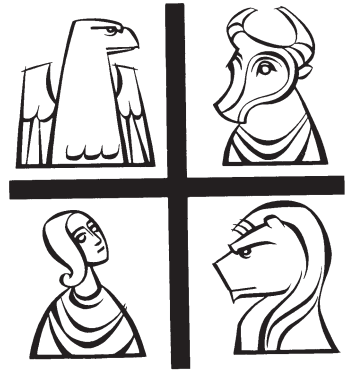


Reading Luke in Lent

Gospel of Luke 19:28 - 48



The Triumphal Entry

28 And when he had said these things, he went on ahead,
going up to Jerusalem.
29 When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany,
at the mount that is called Olivet,
he sent two of the disciples,
30 saying,
'Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied,
on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here.
31 If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" you shall say this: "The Lord has need of it."
32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them.
33 And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"
34 And they said, "The Lord has need of it."
35 And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.
36 And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road.
37 As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—
the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice
for all the mighty works that they had seen,
38 saying, 'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!'
39 And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him,
'Teacher, rebuke your disciples.'
40 He answered, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.'

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,
42 saying, 'Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace!
But now they are hidden from your eyes.
43 For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you
and surround you and hem you in on every side
44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you.
And they will not leave one stone upon another in you,
because you did not know the time of your visitation.'

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

45 And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold,
46 saying to them, 'It is written,
"My house shall be a house of prayer," but you have made it a den of robbers.'
47 And he was teaching daily in the temple.
The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people
were seeking to destroy him,
48 but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.

Reflection

Jesus has prophesied his passion, death and resurrection three times in Luke's Gospel. Now the begins the realisation of the prophecy. There is a lot of details in these passages. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is steeped in images of kingship from the Old Testament. His detailed preparations are about the fulfilment of these prophecies and how the people (no longer just a crowd) receive him. This marks a turning point in the narrative. One of the turns is that this is the last we hear of the Pharisees whose grumbling and questions have accompanied Jesus on the road. Now his adversaries will be the chief priests.

The gospel works on a number of time-frames. As Jesus weeps over Jerusalem he is lamenting a city which will reject his message of peace in the coming days. Luke is writing the gospel after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans in 70AD and so Jesus' words are also looking forward to that event.

- Being prepared, clearing out, even de-cluttering, are popular ideas which can see the trappings of modern life as a barrier to a more simple life-style. What do you need to let go of so that you can give more space for Jesus?

Prayer

Holy God,
the folly of the cross
mocks our human wisdom,
and the weakness of the crucified
puts worldly power to shame.

Banish from our hearts
every pretence of might and of knowledge,
that by the power flowing from Christ's resurrection
your people may be raised up from the death of sin
and fashioned into a living temple of your glory.

Grant this through Christ, our liberator from sin,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.
Amen.