

From the desk of Fr. Paulo...

PASSION SUNDAY -PALM SUNDAY

Passion Sunday – Palm Sunday, commemorates the event that ushered in the holiest and solemn days of our Faith, Easter Triduum. Jesus sitting on a donkey – an ass, and colt (young donkey) entered Jerusalem, while the crowd waved palm branches crying out loud, hosanna in the highest.

Though Jesus had been in Jerusalem several times to celebrate the Jewish Feasts, his final entry into Jerusalem had a special meaning. Jesus was solemnly entering as a humble King of peace. Traditionally, entering the city on a donkey symbolized the arrival of peace, rather than as a war waging king riding on a horse.

“This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: Say to daughter Zion, Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.” (Matthew 21: 4-5).

Those words Matthew quotes from Prophet Isaiah 62:11 (“Say to the daughter Zion”) and Prophet Zechariah 9:9 (“Behold your king come to you...”).

Jesus entered as a humble King of peace and fulfilling the words of the prophets of old who foretold of Jesus and prepared His way. Thus to those who would open their hearts and minds in humility and sincerity found the long awaited Messiah and led them to repentance and conversion but to those who closed their hearts and minds in pride and self-indulgence of flesh, an unsurmountable obstacle, a stumbling block, therefore to their condemnation.

Therefore as we enter (Holy Week) into this most solemn days of our Faith, let us behold in our inner vision of our faith, Jesus Christ our Lord and Redeemer, a humble King who desires to reign in our hearts, our lives.

We must then enter these most sacred and solemn days coming and welcome our Lord and King and accompany Him in His Passion-Death and Resurrection.

We have much spiritual materials on hand to be able to enter into Holy Week and celebrate the Easter Triduum, perhaps not in physical presence united as a church community in the sacred space-church building, for this is now impossible, but to do so united in spirit from our homes.

This Passion Sunday/Palm Sunday, get a small palm from your yard if possible, no matter how small and humbly it may look and the father of the household with your wife and children gathered bless it (if father is not present the mother, grandfather or grandmother) with these words;

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...Amen

Let us bless God, whose might has created the earth and whose providence has enriched it.

God gave us the plants to cultivate, so that gathering its fruits our lives are sustained.

Sanctify and bless this (these) palm branches (or any green branches if need be), with your blessings, that we who follow Christ the King in exultation, may reach the eternal Jerusalem through Him.

Who live and reign forever and ever... (every one answer) Amen.

(Taken from Book of Blessings & Missal)

Place the blessed palm branch on your front door or door post to signify your family welcoming Jesus Christ, on Passion Sunday – Palm Sunday into your home – household as the most Sacred and Solemn Easter Triduum takes place this Holy Week.

Though you may not be able to be present physically at the church today on Passion-Palm Sunday, April 5, you are all remembered in the Holy Mass that is offered at 8:00am. I have the names of your families from the parish registration list and I have written – typed them all down and placed it in the folder. The folder will be placed on the Altar during the mass and each of your name (families) will be prayed at the intercession (Prayer of the Faithful). Pray with me, at home anytime you wish as a family on Passion – Palm Sunday.

Read the scripture readings which are attached to this letter:

Have a Family **Liturgy of the WORD** together.

Begin with the Sign of the Cross and call to mind your sins in silence as we seek God's forgiveness and mercy.

Then simply recite together **"I Confess to almighty God..."**

Or.

Have Mercy on us, Lord

- **For we have sinned against you**

Show us, O Lord, your mercy,

- **And grant us your salvation**

**May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.**

Below are the outline of the Scripture readings you can follow. (see also attachments)

Assign a family member to do:

First Reading,

Responsorial Psalm and other repeat the responses

Second Reading.

The Gospel Matthew is long, but it is in a beautiful dialogue manner. You can assign a father to do Jesus, Mother do the Voice and rest the Crowd.

As you read through the Gospel in such a manner, the gospel becomes alive and you can almost visualize what Jesus is going through for our salvation. So, don't rush it.

After wards, the Father or Mother may give a fervino (fervino is not a sermon or homily as priests and deacons give) but fervinos are short spiritual reflections anyone can give. But make sure you do not create your own spiritual interpretations. Stay tune to what is the gospel saying...example what Jesus went through for love of us sinners. Let us try hard to overcome our temptations and stop sinning against God – Jesus.

You will find attached readings with this letter.

First Reading. Isaiah 50:4-7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 22:8-9, 19-20, 23-24

Response is: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel Acclamation: (chant if possible) "Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory."

(then read or chant) "Christ became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross.

Because of this, God greatly exulted him."

Gospel: Matthew 26:14-27; 66.

Fervino

Intercessions – father or mother lead by praying for...then others can add, then again father or mother closes the prayer.

Then say One Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be, then close with the Sign of the Cross.

Then say the Spiritual Communion Prayer (was sent in earlier letter) Pray it together and then the father or mother can say, now let us spiritually receive Jesus Christ into our hearts.

This practice of receiving Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is a long ancient Catholic practice by those who have been imprisoned, cannot find a priest or away from church.

So, do it prayerfully, and you will be amazed Jesus Christ is truly present in you spiritually.

(Keep it simple so that everyone can be encouraged to participate, even the little ones)

Have a blessed week in the Lord.

Fr. Paulo ofm cap.