

Dear Padre,

I recently converted to Catholicism. Can you tell me more about the significance of the palm branches on Palm Sunday?

Welcome to our faith! And we are delighted to answer your questions. We can consider the meaning of the palm branches on two levels. On the first level, we commemorate a historical event—Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

In biblical times, people saw the palm as a kingly tree because of its height and majestic appearance. During festivals, the Jews carried palm branches in processions. Roman soldiers carried palm branches in their victory parades. In public games, the winners of contests and sports received palm branches as signs of victory. Thus, when people greeted Jesus with palm branches, they were greeting him in the spirit of joy and triumph usually reserved for victorious kings, armies, and athletes. It was the biblical equivalent of a ticker-tape parade!

That brings us to the second meaning for the palm branches. They do signify a joyful victory, but not in the worldly and military sense of the word. It is a victory that we can understand and celebrate only in the light of the other events of Holy Week and Easter Sunday.

The ultimate victory of Jesus was his Easter triumph over death and sin. But it was a victory won through suffering and dying. This is the victory we recall on Palm Sunday. Even though we must relive the sad events of Holy Thursday and Good Friday, we know the triumphant outcome of the story. Knowing that outcome enables us to make Palm Sunday the beginning of our victory celebration.

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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

This celebration seems to combine stories of joy and suffering, mistakes and successes, which are part of our daily lives as disciples. It somehow expresses the contradictory feelings that we too, the men and women of today, experience: the capacity for great love...but also the ability to "wash our hands" at the right moment.

PALM SUNDAY HOMILY, MARCH 25, 2018



Calendar

Monday
MARCH 29
Monday of Holy Week
Is 42:1-7
Jn 12:1-11

Tuesday
MARCH 30
Tuesday of Holy Week
Is 49:1-6
Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

Wednesday
MARCH 31
Wednesday of Holy Week
Is 50:4-9a
Mt 26:14-25

Thursday
APRIL 1
Holy Thursday
Ex 12:1-8, 11-14
1 Cor 11:23-26
Jn 13:1-15

Friday
APRIL 2
Good Friday
Is 52:13-53:12
Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9
Jn 18:1-19:42

Saturday
APRIL 3
Holy Saturday
Gn 1:1-2:2 or 1:1, 26-31a
Gn 22:1-18 or 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
Ex 14:15-15:1
Is 54:5-14
Is 55:1-11
Bar 3:9-15, 32-4:4
Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28
Rom 6:3-11
Mk 16:1-7

Sunday
APRIL 4
Easter
Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8
Jn 20:1-9 or Mk 16:1-7

Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 28, 2021

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (B)
Mk 11:1-10 or Jn 12:12-16
Is 50:4-7
Phil 2:6-11
Mk 14:1-15:47 or 15:1-39



Those preceding him as well as those following kept crying out: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
MARK 11:9

Empty Praise

How could anyone think that the joyous cry "Hosanna!" would be viewed as empty praise? Though the word has come down to us in the Greek Gospels, it probably has Hebrew roots as a form of the verb "to save" (see Psalm 118:25). Thus, it is more than an exuberant cry; it is a plea for salvation. How could this possibly be empty praise?

The answer to that question is found in human fickleness. So often we—not simply the people of Jerusalem, but we human beings—wholeheartedly offer someone our support, only to turn our backs on that person when the going gets tough. We know from experience how this works.

This is precisely what today's readings describe. The passage for the procession with palms describes an enthusiastic group of people showing Jesus great respect and crying out: "Hosanna!" Later, in the Gospel we hear, "Crucify him!" Were these the same people? Does it matter? Presumably these were people who were in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, the feast of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Now they are caught in another oppressive political system—Roman occupation. Are these heartless people? Or are they like us: often afraid to take an unpopular stand lest we lose face or, even worse, suffer serious consequences? And so, Jesus stands alone before those who have planned to silence him. Might he have considered the earlier "Hosanna" empty praise? Probably not. Jesus does not hold our fickleness against us.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

For Reflection

- ★ How steadfast have you been in your support of others?
- ★ Thank Jesus for his willingness to forgive your fickleness.



St. Mary's Church
Dalton, NE 69131



All Souls' Church
Bridgeport, NE 69336
Pastor: Rev. Dr. C.P. Varghese
Address: 701 P Street, Bridgeport, NE 69336



Sacred Heart Church
Bayard, NE 69334

Parish Office & Fax: (308)262-0709. Rectory: (308)262-1332 Email: allsoulsbridgeport@gmail.com Website: www.smassh Catholics.org

Dear Sisters, Brothers and Children in Jesus Christ,

It is Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday, the first day of the holy week. Today's first reading, the third of Isaiah's four Servant Songs, like the other three, foreshadows Jesus' own life and mission. The Refrain for today's Responsorial Psalm (Ps 22), "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" plunges us into the heart of Christ's Passion. The Second Reading, taken from Paul's letter to the Philippians, is an ancient Christian hymn representing a very early Christian understanding of who Jesus is, and of how his mission saves us from sin and death. The first part of today's Gospel describes the royal reception Jesus received from his admirers, who paraded with him for a distance of two miles: from the Mount of Olives to the city of Jerusalem. In the second part of today's Gospel, we listen to/participate in a reading of the Passion of Christ according to Mark. We are challenged to examine our own lives in the light of some of the characters in the Passion story – like Peter who denied Jesus, Judas who betrayed Jesus, Herod who ridiculed Jesus, Pilate who acted against his conscience as he condemned Jesus to death on the cross, and the leaders of the people who preserved their position by getting rid of Jesus.

We need to answer 5 questions today: 1) Does Jesus weep over my sinful soul as he wept over Jerusalem at the beginning of his Palm Sunday procession? 2) Am I a barren fig tree? God expects me to produce fruits of holiness, purity, justice, humility, obedience, charity, and forgiveness. Do I? Or worse, do I continue to produce bitter fruits of impurity, injustice, pride, hatred, jealousy and selfishness? 3) Will Jesus need to cleanse my heart with his whip? Jesus cannot tolerate the desecration of the temple of the Holy Spirit that I have become by my addiction to uncharitable, unjust and impure thoughts words and deeds; nor does Jesus praise my business mentality or calculation of loss and gain in my relationship with God, my Heavenly Father. 4) Do I welcome Jesus into my heart? Am I ready to surrender my life to him during this Holy Week and welcome him into all areas of my life as my Lord and Savior? Let us remember that we are all sinners who have crucified Jesus by our sins, but we are still able to turn to Jesus again to ask for pardon and mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. 5) Are we like the humble donkey that carried Jesus, bringing Jesus' universal love, unconditional forgiveness, and sacrificial service to our families, places of work and communities by the way we live our lives?

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Fr. C. P. Varghese
Pastor

SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

Date	Day	Time	Place	Intention
03/29	Monday	No Mass Today		
03/30	Tuesday	6.00 PM	Bridgeport	Stations of the Cross & Eucharist
03/31	Wednesday	No Mass Today		
04/01	Holy Thursday	4.00 PM	Dalton	Eucharist & Adoration till 9 PM
04/01	Holy Thursday	6.30 PM	Bridgeport	Eucharist & Adoration till midnight
04/02	Good Friday	4.00 PM	Bridgeport	Veneration of the Cross & Holy Communion
04/02	Good Friday	6.00 PM	Bayard	Veneration of the Cross & Holy Communion
04/03	Easter Vigil	8.00 PM	Dalton	Easter Vigil (Int. Nursing Home Residents)
04/04	Easter Sunday	8.00 AM	Bayard	Holy Eucharist (Mary Lou Weitzel)
04/04	Easter Sunday	10.30 AM	Bridgeport	Holy Eucharist (Tony Backer)

ALL SOULS
617 P STREET
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

MASS TIME
Tuesday — 6:00 PM
Sunday — 10:30 AM

Parish Council Meeting

March 28, Sunday,
6.00 PM

OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH

ADULTS	\$1,095.00
CHILDREN	
PLATE	\$18.00
SUBTOTAL	\$1,113.00
FLOWERS	\$45.00
CATHOLIC RELIEF	\$110.00
TOTAL	\$1,268.00
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$6,046.00
DONATIONS	\$3,615.00
BALANCE	\$2,431.00

- Prayer line requests may be made to Carolyn-262-0453 or Teresa-262-0439.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.



SACRED HEART
1003 AVE B
BAYARD NE 69334

MASS TIME
Friday — 12:00 PM
Sunday — 8:00 AM

Parish Council Meeting

March 29, Monday,
6.00 PM

OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH

ADULTS	\$520.00
CHILDREN	
PLATE	\$10.00
SUBTOTAL	\$530.00
MASS STIPEND	
CATHOLIC RELIEF	\$15.00
TOTAL	\$545.00
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$4,907.00
DONATIONS	\$2,915.00
BALANCE	(\$1,992.00)

- Prayer line requests may be made to Paula-586-2992.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.



SAINT MARY'S
718 FRANCIS ST
DALTON NE 69131

MASS TIME
Thursday — 6:00 PM
Saturday — 5:30 PM

Parish Council Meeting

March 31, Wednesday,
6.00 PM

OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH

ADULTS	\$775.00
CHILDREN	
PLATE	\$63.00
SUBTOTAL	\$838.00
MASS STIPEND	
CATHOLIC RELIEF	\$20.00
TOTAL	\$858.00
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$6,136.00
DONATIONS	\$6,439.00
BALANCE	(\$303.00)

- Prayer line requests may be made to DeAnn-249-1735.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.

