

Stewardship Reflection on Lectionary Readings

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Is 50: 4-7; Ps 22: 8-9, 17-20, 23-24; Phil 2: 6-11; Lk 22:14 – 23:56



Today is the Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, sometimes referred to more simply as Passion Sunday. The readings today prepare us for Holy Week which officially begins today. The Gospel in particular is always the proclamation of the Passion of Christ. It is lengthy and filled with meaning for us.

The report of Christ's passion is included in all four Gospels. Although there are some minor differences among them, they seem to agree with each other on the major facts, and certainly the four together offer us an accurate depiction of what occurred. The Gospel reading today is the narrative from Luke, which emphasizes Christ's innocence.

Rather than make an effort for an overall reflection, we choose to focus on two important components of today's readings — humility and obedience. We have referenced these in the past as significant in relationship to stewardship as a way of life.

The Prophet Isaiah, in an almost strikingly tragic way, foretells the sufferings of Christ when Isaiah has the Messiah say, "I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting." Jesus understood full well the suffering and pain and death He would experience in our behalf. His response and His message to us has everything to do with humility, however. Jesus accepts the fact that He is the servant of the Lord, something that our own pride and sense of independence may prevent us from accepting.

In his letter to the Philippians, St. Paul emphasizes this obedience and humility, as well. Paul reminds us that Jesus "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death." Jesus' humility is a part of His life on earth from the time He was born in the humble setting in the stable. He was humble in that He was born as a helpless baby. He was humble in obedience to His parents and to His Father in Heaven. And, of course, He suffers the ultimate in humility in His suffering and death on the cross.

All of the obedience and humility concludes with what we call the Passion of Christ: the time period from the night prior to the Crucifixion of Jesus until His death on the cross, which includes His time in the Garden of Gethsemane, His prayers, His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, His abandonment by and denial by His disciples, His arrest, His trials, His beatings, and His Crucifixion itself.

Even though this is history for us, it is more than history. It is a lesson in life. The humiliation, the persecution, the scourging, the painful and difficult journey up the hill with the cross — all make His suffering, His obedience, and His humility obvious to us. The lesson for us is the humility and forgiveness Christ demonstrates, even toward those who abused Him. He shows us the kind of love He expects from us. The Cross, for all of its sorrow, pain, and despair, is also a sign of freedom and hope. We are called to transform the suffering of this day into infinite love.

ANNOUNCED MASSES
March 19th – March 27th, 2016

Sat. Mar. 19th 4:30 p.m.	Saint Joseph Zenona Lanzaderas – RIP – by Tommy, Emma and family
Sun. Mar. 20th 9:00 a.m.	Passion Sunday Thanksgiving by Arlene Arcadio
11:00 a.m.	Bruna Alesi – RIP – by her parents
Mon. Mar. 21st	NO MASS
Tues. Mar. 22nd 7:00 p.m.	Weekday Gilda Pednekar –RIP – by Connie and Jim
Wed. Mar. 23rd 9:00 a.m.	Weekday Polly and Hannibal – RIP – by the Alvares family
Thurs. Mar. 24th 7:30 p.m.	Holy Thursday <i>Mass of the Lord's Supper</i>
Fri. Mar. 25th 3:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Good Friday <i>Celebration of the Lord's Passion</i> <i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat. Mar. 26th 8:00 p.m.	Holy Saturday <i>Resurrection of the Lord (Vigil)</i>
Sun. Mar. 27th 9:00 a.m.	Resurrection of the Lord Noel Atas –RIP – by the family
11:00 a.m.	Adrian de Souza – RIP – by the family

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed
through the mercy of God rest in peace*

Holy Week Schedule

Holy Thursday, March 24	7:30 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper
Good Friday, March 25	3:00 p.m. Celebration of the Lord's Passion
	7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross
Holy Saturday, March 26	8:00 p.m. Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday, March 27	9 & 11 a.m. Resurrection of the Lord

Palm Sunday (Holy Day of Obligation)

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Palm Sunday is the final Sunday of Lent, the beginning of Holy Week, and commemorates the triumphant arrival of Christ in Jerusalem, days before he was crucified.

Palm Sunday is known as such because the faithful will often receive palm fronds which they use to participate in the reenactment of Christ's arrival in Jerusalem. In the Gospels, Jesus entered Jerusalem riding a young donkey, and to the lavish praise of the townspeople who threw clothes, or possibly palms or small branches, in front of him as a sign of homage. This was a customary practice for people of great respect.

Palm branches are widely recognized symbol of peace and victory, hence their preferred use on Palm Sunday.

The use of a donkey instead of a horse is highly symbolic, it represents the humble arrival of someone in peace, as opposed to arriving on a steed in war.

A week later, Christ would rise from the dead on the first Easter.

During Palm Sunday Mass, palms are distributed to parishioners who carry them in a ritual procession into church. The palms are blessed and many people will fashion them into small crosses or other items of personal devotion. These may be returned to the church, or kept for the year.

Because the palms are blessed, they may not be discarded as trash. Instead, they are appropriately gathered at the church and incinerated to create the ashes that will be used in the follow year's Ash Wednesday observance.

The colors of the Mass on Palm Sunday are red and white, symbolizing the redemption in blood that Christ paid for the world.

Ecumenical March of Forgiveness

Among the activities and rituals recalling the Passion of Christ, which in turn allow us to better appreciate and celebrate His Resurrection, the Christian churches of Saint Laurent will be holding their annual Ecumenical Good Friday's Walk of Forgiveness on **March 25th**. The walk will start at the **Notre-Dame-du-Bois Franc Church** at 8:30 a.m. There will be a stop at our Parish around 12:05 p.m. for the **12th & 13th Stations** of the Cross. The walk will end at Saint-Sixte Church at 1 p.m. where refreshments will be served. Everyone is encouraged to participate.

Income Tax Receipts

To our dear parishioners who used the envelope system for the weekly donation to the Parish in 2015, your income tax receipts are ready at the **Sacristy**. Please pick up your receipt either on the weekend after Mass or during the week, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon. Thank you.