielle Rosher, Maria Bryant, Roberto di Paco & Pam Dodds

COLLECTIONS: Our retiring collections:

This weekend: 27/28 Mar: No Second Collection

Good Friday, 2 April: Holy Places - the places connected with Our Lord's Passion have always been centres of veneration and pilgrimage. This Good Friday collection is sent for their upkeep, and to help maintain Christian schools in the area.

Next weekend: 3/4 April: Easter Offering: Please note that ALL COLLECTIONS at the Easter Vigil and at Easter Sunday Masses, are for the direct benefit of the priests of our parish. There are Easter Offering envelopes at the back of the church and in the Foyer for your convenience.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY:

Monday, 29 March - Parish Reconciliation Service at 7.30pm

Sunday, 18 April - Parish Annual General Meeting at 4.30pm

SHOP FUNDRAISING TABLES: Thank you to all Parishioners who so generously donated to our fundraising tables in the church

POLISH FOOD BLESSING: Saturday, 3rd April 2021 at 12 noon. Below is the link for bookings for Polish Food Blessing at the Church. Please book your tickets for this event: [Święcenie pokarmów / Food Blessing Tickets, Sat, Apr 3, 2021 at 12:00 PM | Eventbrite](#) Regards, Marta Gocek

From Fr Anthony ...

When we began Holy Week last year all churches were closed and here at St Thomas we hadn't as yet got our live-streaming cameras up and running. For Fr Sylvester, Mgr John and myself it was really lonely celebrating Palm Sunday and the Triduum without you all gathered round the altar. This year we will be able to celebrate Holy Week and Easter together. But sadly not all together as there is still strict guidelines on how many can be present in church and we need to adhere to those guidelines regarding COVID 19. I know that some of you will be disappointed that you are not able to join us in person. As you know we have agreed to put on a second Celebration of the Passion on Good Friday at 5pm because so many missed out being able to book at place at the 3pm service. The guidelines given to us by the Bishops of England and Wales for celebrating at this time mean that all our services will be shortened.

This weekend, Palm Sunday, sadly there will be no blessing of the palms outside the church nor a procession. The palms will be blessed in the All Saints Chapel after the reading of the story of Jesus entry into Jerusalem. The shortened form of the St Mark's Passion will be read in parts but you will not be able to shout out the crowd parts. When you leave at the end of Mass you can collect your palm from the table in the All Saints chapel. These will be handed to you by volunteers wearing gloves.

Mgr John, Fr John and myself are able to go to St. George's Cathedral on Wednesday for the Chrism Mass. This is a ticketed event. We will renew our priestly promises and will bring back the newly blessed Oils of Chrism, Oil of Catechumens and Oil of the Sick.

On Thursday evening we begin the Triduum with the Mass of the Lord's Supper at 8pm. This year we will not be able to wash the feet of twelve men and women. There will be no procession to the Altar of Repose after communion. The Reserved Sacrament is to be kept in the Tabernacle in the Church. After the Prayer after Communion the priests will kneel on the bottom step of the back Altar and pray silently for some time. You will be able to remain to pray for only a short time before we close the Church.

At the Good Friday service of the Passion of the Lord we will read the shortened version of the Passion according to St John. After the intercession there is a simple Adoration of the Cross.

The priest will unveil the cross and hold it high for the congregation to adore in silence by a genuflection or deep bow in their places followed by a brief period of silent prayer. You will not be able to come up in procession to venerate the crucifix. This is followed by Communion.

Our Easter Vigil will be much shorter because there is no blessing of the New Fire or the Paschal candle outside. The new Paschal candle will be enthroned and lit in the Sanctuary before the Vigil begins. After the shortened form of the Exultet we will have only three Old Testament readings, the reading from Romans and the Easter Gospel. After the short homily we have the blessing of the baptismal water and the renewal of Baptismal promises. Robert will be baptised on Easter Monday at the 10am Mass and Simon and Geoff will be received into full communion of the Catholic Church and, along with Vestina, they will all be confirmed.

This year, while not ideal, we are at least blessed to be able to celebrate the one event of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord. Let us do the best we can either in the church or at home.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, having made this day a day of mourning by his death, changed it into a day of rejoicing by his resurrection. Now that we are solemnly commemorating both these events, let us keep watch in memory of his death and joyfully welcome his approaching resurrection." (St Augustine)

SVP: £792.64 THANK YOU. A Health Visitor texted: Your service is so helpful for our families & the only one in the area like it. The support you give as people, when delivering the goods is also so much part of the service and so appreciated.

Seeking Marriage & Family Life Bereavement Support Trainers:

The Marriage and Family Life team are seeking volunteers who would be interested in being trained to train others in Bereavement support ministry at parish and deanery level. An introductory meeting will take place remotely, **via zoom** from 10am to 11am, on Saturday 8th May. Please email Elizabeth Partridge at: mflbereavement@rcaos.org.uk to register and receive the zoom meeting joining details. Subsequent online training meetings are planned. Further details at the introductory meeting.

THE BIBLE TIMELINE COURSE

Understand the Bible from start to finish, the Old and New Testament, with this **FREE OF CHARGE**, worldwide-famous course delivered online LIVE by Mauro Iannicelli. Starts on **7th April 2021** at 7pm (Eight Wednesday evening sessions). Info & Registration: www.comeandsee.org

The Passage's mission and work is developing to cope with more people becoming homeless. It is raising funds through the Big Give until Wed 31st March to support **No Night Out** a new initiative to take newly homeless people off the street straight away. Further details of the work is at www.passage.org.uk.

Double your Donation, Double your impact. This is a matched giving scheme for online donations. If someone (can be company, individual or trust) gave £10 online matched giving of £10 would bring the Gift up to £20 (and for individuals to £22.50 with Gift Aid with higher rate tax relief it may cost the donor less than £10). For more information ring Andrew Hollingsworth 020 75921886 andrew.h@passage.org.uk

Donate at <https://tinyurl.com/NoNightOut>

EASTER SERVICE BOOKINGS:

We are fully booked for almost all the Easter Services with waiting lists; so if you have tickets but cannot attend, please cancel the tickets online to allow others to get a seat. Thank you