

**RCIA: SESSION TWENTY-FOUR**  
**Palm Sunday**  
**Morality – Social teaching, ethics, etc**  
**Week: 27/03/23 – 02/04/23**

**1. Palm Sunday**

The correct name for this Sunday is Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord as on this day the Church recalls Christ's entrance into Jerusalem to accomplish his Paschal Mystery.

Accordingly, Christ's entrance into Jerusalem is brought to mind by means of a Procession or Solemn Entrance before Mass. The congregation hold palm branches as did the citizens of Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday. A long extract from the Gospel is read telling the story of the passion.

**2. Pause for Meditation**

- Sit upright and still.
- Close your eyes.
- Breathe slowly for a few minutes in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- In order to learn the secret of the resurrection we must learn the secret of the cross. Listen to the following insights from St. Paul:
- *I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. (Romans 8:18).*  
PAUSE
- *The troubles which are soon over, ... train us for the carrying of a weight of eternal glory which is out of all proportion to them. (2 Cor. 4:17).* PAUSE
- *You have been buried with him, when you were baptised; and by baptism, too, you have been raised up with him. (Col. 2:12).* PAUSE.
- Conclude with this collect from Palm Sunday: *Almighty ever-living God, who as an example of humility for the human race to follow caused our Saviour to take flesh and submit to the Cross, graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering and so merit a share in his Resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.*

### 3. Morality – Social teaching, ethics etc.

The following important points will be explained and discussed:

- The role of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who 'inspires, guides, corrects and strengthens' our life in Christ. (CCC 1697).
- This gift comes from God. 'It is by grace that we are saved and again it is by grace that our works can bear fruit for eternal life' (CCC 1697).
- The importance of the Beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-12). 'For the way of Christ is summed up in the Beatitudes, the only path that leads to the eternal beatitude for which the human heart longs.' (CCC 1697).
- Sin and forgiveness. 'For unless man acknowledges that he is a sinner he cannot know the truth about himself, which is a condition for acting justly; and without the offer of forgiveness he would not be able to bear this truth.' (CCC 1697).
- An understanding of the human virtues. This 'causes one to grasp the beauty and attraction of right dispositions towards goodness.' (CCC 1697)
- The Christian virtues. Understanding the virtues of 'faith, hope and charity, generously inspired by the example of the saints.' (CCC 1697).
- The twofold commandment of charity as set out in the Decalogue.
- The communion of saints. 'For it is through the manifold exchanges of *spiritual goods* in the *communion of saints* that Christian life can grow, develop and be communicated.' (CCC 1697).

### 4. Gospel Reflection:

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April is Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, and the Gospel we will reflect on is the account of the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem, Year A: Matthew 21:1-11.

The following format will be used for all Gospel reflections:

- Read the text aloud.
- Pause for a minute's silence.
- Read the text aloud again.
- Ask everyone to pick a word or a phrase that struck them. They just say the word or phrase without comment or discussion.
- Read the text again.
- Ask those present to comment on their word or phrase. What struck them about it? Why/how is it speaking to them?

- Continue with the discussion. The following questions may be helpful: What does this mean to me? How does it make me feel? Do I find the text disturbing/hopeful/confusing? What images of God emerge for me? What do I think that God is saying in this text? What impact does this have on my life?

## GOSPEL READING

Reader: The Lord be with you.

Response: And with your spirit.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

When they were near Jerusalem and had come in sight of Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go to the village facing you, and you will immediately find a tethered donkey and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, "The Master needs them and will send them back directly".' This took place to fulfil the prophecy:

Say to the daughter of Zion:

Look, your king comes to you:

he is humble, he rides on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.

So the disciples went out and did as Jesus had told them. They brought the donkey and the colt, then they laid their cloaks on their backs and he sat on them. Great crowds of people spread their cloaks on the road, while others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in his path. The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed were all shouting: 'Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heavens!'

And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil. 'Who is this?' people asked, and the crowd answered, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee'.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.