

Hi all,

This story which begins on Palm Sunday is basically a human drama; it is our drama. As Jesus enters into his final week, he takes us with him and continues to do so every Easter.

His entry in to the city begins on a huge wave of optimism, joy and hope. The people line the streets; they wave palms, they put their cloaks and garments on the ground and they shout out his name. This was a Roman tradition used to welcome soldiers home from successful battle. The crowd welcomes Jesus in a similar way as they shout out, *Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.*

Yet, how quickly the crowd changes and turns on Jesus. The same people who were happy to welcome him with shouts of joy, will soon begin to shout '*Crucify him, Crucify him.*' Even Jesus' closest friends betray and deny him. They run and desert him. He is left alone.

Good Friday commemorates the anniversary of Christ's crucifixion and death. For us, this is not just an historical event, but the sacrificial death of Christ which, with the resurrection, comprises the heart of what it means to be Christian. We cannot miss that Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross for the atonement of our sins is the story of our own redemption. The heart of who we are as Catholic Christians is intimately bound up in the cross of Christ. Words are insufficient to describe the supreme act of a loving God who would die for us. We can only enter into the story in silent awe.

In these uncertain times as we begin Holy Week in our homes and not our churches, as we remember, celebrate and participate in this week through social media, television, and our own private devotions, we need ask ourselves what it is all about and what it means to each of us. Where are we in the unfolding drama that begins on Palm Sunday and plays out over Holy Week and climaxes on Easter?

Where are we as Jesus passes by on the donkey? One of the crowd shouting out his name? Are we like Judas in any way? When have we betrayed others or Jesus? When like Peter, have we denied knowing Jesus? Like Pilate, ready to condemn others? How can we be more like Simon or Veronica who helps Jesus in his time of need? Having stood with the crowd shouting out his name and welcoming Jesus, will we stand with the same people spitting out insults as we shout '*Crucify him! Crucify him!*'

May Jesus be our constant companion as we begin our journey through an unprecedented Holy Week where we are called to ask ourselves who we are in the crowd. May he accompany us as we enter in to the mystery of His life, death and resurrection as we take it upon ourselves this week to quiet ourselves. Spend time in prayer. Read and meditate on scripture. To celebrate His triumphant entrance to Jerusalem. Receive Him into our hearts as we make a Spiritual Communion on Holy Thursday To cry at the foot of the cross on Good Friday at his passion and death. To share in the joy and awe that His followers must have felt at the news of His resurrection on Easter morning. After experiencing all of these days with faith, hope, and joy then we can decide what kind of followers of Christ we are and desire to be.

Peace, love and God bless!

Deacon Ed