

St Luke's in the City  
Passion Sunday of Palms  
1 April 2007  
Celebrating at the CROSSroads

*Dear Friends,*

*Over the last few weeks I have been encouraging us to take Holy Week and the Great Easter Triduum as seriously as we are able. The Triduum is unlike most everything else in our culture, so governed by the supremacy of individual choice. It is true that the Triduum requires all our effort, exertion outside the normal range. But it is also true that our solidarity in procession with palms, as our feet are washed, in touching wood, and huddled around the New Fire binds us together as the Body of Christ. If I am absent that diminishes both you and me.*

*As I encourage you in these terms I realise that it's almost impossible for us to hear such exhortations other than as 'law', rule, regulation. But the Gospel of Jesus Christ crucified and risen is about freedom, liberation from all enslavement. So I do not exhort us to take the Triduum seriously as an exercise in clerical rule-making – heaven forbid! No, I make this plea with the same spirit with which the silence of a silent retreat is encouraged - not kept to please 'father', or teacher, or anyone else. Rather, we keep silence because the silence itself is grace. In the silence we encounter the deepest truth about ourselves and God. The great silence reveals all that really matters. Ultimately, by silence we are liberated from the tyrannical voices in our heads and the graves that hold us captive. Holy Week is the church's loving response to Christ's thundering silence – in the Garden, before interrogators and thugs, on the wood of Calvary, in the dark earth, new-born from the tomb. I leave you with John V Taylor's poem 'Dyptich':*

He who lay curled in Mary's womb,  
starting and ending in a cave,  
has broken new-born from the tomb.

His star outshone the smothering gloom,  
searching for those he came to save.  
He who lay curled in Mary's womb.

To take upon himself our doom,  
and our unkindness forgave,  
has broken new-born from the tomb.

Again they offered sweet perfume,  
myrrh for his helpless limbs they gave,  
he who lay curled in Mary's womb.

Swaddling allows too little room;  
he that was bound from crib to grave  
has broken new-born from the tomb.

Angels again brought tidings: 'Whom  
seekest thou? See, the Lord you crave,  
he who lay curled in Mary's womb,  
has broken new-born from the grave.'

*With my love, David*