



WychwoodBenefice
www.wychwoodbenefice.org.uk

Introduction to the Season

This is the season when Christians retell and identify with the death and resurrection of Christ. All the great themes of redemption are included within it: incarnation, suffering, death, resurrection, glorification.

Through participation in the whole sequence of services, the Christian shares in Christ's own journey, from the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the empty tomb on Easter morning.

We begin with the procession with palms, through to Maundy Thursday themes of: humble Christian service expressed through Christ's washing of his disciples' feet, the institution of the Eucharist, the perfection of Christ's loving obedience through the agony of Gethsemane. After keeping vigil ('Could you not watch with me one hour?') Thursday passes into Good Friday where the church remains stripped of all decoration. It continues bare and empty through the following day, which is a day without a liturgy: there can be no adequate way of recalling the being dead of the Son of God, other than silence and desolation. But within the silence there grows a sense of peace and completion, and then rising excitement as the Easter Vigil draws near.

This solemn season rehearses the deepest and most fundamental Christian memories.

The Gathering

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you

and also with you.

Prayers of Penitence

Our Lord Jesus Christ says: 'If you love me, keep my commandments.' 'Unless I wash you, you have no part in me.' Let us confess to almighty God our sins against his love, and ask him to cleanse us.

Silence is kept.

Have mercy on us, O God, in your great goodness; according to the abundance of your compassion blot out our offences.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Against you only have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Purge us from our sin and we shall be clean; wash us and we shall be whiter than snow.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May the Father forgive *you* by the death of his Son and strengthen *you* to live in the power of the Spirit all *your* days.

Amen.

The Collect

Let us pray that we may love one another as Christ has loved us.

Silence is kept.

God our Father, your Son Jesus Christ was obedient to the end and drank the cup prepared for him: may we who share his table watch with him through the night of suffering and be faithful.

Amen.

Gospel Reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the Spirit let us pray to the Father through Christ the saviour of the world.

Father, on this, the night he was betrayed, your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet.

We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service.

Lord, hear us

and humble us.

On this night, he prayed for his disciples to be one. We pray for the unity of your Church.

Lord, hear us

and unite us.

On this night, he prayed for those who were to believe through his disciples' message. We pray for the mission of your Church.

Lord, hear us

and renew our zeal.

On this night, he commanded his disciples to love, but suffered rejection himself. We pray for the rejected and unloved. Lord, hear us

and fill us with your love.

On this night, he reminded his disciples that if the world hated them it hated him first. We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith. Lord, hear us

and give us your peace.

On this night, he accepted the cup of death and looked forward to the new wine of the kingdom. We remember those who have died in the peace of Christ. Lord, hear us

and welcome all your children into paradise.

The Peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'

The peace of the Lord be always with you

and also with you.

Eucharistic Prayer

At the eucharist we are with our crucified and risen Lord. We know that it was not only our ancestors, but we who were redeemed and brought forth from bondage to freedom, from mourning to feasting. We know that as he was with them in the upper room so our Lord is here with us now.

Until the kingdom of God comes let us celebrate this feast.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of the universe, you bring forth bread from the earth.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of the universe, you create the fruit of the vine.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Lord be with you

and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

And now we give you thanks because, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; and on the night before he suffered, sitting at table with his disciples, he instituted these holy mysteries, that we, redeemed by his death and restored to life by his resurrection, might be partakers of his divine nature.

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood; who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father, we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross; we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; we look for the coming of your kingdom, and with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

Jesus Christ is Lord:

Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free. You are the Saviour of the world.

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty, renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray;

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament you have given us the memorial of your passion: grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries of your body and blood that we may know within ourselves and show forth in our lives the fruit of your redemption, for you are alive and reign, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Stripping of the Sanctuary

How lonely sits the city that once was full of people! How like a widow she has become, she that was great among the nations! She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks; among all her lovers she has no one to comfort her.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

The roads to Zion mourn, for no one comes to the festivals; all her gates are desolate, her priests groan; her young girls grieve, and her lot is bitter. Her children have gone away, captives before the foe. Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

From on high he sent fire; it went deep into my bones; he spread a net for my feet; he turned me back; he has left me stunned, faint all day long. For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears; for a comforter is far from me, one to revive my courage; my children are desolate, for the enemy has prevailed.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

All who pass along the way clap their hands at you; they hiss and wag their heads at daughter Jerusalem; 'Is this the city that was called the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the earth?' The thought of my affliction and homelessness is wormwood and gall.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him. 'The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for one to bear the yoke in youth, to sit alone in silence when the Lord has imposed it, to put one's mouth to the dust (there may yet be hope), to give one's cheek to the smiter, and be filled with insults. For the Lord will not reject for ever.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

Chant

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near, Wait for the Lord, keep watch, take heart.

The Watch

The story of this night as recorded by John will be read at 15 minute intervals. People may come and go during the chant which will follow each reading.

Dismissal

When the disciples had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus prayed to the Father, 'If it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me.' He said to his disciples, 'How is it that you were not able to keep watch with me for one hour? The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinners.'

Christ was obedient unto death. Go in his peace.

The ministers and people depart.