

# Sermon

- ◆ **First Reading:** *Isaiah 50: 4-7*
- ◆ **Second Reading:** *Philippians 2:6-11*
- ◆ **Gospel:** *Matthew 26:14-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-54*

1. PALM SUNDAY, 2020.....WELL!!, one thing is for sure for those of you with a good memory, you're never going to forget Palm Sunday of 2020, why is that??. Because the world is lockdown, our churches are closed, and we all have to keep our distance from each other because of the Corona virus (... will we ever forget it?? ...) What a way to enter into Holy Week, that one special solemn week of the year; presently do you feel "distanced", as in, emotionally cut off from loved ones who perhaps live a long way from where you are right now??. It's a rather insecure feeling, something you are not used to; on the virus issue, being distanced from everyone is, I suppose, understandable, none of us want to be laid low or worse in the present circumstances;

But what if you were distanced from loved ones and friends because of a miscarriage of justice?? If you read thru' the long gospel to-day (..Palm Sunday..) from St Matthew, you will recognise a shocking injustice in motion against Jesus, the saviour, an innocent man;

2. The “distancing” commenced in the garden of Gethsemane; he was arrested, HisT apostles were afraid they would be taken, at it says

“Then all the disciples deserted Him and ran away” So Jesus found himself distanced from his friends, there was fear; During his sham trial, no-one came to his rescue, imagine! Standing there with all these people in front of you, making up malicious stories “Several lying witnesses came forward” ; Jesus really didn’t stand a chance, he was “distanced” of a fair trial with no defence lawyer in sight; the crowd demanded the death sentence; this whole scenario is painful, just imagine it!! to feel distanced and very much alone in such circumstances is indeed painful;

On a spiritual level for Palm Sunday, and throughout Holy Week, perhaps we could reflect on what it means to be distanced from each other during this Corona pandemic, the pain of isolation for many may be a cross too heavy to carry; For elderly people who live alone and are advised not to go is of course.

3. Generating loneliness, and as for the rest of us, our former routine is, as the saying goes, “ UP-IN-A-HEAP” ; If our Lord was around during this strange “virus time” surely he would say “make sure no-one is overlooked nor forgotten, get to them by whatever means available ... LET NO-ONE FEEL INTERNALLY DISTANCED...”

4. I'll leave you with a suggestion for Palm Sunday; as we cannot meet as a parish family to worship together, at some point in the course of the day, why not take out your bible, and slowly read the PASSION OF OUR LORD, st.MATTHEW's GOSPEL CHAPTER 26 ; 14 – 27 ; 66 (longer version), light a candle!, and pray THE 4<sup>TH</sup> DECADE OF THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY, THE CARRYING OF THE CROSS, offer this up for all those who are now feeling the "STING-OF-DISTANCE" as they sit alone at home, waiting and wondering when this present situation will come to an end; Lastly be mindful of the fact that in excess of one third of the population of London live alone, this includes young, middle-aged and elderly; "THE LORD BE WITH YOU", sorry!, that should be "THE LORD IS WITH YOU".....GOD BLESS YOU ALL WHEREVER YOU ARE.....

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