

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

March 24, 2024

Gospel: (John 12:12-16)

When the great crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took palm branches and went out to meet him, and cried out: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel." Jesus found an ass and sat upon it, as is written: *Fear no more, O daughter Zion; see, your king comes, seated upon an ass's colt.* His disciples did not understand this at first, but when Jesus had been glorified they remembered that these things were written about him and that they had done this for him.

Reflection:

The essence of discipleship is that we carry his cross. Disciples go wherever the Master goes. Coming to understand who Jesus is, his mission, and how that relates to us his disciples is not an easy task; it takes a lifetime. Like Jesus, to be faithful followers by taking up our cross means we will *feel* this in the depths of our humanity: we will suffer, we will lose heart, we will cry out to God to take life's miserable lot away from us. But also like Jesus we have divine life which gives us the strength to carry our cross. It is divine life pulsating within us – which we first receive at our baptism – that raises up our humanity enabling us to be faithful disciples carrying our crosses. (Living Liturgy, p.98)

Vincenzian Meditation:

Jesus' dying love gives meaning to the many "crosses" his followers are called to bear...the cross today may take the following forms especially:

- laboring daily, and perseveringly, in the service of the poor
- sharing the helplessness and pain of the marginalized
- standing in solidarity with the abandoned and suffering
- accepting painful events, that we can do nothing about
- bearing sickness, our own and that of others
- coming to grips with aging
- enduring the death of friends and family

The following of the crucified Lord is the supreme act of faith; it is a surrender in hope and love into the incomprehensible mystery of God. (Maloney, *He Hears the Cry of the Poor*, p. 46-47)

Discussion: (*Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

What "crosses" have you carried in being Jesus' disciple?

Closing Prayer:

As we enter the mystery of the passion of Christ, may our hearts be touched anew by the depth of his love, and so we pray:

-Christ, our Savior, hear our prayer.

That this Holy Week may deepen our understanding of the cross,

-Christ, our Savior, hear our prayer.

For all who suffer injustice and abuse, may we help them carry their cross,

-Christ, our Savior, hear our prayer. Amen

