

## **Palm Sunday Palm Sunday, 28 March 2021, 9h00**

### **Liturgy of the Word**

With the celebration of Palm Sunday, symbolizing Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the holy city of God, we are slowly coming closer to the end of a Lenten journey towards Easter that began at Ashes Wednesday. As Jesus victoriously enters the holy city of Jerusalem to begin his suffering, we also enter with him as we begin the Holy week. On Maundy Thursday, we will share the privilege of being part of God's drama of salvation, as we witness Jesus' sacrificial offer of himself, in a gesture of utter humility and servanthood, when Jesus washes the feet of his disciples and bids them a farewell in a meal that will mark forever the significance of Christian discipleship and its impact to humanity as a depiction of God's love and solidarity to the world. The drama of Good Friday will follow immediately, as a sign of God's revelation and self-disclosure in Christ, as Christ hangs and succumbs in agony on the Cross, in an outpouring of divine love for humanity that will seal forever the significance of the Cross as a key moment of divine revelation in Christ. The drama of Good Friday that culminates with the Cross brings to reality the meaning of God's sacrificial love and offer of Himself as a ransom for the salvation of humanity. Yet, in the midst of all this total outpouring of divine sorrow, the good news today, that brings to fruition the mystery of Christian faith, is that this dark path of glory will soon culminate with Jesus' glorious resurrection and exaltation on Easter Sunday. As we proceed with Christ, the present story will mark our devotional moment during Holy week celebration in a solemn path of penitence and self-surrender.

The drama of foot-washing with all its real symbolism, which the significance of Maundy Thursday brings to the fore, gives us the vocabulary we need in order to reflect on the meaning and end of Christian discipleship as foot-washing. If Christ washed the feet of his disciples as an act of humbly service and obedience, this means that the disciples not only ought to wash one another's feet as they also need to wash the feet of those they serve. As Jesus takes off his outer garment that prevents him from acting willingly, he also invites everyone who follows him to take their outer-garment in order to be able to offer works of love and mercy. In this way, the foot-washing symbolism describes in real terms Jesus' humble obedience and service to all who have the humility to accept it. As in any real human act of love, it is really sad that Jesus' acts of servant obedience can only be made clear and found fitting only after the tragedy of the cross and the hope of the resurrection. Key in the episode of Maundy-Thursday is that the place of Eucharist in the washing of the feet authenticates the place of remembrance as a key moment to Christian faith, where to remember is to reunite, to remember is to return, to remember is to belong, to remember is to live again. To remember to return to our real humanity beyond the garment of our culture, social creed, gender, and identity is key in the story of Christian faith as embodied by Maundy-Thursday symbolism.

When Jesus is revealed in glory as he leads himself to calvary, the cross brings to fruition the costly reality of God's love for humanity. Good Friday is the utter symbolism of how the pain of humanity is revealed and engraved in divine grief. In Jesus the humanity of God is revealed when the cross attains its divine face. Good Friday brings to the fore the utter reality of how far can the cross of Jesus reveal the cost of our sins as emphasized in our Anglican lectionary. As we come to the end of Lent having had a very difficult journey the message of the cross as foreseen by prophet Isaiah gives us the strength and language, we need, in order to make sense of the overwhelming challenges and tragedy we face in the journey in our faith journey. Isaiah 50:4-9a offers us the courage and insight we need to interpret and understand the experience of suffering and anguish, as a result of Covid-19 pandemic, gender-based violence and other challenges in which any ability to overcome it or come to terms with it still uncertain and far beyond our means. Where one sees pain and agony, the God of Isaiah sees hope, reassurance, healing, and triumph. Easter Sunday is a clear reminder that where Jesus is there is a spring of eternal life. Resurrection is a clear testimony that the neither the cross nor the tomb can apprehend the power of divine grace. The ray of glory shines in its splendour as a token of divine glory. **Amen**