



SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2020

## PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD



"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." - Mt 21:9

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

CLPI

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## REFLECTION FOR PALM SUNDAY

Please read Psalm 22 and the passion of our Lord from Matthew:

“My God my God, why have you forsaken me?” It is the cry of Jesus as he dies on the cross. The people want to see if God comes to rescue him. A Jewish person listening to Matthew tell his account of Jesus’ death will immediately remember Psalm 22. The person crying out experiences a total loss of God’s presence and protection. The lost and abandoned one cries out but God doesn’t answer. The jeering crowd shouts “He put his trust in the Lord. Let the Lord rescue him! If the Lord is his friend, let him help him!”

Have we not at times cried out as Jesus did? Have we not said to God: “Be not far from me for trouble is near and there is no one to help me.” I have any number of times. I imagine the people in New York and New Orleans and other very hot spots around the world are digging deeply into their reserve of faith and trust. It certainly could happen to us here in Buckhannon. In the back of our minds there is a natural fear that our family and friends will be touched. There is a natural worry about food and money and paying bills. Tensions can arise in the home when we are confined for a long period. If alone, who will take care of me?

But now the Good News!!! Psalm 22 is not a despairing psalm but ultimately a prayer or song of hope and trust in God. Jesus did feel abandoned as we sometimes do. But the psalm strikes a powerful chord of trust in God’s saving presence. Jesus went through his terrible passion and death but in the end was able to say: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” (Lk 23:46) He gave himself over to his father in trust. Psalm 22 shouts: “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and praise you in the assembly.” “You who fear the Lord, praise him.” “God has not scorned or loathed the afflicted one in his misery. He has not hidden his face from the afflicted one but has listened when he cried to the Lord.”

God has not abandoned us. He hears the cries of the poor and is reaching out to us with his love. Yes, there is suffering and possibly many crosses to bear. We might be tried in ways we have not yet experienced up to this time. “But no trial greater than human endurance has overcome you. God is faithful and will not let you be tempted beyond your strength.” We may be tempted to give up but “God will give you the means to resist.” (1 Cor: 10-13)

You are God’s beloved, his holy ones. Stay close to him in prayer. Jesus went through the passion and death to rise in victory. This week walk with him as he enters Jerusalem to shouts of adulation. Sit with him in the upper room as he gives us his body and blood in the Eucharist. Pray with him for the father to take this away from us but not my will but yours be done. Bear with him as the shouts turn to “crucify him.” Stumble and fall with him on the road to Calvary. Be silent and look upon him who died for love of you. Then rejoice that fear and death are defeated as Jesus rises from the grave.

This is Holy Week. It is holy to us and to the Lord. Take the time to just be with Jesus.

My dear parishioners, Brother Roy and I pray at mass each day for you and regularly pray the divine office. We are in this together and your loving support of each other and your caring prayers will be our strength. Know that you can call any time. We are here for you.

Father Joe

### Mass Intentions

**Last Week:** Bob Jeran, Mildred McLaughlin, James Fallon, Bob Gracie, Allen Rosebury, Our Holy Rosary Parishioners, Krysti Davis

**This Week:** Marjorie Rosenbury, Beverly & Roger Cole, Kathy and Sherry, Parish Families, Giovanna Ricottilli



# WORSHIP & MEDITATION

## PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL

"Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest." (Mt 21:9b)

## FIRST READING

The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced. (Is 50:7a)

## PSALM

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? (Ps 22)

## SECOND READING

He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Phil 2:8)

## GOSPEL

But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. (Mt 27:11-50-51)



## GOSPEL MEDITATION

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

Human beings are united in their suffering. When we find ourselves in a painful moment, our first reaction is "why me?" as if we are the only person on earth who ever encountered this challenge. Going through life with a "why me" attitude only finds us wallowing in the mire of self-pity and never seizing opportunities or graces. We walk in solidarity with every human being in the experience of suffering. Believing that the goal of life is the elimination or avoidance of suffering is simply an illusion that keeps us entrenched in a collective myth. This myth distorts us and limits us.

There are living witnesses among us showing how courage and determination can overcome any degree of hardship, pain, loss, or tragedy. Folks finding the normalcy of their lives suddenly torn asunder are faced with options: opportunity or despair, stay or leave. Jesus stands before us as the prime example of endurance and perseverance. He is the One who showed humility through both the triumphs of life (by learning to be humble) and the tragedies and injustices (by learning how to be obedient). To secular ears, this may be perceived as nonsense. But to those with the eyes of faith, they are pearls of great price.

True humility tempers the temptation we have to become complacent and prevents an excessive relishing of life's successes and affirmations. Learning obedience keeps us faithful to our relationship with God so that we can find the courage to endure any depth of hardship, disappointment, betrayal, or agony. While we may want our cup of suffering to be taken away, it simply cannot be. Somehow and somewhere in the seemingly opposing experiences life can deal us, God is present with His reassuring, compassionate, empowering, and persevering love. To be true to who we are and who God is, we must take up the cross of suffering, even when it's the hardest and most apparently senseless thing to do.

Only our soul can understand these things, but our minds cannot, so they continue to run to secular ideas and solutions to pain and hardship. It goes without saying that we need to do all we can to eliminate as much senseless, unjust suffering as possible. Hunger, violence, abuse, exploitation, rejection, prejudice, homelessness, disrespect for life, and a whole host of other sins all result in suffering that is within our control. Then, when we face the uncontrollable kind of suffering or find ourselves the victim of injustice, what do we do?

# LITURGICAL LIFE

## TIME • TALENT • TREASURE

### EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP

Recognize God In Your Ordinary Moments

The 6 Characteristics of an Everyday Stewardship for Lent – Accountable

Easter is only a week away, and churches everywhere in the West are beginning the holiest of weeks. For a moment, even the secular world will bow to religious observances: closings on Good Friday, Easter baskets filled with treats, and television specials featuring Biblical figures. You and I will be reflecting on the meaning of Lent and how we have died and risen with Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Either we have prepared well for this Holy Week observance, or we are left lamenting that maybe next year will be when we get back on track.

The question before us is: "To whom are we accountable?" Did our Lenten observance only have to do with us? Does it matter to anyone if we really took this time seriously or not?

Both faith and community are gifts from God to us. The Church exists so we may live out that faith and respond to God's call, being strengthened by the grace imparted through the sacraments and the community in which we find ourselves. If we are accountable to no one, then the community is simply an option on a Sunday morning, much like golf or household chores. If we are not accountable to God, then our faith is simply something we look to periodically when we are sad or frightened.

However, if we are accountable to each other and to Jesus Christ, then we must answer for our stewardship gifts of faith and community. The Body of Christ is counting on us. Without a strong sense of accountability, we think our actions only affect us. In the end, we are connected to each other through Christ in such a manner that no one ever stands alone.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

### PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

Our parish is grateful for your continued support. Thank you!



### WHY DO WE DO THAT? Catholic Life Explained

#### Question:

Why do Catholics make the sign of the cross?

#### Answer:

The sign of the cross is a devotional practice that dates back to the first Apostles. When making the sign of the cross, we remember Jesus Christ who died for us and also bear witness to the fact that we belong to him and are called to share the Good News to all the world. At our Baptism, we were signed with a cross and marked for Christ. That mark remains on us throughout the entirety of our lives. We remind ourselves of that mark every time we make the same gesture over our bodies. We also remind ourselves that to be a Christian means we are to "put on Christ" and be Christ for a world that needs to know him. In a way, this devotional gesture covers us with Christ so that others may see him in us.

Catholics are not the only ones who make the sign of the cross. Orthodox, Lutheran, and Anglicans are examples of other Christians who maintain this same ancient tradition.