

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT No 5

Palm Sunday 5th April 2020

‘Virtually Church but with some way to go...’

Welcome

We are virtually church but with some way to go. So why not go part of that way and try a Zoom conference on Easter Sunday? The cry has been reaching me and although I still have a long way to go with Zoom, I have downloaded the free version and will be issuing all Cutting Edge Camelot readers with a Zoom invitation for Easter Sunday in the course of this week (I hope). Remember, however, a free Zoom only lasts 40 minutes and is limited to 100 participants (hint we are closing in on the 100 reader figure) - so first come first served! If you are new to Zoom you should also be able to download the free version so that you too can participate.

Anna shares her reflection for Palm Sunday below. It includes instructions for making a paper cross should you wish to do this to mark the day. As we enter Holy Week we will each day of next week consider various aspects of the Passion Narrative with reflections on them written by different members of the Ministry Team.

Scripture Passage

Matthew 21.1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Reflection

Today is Palm Sunday, the day the church remembers Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and it also marks the beginning of Holy Week – the days leading up to Jesus’ death and resurrection.

When I was reflecting on the Bible passage from Matthew, the words that especially struck me were verse 10:

*When he [Jesus] entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil,
asking, “Who is this?”*

If you look up ‘turmoil’ in the dictionary, it is defined as ‘a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty’. Not only our cities, and not only *our* nation, but all the nations of the world are in turmoil at the moment. The coronavirus pandemic has affected everything: our shopping, our socialising, our working, our travelling. And it has left us in a state of disturbance,

confusion and uncertainty. We may not be asking, “*Who is this?*”, but we may well be asking, “*What is this?*” or “*What shall we do?*”

So, what should our response be? As Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds waved palm leaves and called out,

Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

‘Hosanna’ literally means ‘Save’ in Hebrew, but it came to be used as an expression of praise, almost like saying, “You’ve saved us!”. The words the people used to praise Jesus are very similar to the words of Psalm 118, which isn’t surprising given that the Psalms are full of praise for God. The first and last verse of Psalm 118 are the same, saying this:

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

for his steadfast love endures forever!

The people of Jerusalem recognised that in Jesus, God had remembered his promise to save them and had remained faithful to them. God is good, and his steadfast love endures forever! And this is as true today as it has ever been. Even with all of the disturbance, confusion, uncertainty *and* tragedy of the coronavirus, God is still good and his steadfast love remains rock-solid. In the words of Deuteronomy, “he will never leave you nor forsake you” (31.6). So even at this time of turmoil, we can still praise God and thank him for the all the blessings we have been given.

Holy Week is a time when Christians traditionally look towards the last days of Jesus' life and particularly remember the suffering that Jesus went through. They remember that the people who called out, "Hosanna!" were only a few days later calling out, "Crucify him!" - just as palm crosses turn a symbol of praise, the palm leaf,



to a symbol of crucifixion, the cross. This year, we can't hand out palm crosses in church, but below you'll find some instructions on how to make a cross from paper (or even palm leaves, or reeds, if you have some in your garden!). You might like to make one, and hold it as you pray or put it somewhere you will see it as a reminder to pray.

Jesus knew as he entered Jerusalem what would happen to him, but he also knew that God – his Father – was good and that his steadfast love endures forever, so he knew that he was not alone in all that he had to face. And he knew that God would have the final victory. Perhaps this week, you would like to use the words of praise the crowds shouted, or the words from Psalm 118, as part of your prayers.

Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

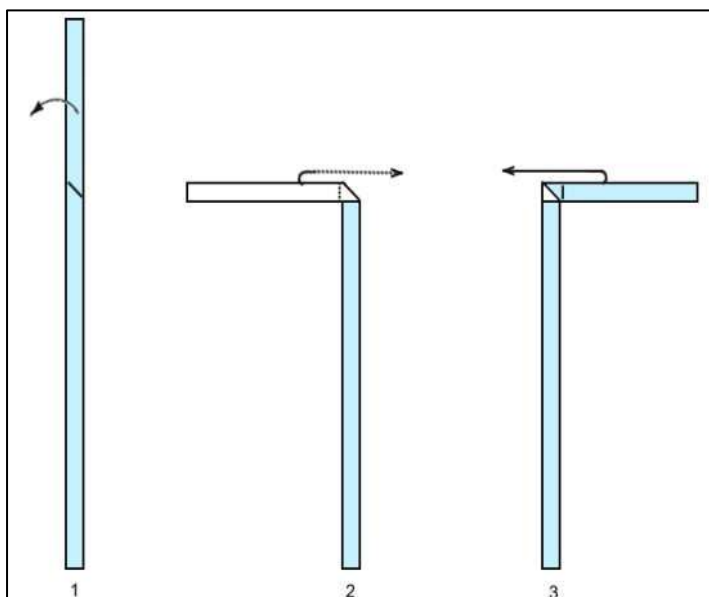
for his steadfast love endures forever!

Anna.

How to make a paper cross

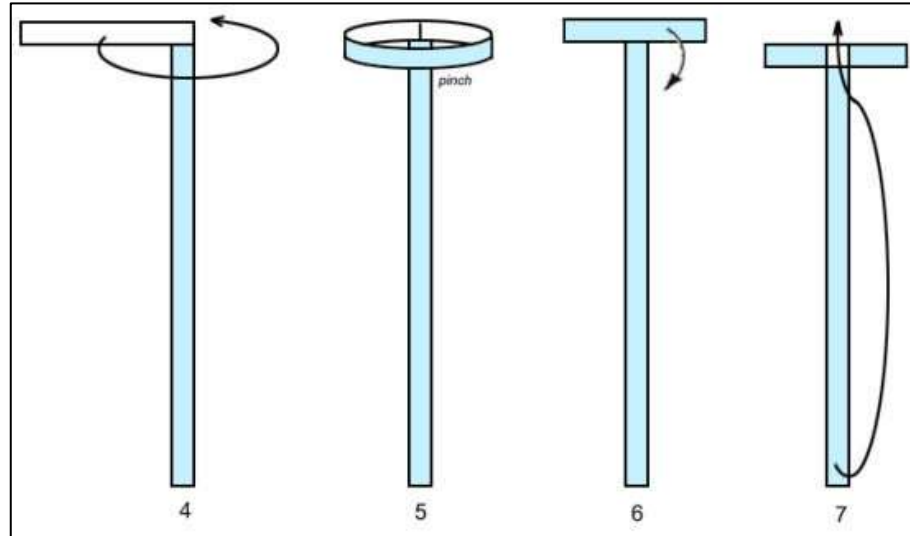
(These instructions and the images used are based on those produced by the Origami Resource Centre, and the original instructions can be found at: <https://www.origami-resource-center.com/easter-cross.html>)

You will need a long thin strip of paper, of a ratio of about 30:1, length:width. So, if you use A4 paper, you will want the strip to be about 1cm wide. Brown parcel paper or gift wrap work quite well as you can get a longer length and therefore a larger overall cross.

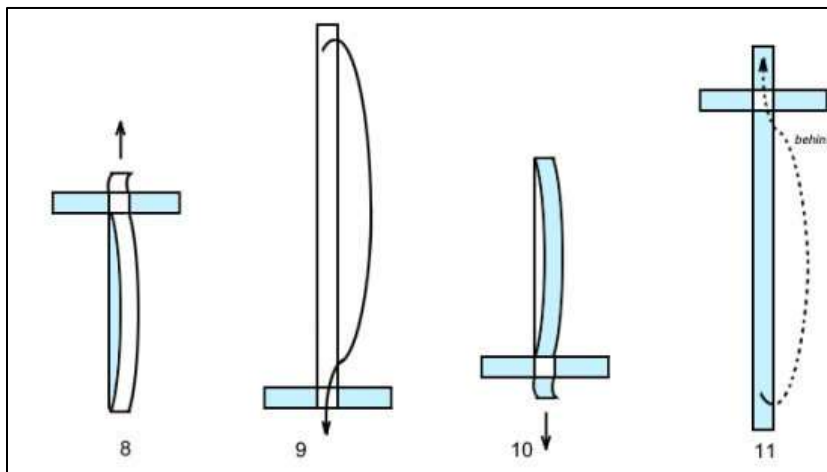


1. Take your strip of paper and fold it one third of the way down to the left, so that it forms a right-angle.
2. Then, take the horizontal end and fold it around behind the original fold, so that it pointing in the opposite direction.
3. Then fold the paper back towards the left again, so that has essentially been folded 360 degrees.
4. You then take the horizontal end towards the right and then into the centre to form a loop.

5. You then squish the loop to form the two arms of the cross.
6. Then fold down the arms down forwards, and this should form a square in the middle of the cross.



7. You then take the end of the vertical strip and weave it through the square in the centre of the cross.
8. Pull the vertical strip upwards all the way through the centre of the cross.
9. Then bring the end of the vertical strip back through the central square of the cross that you have just passed it through (this should create a loop at the top).
10. Pull the paper through until you have enough at the top to form the top of your cross, and then flatten the loop.



11. Finally, bring the end up behind the cross and weave it behind the square that has formed in the centre of the back of the cross, the end of the paper should end up in the middle of the loop at the top of the cross.

You should now have a paper cross!

Points for Prayers

- Thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and the opening of the new Nightingale Hospital
- For coronavirus testing to be rolled out with greater speed

- Funerals needing to take place under new restrictions with only family mourners
- Couples whose weddings have been postponed
- Finding new and creative ways to celebrate Easter in the light of the current restrictions
- Those wishing to return to this country from abroad
- Those suffering from anxiety as a result of self-isolation
- Wisdom and divine guidance for governments of this country and all across the world.

Why not try?

- Asking yourself how you have seen God at work in your spiritual life since the emergency e.g. perhaps greater trust in God?
- On Sundays lighting a candle near dusk and placing it in your window as a symbol of Christ the light of the world
- Keeping a journal, spending time in silence with God or reading a new or unfamiliar book of the Bible
- Responding to the Churches Together call to sing Jesus Christ is risen today and Thine be the glory on Easter Sunday (for details go to www.ctbi.org.uk/sing-resurrection/)
- Responding to the invitation to the Zoom meeting on Easter Sunday to be sent out in the course of the week.

Updates

- Churches now closed following Prime Minister's announcement. No weddings and only emergency baptisms (child's life in danger) at home or in hospital. Funerals restricted to immediate family at graveside or crematoria (subject to local crematoria rules). Further details on Church of England website.

- Current Excalibur gives details of network of community volunteers now in action across the parishes.
- Parishes Office now closed. Please contact Rob via email (office@camelotparishes.org.uk) or on 01749 850934.

An inclusive Communion celebrated on behalf of the benefice

Ron and Pam will be celebrating Communion regularly in their home each Sunday at 10.00am. Please be aware of this because even though no-one can join them they are praying for us all and hope that you will feel included in this act of Communion.

Some streamed resources available online

Here are a selection of some streamed resources available online which you may find helpful:-

- The Royal School of Church Music website provides a Hymn of the Day and Sunday Self-Service with music, readings and prayers.
- The Prayer Book Society has details of online streaming of BCP services.
- Spring Harvest is not being held live this year. However, there is full online coverage of this Christian festival available from 13th to 17th April. Simply go to YouTube and enter in 'Spring Harvest Home'.

Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family.

We pray that 'we might live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us' (Ephesians 5:2).