

28 MARCH 2021

Sunday Message

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

THE WORD

Year B • Season Colour: Red • Psalter Week 2

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 forsaken me?

(Mark 15:34/Psalm 22:1)

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.



SWINFORD (F12 YH57) MEELICK (F12 AY23) MIDFIELD (F12 AX29)

Fr Dermot Meehan Phone: 094-9251790/Urgent Calls: 087-1338200

PARISH OFFICE- OPENING HOURS: Fridays: 9.00am-2.00pm; Phone: 094 - 9253607

Email: swinfordparish@gmail.com

28th Mar – 4th Apr 2021

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

Sunday 28th	12 noon	Swinford: Mona & Martin Tunney, Cloonacanna Michael King, Cloonlara (MM) Richard & Pat Gallagher & their parents, Carrowreagh Joe Prendergast, Circular Road & Marie Doherty, San Francisco & dec'd Prendergast & Doherty Families Tom & Mary Doyle & their son-in-law John Fahy
Monday 29th	10.00am	Swinford: Dominic Bryne, Scanta Maria & dec'd Bryne & Lavin Families
Tuesday 30th	10.00am	Swinford: No Intention
Wednesday 31st	10.00am	Swinford: Maureen Falsey, Scanta Maria (1 st anniv)
HOLY THURSDAY		
Thursday 1st	10.00am	Swinford: Morning Prayers
	7.30pm	Swinford: Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
GOOD FRIDAY		
Friday 2nd	10.00am	Swinford: Morning Prayers
	3.00pm	Swinford: Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion
	7.00pm	Swinford: Stations of the Cross
HOLY SATURDAY		
Saturday 3rd	10.00am	Swinford: Morning Prayers
	9.00pm	Swinford: The Easter Vigil
EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD		
Sunday 4th	12 noon	Swinford: Mary McGuinness & Thomas McGuinness (Junior) Scanta Maria William & Ann Murphy, Bothaul & dec'd Murphy, Roache & Killilea Families Mary, Michael & Kathleen Philbin, Tom & Kevin Basquil Ellen, John & Jim Murtagh, Woods, Julia & Pat Gallagher & dec'd Family, Curryane & Joe Flanery & Joe Bryne Maisie & John Fahey & dec'd Family, Brackloon Paddy & Noreen Ryan, Johnsfort & their grand- daughter Tara

While there will be no public Masses this week, the intentions above will be remembered at Mass on the designated day except for Sundays. On Sunday, the intentions for the Vigil Mass, 9a.m. Mass in Meelick, 10.30a.m. Mass in Midfield and the 12 noon Mass in Swinford will be remembered together at 12 noon Mass in Swinford. Though families will not be present, please be assured that your loved ones will be remembered at Mass.

All of the Masses above will be broadcast via live streaming on our webcam at www.Churchservices.tv. Just click on the icon for Swinford Church.

Useful updates and resources available on our diocesan website: www.achonrydiocese.

Please pray for Sr Mairéad (Mercedes) Murray, Sisters of Mercy and Helen Pugh (nee Nellie Kneafsey), Cashelsheenaughane and Epsom, England. May they rest in the peace of Christ.

Holy Week: This Sunday we begin Holy Week, the most important week in the Church's yearly calendar, when we recall the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, all that is at the core of our Christian faith. Due to continuing restrictions to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus, we will not be able to gather in church for the liturgies of Holy Week but we can join together in prayer through participating in the ceremonies on-line via the webcam in Swinford Church. Holy Week reaches its high point in the Easter Triduum which begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening and leads us into the Solemn Commemoration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday afternoon and the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night when we celebrate the Lord's resurrection, a celebration that continues with the Mass of Easter Sunday morning. These are very special days for us as Christians and all are encouraged to take time to pray and reflect on the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection and its meaning for us now.

Palm Sunday remembers Jesus' entry into the city of Jerusalem to undergo his passion and death when he was joyfully greeted by the crowds. Palms will be blessed at the beginning of the 12 noon Mass on Sunday and will be available afterwards in all three churches for those who might like to bring blessed palm to their homes.

Holy Thursday: On Holy Thursday, Morning Prayer of the Church will be broadcast by webcam from Swinford Church at 10 a.m. Following an ancient tradition in the Church no Mass is celebrated on Holy Thursday except the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper when we remember Jesus' institution of the Eucharist. The Mass of the Lord's Supper will be broadcast by webcam from Swinford Church at 7.30 p.m. on Holy Thursday evening.

Good Friday: Morning Prayer of the Church for Good Friday will be broadcast from Swinford Church at 10 a.m. Following tradition, Mass is not celebrated on Good Friday. Instead there will be the Solemn Commemoration of the Lord's Passion on-line from Swinford Church at

3.00 p.m. This ceremony has its focus readings from scripture, prayers and the veneration of the cross. Those participating from home might like to have a crucifix or the cross on their rosary beads to hand to venerate for themselves during the ceremony. The Stations of the Cross will be broadcast on-line from Swinford Church at 7.00 p.m. on Good Friday evening, an opportunity to walk prayerfully, as it were, with Jesus on his journey to Calvary.

Holy Saturday: Again, by ancient tradition, no Mass is celebrated on Holy Saturday. Morning Prayer of the Church will be broadcast on the webcam from Swinford Church at 10 a.m. Holy Saturday is a day when the Church keeps vigil at the tomb of Jesus, awaiting his resurrection. The Easter Vigil, the most important celebration in the entire Church year, draws us into the mystery of Christ's resurrection and will be celebrated on-line at 9.00 p.m. on Holy Saturday night. During the Vigil, as we mark with joy the Lord's resurrection, we renew our Baptismal promises and bless holy water. In all our churches, bottles of Easter Holy water will be available to bring home on Easter Sunday.

Praying at home in Holy Week: To help mark this important week, resources are available for praying at home on our diocesan website, www.achonrydiocese.org/holyweek2021.

Penance Service: On Wednesday of Holy Week, each of the six parishes in our cluster will hold a Penance Service on-line at 7.30 p.m. This is an opportunity to reflect on our lives, acknowledge our sins and in our hearts to ask God's merciful forgiveness until we can make an individual confession.

Offertory envelopes: Boxes for the weekly offertory collection and other collections during the year can be collected from the Parish Office on Thursday next from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and also on Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 7.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. If you are unable to come to the Parish Office to collect your box, you can call 9253607 during the times above to arrange to have the box delivered to you. It is also possible to make contributions to collections on-line. How to do this is explained on our diocesan website, www.achonrydiocese.org.

Thank you to all who have been dropping in their contributions to the offertory collection.

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.

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,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Is 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

Ps 21

Response:

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

- 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.)
- 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.)

- 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.)
- 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

Phil 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

Mk 14:1-15:47

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.**
**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow during the next three lines)
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.**
**For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,**

**and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. 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