



Introductory Prayers:

Give us this day our daily bread that lets our hearts sing.....
That we can express our loves, our likes, our hates and our fears,
The depths of our joys, our sorrows, our hopes and our dreams.

Give us this day our daily bread that lets our hearts sing.....
That we can live and be ourselves that you can hear our songs,
That we can sing out our hearts desire.

Give us this day our daily bread that lets our hearts sing.....
As you know the songs of our souls and the depth of our being,
May those others who hear them through us see you?

O Lord our God, on this Lenten journey,
Let us sing and shout and proclaim your way to the whole world. Amen

Hymn: Singing the Faith 265: Ride on ride on in majesty

1. Ride on ride, on in majesty! Hark, all tribes 'Hosannas!' cry;
Your humble beast pursues its road with palms and scattered garments strowed.
2. Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die;
O Christ, your triumphs now begin o'er captive death and conquered sin.
3. Ride on, ride on in majesty! The winged squadrons of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes to see the approaching sacrifice.
4. Ride on, ride on in majesty! Your last and fiercest strife is nigh;
The Father on His sapphire throne, expect His own anointed Son.
5. Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die:
Bow your meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, your power and reign.

Prayers of Adoration and Praise:

God of the galaxies, Lord of creation,
Yet accessible to every Human heart;
Mind behind the universe
Yet one whom we call our Father;
Infinite
Yet within our reach;
Awesome and majestic
Yet compassionate and tender;
Above and beyond us
Yet here beside us:
We praise your name
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
We thank you Lord God!
We want to tell the world of what you have done to redeem us:

All your wonderful works.
We remember our beginnings and celebrate our belonging together in this world.
We trust you Lord God!
You are still our help.
We go forward in faith, remembering all you have done.

We celebrate again your coming into Jerusalem, victorious yet a man of peace.
We celebrate all that you have done for us on our behalf.
Your amazing forgiveness though we don't deserve it.
You made the blind to see, the lame to walk and the deaf to hear.
You are a wonderful God and we praise and worship you. Amen

Reading: Luke 19:28-40 (Good News Version)

Jesus said this and then went on to Jerusalem ahead of them. As he came near Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of the disciples ahead with these instructions: "Go into the village there ahead of you; as you go in, you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If someone asks you why you are untying it, tell him that the Master needs it."

They went on their way and found everything just as Jesus had told them. As they were untying the colt, it, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying it?"

"The Master needs it," they answered, and they took the colt to Jesus. Then they spread their cloaks over the animal and helped Jesus get on. As He rode on, people spread their cloaks on the road.

When He came near Jerusalem, at the place where the road went down the Mount of Olives, a large crowd began to thank God and praise Him in loud voices for all the things that they had seen: "God Bless the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory to God!"

Then some Pharisees in the crowd spoke to Jesus. "Teacher", they said, "command your disciples to be quiet!"

Jesus answered, "I tell you that if they keep quiet, the stones themselves will start shouting."

Reading: Zechariah 9:9-10

Rejoice, Rejoice, people of Zion!
Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem!
Look your king is coming to you!
He comes triumphant and victorious,
But humble and riding on a donkey –
On a colt, the foal of a donkey.

The Lord says,
"I will remove the war chariots from Israel
And take the horses from Jerusalem;
The bows used in battle will be destroyed.
Your king will make peace among the nations;
He will rule from sea to sea,
From the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth."

Prayers of confession

Lord of Light,

You fill us, your children with your light,

So often your light in us is dimmed by our selfishness and greed.

There are times when we ignore those in need, those who are poor or who do not have anywhere to stay.

We sometimes look at other people and feel we are better than them, so we turn away.

We criticise other people who are doing the best they can.

We can make others feel inferior.

We are unprepared to speak out against injustice.

We are unprepared to stand up for Christ or witness to His love.

And so, the light is dimmed. Forgive us Lord and enable your light to shine through us so that others will see you in us and turn to you and find the answer to all their deepest needs.

We thank you Father that you have promised that when we come to you in repentance you are always prepared to forgive – so forgive us Lord and help us to change. **Amen**

Voices in the Crowd (instead of the sermon)

Voice of a Skeptic:

It is a lovely spring day. Jerusalem is usually lovely on such a day but in the lead up to Passover there are pilgrims from all over the Empire – and beyond. Festival times are always tricky. It's a signal for all the crackpots to take to the streets, prophesying doom and the end of the world. The Zealots, with their hidden knives, use the cover of the crowds to pick off a Roman soldier or more likely renegade Jews who inform and line their pockets with Roman Gold. The crowds are excitable, unpredictable at this time of year. I've heard the rumours. Hardly know what to make of them. I don't usually take much notice of religious rumours. But people are saying that this preacher from Galilee is different. How often have I heard *that* before? They say he is a healer who is going to be king in a new kingdom. Dangerous talk that. Look what happened to John. I went out to see him once some years ago now; a real wild man. He shouted at the Pharisees and priests who came to see him. Called them snakes and said they were full of rotting corruption. I enjoyed that bit. But, to be honest, it wasn't for me. I don't go in for fanatical preaching myself. And then Herod had his head chopped off. Too much religion can be dangerous!

Anyway, today I find myself near the place where Jesus is due to pass, so I thought I would take a look – not too close mind.

And here he comes. The crowd is going wild, waving and shouting. This is dangerous stuff. I wonder if they realise just how dangerous? "Hosanna to the son of David". That sounds political and revolutionary. The priests won't like that; not to mention the Romans.

He doesn't look much like a military man. He doesn't look wild like his cousin John. In fact he looks quite decent, very ordinary; no fanfares, no swords, no noble charger, no locusts and wild honey and definitely no hair shirt. He is actually smiling at the crowd. In my experience, religion and smiling don't usually go together. He doesn't look like a religious fanatic. There is a quiet gentleness about him and, for all the smiles and Hosannas there is a haunted sadness in his face. I might try to get closer. He seems to be heading for the Temple. I might be able to get there first if I hurry

Voice of a priest:

Just look at him; an uneducated odd job man from Galilee, thinking he can change everything we have built up and cherished over hundreds of years. Well, it will not do! Oh, he's bright all right. We can read the message he is trying to send. We know the passage from Zechariah about a peaceful King coming on a donkey. But, come on, does he look like a Messiah? When Messiah comes, **we** will know him. He will be like one of us. He will be dignified with the proper respect for the traditions of the people of Israel. He will certainly not do what this imposter has done. He eats with quislings and tax

collectors. He consorts with prostitutes and Samaritan whores. He even touches lepers. By rights he should not be allowed in a synagogue let alone the Temple. He is unclean. Can you imagine God – the God of Moses and the prophets – having anything to do with this man? Now, just look at those fools. Don't they know what a dangerous situation this is? They are hailing him as King. Do they think our Roman masters will ignore this? Of course not! "You will have no King but Caesar....or one appointed by Caesar" is what they say. It is the duty of the priests to keep things calm and protect what we have preserved from the past. This man will ruin us all. If you will excuse me, I must get back to the Temple and warn the guard that there will be trouble.

Voice of a Zealot:

What does the idiot think he is up to? We heard him talk about a Kingdom. We just knew he was the one who could get the rabble together. People followed him everywhere. They hung on his every word and he could wrap them around his little finger. Judas came and told us to be ready. Judas thought that Jesus would be reluctant to start an uprising but, if we gave him a push, got the crowd worked up, then Jesus would likely go along with it. This Jesus is a bit of a dreamer apparently and fancies himself as the son of David. Well come on, think about it. What does that mean if it is not a call to arms? And we are ready. There are thousands of us waiting in Jerusalem. And, **what** do we see? He is on a donkey! Fine if you're a preacher and you want to save souls, but this is no way to start a revolution. The image is all wrong. We haven't done all this planning and training to follow a preacher on a donkey. What a waste. Just listen to the crowds screaming for him but he doesn't seem interested. Judas got it all wrong. This poor dupe will be crushed by the Romansor the priests. And we will have to start all over again.

The Voice of a Follower of Jesus

We had all heard that Jesus was coming into Jerusalem. But we thought it was just a rumour. After all, the thought of Jesus coming into that viper's nest - there were the scribes, Pharisees not to mention the priests. And the Romans too! We thought He was foolish to come to Jerusalem, especially at Passover time - then we realised that it was true. He **was** coming. We wondered how He would come – was he going to come to the city on a charger? Like a sword wielding king? We thought that would be too provocative for the Romans!

That's when we saw Him. He came in on a donkey! Of course the crowd understood what this meant. Everyone knew the prophesy of Zechariah. He came as King, certainly, but as a man of Peace. So, He didn't come as a threat to the Romans. When He came into the city, by way of the Mount of Olives, everyone went wild with excitement.

When we saw Him we were ecstatic. We stripped the trees of the palm branches and waved them about until we were hoarse with shouting. We laid our cloaks in front of Him and he smiled at us. He even said that if we stopped shouting the very stones would shout out loud. But there was no stopping us. The priests looked on with disgust. We cheered and shouted all the louder when we saw them; I'm sure that they saw it as a deliberate act of rebellion – but we didn't see it at the time.

"Hosanna to the son of David" we shouted. "Blessings on Him who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, glory in the highest heaven!"

But, if had we realised what would happen next perhaps we would have restrained ourselves. After this Jesus went into the Temple and turned over the tables of the money changers. The sellers of pigeons, the cattle and sheep for sacrifice - He drove them out of the Temple.

From then, on things went downhill. He upset the priests and the King and eventually the Romans got involved. So they got together and crucified Him.

Hymn: Singing the Faith 175: Light of the World

1. Light of the world you stepped down into darkness, open my eyes let me see;
Beauty that made this heart adore you, hope of a life spent with you.
*So here I am to worship, here I am to bow down,
Here I am to say that you're my God.
And you're altogether lovely, and you're worthy! Altogether wonderful to me.*
2. King of all days oh so highly exalted; glorious, in heaven above.
Humbly you came to the earth you created; all for love's sake became poor.
(Chorus)
3. And I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross.
And I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross.
(Chorus)

Prayers of Intercession:

In the Darkness

Let your Light shine

Lord of peace; bring peace where there is violence. We bring to you Lord, the people of Yemen, of Afghanistan and we bring to you the people of Ukraine. And we remember soldiers on both sides of the conflict. We bring to you the people of Syria. May those people in charge at this time seek justice and peace?

In the Darkness

Let your light shine

Lord of Justice; we bring to you those people who live in fear; for those places where governments and soldiers impose their will. At this time we pray particularly for the peoples of the Holy Land, both Palestinians and Israelis, especially we pray for the people of Gaza and the West Bank who live in fear. May all the communities of that land find ways to live together with justice and peace? We also pray for those kept as hostages. May they be returned to their families soon. We pray for our brothers and sisters living with persecution

In the Darkness

Let your light shine

Lord of the poor and the marginalised; where there is poverty and unfairness; where people are hungry, homeless or suffering for the want of simple medicine, move in the hearts of those who have plenty so that there is a fair sharing of the earth's resources. We pray for all refugees living in terrible conditions in camps – suffering from hunger, disease and a lack of hope. May they receive mercy, compassion and practical help.

In the Darkness

Let your light shine

Lord of creation; forgive us for misusing your created world and making deserts where there had been abundance, for polluting clean air and water. We pray for the governments of the world who have met so often to discuss climate change. Give courage to those who work to save the environment. We pray for those who are suffering because of climate change – the peoples of Sub Saharan Africa who are suffering the worst drought in living memory, those suffering because of violent floods or wild fires or freak weather events

In the Darkness

Let your light shine

Lord of healing and wholeness; we bring to you those who are known to us personally who need your healing power.....

In the Darkness

Let your light shine

Lord of the Kingdom of God, who came into this world, not to condemn it but to save, work with your people, give us courage, wisdom and power as we bring the message of your love and forgiveness to a needy world. Send your Holy Spirit and may your Kingdom Come.

In the Darkness

Let your light shine. Amen

Hymn 171 In Singing the Faith: Hark the glad sound!

1. Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes, the Saviour promised long:
Let every heart prepare a throne, and every voice a song.
2. He comes the prisoner to release, in Satan's bondage held:
The gates of brass before Him burst, the iron fetters yield.
3. He comes the broken heart to bind the bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace to enrich the humble poor.
4. Our glad hosannas, the Prince of Peace, your welcome shall proclaim,
And heaven's eternal arches ring with the beloved name.

Our Final Prayer – said together

O Lord our God, on this Lenten journey,
Let us sing and shout and proclaim your way to the whole world.
And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Rest and remain with us ever more. Amen