

Palm Sunday (B)

29th March 2015

'The Most Holy Week'

Mk 11: 1–10: *Hosanna to the Son of David!* Is 50: 4–7: For my part I
made no resistance Phil 2: 6–11: *to assume the condition of a slave*
Mk 14–15: Passion according to Mark

With these beautiful Palm-Sunday readings, we have begun our blessed and solemn keeping of Holy Week! It's the heart of our whole Christian year, and we should be determined to give to the Lord the maximum possible; of any time in the year, the coming days are the most precious, and I urge you to make this week here at church a priority. How we keep Holy Week is a measure, really, of how seriously we take our faith. Do we want to be with Jesus, ... or not? I want to highlight the profile of the week ahead, and urge you to be drawn in your hearts, of your deep love for Jesus, to be here with Him throughout the week.

First, we have our Penitential Services, Monday at 11.30am or at 7.30pm. One of the most important elements of a good Lent is the Sacrament of Reconciliation, to come to the Lord and receive the forgiveness of our sins. The Penitential Services are a special way of doing that, for at least two reasons: (i) because by being there together, we witness to each other that we are all sinners in need of God's mercy; and (ii) because there are several priests there to choose from! Use the purple sheet that you got last week, to help you prepare for the Sacrament.

Then, the '***Triduum***,' as we call it: the 'three days' which are at the centre of the Church's year: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday ... leading in to the night of Easter. If you have never before followed the full sequence of the *Triduum*, then I urge you to, so as to experience fully the passage of Christ from death to life. **Holy Thursday** (8pm) is the commemoration of the Last Supper, the first Mass, followed by the procession to the 'garden' where we pray with Him as He awaits His arrest. **Good Friday** is the solemn commemoration of the Crucifixion of Jesus, and every single one of us should be here (3pm), to honour Jesus who died for us, to kiss the wood of His holy Cross. There is nowhere else a believing Christian could intend to be, on Good Friday afternoon, other than here in church. For the infinite love of Jesus for us led Him to sacrifice His life; we must sacrifice Good Friday for Him. After waiting in the silence of Saturday, we come to the great **Vigil of Easter** (9pm) Saturday night, and welcome Jesus in His resurrection. If you have never been to the Easter Vigil, I suggest that this year you take the chance — it's the central liturgy of the whole year, celebrating our victorious risen Lord! So, let's promise to keep Holy Week really well, here with Jesus, so we can rejoice properly come Easter Day! Let's show that we deeply love Him.