Reflection for Saturday 27 March

This morning's Mass readings are a help to us as we prepare for Holy Week beginning with our Lord entering into Jerusalem for the last time on this occasion riding on a donkey.

Our first reading is from the prophet Ezekiel living in the time of the exile of the people from their homeland to Babylon. Most of the prophets' messages are doom and gloom, but Ezekiel is delivering one of hope because he sees an end to the exile when the people will return home cleansed from their sins and ready to live according to God's way. The passage ends with these words of Ezekiel: "I shall make my home above them; I will be their God, they shall be my people. And the nations will learn that I am the Lord the sanctifier of Israel, when my sanctuary is with them for ever." That prophecy was not fulfilled until Jesus died on the cross.

The Gospel reading is from St John's Gospel. The words spoken by Caiaphas, the high priest are prophetic. He did not know the significance of them. They inferred that Jesus was to die for the nation and his death would bring together the scattered children of God together as one.
But more than that: Jesus's death would be the beginning of a new relationship with God for all people. The new covenant comes into being through the blood of Christ by which our sins are forgiven if we truly repent. He becomes our God and we become his people.

Both these passages of Scripture help us to focus on the Cross as we enter Holy Week and prepare to walk with Jesus in his last days before his terrible ordeal. His death was necessary to show the extent of how much God loves us by letting his Son die so that we can be people of love and be ready to give of ourselves when God calls us to do so.

May this Holy Week be for all of us a time change in our lives when we think of the Cross and all that Jesus went through before he died. We pray that God will make us more like Jesus as we contemplate all that is said and done in the events of Holy Week. We pray that God will richly bless us.