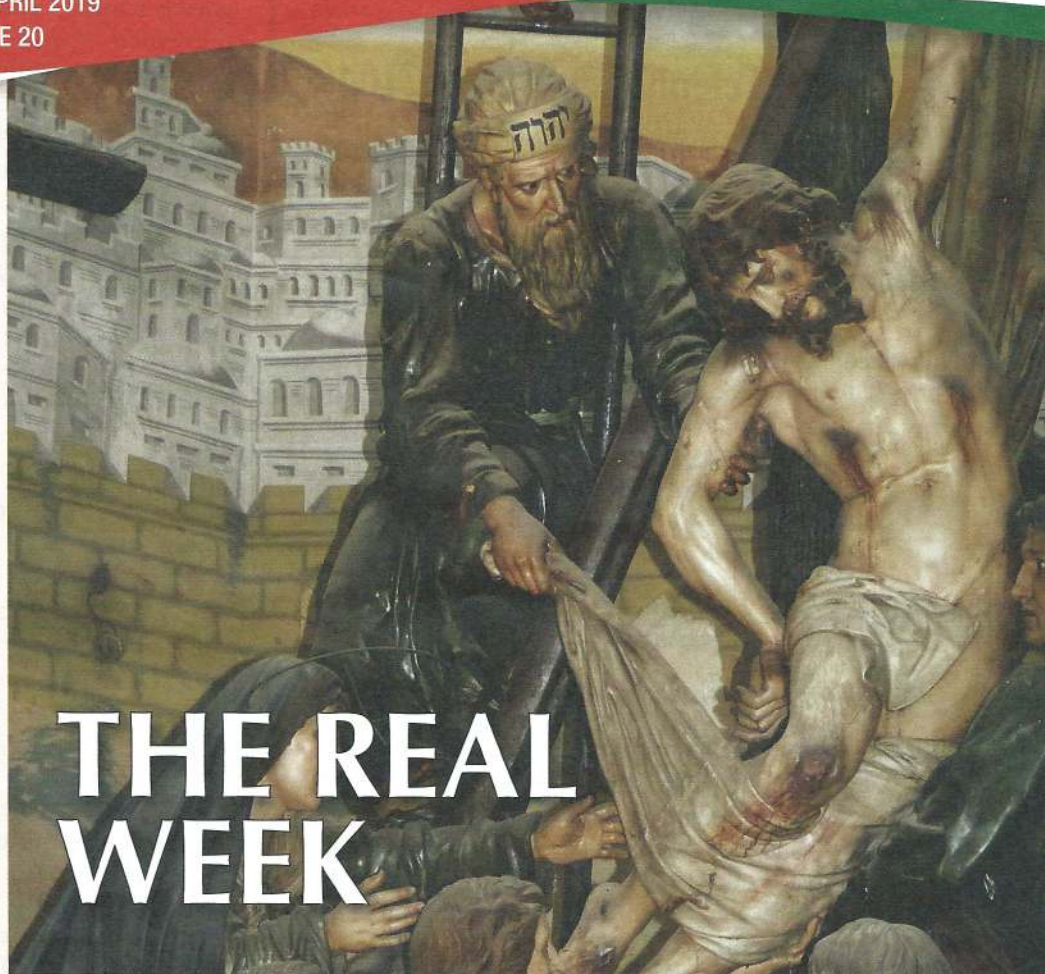


# Parish Newsletter

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD / CYCLE C | 14 APRIL 2019 | ISSUE 20

As I'm writing this, the terrible news of the desecration of the crypt of St Michan's in Dublin is in the news. The remains that were disturbed at this ancient site included those of an 800-year-old crusader and a 400-year-old nun. We may wonder what our society has come to. Is there any respect for the living or the dead? But, as with all news stories, we move on ... Well, Lent has moved on too. With Palm (Passion) Sunday comes the Week that Christians mark as no other. Our ancestors called it a *Seachtain Mór* or 'Great Week'. We usually call it simply Holy Week. With Palm Sunday comes the high solemn feast of God's dark glory and grandeur. With Palm Sunday comes the most awesome and terrifying time in the Church year. As Advent is to Christmas, so Lent is to Holy Week. Except Christmas has a birth – and sure who'd be afraid of a baby? But Holy Week has a certain tone of anxiety and fearful waiting. Of course, we know the end of Holy Week (which is really a beginning) leads us to an empty tomb and Resurrection. Still, maybe we should call it the 'Real Week' – because it mirrors so much of the reality of our human vulnerability. God, in Jesus, is stripped bare, manhandled and seized, beaten and mocked and spat upon. And we do not like vulnerability. And we certainly don't



## THE REAL WEEK

easily grasp the willingness of God to suffer with us and for us. The child Jesus is easy to accept – the suffering Jesus remains a struggle for us.

My late uncle, a priest, had a pretty gruesome picture of Jesus crucified – you could feel the pain etched on his features. The more I think of it, the more accurate I feel it was. In modern life we have sanitised and smoothed over the rough edges of our reality – so much so that we have a problem when the cross swerves into our lives. For instance, in modern language people don't 'die' – they 'pass away'. I've heard that the death of a patient in a hospital is recorded as 'negative patient-care outcome'! Yes,

euphemisms are alive and well as they make it easier for us to describe hard realities. But this week is a time to be real and to grapple with the matter. Life is beautiful, yet it can be tough – but for the Christian, while we may be unsure of what the future holds for any of us, we do know who holds the future.

– Tom Cox



### THIS WEEK (15-21 APRIL)

- 15 **Mon** Monday of Holy Week
- 16 **Tue** Tuesday of Holy Week
- 17 **Wed** Wednesday of Holy Week
- 18 **Thur** HOLY THURSDAY
- 19 **Fri** GOOD FRIDAY
- 20 **Sat** HOLY SATURDAY
- 21 **Sun** EASTER SUNDAY

### NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS



Acts 10:34-37-43  
Psalm 117:1-2,16-17,22-23  
Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6-8  
John 20:1-9

### Reflection

How does the Lord want to enter my life this Palm Sunday?

### Lesson

The end, which Jesus' entry into Jerusalem signals, is Easter and eternal life.

### Prayer

Eternal Father, we thank you for the gift to us of your Son Jesus Christ.