

Palm Sunday Brief Homily 2022

It was only with the gift of the Holy Spirit and in the light of Easter that the disciples came to understand the significance of Jesus' death on the cross. They had hardly clothed themselves in glory, arguing about who was the greatest, resorting to violence, deserting Jesus and disowning him. Indeed it was a stranger, Simon of Cyrene who helped Jesus carry his cross, and it was a Pharisee, Joseph of Arimathea who laid Jesus in the tomb.

From Luke's narrative we see that Jesus died as he had lived, He lived communing with his Father in prayer, and he died in the same way, his final words being "Father into your hands I commend my spirit." During his life he reached out to those in need, healing, raising, encouraging, and forgiving. On the cross he asked his Father to forgive his executioners because they did not know what they were doing, and to the thief who asked Jesus to remember him in his kingdom, he said "Today you will be with me in paradise."

A narrative of brokenness and failure is seen as a story of promise and hope. What at one level looks like a tragedy, and indeed was a total travesty of justice, is at another level Good News. The invitation to us today is not just to hear the Good News but to be part of it by ourselves reaching out to those in need, being sensitive to those in pain, doing all we can to alleviate the suffering of others, being compassionate as our God is compassionate. And we can do this because the one who died on the cross is the one who rose from the dead and ascended to the Father so that the Holy Spirit could come upon us, transforming our lives to be more like the life of the prayerful and compassionate Jesus who died as he had lived.

Bidding Prayers for Palm Sunday

Celebrant:

With the words of the passion narrative in our minds and hearts, pondering the immense love Jesus shows for each one of us, we turn to God in prayer.

Reader:

We pray for the Church in this Holy Week – that all its members will die with Christ so as to rise with him in glory.

Lord in your mercy

We pray for peace in the world – that violence and bloodshed will cease in Ukraine and those other places where so many are suffering because of war.

Lord in your mercy

We pray for those who today carry a heavy cross – that they may experience the closeness of the Lord who carried his cross to Calvary.

Lord in your mercy

We pray for all those who are suffering in body, mind or spirit - that they will experience the healing presence of the crucified and risen Lord in the very depths of their beings.

Lord in your mercy

We pray for all those who have died especially all victims of violence, accident, natural disaster, and the Covid 19 pandemic, Fr John Gott a retired priest of the diocese who died recently and Sheila O’Gara, Thomas O’Gara, Nicola Jane Poulter, Anne Flashka, John Powell and Thomas Godfrey whose anniversaries occur this week – that they and all the dead will rest in peace and rise in glory.

Lord in your mercy

Either aloud or in silence we pray for our own special intentions...pause...then

Lord in your mercy

We turn to Mary who shared in the passion of her Son asking her prayers as we say, Hail Mary...

Celebrant:

All loving Father your Son came to heal and save us. Hear our prayers that we may enter the passion of your Son and rise with him to new life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen