

Fr. Rudy's Reflections

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

April 13, 2025

Peace in Heaven and Glory in the Highest!

My Sisters and Brothers in the Risen Lord,

As he rode along, the people were spreading their cloaks on the road; and now as he was approaching the slope of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to praise God aloud with joy for all the mighty deeds they had seen. They proclaimed: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." (Luke 19:36-38)

Today we celebrate Palm Sunday and all the pageantry and purpose of Jesus Christ as he rides into Jerusalem, as crowds follow him along his path proclaiming, "Hosanna in the highest!" This moment is the culmination of all Jesus accomplished in his lifetime and foreshadows all the suffering he is to incur in the days to come. He rode upon a donkey, in this instance, as a symbol of peace and humility to fulfill the prophecy of the Old Testament. On this most special day, let us reflect on this occasion and prepare ourselves for Holy Week and the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made for our salvation and the salvation of all mankind.

On Palm Sunday in 2014, Pope John Paul asked the people assembled at St. Peter's Square these questions that all of us should ask ourselves this week: "Who am I before our Lord. . . am I ready to express my joy, to praise him? Or do I stand back?" The pope then asked the group to consider the many names one hears during the Passion of Christ and whether we are like any of them in our expression of faith. For example, like the disciples, do we fall asleep when we are bored and exhausted from the grind of our daily lives, when we are asked to do more than what we are comfortable with? Or, like Pilate, when faced with an uncomfortable decision of faith, do we dodge our responsibility and pass it on to another? Or, like Judas, who claimed to be a disciple of Christ, do we feign righteousness and choose always any gain we might receive in embracing its tenets?

These are difficult examinations of conscience, yet this week we should indeed look at ourselves and determine what more we can do to become better and brighter lights of faith. Let us try to be more like Jesus's mother, Mary, who suffered silently; the Cyrenean who helped carry Jesus's cross, Joseph who lovingly buried Jesus at his death, and all others who were there, present, with loving hearts.

Today we hear, and hopefully breathe in, the Passion of Christ, as told to us by Luke, beginning with the Last Supper and continuing with the passion: the events at Gethsemane and ending with Jesus's burial in the tomb. Let us not seal our hearts to all that occurred during this momentous week: the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, who came into this world to save us, one and all.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Rudy