

**HOMILY FOR PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION,
YEAR C, APRIL 14, 2019
SJTW PARISH-DUBUQUE
PROCESSION WITH PALMS GOSPEL LK. 19:28-40
MASS READINGS: IS. 50:4-7 / PHIL. 2:6-11 / LK. 22:14-23:56
THEME: "WALK WITH JESUS TO JERUSALEM"**

DONKEYS

Two donkeys were walking in Jerusalem, when one donkey said to the other, "Just yesterday I was here carrying Jesus and the people were singing and shouting and throwing down their clothes for me to walk on, and today they don't even recognize me'. The other donkey replied, 'that's how it is my friend Without JESUS you are nothing.'" (Pause) We ARE the donkey! Are we riding with Jesus?

This Palm Sunday, we will focus, briefly, on three things - "Holy Week", "Palm Sunday" and "Passion Sunday".

HOLY WEEK

Dear Friends, During Lent, we have focused on changing our lives -- **repenting, aligning** our hearts and **seeking** renewal -- OUR TRANSFORMATION in Christ. Today we begin our spiritual journey through a week that we call HOLY. It is the only week throughout the year in which we call some days within it "Holy" (Thursday & Saturday) and "Good" (Friday). It will not be "Holy" or "Good" because we say so. It will be "Holy" or "Good" if we walk with Jesus, make a *pilgrimage with him in our hearts* to Jerusalem and keep our **eyes fixed** on His Cross.

To do this, we turn from our superficial attitudes or actions that make these days merely a secular celebration for dying eggs and eating out, something that comes and goes, without any real impact on us? It is my prayer that sometime during this Holy Week, we will really take stock and review our heart's priorities – choosing to become like what we admire — Jesus, the King of Glory.

PASSION SUNDAY

This Sunday is also called Passion Sunday to commemorate the suffering (Passion) and death of Jesus; His final agonizing journey to the cross. The English word *passion* comes from a Latin word that means "to suffer with", the same word from which we derive the English word "patient". This Passion Sunday is a spiritual powerhouse in the Church's liturgical year. We've heard the story today from St. Luke. While the story never changes, it *is* a life-changing story and it **does** change us because, taking it in, we encounter Christ.

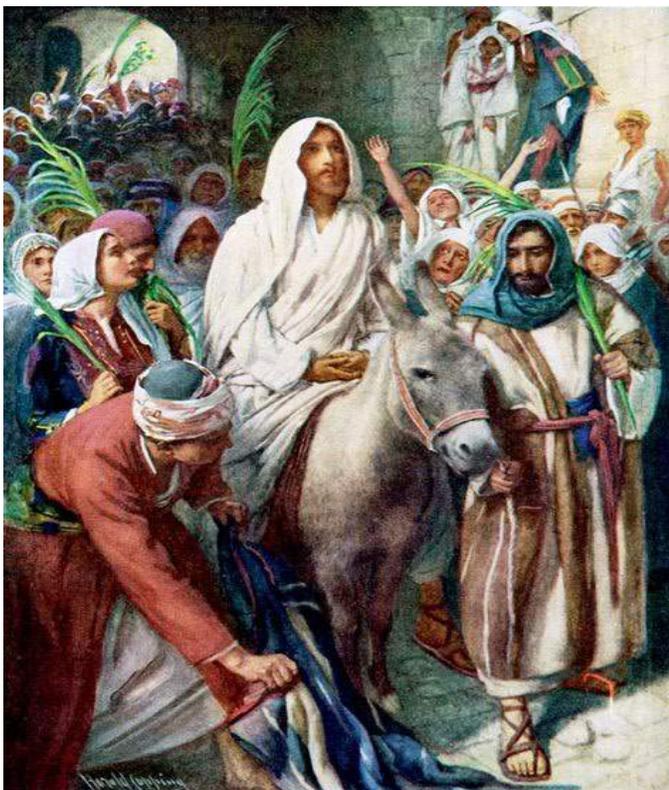
And, does not this passion narrative include everything we experience in our world today? - betrayal, denial, abandonment, trial, institutional injustices, persecution, intense suffering and pain, cruel torture and violent death. AND, it offers the unfolding of supreme and sacrificial love, of forgiveness, salvation, and new life....a laying down of one's life for others.

As we listen, where do we **find** ourselves? Are we today's fearful Apostles, righteous religious or political authorities, zealous soldiers, or the agitated but silent masses? Or do we bravely follow Jesus in our humble, self-emptying love for those in our life? What is our passion? Let us reconnect our suffering and pain with the passion of Christ, making this week our **own** Holy Week?

PALM SUNDAY/THE TRIUMPHANT ENTRY

Today, Palm Sunday, is described as the "triumphal entry into Jerusalem." But, have we ever asked: "If this was a triumphal entry, then how did they crucify Jesus just a few days later?" Are they (or we) so fickle that we go from: "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel (Mt.21:9; Jn. 12:13) to "Crucify him!" in just a few days?

What choice does Palm Sunday present to us today? Admirers see Jesus as both a revolutionary and a mystic. Our world needs both! Jesus would say to us today: "I have no hands and feet but yours. Are we recognizing God's timing in the world today? Let us "Open our lives and allow him to enter because He is the King of Glory (Ps. 24:7-10)



LET US WAVE OUR PALM BRANCHES ALWAYS TO JESUS THE KING OF GLORY:

- P - PRAYER** – Reconnect with Jesus by praying unceasingly (Lk. 18:1)
- A - ADORATION** – Reconnect with Jesus through genuine worship and adoration in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:23)
- L - LIFESTYLE** – Reconsider to "offer" our bodies as living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" and to consecrate your very life to him, the King of Glory (Ps. 24)
- M - MERCY** – Reconsider to do Corporal Works of Mercy; for Jesus says; it is mercy that God desires (Mt. 9:13; Hos. 6:6).