

# The Church Guardian

— EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR —

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## CALENDAR FOR MARCH.

MARCH 1.—Second Sunday in Lent.  
" 8.—Third " "  
" 15.—Fourth " "  
" 22.—Fifth " "  
" 25.—ANNUNCIATION.  
" 29.—PALM SUNDAY—next before EASTER  
SUNDAY.

## Holy Week.

Next Sunday we shall enter upon the com-  
memoration of the last sad week of our Saviour's  
earthly life, during which His conflict with the  
powers of darkness, which had been gradually  
growing in intensity from the moment of His entry  
upon His public ministry, reached its crisis. Holy  
Week, as the last week in Lent has been called  
from primitive times, has always been observed by  
Christians with special solemnity, and our own  
branch of the Church has marked her sense of its  
importance by appointing a special Epistle and  
Gospel for each of its days. In many of our  
parishes, where it is impracticable to have a  
literal observance of the Church's rule as to Morn-  
ing and Evening Prayer "daily throughout the  
year," it is the custom to call the people together,  
at least once a day during this Great Week—a  
custom which, we are thankful to say, is growing  
year by year. There are many persons, how-  
ever, in every congregation, who cannot avail  
themselves even of this opportunity of united  
meditation and prayer, but who may well employ  
these solemn days in private contemplation of the  
great events which are now brought to our mind.  
To such persons especially, as well as to those  
who are able to go to church, we commend the  
following brief notes on the several days of Holy  
Week, taken, for the most part, from the Annotated  
Book of Common Prayer.

## PALM SUNDAY.

The name by which this Sunday is most famil-  
arly known to us has an obvious reference to the act  
of the Jewish people on the occasion of our Lord's  
last visit to Jerusalem, when they "cut down  
branches from the trees, and strawed them in the  
way." In ancient times, this striking incident in  
the life of Christ was celebrated by the blessing of  
palm branches in the churches, which were then  
distributed to the people and carried home by  
them with much rejoicing. A relic of this old  
custom still lingers in some of the rural parts of

England, where the churches are decked with  
willow-branches on Palm Sunday, and the country  
people bear them in their hands as they walk out  
in the afternoon.

The distinguishing feature of this day in the last  
week of our Lord's life is brought before us in the  
Second Lesson for Evening Prayer. The other  
Scriptures for the day are altogether occupied with  
the story of our Lord's Passion.

We can hardly fail on this day to think of that  
"great multitude" seen by St. John in vision,  
gathered out "of all nations, and kindreds, and  
people and tongues [who] stood before the Throne,  
and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes,  
and palms were in their hands."

## MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

The distinctive memorial of this day is the act  
of our Blessed Lord in destroying the barren fig-  
tree. "It was not yet the time of the fig-harvest,  
but some of last year's fruit might no doubt be  
found on some of the trees growing about. One  
tree, especially, attracted the notice of Jesus. It  
grew at the road side, as common property, and  
thus early, when other fig-trees had hardly begun  
to show greenness, was conspicuous by its young  
leaves. When He came to it, however, they  
proved its only boast; there was no fruit of the  
year before, as might have been naturally expected.  
It was, indeed, the very type of a fair profession  
without performance: of the hypocrisy which has  
only leaves and no fruit. Such a realized parable  
could not be passed in silence by One who drew a  
moral from every incident of life and nature.  
'Picture of boastful insincerity,' said He, loud  
enough for the disciples to hear, 'type of Israel  
and its leaders—pretentious, but bearing no fruit  
to God—let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for  
ever,' and passed on. They were to learn that  
profession without performance found no favor  
with their Master."—(Geikie.)

Reaching the city, He went to the Temple, and,  
as on a former occasion, purified its outer Court  
from the sordid abuses which love of gain had  
dexterously cloaked under an affectation of piously  
serving the requirements of worship.

The day which had thus begun, was devoted,  
in its later hours, to his wonted work of teaching  
all who would listen, and in the evening the quiet  
retreat of Bethany once more received Him.

## TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

This was the last day of our Lord's public teach-  
ing and ministry. Having retired to Bethany for  
the night on the evening of Monday as on that of  
Sunday, He again returned to the city on the  
morning of this day, and "as they passed by, they  
saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots." In the  
Temple, the scribes and elders required from our  
Lord an explanation of the authority by which He  
did the things which he had done there, clearing  
it of buyers and sellers, and claiming it as the  
House of His Father. The events of the day are  
then recorded with much fulness by the Evangelist.  
Our Lord spoke the parables of the Father and  
his Two Sons, the Vineyard let out to Husband-  
men, the Marriage Feast and the Wedding Gar-  
ment. Each sect of the Jews—the Herodians,  
the Sadducees and the Pharisees, endeavored to  
entangle Him into some discourse which could be  
made the ground of an accusation against Him.  
Our Lord pronounced the eight woes, and then  
departed from the Temple to speak nearly His

last words to the Jews, in the parables of the Ten  
Virgins, the Talents, and the Sheep and Goats.  
The latest public event of the day appears to be  
that recorded in St. John xii., 28-36, when, in reply  
to the prayer, "Father, glorify Thy Name," there  
came a voice from Heaven, saying, "I have both  
glorified it, and will glorify it again." After this  
voice, our Lord spoke of his "lifting up" upon the  
cross. He then gave His final words of public  
warning, "Yet a little while is the Light with you.  
Walk while ye have the Light, lest darkness come  
upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth  
not whither he goeth. While ye have Light, believe  
in the Light, that ye may be children of light." As  
soon as these words were spoken, the public  
teaching of the Light of the world came to an end,  
and He shone no more upon the multitude until  
He displayed Himself "lifted up" for their salva-  
tion. "These words spake Jesus, and departed,  
and did hide Himself from them."

## WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

The fourth day of the Holy Week marks the  
actual beginning of the events which reached their  
climax on Good Friday—the conspiracy of the  
Sanhedrin, and the agreement between them and  
Judas. On this account it is always reckoned the  
day of the Betrayal. It was on this and the follow-  
ing day that our Blessed Lord gave to His  
Apostles those instructions and encouragements  
which are recorded in the thirteenth and four  
following chapters of St. John's Gospel. They are  
given, it is probable, only in the form of a summary,  
yet even in that form they provide the Church  
with a solid foundation of doctrine respecting the  
continual presence of her Lord, and her true unity  
through union with Him. The day seems to have  
been spent in the retirement of Bethany, and was  
apparently concluded by another festival, which  
ended our Lord's intercourse with the family of  
Lazarus, the next day being spent with His  
Apostles alone.

## MAUNDY THURSDAY.

The fifth day of Holy Week was honored by the  
institution of the Holy Communion, and the names  
by which it has been known have almost always  
been derived from this distinguishing feature of  
the day. As early as the time of St. Augustine, it  
is called *Dies Cane Domini*, and, in later times,  
*Natalis Eucharistiae*, or *Natalis Calicis*. The  
English name of Maundy Thursday also points  
to the same holy event, being a vernacular cor-  
ruption of *Dies Mandati*, the day when our Lord  
commanded His disciples to love one another as  
He had loved them, to wash one another's feet in  
token of that love, and, above all, to "Do THIS,"  
that is, to celebrate the Holy Communion after  
the pattern that He had showed them, as the  
sacramental bond of the love that he had com-  
manded.

Our Lord's act of humility in washing the feet  
of His disciples took a strong and lasting hold  
upon the mind and affection of the Church; and the  
terms in which He commanded them to follow His  
example not unnaturally led to a belief that the usage  
was in some manner and degree binding upon their  
successors. In later ages, however, the Church of  
England has considered the commandment to  
follow our Lord's example in that particular as one  
which is not, in its literal construction, of perpetual  
obligation, while "Do this in remembrance of Me"  
is one, the unceasing obligation of which has never  
been doubted.