

The Mission Episcopate of Saints Francis and Clare
A Eucharistic Community in the Liberal Catholic Tradition.

The Sunday Next before Easter or Palm Sunday

There are some preparations to be made for Palm Sunday in addition to the usual arrangements. The altar and processional crosses are still veiled in violet, but the veils used on Palm Sunday may if desired be of a lighter, more rose—hued violet. Deep violet veils are resumed for the following days. Palm branches may be placed gracefully between the six altar candlesticks and arranged in other parts of the sanctuary and church. Lengths of violet ribbon, with which to tie a small branch of palm to the processional cross, are laid on the credence table. On a special credence table placed at the epistle side of the sanctuary palm branches are laid. For the people little branches six to eight inches in length, or little crosses made of folded strips of palm leaf are prepared and heaped on trays also placed on the special credence table. If there is difficulty in obtaining palms of a larger size, the clergy and servers may be given palms like those for the congregation. The palms can usually be bought at church shops; the little palm crosses, if used, must be made from palm strips a day or so before they are needed. The branches (and crosses) on the table are covered with a violet cloth. Only the six altar candles are lighted.

In some churches it is the custom for the covered trays of palms to be brought to the chancel gates by lay people immediately before the blessing. (MESFC: this is commended.) The M.C. and servers receive them and place them on the special credence.

The celebrant and ministers vest as for the Eucharist, the celebrant wearing a violet cope, the deacon and subdeacon (if any) violet dalmatic and tunicle.

The procession forms in the usual order and moves to the sanctuary by the shorter way while a hymn is sung or soft music played. As they enter the sanctuary the servers and clergy either arrange themselves symmetrically before the altar, or they go to their places. When the celebrant and his/her ministers reach the lowest altar step, they remove their birettas and genuflect together. The birettas are given to a server to put in some convenient place.

The celebrant, flanked by his/her ministers, goes to the special credence table. The M.C. or a server removes the violet cloth and so uncovers the palm branches. The celebrant sings or says:

Priest. Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that comes in the name of the Most High.

People. King of Israel: Hosanna in the highest.

Receiving the aspergill from the deacon or MC. the celebrant sprinkles the palms thrice, once towards the middle, once towards his/her left, once towards his/her right. He/she then says or intones:

P. Let us pray.

-still facing the table of palms. All kneel except the celebrant and his/her ministers. He/she says, making the sign of the cross over the palms twice as indicated in the Liturgy.

P. O God, who gather the things that are dispersed and preserve what is gathered; you who blessed the people who, bearing branches, went out to meet Jesus; we pray you also to + purify and + bless these boughs of palm which your faithful take up in honour of your name, that unto whatsoever place these branches may be brought, the dwellers therein may obtain your blessing and, every adversity being driven therefrom, your right hand may protect those whom our Sovereign Christ watches over and loves; in Christ's name we pray. Amen.

After the response, the people are seated. The celebrant now blesses incense in the usual manner and, still standing before the table of palms, censes the branches with three double swings: two towards the middle, two towards his/her left, two towards his/her right. Returning the thurible, the celebrant proceeds to distribute the palms to the clergy. The celebrant reserves a palm branch for him/herself by giving one to the M.C., or a server, to place on the altar. He/she then gives a branch to the deacon, to the subdeacon, to any bishops present, to the M.C. and to the clergy. Finally the servers and choir each receive a branch. In this distribution the ministers may assist the celebrant, so that the service be not unduly delayed. When everyone in the sanctuary and choir has received a branch of palm the celebrant turns to the people and says:

Receive a branch of palm, all you who desire to greet the Lord with joy and gladness.

Immediately those appointed for the purpose are given trays of small palm branches or crosses and depart to distribute them quickly to the people.

In small churches the people may come forward to the altar rail for their palms, to receive them from the celebrant. Meanwhile the cross bearer fastens a branch of palm to the processional cross, using some violet ribbon. If practicable, a branch may also be fastened to the altar cross (or it may have been so placed before the service).

As soon as all have received branches, the celebrant, facing the altar and holding his/her palm branch in the right hand, says or sings:

P. Let us go forth in peace.

C. In the name of Christ.

*(For the procedure **in small churches** see hereafter)*

The procession forms as usual (all putting on their birettas after genuflecting), leaves the sanctuary and moves through the church and out of the vestibule door singing an appropriate hymn.

When the procession has entirely left the church, those in the vestibule group themselves round the closed door. The extra candles on the altar, if not previously lighted, are lighted at this time. Following the instructions of the M.C., or someone appointed for the purpose, the people within the church turn round and face the vestibule door. The people and those in the vestibule now sing the hymn: All glory, laud and honour in the alternate manner described below. (It may be necessary for the vestibule door to be opened slightly to permit the organist and those outside the vestibule door to keep in time. Usually the organist must follow the singers, and not the singers the organist, simply because the organ cannot be heard by those outside while they are singing.)

When the hymn is ended and all is silent in the church, the cross bearer knocks on the vestibule door three times with the lower end of the processional cross. The door is immediately opened, the organist begins the hymn, and the procession returns to the sanctuary.

Tune: ELLACOMBE, Meter: 76.76 D

**HOSANNA ! loud hosannas
The little children sang;
Through pillared court and temple
That heartfelt anthem rang;
To Christ, Whose Love had blessed them
Close folded to His breast,
The children sang their praises,
The simplest and the best.**

**From Olivet they follow,
'Mid that exultant crowd,
The victor's palm-branch waving
And shouting clear and loud.
Bright Angels join the chorus
Beyond the cloudless sky
Hosanna in the highest
Glory to God on high.**

**Fair leaves of silvery olive
They strew upon the ground,
While Salem's circling mountains
Echo the joyful sound.
The Lord of men and Angels
Rides on in lowly state,
Smiling on those dear children
Who on His bidding wait.**

**Hosanna in the highest;
That ancient song we sing,
To Christ our glorious Leader
Our holy Lord and King.
O may we ever praise Him
With heart and life and voice,
And in His blissful presence
Eternally rejoice. Amen.**

The door is closed at the end of the hymn and the people within turn in its direction and sing the first verse of 'All glory, laud, and honour'. This verse is repeated by those without the door. The people and choir then sing the next verse and those on the outside repeat the refrain, which is the same as the first verse. This is done alternately throughout the whole of the verses, all, however, joining in the refrain after the last verse.

*Or, with a view to shortening the service, the hymn may be omitted and the organ play during the outgoing procession. Or verses 1 and 2 of the hymn, **Hosanna, loud hosannas**, may be sung as the procession moves to the vestibule and verses 3 and 4 sung as it returns to the sanctuary.*

*Music on the organ may take the place of the third hymn, or verses 3 and 4 of the hymn, **Hosanna, loud hosannas**, may be sung.*

*In small churches where there are few clergy and servers the procedure may be altered. The knocks are given on the door before the hymn: **All glory, laud and honour**; that hymn is then sung by all together, the first verse being repeated, and the procession enters during the singing of this hymn.*

St. Theodulph. 7.6. D

**ALL glory, laud, and honour
To Thee, eternal King,
To Whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.
All glory, etc.**

**Thou art the King of Israel,
Thou David's royal Son,
Who in the Lord's Name comest,
The King and Blessed One.
All glory, etc.**

**The company of Angels
Are praising Thee on high,
And mortal folk and all things
Created make reply.
All glory, etc.**

**The people of the Hebrews
With palms before Thee went;
Our praise and prayer and anthems
Before Thee we present.
All glory, etc.**

**To Thee before Thy Passion
They sang their hymns of praise;
To Thee now high exalted
Our melody we raise.
All glory, etc.**

**Thou didst accept their praises,
Accept the prayers we bring,
Who in all good delightest,
Thou good and gracious King.
All glory, etc. Amen.**

(Note that according to the directions in our Liturgy, the refrain is repeated by the choir outside the Church door after the first verse as well as after the others. The organist should therefore begin by playing the first half of the tune twice, and thereafter go on as directed.)

The cross-bearer then knocks at the church door with the base of the processional cross; the door is immediately opened and the procession enters singing some appropriate hymn.

The congregation faces the procession as it passes on its return.

The Holy Eucharist now begins as usual.

The palm branches are held by all present, if practicable, during the singing of the Gloria in Excelsis, the Adeste Fideles, and the Recessional Hymn, and during the reading of the Gospel. It is intended that the people should take their palm branches or crosses home after the service and keep them during the ensuing year.

It is recommended that the blessed palms left from the preceding Palm Sunday be reverently burned, at the church or at home, on the following Ash Wednesday, and not thrown away.