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**BULLETIN C 20 – 10TH APRIL 2022
PALM SUNDAY**

My dear brothers and sisters,

Today Palm Sunday marks the start of Holy Week. The word Holy means, set apart for God, so this week is very special for us Catholics, it is a week that is set aside for God. How we interpret that is a matter for each of us to determine ourselves. Yet let this week be for all of us a time of our journeying with our Lord in the last week of his earthly life. We are with him today as he enters Jerusalem joyously welcomed by the crowds.

On Maundy Thursday we celebrate with the first disciples as he washes their feet, an example of Christian service to others. It is on that night that he gave us the Eucharist, the source and summit of our Christian life. We will have an opportunity to watch with him in prayer for one hour that night, something those first disciples failed to do.

On Friday, the one we call "good" we recall his passion and death and are able to show our appreciation of all that his death means to us in our Adoration of that cross.

That is not the end of his story or ours, for on Holy Saturday and on Easter Day we celebrate together his glorious resurrection, and we renew once more our Baptismal promises as our response to all that Jesus did for us in this Holy Week and to re-consecrate our lives once more to walk ever closer to him.

God bless you all and may the power of the Cross and the Joy of the Resurrection be yours this Holy Week.

Fr. John

Cash Collection last Sunday = £166-45

TIMES OF MASSES AND LITURGIES THIS HOLY WEEK

Sun	10	Palm Sunday	1000	Sung Mass	Carmel Arbuthnott (INT)
			1200	Mass	Peace in Ukraine
			1800	Mass	People of the Parish
Mon	11	Holy Monday	1000	Mass	Mgr Keith Newton (INT)
Tue	12	Holy Tuesday	1000	Mass	Lorraine Jaw (RIP)
Wed	13	Holy Wednesday	1100	Chrism Mass at the Cathedral	
Thu	14	Maundy Thursday	1900	Mass of the Last Supper & Watch of prayer until	
			2100	Compline (Night Prayer)	
Fri	15	Good Friday	1000	Children's Stations of the Cross	
			1500	Liturgy of the Lord's Passion	
Sat	16	Holy Saturday	2000	Easter Vigil & First Mass	
Sun	17	Easter Sunday	1000	Sung Mass	People of the Parish
			1200	Mass	the newly baptised

SERVICES OF RECONCILIATION BEFORE EASTER

Monday 11th April at 7.30pm in Holy Cross Harlow

Tuesday 12th April at 7.30pm in St Edmund of Canterbury Loughton

GOSPEL REFLECTION

We probably all know how it feels to let down those we love, to harm others, betray them even. How do we respond to those dark realities of human life? A first step is simply to admit the hurt we have caused. Without attempting a sincere apology, there can be no forgiveness, no reconciliation, no healing. The person who has caused hurt needs to accept responsibility for what they have done. Secondly, genuine remorse will always be expressed most credibly by actions rather than by words. Learning from our mistake – actually making a change in our behaviour – will show the seriousness of our remorse. Finally, it's important in time to be able to look beyond the mistake – not to wallow in it, get stuck in an endless cycle of blame, guilt and self-recrimination. The alternative is to live in endless depression, even despair.

St Luke's account of the final hours of Jesus' life offers insight into how we can move beyond our failures and betrayals to new life. One poignant detail, found only in Luke, is that it is at the very moment that the cock crows, as Peter is denying knowing Jesus a third time, that the Lord turns and looks straight at Peter. Whatever Peter sees in Jesus' eyes, it makes Peter come to his senses. He weeps tears of remorse. He acknowledges the harm he has done. After the resurrection, Jesus helps Peter move on. At the lakeside he asks Peter three times if he loves him. And each time Peter affirms his love, the Lord entrusts him with a task: feed my sheep, care for my little ones. Actions speak louder than words. Peter will do as the Lord asks.

In another detail found only in Luke, we meet the good thief – traditionally known as Dismas. He owns his guilt and accepts responsibility for his actions, and so escapes the bitterness and anger of the other criminal hanging beside Jesus. Dismas clings to his hope for a future, for redemption: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." In so doing, he is able to embrace forgiveness and the promise of new life.

A final detail that Luke alone relates is that in the middle of the Last Supper, the disciples squabble about who is the greatest. It is as if they have learnt nothing from Jesus during the last three years. Jesus reminds them where true greatness lies: service. Self-giving love – a genuine conversion of heart, mind and behaviour – is the antidote to the temptation of asserting ourselves at the expense of others. It is the antithesis of our very human tendency to inflict damage and hurt.

Like Peter, each of us knows how it feels to have let the Lord down – to have denied him. Whenever I sin, every time I refuse to act with love and kindness, when I withhold forgiveness, there's a denial of my friendship with the Lord. So perhaps we all know how it feels to hear the cock crow and have Jesus turn to look straight at us. But Peter also teaches us that the Lord's glance is a look not of condemnation but of compassion. Jesus always holds out the possibility of our own personal lakeside encounter with mercy, a healing of wounds, a new beginning. Like Peter, I can respond to the trust the Lord shows in me by choosing to care for others.

Dismas shows that no matter how desperate my situation may seem, how guilty, rejected or alone I feel, Jesus is with me, sharing my pain and giving me hope. Dismas' prayer – "Jesus, remember me" – is an expression of authentic faith and hope. If we remember Jesus, he will always remember us.

The argument about power and prestige reminds us of the essential vocation of the Church as an institution and of every individual believer: to serve, to "do this in memory of me"; to pour out our lives in service; to love as Christ has loved us. St John describes how, at the Last Supper, Jesus dramatically illustrated where true greatness lies: he took off his garment, wrapped a towel round his waist and washed his disciples' feet. Such service is the most Christ-like response we can make, to move us beyond our hurts, failures and betrayals, to new life.

OTHER PARISH FAMILY NEWS

Many thanks to Ian, Beata and Bob for their hard work last week in cutting the grass in the grounds and the Garden of Remembrance. All is looking much better already. If there are others who would like to join the Gardening group please have a word with one of them or Maria Lason who has been tending the flower beds. The team could be greatly helped by purchasing a "ride on mower", they have seen a reconditioned one at £550, maybe some of you who would like to help but don't have the time or the energy could contribute to the "Mower Fund".

Thank you also too four anonymous donors who have provided a new oven, hob and fridge for the Hall. This makes the Hall much more attractive to hirers.