

APRIL 09, 2017
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
Homily

The Word of God: Mt 21:1-11; Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14-27:66

Brothers and sisters this Sunday we celebrate the triumphal entrance of Our Lord Jesus Christ into the City of Jerusalem. Palm Sunday is also our entrance into the Holy Week when we celebrate the Self-offering of Christ in Sacrifice for us --his passion and death on the Cross, and his glorious rising from the tomb. These are the sacred mysteries of the Passover of Jesus Christ; his passing from his life on earth to the glorious life in the Kingdom of God.

Yes, my dear friends Jesus Christ freely offers himself in Holy Sacrifice to God. Jesus is totally free, totally innocent to offer his Body and Blood in the Pascal Sacrifice. In last Sunday's Gospel, when Jesus decided to go back to Judea, one of his disciples said, "Master, the Jews were just trying to kill you, and you want to go back there;" and Jesus said, "Let us go..." Well, this is exactly what Palm Sunday means: The triumphal entrance of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem. But this triumphal entrance into the Capital of Judea is just a sign of Jesus' triumphal entrance into the Kingdom of God. With mighty deeds and his merciful preaching, Jesus Christ conquered for God the hearts of the people in the City of David; and with the offering of his Body and Blood to the Heavenly Father to conquered for us the Kingdom of God.

Like in this time people acclaim their champions and winners with songs and flags as they march or walk on the red carpet; at Jesus' times the signs of victory were palms, the carpet the people's cloaks, and the song: "Blessed is the king who comes in the Name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

But... all those people who at Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" few days later cried out: "Crucify him, Crucify him." And in that way the promises of the Lord God in Old Testament times were all fulfilled in Christ.

The reading of the Lord's Passion is the accounting of how Isaiah's prophesy in the first reading was faithfully fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Obediently to God the Father, Saint Paul says, Christ Jesus, for the salvation of us all, accepted death, death on the cross.

Let me say it once again, it is Jesus Christ who freely offers, in Sacrifice, his Body to be broken, and his Blood to be shed. Neither Pilate nor even the chief priest and the entire Sanhedrin, the Evangelist says, found a testimony against Jesus in order to put Him to death. It was only when Jesus said that He is the Son of God, that they said, "He deserves to die." So Jesus' Sacrifice was the will of God; that was the plan of God for our salvation that Jesus wanted to fulfill. Therefore, at the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed to his Heavenly Father saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I

will, but as You will.” *“My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done.”* Totally free and totally innocent Christ Jesus offered his Body to be crucified, and his Blood to be shed.

And because of this, Saint Paul says, “God greatly exalted and bestowed on Christ the Name which is above every name, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bend in heaven and on earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Brothers and sisters, as I said, with this Solemn Celebration we have entered into the Holy Week. Remember also from last Sunday’s Gospel the words a disciple, “Let us go to die with him;” so, let us dispose to celebrate the Mysteries of this Holy Week. On Tuesday, all the priest of our diocese of Colorado Springs together with Bishop Sheridan will celebrate the Chrism Mass.

On Holy Thursday we will celebrate the Mass of the Last Super of Jesus Christ. On Good Friday we will have the Liturgy of the Passion of the Son of God; and on Saturday with great rejoicing we will celebrate the Glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, my dear friends, to look forward to Jesus’ final exaltation, his glorious resurrection, so that we too, when our hour comes, may triumphantly enter into the Glory of God.