



WOY WOY PENINSULA PARISH

St John the Baptist Catholic Church



The Passion of the Lord (Palm Sunday)
5th April 2020, Year A (Psalter Week 2)

Palm Sunday

Fr Lourduswamy

The whole world today is witnessing and having a first hand experience of something that is very unfamiliar, impersonal, unrelated and illogical in the form of COVID – 19. Though initially, most of the countries thought it to be the virus that has infected only China, has made a great impact globally and has brought everyone to their knees. Today's liturgical celebration reminds of something what we are experiencing today. Palm Sunday, that marks the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Thousands of people lining at the streets holding olive leaves and spreading carpets on the road to welcome the one whom many have not seen, nor experienced and not even probably heard of. Jesus who made a great impact at Nazareth, Galilee, Samaria and many more villages and towns, has finally made his way to Jerusalem. The one who was known to be the son of a carpenter, is now acclaimed to be the King. His glory and good work has reached all over Israel. Hence, they in one chorus acclaimed him to be the King and welcomed him.

At this point, I would like to bring before you three aspects of this event.

- i) **Triumphant entry of Jesus:** Jesus after having gone through different villages and towns now at last enters the holy city Jerusalem. This entry of Jesus is named as 'Triumphant Entry'. The question is what did he triumph over? He indeed triumphed over the shallow understanding of the people over laws and commandments, he brought people to the intimate and closer understanding of our relationship with God. He was victorious in uniting people and making everyone equal in the eyes of God. After having done all these he makes a triumphant entry into Jerusalem.
- ii) **The Fickle mindedness of the people:** Most people who were present at the coming of Jesus were not aware of who this person was. All joined the rest in singing Hosanna and acclaimed him to be the King. They followed the crowd at one hand and on the other did not take trouble to know about this person even later which resulted in the gathering of these same people at the condemnation of Jesus to death when everyone shouted Crucify him. What unifies both these events is that, the crowd simply supported the few who initiated either the praise or the curse.
- iii) **A Threat to Religious and Political Leaders:** Those who were already seeking to get away with Jesus, were faced with a major threat as thousands were gathered at the street to welcome him. They did not want anyone to become his disciples nor to be his followers, hence had planned to end his trip in Jerusalem itself.

At this what we need to ask ourselves is how many among us fall into one of these categories. There are some among us who go around doing good whatever the situation may be or hurdles or hindrance that might come on the way. There are some who just follow the crowd and not stable in our faith and belief not knowing where to go and whom to believe. These kind of people are vulnerable to believe anyone easily and find difficult to identify between truth and false. And finally, there are some who always see others as threat and find ways and means to get rid of them. This event teaches us that we also need to be triumphant as Jesus was triumphant not just by entering into Jerusalem but triumphant in bringing Salvation to all.

Parish News:

Welcome Back to our Parish, Peter Lennon. As the Seminary of the Good Shepherd has temporarily closed, Peter will be staying with us until it reopens.

We are working on keeping our Parish community together in these unprecedented times. A list has been compiled of as many emails as possible, so we are able to keep in touch over the coming weeks/months. We ask you to forward any correspondence on to as many parishioners as you can. Those without emails can ring the Parish Office and we can happily post it out. All Masses over Holy Week will be streamed Live and posted on our Facebook page.

Coronavirus, COVID-19

Bishop Anthony has written to advise the following, guided by the Decree from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (26 March 2020):

- Given that the date of Easter cannot be transferred, Bishops and priests may celebrate the rites of Holy Week without the presence of the people and in a suitable place.
- The Province of Bishops for NSW/ACT have, on 26 March 2020, extended the precept of the obligation for annual Communion of the Faithful until Christmas 2020.
- On the advice from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, and after consulting the Council of Priests, I have deferred the celebration of the Chrism Mass to such a time when both clergy and people can come together. It may be that this is possible at the time of Pentecost. However, this will need to be reviewed in light of the ever-changing social circumstances
- The liturgies of the Sacred Triduum are to be celebrated in each Parish by the Pastor and his Assistant Priests. Where possible the deacon may assist.
- Bishop Anthony will celebrate each of the liturgies of the Sacred Triduum in the Cathedral with the clergy of the Cathedral Parish.

In respect of individual liturgies:

- **Palm Sunday:** The Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem is to be celebrated within sacred buildings; in Cathedral churches, the second form given in the Roman Missal is to be adopted; in parish churches and in other places, the third form is to be used.
- **Holy Thursday:** The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted. At the end of the Mass of the Lord's Supper, the procession is also omitted, and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle. On this day, the faculty to celebrate Mass in a suitable place, without the presence of the people, is exceptionally granted to all priests.
- **Good Friday:** In the Universal Prayer, a special intention prepared for those who find themselves in distress, the sick, the dead, (cf. Missale Romanum) is to be included. The adoration of the Cross by kissing it shall be limited solely to the celebrant.
- **The Easter Vigil:** Is to be celebrated only in Cathedral and parish churches. For the "Baptismal Liturgy" only the "Renewal of Baptismal Promises" is maintained (cf. Missale Romanum).

In many of our parish communities, Catechumens, enrolled in the Rite of Election at the Cathedral on 1 March 2020, along with Candidates for Reception into the Church, have been eagerly anticipating the Easter Vigil. Given the circumstances, it will not be possible now to receive new members into the Church at the Easter Vigil this year. Subsequently, I am extending the period of the Catechumenate until such a time when our expectant neophytes can be baptised, or those already baptised be received into the Church, in the full presence of our community of faith.

Every Sunday is a celebration of the Resurrection. Therefore, let us look to welcome them on the first Sunday on which it is possible for our communities to gather once again. This will be a powerful sign of the new life of the Risen Christ who breaks the shackles of our human limitations and our current social restrictions. I am considering as to whether such an event may be best placed at the Cathedral. In the meantime, I ask that our Pastors and RCIA leaders continue to accompany our Catechumens in the most creative and sustained way possible for the course of our journey.

Bishop Anthony will share a short video message to the people of Broken Bay each week on <https://youtu.be/4nkHF1sPh4E>.

Anointing of the Sick: For people who are sick or awaiting surgery the sacrament is always available.

Baptism: With just the parents and two godparents.

Funerals: With up to ten people present.

Prayer and support: Contact the Parish Office by telephoning 4341 1073 or emailing woywoyparish@bbcatholic.org.au. Out of hours medical emergency call 0438 631 327.

Mass for You at Home is on Channel 10 on Sunday mornings at 6am. This can also be accessed at <https://10play.com.au/mass-for-you-at-home>.

We recommend <https://pray-as-you-go.org/> which offers a 10-15 minute reflection and meditation each day upon the daily scripture readings, and some great prayers for particular circumstances such as loneliness, grief and depression under "prayer tools". Access it via your browser or install the free app.

Parishes streaming Mass online in Broken Bay: <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/places/mass-on-demand>.

Connected in Christ for Palm Sunday: www.bbcatholic.org.au/connected.