



St Peter Chanel & St Joseph Berala

Streams of living water will flow from within. ~John 7:38

Parish Office: 60 Kingsland Rd, Berala, 2141, Ph: 96447787 E: info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au
Parish Website: www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au, facebook: [stpeterstjoseph](https://www.facebook.com/stpeterstjoseph) YouTube: [BeralaParish](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqKjKjKjKjKjKjKjKjKjKjKj)

Holy Mass: Tuesday to Friday 6.45am, Saturday 8.00am | Holy Hour: Saturday 8.30am-9.30am

Lord's Day Mass : Saturday 5.00pm Vigil - LiveStreamed, Sunday 8.00am & 10.00am

Reconciliation: Saturday 8.30am - 9.30am

For Baptisms, Weddings, Bible Study and Catholic Enquiry, please contact Fr Thomas or the parish office on 9644 7787.

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD - YEAR A

2 APRIL 2023

Barabbas or Jesus, have your pick!



The trial of Jesus in front of Pilate the Governor should inspire you and me to a personal reflection. Pilate wants the people to make a choice between Barabbas and Jesus. "Barabbas" literally means "son of the father", presumably the Father in Heaven. Even though he bears such a beautiful name, by his own choice his life shows anything but. Here is a man who made a mockery of his name; the Gospel describes him as a criminal. He is the figure of those who are initiated to be children of God through baptism but has abandoned the Christian ways to a self-gratifying way of living. Whereas "Jesus" means "God saves". As the true Son of the Father in heaven, Jesus is the figure of trust in God's love. Jesus never looked for his personal glory. He was here to show the Glory of the Father in Heaven. Reading the narrative of Pilate's call to choose between Barabbas and Jesus is an invitation for us to reflect on whether we are figures of God's love or only Christians by name.

In your examination of conscience, if you have found yourself chosen to favour Barabbas, this is the time to act. Make an act of contrition like Peter who wept over his denial of Jesus as his master. Peter remembered the words of Jesus, who commented on his life by predicting that he will deny Jesus three times. In reading the Bible we let the Word of God interpret our life. If, unfortunately, you too are lapsed like Peter, pray to be restored to the fellowship of Christ and to be made worthy of the promises of the Resurrection. This Holy Week liturgies are setting the mood for a Christian conversion.



Sixth Sunday of Lent (Palm Sunday) 1 & 2 April



Every day, more than 200 million children miss out on school, around 690 million people go hungry and 2.2 billion people cannot access clean drinking water.

With your generosity, Caritas Australia has been able to help millions of vulnerable people around the world, through the Project Compassion appeal.



Please donate to Project Compassion 2023 to help continue empowering vulnerable communities around the world to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty.

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow **For All Future Generations**.

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes/envelopes available from your parish, or visit caritas.org.au/project-compassion or phone 1800 024 413.

BRING YOUR PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES ON HOLY THURSDAY TO TAKE UP DURING OFFERTORY PROCESSION.

MASS INTENTIONS

Sick: Doreen Stanmore, Pauline Lian, Gerard Del Rosario, Romaine Cheema, Virginia Naidu, Veronica Jacobs, Nazih Melhem, Danilo Carreon, Fiya Gourani, Zekia Al Asady, Graham Turner, Patsy Dutton, Aurora Flores, Olive Torino, Maureen Hynes, Giovanni Simeone, Joey Kiraz, Richard Langford, Maria Nobilo, Roland Javier

Deceased: Giuseppe Leonardi, Eddie Leonardi

Birthday: Anistan Croos

Other Intentions: Holy souls in purgatory.

Parish Priest

Fr Thomas Kurunthanam
 info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au (Office)
 pp@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au (for confidential)
 T. (02) 9644 7787

Parish Secretary

Lea Baldoria
 info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au
 Tue to Fri 9am -3pm
 T. (02) 9644 7787

Sacramental Co-ordinator

Sophia Brewty
 Tue & Wed 10am-3pm
 sacraments@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au

Catechist Co-ordinator

Josie Pangilinan
 0406 515 050

Catholic Inquiry—RCIA

Andrew Tham 0403 566 001

Parish Pastoral Council

Karim Kassis (Chair), Robert McGinn (Vice Chair), Renee Salar (Secretary), Julia Babic (Assistant Secretary), Maria Simeone (Co-ordinator, Social Committee, Jenny Michael (Asst Co-ordinator, Social Committee), Amanda Dowdell, Amanda Gahan, Jennifer Makerry, Michael Kim, Natasha Ellis, Susie Mravunac, Sr Cecilia Joseph, Sophia Brewty

Finance Committee

Brendon Nazareth (Chair), Joe Moses, Sylvia Jukic, Nader Badra

Parish Schools

St Peter Chanel, Regents Park
 T. (02) 9644 9083
 Principal—Sr Cecilia Joseph
 Family Educator - Jenny Michael

St Joseph the Worker, Auburn South
 T. (02) 9646 1434
 Acting Principal - Susie Mravunac
 Family Educator - Natasha Ellis

CatholicCare. Patricia Lay. Provides caring advice and advocacy to help families . 0447 529 122 | CCareline 13 18 19

Alcohol & Drug Information Service:

(Confidential) 02 9361 8000

Spiritual Retreats: Benedictine Abbey

Jamberoo - www.jamberooabbey.org.au/
 retreats Ph: 4236 0533

Carmelites Varroville -

www.carmeliteretreats.com.au
 Ph: 8795 3400

Healing After Abortion: 0400 092 555

Vincentian Retreat Centre Somersby -

www.divineretreatcentre.org.au
 Ph: 4372 1598

Sara's Place: For pregnancy support or

grieving after abortion visit

www.sarasplace.org.au Ph: 9699 8190

PARISH DIARY THIS WEEK

Mon 3/4	Monday of Holy Week 6.45am Mass 7.30am-9.00am Confession 5.00pm-7.00pm Confession
Tue 4/4	Tuesday of Holy Week 6.45am Mass 7.30am-9.00am Confession 5.00pm-7.00pm Confession
Wed 5/4	Wednesday of Holy Week 6.45am Mass 7.30am-9.00am Confession 5.00pm-7.00pm Confession
Thu 6/4	Holy Thursday 10.30am Chrism Mass at St Mary's Cathedral 7.30pm Mass of the Last Supper
Fri 7/4	Good Friday 10.00am Stations of the Cross 3.00pm Passion Service
Sat 8/4	Easter Vigil 8.00am Morning Prayer & Blessing of Easter Food 7.00pm Mass, Blessing of Fire & Water, Adult Baptism
Sun 9/4	Easter Sunday 8.00am Mass 10.00am Mass

6 APRIL 2022**HOLY THURSDAY – 7.30PM**

ACOLYTES	ALL ACOLYTES
LECTOR 1	Rosalind EVANS
LECTOR 2	Mai NGUYEN

7 APRIL 2022**GOOD FRIDAY – PASSION SERVICE 3PM**

ACOLYTES	ALL ACOLYTES
LECTOR 1	Ingrid SCHARENGUIVEL
LECTOR 2	Noeline DONNELLAN

PASSION NARRATIVE

NARRATOR	Joy SKERRITT
GOSPEL CROWD	Mai NGUYEN
GOSPEL OTHER	Christine KENSEY

8 APRIL – 7 PM**EASTER VIGIL OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD**

ACOLYTES	ALL ACOLYTES
MUSIC & SINGING	PARISH CHOIR
POWERPOINT	Parish Choir
LECTOR 1	Joy SKERRITT
LECTOR 2	Rosalind EVANS
LECTOR 3	Jenny MICHAEL
LECTOR 4	Katrina YIP
EPISTLE	Phirum DUCH

9 APRIL 2022**EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD**

Mass	8AM	10AM
ACOLYTE	Robert MCGINN	Dom Pangilinan
MUSIC & SINGING	Cyril EDWARDS, Liva FUNAKI & Lavinia FIFITA	SACRED HEART CHOIR
POWERPOINT	Liva or Lavinia	Sacred Heart Choir
LECTOR/S	Maria SIMEONE	Ibrahim MATAR
	Maris MARSH	Noeline DONNELLAN
CHURCH SHOP	Catherine MCGINN	Alan THAM

ANTIPHONS & READINGS

First Reading *Is 50:4-7*

I did not cover my face against insult and I know I will not be ashamed.

Second Reading *Phil 2:6-11*

He humbled himself to become like us and God raised him on high.

Gospel *Mt 26:14 – 27:66*

The Passion.

VIGIL MASS

PROCESSION HYMN

Refrain:

All glory, praise and honour to you redeemer, king!
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

1. You are the king of Israel and David's royal son,
Now in the Lord's name coming, our king and blessed one.

Refrain

2. The company of Angels are praising you on high;
As we and all creation exultant make reply.

Refrain

3. The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went;
Our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present.

Refrain

4. To you before your passion they sang their hymns of praise;
To you now high exalted, our melody we raise.

Refrain

5. Their praises you accepted; accept the prayers we bring,
Great source of love and goodness, our saviour and our king.

Refrain

SUNDAY MASS 8AM

PROCESSION HYMN

Refrain:

All glory, laud and honour to you, Redeemer King,
To whom the lips of children Made sweet hosannas ring.

- You are the King of Israel,
And David's royal Son,
Now in the Lord's name coming,
The King and blessed One.

Refrain

The company of angels
Are praising you on high,
As we and all creation,
exultant make reply.

Refrain

The people of the Hebrews,
With palms before you went;
Our praise and prayer and
Anthems before you were present.

Refrain

To you before your passion,
they sang their hymns of praise;
To you, now high exalted,
Our melody we raise.

Refrain

As you received their praises,
accept the prayers we bring,
for you delight in goodness,
O good and gracious King!

Refrain

SUNDAY MASS 10AM

PROCESSION HYMN

Hosanna, Hosanna
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna, Hosanna,
Hosanna in the highest!

Lord, we lift up Your name
with hearts full of praise
Be exalted oh Lord my God!
Hosanna in the highest! (Glory to the King of Kings!)

Glory, Glory
Glory to the King of Kings!
Glory, Glory,
Glory to the King of Kings!

Lord, we lift up Your name
with hearts full of praise
Be exalted oh Lord my God!
Hosanna in the highest! (Glory to the King of Kings!)

Jesus, Jesus
Jesus is the King of Kings!
Jesus, Jesus
Jesus is the King of Kings!

Lord, we lift up Your name
with hearts full of praise
Be exalted oh Lord my God!
Hosanna in the highest! (Glory to the King of Kings!)

Gathering 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.

Responsorial Psalm:

(R) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

1. 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.)**
2. 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.)**
3. 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.)**

4. 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.)**

Gospel Acclamation *Phil 2:8-9*

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Christ became obedient for us even to death dying on the cross. Therefore God raised him on high and gave him a name above all other names.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Communion Antiphon *Mt 26:42*

Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my drinking it, your will be done.

Next week's Readings:

1st Reading: Acts 10:34. 37-43

2nd Reading: Col 3:1-4

Gospel: Jn 20:1-9

REFLECTIONS ON MT 26:14 - 27:66

Scriptural context – Passion narratives

Towards the end of the 19th Century, the German scholar, Martin Kähler, described the gospels as 'passion narratives with lengthy introductions'. Over time, this description was more commonly applied to the gospel of Mark, but it is quite true of all four gospels. The passion elements are the climax of each gospel narrative and were probably written first to establish the unique interpretation of each of the gospel communities. The remainder of the gospel was written to 'set the scene' for the culmination of the message in the passion. Reading the four accounts of the passion reveal the unique styles and themes of the different gospel writers.

Different View – The Blame Game

This Passion narrative has been used in the past as justification for persecution of Jews. The text has the people of Jerusalem calling out, 'his blood be on us and on our children!' This has been interpreted (poorly) as reason to condemn all subsequent generations of Jews for the death of Jesus. However, this gospel was written in the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. The gospel writer sought some explanation for this disaster in the story of Jesus' life and death: it is the children of the crowd at Jesus' death who suffered in the fall of Jerusalem.

Gospel Focus – Uniquely Matthew

The passion narrative in the gospel of Matthew follows the gospel of Mark very closely. However, unlike in other sections of the gospel the Matthew writer has not just inserted sections from the Mark account. Rather, the material is reworked and given a unique Matthean 'flavour'. In addition, the Matthew account includes five events that are not found in the Mark account: Judas hanging himself (27:3-10); Pilate's wife's dream (27:19); Pilate's washing his hands (27:24-25); extraordinary events at the time of Jesus' death (27:51b-53); sealing and guarding the tomb (28:62-66).

NEWS

Welcome to the New Members of our Faith Family

All are invited to a supper in the Jubilee Hall after Easter Vigil Celebrations to celebrate the initiation of the newest members, David and Katy, of our faith Family.

You are welcome to bring some food to share at supper with others.



Mass for Sister Tomsy SH

It will be the death anniversary of Sr Tomsy, sister of Fr Thomas, on Monday 10 April. A Holy Mass will be celebrated at 8AM on Easter Monday.

Parishioners and friends are welcome to the Mass and a morning tea to follow. May Tomsy rest in peace.

Good Friday Collection

The annual collection for the support of the church in the Holy Land will take place on **Good Friday, 7 April**. This collection promotes the missionary work of the Church in the Holy Land by providing welfare assistance to local Christians in areas such as health, education, employment and housing. Parishes, schools orphanages and medical centres throughout the Holy Land also rely on assistance from the Good Friday collection. It is also used to maintain 70 churches and shrines associated with the life of Jesus. Please remember the Christians of the Holy Land on Good Friday and please keep them in your prayers. Thanks!



Altar Servers for Good Friday

On Good Friday, there will be 2 services: Stations of the Cross at 10AM and The Passion of the Lord at 3PM. All Altar Servers are invited to join the Passion Service in the afternoon. Two Altar Servers are required for the Stations of the Cross in the morning. Let Fr Thomas know if you would like to volunteer.



WARC FIRSTCPR

St Peter Chanel & St Joseph, Berala is participating in a program called FirstCPR that involves education and training in responding to cardiac arrest in the community.

As part of this program, we are hosting a 1-hour CPR education session conducted by The Michael Hughes Foundation.

Join us on **Tuesday 2nd May at 10.30am at Jubilee Hall**, 62 Kingsland Road, Berala.

- Learn how a cardiac arrest differs from a heart attack.
- Learn how to perform CPR.
- Learn how to use an Automated external defibrillator (AED).
- Practice on a CPR manikin.

Reserve your spot by registering here: <https://redcap.sydney.edu.au/surveys/?s=8N43JJY7TPYFHHY>
For any questions, please contact warc.firstcpr@sydney.edu.au.



NEWS FROM YOUR PARISH SCHOOL



9646 1434
2 New St
Auburn



Our families have been involved in three way interviews in the last week and students have been celebrating the success of reaching their goals! Some have reached up to 4 goals already - awarding them pencils, ice blocks, bands and special stickers.

It has also been wonderful to celebrate our students receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Thank you to Sophia Brewty and Father Thomas in helping them on this journey.

Yours faithfully,
Susie Mravunac
Acting Principal



STJW THE BEST KEPT SECRET

Volunteers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to help with the church cleaning once a month, commencing in May. If you are available to help, please contact the Parish Office on 9644 7787. Thank you!

Just for Laughs

The Sunday School teacher began the week's lesson with a recap of the previous week's topic by saying, "We have been learning about how powerful the kings and queens were in Biblical times.

But there is a higher power. Who can tell me what it is?"
Six-year-old Peter blurted out, "I know, Aces!"



CELEBRATING
10
YEARS

Catholic
Education
Foundation
Opportunities for all

A PROUD INITIATIVE OF  Sydney Catholic Schools

Help us create educational opportunities for our students by making a tax deduction contribution to the CEF. Please scan the QR code or visit cef.syd.catholic.edu.au to find out more information on how you can support our cause!

The Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) has been committed to helping families afford a Catholic education for their children for the past 10 years through the bursary program. Our vision is that no child is denied this opportunity due to genuine financial, cultural or social hardship.

*Please note that all donations over \$2.00 are fully tax deductible.



Farewell Maroun

On behalf of the Parish, I would like to thank Maroun Aboumelhem for his service of nearly seven years.



Wishing you all the best and praying for God's blessing upon you and your loved ones.

~Fr Thomas

Parish Feast

The two patrons of the Parish, St Peter Chanel and St Joseph the Worker have their memorial feast days only a couple of days apart, 28 April (St Peter Chanel) and 1 May (St Joseph the Worker).

This year we can celebrate both feasts together on Sunday, 30 April. Both SPC School and SJW School will be combining the festivities for their respective patron saints on 30 April. The day will start with a procession, carrying the statue of St Joseph the Worker from SJW School grounds at Auburn South to SPC School grounds.

SJW students, parents and parishioners of Auburn South area are asked to gather in the school grounds by 9AM for the procession. The solemn procession will be accompanied by ceremonial brollies, colourful flags, and banners. Upon reaching Regents Park grounds, SPC families and other parishioners will join the procession. The relic of St Peter Chanel will be carried under a canopy and will join the procession to the Church. A solemn Mass to follow.

There will be a multicultural lunch in the Jubilee Hall to finish the celebrations. You are welcome bring food, especially of your home cuisine/culture to the shared lunch.

Tateama Hehea will be leading the choir for the day. She will be happy to hear from volunteers to her to sing.



**Save the date:
Sunday
30 April 2023**

"Family that pray together stay together"



Pilgrim Statue

This week at

Ryan & Mayo Families

To host the Pilgrim Statue and Rosary prayer
please contact Mona
on 9709 8701 / 0417 282 603
or
Phil Lopez on 9646 1756.



The Triduum

Palm Sunday (Passion Sunday) marks the beginning of Holy Week. The latter half of Holy Week is a period of exalted liturgical celebration. Mass of the Lord's Last Supper is the start of a three days long liturgy. This three days of liturgical observance

reaches its high point in Easter Vigil, closes with evening prayer on Easter Sunday. (*Ref General Instruction to Roman Missal 18,19*)

During these three days though we recall the historical last supper, crucifixion, and the mystery of resurrection of the Lord, it is only as elements of one whole Liturgy. Therefore, there is no dismissal from the liturgy either on *Holy Thursday* evening or on *Good Friday*. The *Sign of the Cross* and usual greetings are omitted on *Good Friday* and at the *Vigil*.

This indicates these are three moments of the one celebration, a continuum which ends with the *Easter Alleluias*. Thus, to participate in the whole liturgy over these days we need to be there for each moment.

The Lord's Supper

The link between Eucharist and service is made on Holy Thursday. The washing of the feet shows the kind of community we are called to be. 'We pray that in this Eucharist we may find the fullness of love and life'. (*Opening prayer*). The offering of our donation to Project Compassion reflects the mission we undertake from Mass to the poor in the world.



The solemn removal and procession of the *Blessed Sacrament* leads to time for quiet adoration until midnight. The stripping of the altar sets the tone for the next stage of the *Triduum*. The first celebration of the *Triduum*, the ***Celebration of the Lord's Supper ends in silence, so the Celebration of the Lord's Passion begins in silence.*** The altar is bare, and the reserved Blessed Sacrament has been removed. The second part is about to begin.



Celebration of the Lord's Passion, Good Friday

Silently the ministers enter and use the ancient gesture of 'prostrate prayer'. The community join in the silent stillness of the gesture preparing to listen to the word from *Isaiah* and *Hebrews*, then the passion account. An ancient form of the *General Intercessions* concludes the *Liturgy of the Word*.

The final part of the celebration is the distribution of *Holy Communion*. Following the *Prayer after Communion* there is a prayer over the people sending us out 'in the sure hope of the Resurrection.' The silent departure of the priest and people is an indication that we are in the middle of the *Triduum* and are being sent away for reflection and so to engage completely in the *Easter Vigil* on the following evening.

Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil is the high point of the *Triduum*. Our faith would not have any meaning without the mystery of Resurrection. Therefore, the Lord's resurrection becomes the most important feast in Christian Calendar. After a day's silence before the empty tabernacle in her place of worship, the Church emerges with thrilling joy on Easter vigil. The new life Christ has brought to us is celebrated with the blessing of fire, and Easter water for baptism. A solemn singing of praises to Christ our Light is sung on this night.

Adults preparing for admission into the Church are baptised and received into the church at the vigil celebration. David Phillips and Ekaterina (Katy) Korolkova will be baptised at vigil this year. Also, Nancy Manalatas and Mark Bader will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Easter Vigil.

All are invited to a supper in the Jubilee Hall after Easter Vigil Celebrations to celebrate the initiation of the newest members of our faith Family. You are welcome to bring some food to share at supper with others. The joy of Easter is continued to be celebrated on Easter Sunday.

WEEK 6 - REFLECT

THE FOCUS OF THIS WEEK IS: REFLECT

During this week, reflect each day of the previous weeks, what have you learned, and how we will recommit ourselves to those actions, even after this journey is over.

EASTER SUNDAY

The sadness of Jesus' death does not last long. After 3 days, Jesus' tomb is found empty. His friends were astonished and we celebrate like them when we realise Jesus is alive. We believe that we celebrate like them when we realise Jesus is alive. We believe that we will all share in this new life after death, in Heaven, with God. Jesus shows us that there is always hope, always love and that we have nothing to be afraid of. Easter is not a day - it is a season of 50 days leading up to Pentecost. We begin this celebration on Easter Saturday night after the Vigil Mass and into the next day - Easter Sunday.

On this day, traditionally we eat chocolate eggs and bunnies - symbols of life. We say "Alleluia, Christ is Risen". It is a time of great joy. Happy Easter

SATURDAY VIGIL / EASTER SUNDAY



GOSPEL READING: Luke 24:1-49

Loving God,
Jesus is alive! Alleluia, Alleluia!
He has risen risen and I feel so joyful.
His friends have found an empty tomb
and now they are filled with hope.
The sadness has gone
and our Easter hearts are full of light.
May I take this joy to all my friends, family and strangers in
the community and share it with them.
May I spread Your love wherever I go.
Alleluia!



I WONDER HOW I CAN SPREAD THE EASTER JOY AT HOME, SCHOOL AND WORK?



Living a full life requires change. During this week, we will reflect on each of the previous weeks, what we have learned, and how we will recommit ourselves to those actions, even after this journey is over.



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Monday 3 April

6.45am Mass
7.30am-9.00am Confession
5.00pm-7.00pm Confession

Tuesday 4 April

6.45am Mass
7.30am-9.00am Confession
5.00pm-7.00pm Confession

Wednesday 5 April

6.45am Mass
7.30am-9.00am Confession
5.00pm-7.00pm Confession

Holy Thursday 6 April

10.30am Chrism Mass at St Mary's Cathedral
7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Last Supper, Washing of feet, Adoration

Good Friday 7 April

10.00am Stations of the Cross
3.00pm Passion Service and veneration of the Cross

Holy Saturday 8 April

8.00am Morning Prayer & Blessing of Easter Food
7.00pm Easter Vigil, blessing of Fire & Water, Adult Baptism

Easter Sunday 9 April

8.00am Mass
10.00am Mass

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; blessed is the King of Israel

From the discourse "On the Palm Branches" by Saint Andrew of Crete

Let us go together to meet Christ on the Mount of Olives. Today he returns from Bethany and proceeds of his own free will towards his holy and blessed passion, to consummate the mystery of our salvation. He who came down from heaven to raise us from the depths of sin, to raise us with himself, we are told in Scripture, *above every sovereignty, authority and power, and every other name that can be named*, now comes of his own free will to make his journey to Jerusalem. He comes without pomp or ostentation. As the psalmist says: *He will not dispute or raise his voice to make it heard in the streets*. He will be meek and humble, and he will make his entry in simplicity.

Let us run to accompany him as he hastens towards his passion, and imitate those who met him then, not by covering his path with garments, olive branches or palms, but by doing all we can to prostrate ourselves before him by being humble and by trying to live as he would wish. Then we shall be able to receive the Word at his coming, and God, whom no limits can contain, will be within us.

In his humility Christ entered the dark regions of our fallen world and he is glad that he became so humble for our sake, glad that he came and lived among us and shared in our nature in order to raise us up again to himself. And even though we are told that he has now ascended above the highest heavens – the proof, surely, of his power and godhead – his love for man will never rest until he has raised our earthbound nature from glory to glory, and made it one with his own in heaven.

So let us spread before his feet, not garments or soulless olive branches, which delight the eye for a few hours and then wither, but ourselves, clothed in his grace, or rather, clothed completely in him. We who have been baptized into Christ must ourselves be the garments that we spread before him. Now that the crimson stains of our sins have been washed away in the saving waters of baptism and we have become white as pure wool, let us present the conqueror of death, not with mere branches of palms but with the real rewards of his victory. Let our souls take the place of the welcoming branches as we join today in the children's holy song: *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the king of Israel.*