



BULLETIN INSERTS

March 28, 2021 – Palm Sunday (B) The Sunday of the Passion

“Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life.”

Today is the first day of Holy Week and the last Sunday in Lent, known as Palm Sunday or the Sunday of the Passion. The day begins by marking Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Many churches participate in the Liturgy of the Palms, first offered in The Episcopal Church in the 1960 *Book of Offices*. In this liturgy, the celebrant blesses palms or other branches, and, following a reading from the Gospels, leads the congregation in procession into their church—often singing “All Glory, Laud, and Honor” or “Ride On! Ride On In Majesty!”

This liturgy evokes the early observances of Palm Sunday. According to Armentrout and Slocum’s *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church* (Church Publishing, 2000), by the year 381, the faithful would process from the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem, waving palm or olive branches. As they processed, they sang songs from Scripture – including the exultant antiphon of Psalm 118 sung at Christ’s entrance into the city: “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

When the Palm Sunday service includes the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Palms is followed by the salutation and the collect of the day. Afterward, the tone of the service shifts noticeably. In contrast to the earlier song of joy, Psalm 31, appointed for today, cries, “For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.” The Gospel reading is likewise sorrowful, recalling the events of Jesus’ Passion (that is, the events and suffering before and during his death). Still, we are reminded throughout the difficult days ahead that this is *not* the end of the story.



Despite the Savior’s death on the cross, he promises to rise again. The Man of Sorrows remains the one at whose name, “every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [and] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10-11).

Collect for the Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen (Book of Common Prayer, p. 219).