

News from St. Mary's – 2nd April 2020

Thoughts for Palm Sunday

Last week, on Passion Sunday, the churches of the South Feldon Group tried their first experiment in worshipping together remotely using Zoom - a computer program. We began at 11:00 and 32 adults and 2 children took part, which was a great start. If you didn't join us last Sunday, but would like to, don't worry, we will be repeating the process at 11:00 this Sunday morning and you will be very welcome to join us. **It will be our Palm Sunday Service.** If you haven't set up Zoom on your computer please send me an email (revgeorgeh@outlook.com) and I will let you have instructions. We can have a test run before Sunday morning.

In my office I have a couple of boxes full of palm crosses which unfortunately I cannot distribute this year. However, in true Blue Peter style we have a set of instructions for a DIY Palm Cross. Instead of carrying it in procession, how about displaying it in your window? I have attached the instructions but if it is too difficult to make just print off the picture and cut it out instead. Then on Sunday morning we will at least be able to hold up our crosses in our own homes as we remember Jesus's entry into Jerusalem.

As we approach Holy Week and Easter we are looking at different ways of being the church. For many, including me, it seems strange not worshipping in the church building itself. Many Christian people who are housebound have found ways of worshipping in their homes and now we have an opportunity to learn from them. Sometimes we might need the inspiration of services on the radio or TV or via a computer, but at other times we can worship God in stillness and silence.

So we continue to plan to use Zoom which enables us to hear and see each other as we worship, albeit on a screen not in person. I will contact everyone who took part in last week's service with more details and a link nearer the time. Please let me know if you would like to be added to the list: revgeorgeh@outlook.com

Many people are continuing to light a candle every evening and put it in their windows as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ; the light that cannot be extinguished although I now light it at 8pm as the nights are lighter.

On a practical front, the Foodbank was extremely grateful for your continued donations and you can still leave these in the box under the Vicarage Porch or under the porch at the Methodist Chapel. Please observe the Government Guidelines when doing so and wash your hands thoroughly after touching the box.

In Psalm 132 verses 4 and 5 David vows: 'I will not allow my eyes to sleep until I find a place for the Lord.' For many people that place is the building where we worship together, but the challenge we face today is being unable to access our church. Perhaps the message for us is to allow our homes to be a place for God, and to open ourselves up to God where we are. By doing so we may find ourselves in the presence of God. The pilgrimage-of our lives has taken an enforced change of direction, but in the stillness of our homes we can still continue our movement towards God as we reflect on Jesus's journey to the cross.

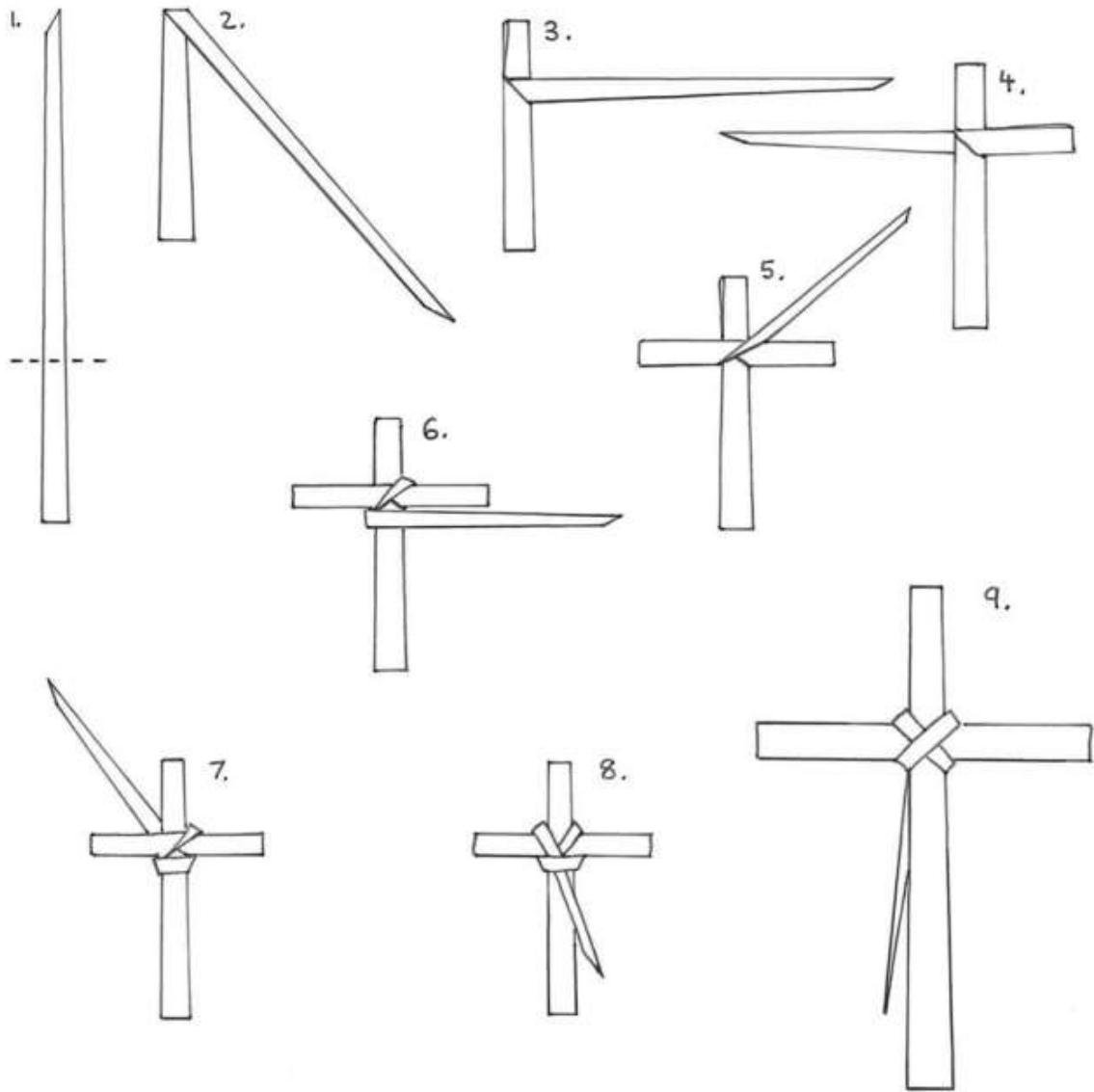
I will write again soon with details of our Holy Week services, including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

God Bless you all.

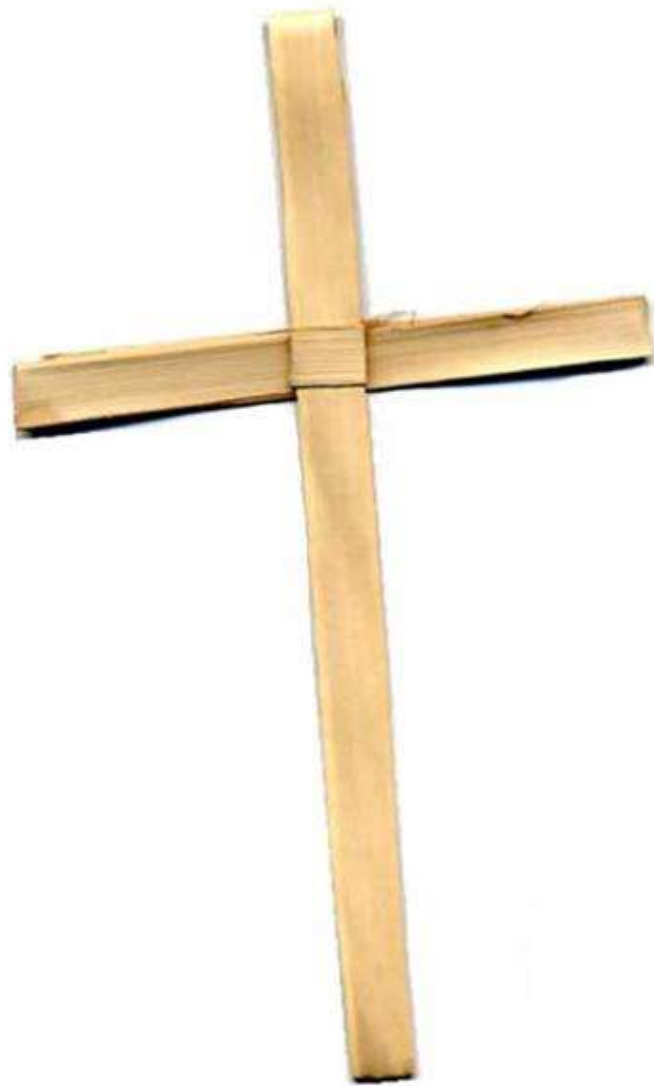
HOW TO MAKE A PALM CROSS To make your own from scratch:

- Cut off strips from the long side of an A4 sheet, each strip to measure about 2cm wide.

- Join two strips together with sticky tape and taper one end, as illustrated below. Fold this long strip as outlined in the diagram.
- Depending on the size of the finished cross, you may need to use three strips joined together.
- As an alternative to paper, you may find other materials that you can use— ideally, some tough strips of long leaves, which would be a European equivalent of palm leaves.



IF DIY is not your thing then you can print this out:-



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