

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT.

Parish priest: *Father George Ngwa*

Church opening hours - **CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**



**PALM SUNDAY- YEAR "A" 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020**

## Palm Sunday

### Vatican Cancels Public Participation at Pope's Easter Events



Dear Brothers and Sisters, Palm Sunday is the great doorway leading into Holy Week, the week when the Lord Jesus makes his way towards the culmination of his earthly existence. He goes up to Jerusalem in order to fulfil the Scriptures and to be nailed to the wood of the Cross, the throne from which he will reign forever, drawing to himself humanity of every age and offering to all the gift of redemption. We know from the Gospels that Jesus had set out towards Jerusalem in company with the Twelve, and that little by little a growing crowd of pilgrims had joined them. Saint Mark tells us that as they were leaving Jericho, there was a "great multitude" following Jesus (cf. 10:46). On the final stage of the journey, a particular event stands out, one which heightens the sense of expectation of what is about to unfold and focuses attention even more sharply upon Jesus.

The preparations made by Jesus, with the help of his disciples, serve to increase this hope. As we heard in today's Gospel (cf. *Mk* 11:1-10), Jesus arrives in Jerusalem from Bethphage and the Mount of Olives, that is, the route by which the Messiah was supposed to come. From there, he sent two disciples ahead of him, telling them to bring him a young donkey that they would find along the way. They did indeed find the donkey, they untied it and brought it to Jesus. At this point, the spirits of the disciples and of the other pilgrims were swept up with excitement: they took their coats and placed them on the colt; others spread them out on the street in Jesus' path as he approached, riding on the donkey. Then they cut branches from the trees and began to shout phrases from Psalm 118, ancient pilgrim blessings, which in that setting took on the character of messianic proclamation: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!" (v. 9-10). This festive acclamation, reported by all four evangelists, is a cry of blessing, a hymn of exultation: it expresses the unanimous conviction that, in Jesus, God has visited his people and the longed-for Messiah has finally come. And everyone is there, growing in expectation of the work that Christ will accomplish once he has entered the city.

Let us ask ourselves: what is really happening in the hearts of those who acclaim Christ as King of Israel? Clearly, they had their own idea of the Messiah, an idea of how the long-awaited King promised by the prophets should act. Not by chance, a few days later, instead of acclaiming Jesus, the Jerusalem crowd will cry out to Pilate: "Crucify him!", while the disciples, together with others who had seen him and listened to him, will be struck dumb and will disperse. The majority, in fact, was

disappointed by the way Jesus chose to present himself as Messiah and King of Israel. This is the heart of today's feast, for us too. Who is Jesus of Nazareth for us? What idea do we have of the Messiah, what idea do we have of God? It is a crucial question, one we cannot avoid, not least because during this very week we are called to follow our King who chooses the Cross as his throne. We are called to follow a Messiah who promises us, not a facile earthly happiness, but the happiness of heaven, divine beatitude. So we must ask ourselves: what are our true expectations? What are our deepest desires, with which we have come here today to celebrate Palm Sunday and to begin our celebration of Holy Week?

May Palm Sunday be a day of decision for you, the decision to say yes to the Lord and to follow him all the way, the decision to make his Passover, his death and resurrection, the very focus of your Christian lives. It is the decision that leads to true joy, as I reminded you in this year's World Youth Day Message – "Rejoice in the Lord always" (*Phil 4:4*). So it was for Saint Clare of Assisi when, on Palm Sunday 800 years ago, inspired by the example of Saint Francis and his first companions, she left her father's house to consecrate herself totally to the Lord. She was eighteen years old and she had the courage of faith and love to decide for Christ, finding in him true joy and peace.

Dear brothers and sisters, may these days call forth two sentiments in particular: praise, after the example of those who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem with their "Hosanna!", and thanksgiving, because in this Holy Week the Lord Jesus will renew the greatest gift we could possibly imagine: he will give us his life, his body and his blood, his love. But we must respond worthily to so great a gift, that is to say, with the gift of ourselves, our time, our prayer, our entering into a profound communion of love with Christ who suffered, died and rose for us. The early Church Fathers saw a symbol of all this in the gesture of the people who followed Jesus on his entry into Jerusalem, the gesture of spreading out their coats before the Lord. Before Christ – the Fathers said – we must spread out our lives, ourselves, in an attitude of gratitude and adoration. As we conclude, let us listen once again to the words of one of these early Fathers, Saint Andrew, Bishop of Crete: "So it is ourselves that we must spread under Christ's feet, not coats or lifeless branches or shoots of trees, matter which wastes away and delights the eye only for a few brief hours. But we have clothed ourselves with Christ's grace, or with the whole Christ ... so let us spread ourselves like coats under his feet ... let us offer not palm branches but the prizes of victory to the conqueror of death. Today let us too give voice with the children to that sacred chant, as we wave the spiritual branches of our soul: 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel'" - Amen!

## **Vatican Cancels Public Participation for Holy Week and Easter**

Pope Francis' Holy Week and Easter services, which normally draw tens of thousands of people, will be held without the public attending because of the coronavirus outbreak, a step believed to be unprecedented in modern times.

It was not clear how the massive events will be scaled down but sources said officials were studying ways to hold them in indoor locations, including St. Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel, with small representative groups attending.

The Holy Week services, which begin on Palm Sunday, lead up to Easter, the most important day of the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar for the world's 1.3 billion members.

Palm Sunday, which commemorates Jesus' entry to Jerusalem, usually takes place in St. Peter's Square, which traditionally is decorated with olive trees while those in the crowd hold up palm branches.

Another main Holy Week event, the Way of the Cross procession on Good Friday, takes place around Rome's ancient Colosseum. The main event is the Easter Sunday Mass and the pope's twice yearly "Urbi et Orbi" blessing and message from the central balcony of St. Peter's Square.

The Netherlands usually fly in tens of thousands of flowers to decorate the papal altar and the entire square but the Dutch ambassador to the Vatican, Caroline Weijers, said last week that there would be no flowers this year.

The Pope, the Vatican - a tiny city-state surrounded by Rome - and the church in predominantly Catholic Italy have all been forced to modify centuries of tradition because of the coronavirus outbreak. Catholic bishops around the world have in the various circumstances pertaining to their localities to come of with measures how to deal with the pandemic in their own dioceses and what guidance they should give to the faithful. Masses have been cancelled to avoid people gathering. Bishops have told the faithful that they are for now freed from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation. Bishops have urged the faithful to participate via television and the internet.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

FROM THE SHEPHERD BISHOP PHILIP. All Churches and Chapels in the Diocese of Portsmouth are closed until further notice. Priests will continue to say daily Masses but without the faithful present

MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CHALLENGE. Fr. George will say Mass at 10.00 a.m. every day, including Mondays, plus a Vigil Mass at 6.00 p.m. on Saturdays. There will be no Evening Mass on a Tuesday for the time being. Unfortunately Masses will be closed to the public, in order to avoid virus cross contamination but you will be able to follow the Masses daily via Live Streaming. Just to remind you all, our Parish Live Streaming can be found at <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton>.

### **HOLY WEEK PROGRAMME 2020**

#### **MON. 6<sup>TH</sup> – Wed. – 8<sup>TH</sup> April 2020**

- 9:25 a.m.** - Stations of the Cross
- 10:00 a.m.** - Holy Mass ( Priest alone )
- 6:00 p.m.** - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
- 6:30 Holy** - Rosary
- 6:50 p.m.** - Benediction

#### **Holy Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

- **8.00 p.m.** - Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

#### **Holy Saturday Vigil Mass 11<sup>TH</sup> April 2020**

- 8:00 p.m.** Vigil Mass of the Lord's Supper ( Priest alone )

#### **Good Friday 10 April 2020**

- **3:00 p.m.** - Celebration of the Lord's Passion
- 00 p.m**

#### **Easter Sunday 12<sup>TH</sup> April 2020**

- 10:00 a.m.** - Holy Mass - Palm Sunday (Priest alone )

**PARISH OFFICE COVER.** Lizzie, our Parish Secretary, will be self-isolating at home for the next few weeks. If you need to contact her, she is available on 07484 110 940 or via email on [lizziedavies@yahoo.com](mailto:lizziedavies@yahoo.com). Alternatively you can contact Fr. George direct. If you wish to have an intention for a Mass to be celebrated for you, or your loved one(s), please call the Parish office, or leave a voice mail – or better still drop your written intention through the Presbytery letterbox.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT during the enforced Coronavirus Church Closure.** If you are not a Gift Aider and would like to continue supporting your Church through this difficult time, you may wish to organise a Standing Order arrangement with your bank to pay your collection directly into our Church bank account. Details as follows: - Lloyds Bank - Sort Code 30-93-04, Account No: 00883116, Account Name – PRCDTR New Milton. Or you may prefer to give your donation directly to Fr. George. Thank you!

**HOW SHOULD CATHOLICS DEAL WITH THE CORONAVIRUS?**

Now that public Masses are suspended in England, Wales and Scotland, this adds to the already strange new world we are currently confronted with. Every day we hear more reports of people dying from this new virus and as the supermarkets get busier and the streets quieter, fear is a very real phenomenon. It is understandably a very difficult time for us all. Yet as Christians we know we have something greater than our worries. Even with public Masses suspended, during this difficult time we can see how God is pulling us closer to Him. In the fear, He calls us to trust. In the quiet, He calls us to turn our focus on Him. We reach out to everyone of you, urging you to take whatever measures are necessary to stay safe and to keep your community safe. ( Please stay at home ). If you know of anyone who needs special help, please let us know

### PALM SUNDAY– YEAR “A” 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020

Saturday	04	Apr.	Vigil Mass of Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord – Year A	18.00 VIGIL Mass of Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord – Year A – <i>Brrigid Horan (RIP)</i>	
Sunday	05	Apr.	PALM SUNDAY of the Passion of the Lord - YEAR A	10.00 Holy Mass - <i>Ray &amp; Jean Carlisle (RIP)</i>	
Monday	06	Apr.	Monday of HOLY WEEK	10.00 Holy Mass –	5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Tuesday	07	Apr.	Tuesday of HOLY WEEK	10.00 Holy Mass - Don and Agnes Cambell RIP	5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Wednesday	08	Apr.	Wednesday of HOLY WEEK – Year A	10.00 Holy Mass - <i>For Joe Hogan RIP</i>	5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Rosary and Benediction
Thursday	09	Apr.	THE EASTER TRIDUUM Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper	8.00 p.m. Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper – For Marry Kallar ( Anniversary of death )	
Friday	10	Apr.	GOOD FRIDAY - Year A	3:00 p.m. <i>Celebration of the Lord’s Passion</i>	
Saturday	11	Apr.	HOLY SATURDAY - VIGIL MASS – Year A	8.00 p.m. Holy Mass – For Maria Long and Family	
Sunday	12	Apr.	EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD - Year A	10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Irena Oleksik (RIP)</i>	

**IMPORTANT – MASS OFFERINGS/INTENTIONS.** See notice above.

**Your continued financial support during these challenging times would be very much appreciated**

**Parish priest: Father George Ngwa**

email: [gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:gngwa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) emergency mobile: **07475753040**

**Parish office: 01425 614968** Hall Bookings suspended during the Pandemic.

**Secretary: Lizzie Davies** See Contact Details above.

Our Parish Live streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton> Website: [www.nfwf.org.uk](http://www.nfwf.org.uk)

**Safeguarding Minister: Tony Harwood** Tel: **01425 511 952** or email [hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hughharwood314@hotmail.co.uk)

PRAYER FOR THE RENEWAL OF OUR DIOCESE – ( to be said at home even with Church closure).

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, we beg you to change us, to convert us and to make us holy. Fill us with a deeper faith, hope and love for you. Send into our hearts the cleansing fire of the Holy Spirit and powerfully renew all the clergy, religious and laity of our Diocese. Unite us in love and respect for one another and unify us as your one, holy people. Grant us a new passion and zeal for the Catholic Faith, for Mission, Outreach and Service. Help us to proclaim your Gospel generously to the poor and needy that many more souls may be saved by finding their way to you in your Church. May Mary Immaculate help us, May St. Edmund of Abingdon and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati pray for us. Amen

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel - St Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen:00 p.m. – Exposition