

Passion (Palm) Sunday.

Year C

(Readings: Luke 19: 28-40. Isaiah 50: 4-7. Philippians 2: 6-11. The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.)

Today is the beginning of Holy Week; the week in which we are each, personally invited to join with the whole Church on a most wondrous journey. It is during this coming week that we recall the last few days of Jesus' life on earth, remembering how, for love of us, he made that lonely and painful journey to the Cross.

More than at any other time, we are urged, by the profound solemnity of this week's liturgy, to come to as many of the Church services as we are able, so that together, we may share with Jesus his last and greatest journey. We are especially invited, on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter vigil, not only to thank Jesus for what he did for us, but also to make up for those who cannot come; those who cannot be bothered to come, and for those who don't know him, and so, do know they should come.

In these next few days, this Holy Week, we are called to find time to pray, time to reflect, and time to repent. We are given an opportunity to meditate on God's great love for us, and on the plans he made to save us from the power of sin, and restore us to eternal life.

We are to bring to mind all that Jesus was willing to endure for our sakes, the emotional pain of betrayal and injustice, the physical pain of scourging and crucifixion. And we are to consider our sins, the evil we have done, and the good we have failed to do, the countless sins we have committed through weakness, and through our own deliberate fault, those manifold sins which made such a sacrifice necessary.

I think it rather sad that, so few people avail themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The mere idea of 'Confession' is something which causes a great deal of anxiety, even dread. But fear not, for there is nothing to fear, unless you fear God's forgiveness. Now, as we embark on Holy Week, this is the time to be 'reconciled' with God, to receive the peace and reconciliation which Jesus won for us at so high a price.

This is a very busy time for parishes. But it's even busier for Satan. – He will be saying to you, "You're very tired. You've worked hard. Relax. Don't bother to go to Church today. Besides, your favourite programmes are on the television. Why not stay in and watch it. You can always go to Church tomorrow."

Like Eve in the Garden, you may listen to him, and be tempted to think, well, why not? It won't hurt just this once. I'll be sure to go tomorrow. And so, Satan wins another victory. And, of course, when the next day comes, Satan has another attractive, 'harmless' suggestion to tempt you not to be with Our Lord. And he will tempt you in this way, day after day, all week. Before you know it, Holy Week is over, and you haven't been to Church once throughout the entire week.

Jesus made this week holy by what he did for each and every one of us, for every soul who ever lived in our world. Join him on his journey, and share with him the amazing, wondrous joy of his resurrection on Sunday. – I pray you all have a very holy week. Amen.