



Palm Sunday

The Journey of Lent is one of solidarity, walking together

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The 'concept' of pilgrimage is well known today. A pilgrimage becomes inviting: when major life decisions are being considered, maybe at times of trauma in life or simply coming to grips with changing circumstances.

On Palm Sunday, we are invited to join with 'the twelve' as they accompany Jesus in that pilgrimage to Jerusalem. They were troubled at the prospect; they remembered earlier confrontations. Jesus too knew the risks! It was the Passover – thousands of Jews would be travelling for Passover, to Jerusalem the 'Holy City'. Jesus and the apostles would have joined the throngs heading in that direction. The journey of Lent is one of solidarity, walking together.

This principle urges us to view others: other peoples, other cultures and other nations as our neighbours, thus, committing to the 'common good', we are called to walk together. Our world today is no different: times of unrest or crises are a constant – the call is to support and stand with our brothers and sisters to create a world where fear, war, hardship don't exist.

Jesus enters the Holy City, not on a war-horse, but on a donkey – an unmistakable sign of humility and peace. The one who comes on a lowly donkey, proclaiming to all a *kingdom of peace, a kingdom over hearts and minds*. The people spread cloaks and palm branches before him welcoming him as the long-awaited

Messiah. Yet the same crowds that shout, 'Hosannah' will soon cry, 'Crucify him!'

On Palm Sunday, we find ourselves standing among two crowds. In one, we hold palms high and echo the cry of joy: 'Hosannah to the Son of David!' In the next, we hear the solemn proclamation of the Passion, 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!' It is not simply an echo of an event long past – it is a mirror held up to our own hearts. This passage highlights the fickleness of the crowds whose loyalty shifts under the influence of powerful voices – they looked for a political liberator, a king who would rescue them from the domination of the Romans.

Palm Sunday challenges us to ask: *Which Messiah do we welcome? Do we follow Christ, only when His path aligns with our hopes and plans? Or do we remain with Him when the road leads to Calvary?*

In the Passion narrative proclaimed, we hear of betrayal, denial, injustice and cruelty. We may be tempted to distance ourselves from the figures in the story – to see Judas, Peter, Pilate, or the shouting crowd as 'others.' But Palm Sunday gently exposes just how easily our own fidelity falters. We too can be courageous in publicly proclaiming our allegiance, but hesitant in the daily living of Jesus' message. We can profess loyalty with our lips while our hearts remain divided.

This reality is not meant to discourage us, rather to draw us deeper into Holy Week with honesty and hope. Christ's love is deliberate, His sacrifice is chosen, He walks with steadfast resolve towards the cross.

Palm Sunday is not about our 'wavering hearts' it is about His 'unwavering love'.



As we begin these days that lead to Easter, the Church invites us to walk with Jesus more intentionally. Not as spectators, but participants in the mystery. Through our prayer, fasting and acts of kindness, we join our own struggles to His saving work.

When we hold our Palms, we hold a promise. The shouts of 'Crucify Him' will not have the final word. The cross which looks like defeat, will become the 'Tree of Life'.

Palm Sunday teaches that being 'pilgrims on the journey' is to walk with Christ in both joy and sorrow. It means that the path of self-giving love – though costly – is the only road that leads to resurrection.

May our 'Hosannah' this year be more than a passing cry. May it call forth commitment to welcome Christ, to follow where He leads, and to remain with Him through the mystery of the cross – knowing that beyond the empty tomb is the dawn of new life.

Pilgrimage is a life-long journey'.