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24th March 2024

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

PALM SUNDAY

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Sat 23 Mar	5.30 pm	St George's	Tom O'Reilly RIP and family.
Sun 24 Mar	9.30 am	St George's	Eily Mitchell RIP
	11.15 am	Holy Spirit	For the repose of the soul of William Thomas Byrne RIP
Mon 25 Mar	9.30 am	St George's	Mass for the soul of Mary Anthony in remembrance of the 1 st anniversary of her death
Tue 26 Mar	9.30 am	St George's	For the soul of Dr Nicholas Tun RIP
Wed 27 Mar	9.30 am	St George's	Eucharistic Service
	11.00 am	Cathedral	Chrism Mass
Thu 28 Mar	9.30 am	St George's	Eucharistic Service
MAUNDY THURSDAY	7.00 pm	St George's	Mass of the Lord's Supper, for Hannah Maureen McAleavy RIP
Fri 29 Mar	3.00 pm	St George's	Good Friday service
GOOD FRIDAY	6.00 pm	St George's	Stations of the Cross
Sat 30 Mar	NO MORNING MASS OR SERVICE		
EASTER VIGIL	6.00 pm	St George's	The Doolan family
Sun 31 Mar	9.30 am	St George's	People of the Parish
	11.15 am	Holy Spirit	In thanksgiving to St Joseph for a favour received and for holy souls.

GOSPEL REFLECTION: It is a common mistake to listen to or read today's account of Jesus' Passion and imagine that he was somehow the victim of his circumstances, powerless and vulnerable to chance and the caprice and whim of violent men. This is a wrong way to read or hear the Passion. Jesus' violent death was not the result of chance, nor was he subject to a set of circumstances which overwhelmed him. The best way to understand Jesus' Passion is by considering the words of Peter on the Feast of Pentecost: 'this Jesus [was] delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God' (Acts 2:23).

Of course, this does not mean that Jesus was handed over by passive players in a scenario written by God. To God, all moments of time are present but, in the mystery of his plan, everybody has free will to make a free response to his grace. Pontius Pilate, Herod, the Gentiles, the Jewish people and the Pharisees were blinded by unbelief and ignorance, and God permitted the acts that flowed from their blindness. In reading or listening to the passion narrative today we witness before our very eyes how the Scriptures foretold this divine plan of salvation through the putting to death of the righteous one – Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures. Jesus' death and resurrection are the fulfilment of Isaiah's Suffering Servant prophecies. He is the Lamb who was silent before his shearers; he did not resist but was crushed for our iniquities, pierced for our transgressions and the punishment that brought us peace was on him. He who had no sin became sin.

The cross is love to the very end. Jesus knew and loved us all when he offered his life. No human being, not Mary our Mother, not St Peter or St Francis of Assisi or St Ignatius of Loyola, could take on themselves the sin of every human being who has ever lived or who will ever live. Only Jesus of Nazareth could become for us the source of eternal salvation, and his most holy passion on the wood of the cross merited justification for us. 'Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven.' (St Rose of Lima)

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER: Today we celebrate Palm Sunday and remember Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem to begin the final week of His life, the great work of the salvation of human beings. The conquest of sin and death which leads to the release of God's Holy Spirit which animates us and gives us new life, 'Dying he destroyed our death and rising he restores our life'. 'By His cross and resurrection he has set us free, he is the Saviour of the world.' St Rose of Lima said 'Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven.'

On Wednesday of Holy Week, priests and deacons and people gather with our Bishop Patrick at our Cathedral for the Mass of Chrism. The bishop blesses the three oils of chrism, used for baptism and confirmation, of catechumens, used for baptism, and the oil of the sick used for anointing those who are ill.

All the clergy of the diocese are invited to renew their commitment to priestly service.

On **Maundy Thursday** we celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7 pm at St George's when we remember, Jesus instituted the Eucharist and this last meal he shared with his disciples before his death. Our Special Ministers of the Eucharist renew their commitment to their service of the people in Holy Communion.

On **Good Friday** at 3 pm we have our Good Friday Liturgy for readings and prayers and adoration of the Cross and Holy Communion.

Then on **Holy Saturday** night we have the Easter vigil at 6 pm at St George's with readings and the blessing of the new fire, the Easter candle and holy water and Mass of the Resurrection.

We encourage as many as possible to join in the Holy Week and Easter services.

CONFESSIONS: SATURDAY ONLY: 10:15 – 10:45

ADORATION before the Blessed Sacrament daily before the 9.30 am Mass and then other times as announced.

On Good Friday the collection is for the holy places in Palestine.

The second collection at the Easter Masses is the Easter offering towards the support of your priest. Envelopes are available at the church.

NEXT SUNDAY is Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord. It is the start of British Summer time and clocks go forward one hour.

Copies of Living Faith available at Church, for April, May, June.

LENT STATIONS OF THE CROSS, FRIDAYS IN LENT

St George's: Friday morning before the 9.30 am Mass
Holy Spirit: Friday evenings at 6 pm

There will be collections for Fr Alan's retirement at all the weekend Masses for the next two weeks.

The Palms of Our Hands

Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Mark 11:9

We may spend so much time this Sunday weaving them into decorations or waving them during Mass that we can forget the original meaning of the palms.

The dictionary tells us that the palm tree gets its name from the way its open branches resemble the human hand. As we begin Holy Week, maybe we should consider not just how we use cut palms to remind us of Christ's entry into Jerusalem but how our own palms our hands, can carry on what Jesus began.

Have we used our palms during Lent to comfort, to console to give? Have we folded them more often in prayer? Have we extended them to help? Palm Sunday can be challenging for a lot of us; the gospel is long, and the pews are often packed.

But the biggest challenge may be in realising that our own palms can do so much. Have we put them to use this Lent to truly prepare our hearts for Easter?
Dcn. Greg Kandra

FATHER ALAN'S RETIREMENT

With the agreement of our Bishop Patrick McKinney, my retirement date is Easter Monday, 1st April 2024.

I shall continue for a while to live at the presbytery, 40 Village Street, until a small bungalow has been purchased for my use by the diocese, via the diocesan property department. I do not own any property myself and the dwelling will be on the diocesan property portfolio.

I shall continue to say Mass every day as I have done since my Ordination in 1971, nearly 53 years ago.

I shall offer my services to the next priest who will have responsibility for St George's and Holy Spirit people.

Health-wise, I am quite well because of good medical care and suitable medication and hope to be able to live independently for quite a while but as we know, when you reach beyond 4 score years, there is inevitably some decline in one's physical health and fitness if not in one's mental capacity.

I have lived for nearly 36 years in Derby in spells at St Mary's and St George's and have many friends and acquaintances in the city, including my doctor, heart consultant, dentist, pharmacy and optician.

My personal family members live in various parts of England and Wales, although the majority are still in my home area of Market Harborough, Leicestershire.

Please keep me in your prayers as I begin a new phase in my life. God bless you all. Fr. Alan.