

# From the PASTOR'S DESK



## *Real Change*

During Lent, we are authorized to change from being “good enough” to being “better.” Through more diligent and focused prayer, intentional giving up of good things like food, and sharing with those who are needy, we improve our behaviors and lessen the power of our habits. Now, we move into the time and space of Holy Week.

Today, at the beginning of Holy Week, we recall Our Lord’s entry into Jerusalem. Crowds cheered, the great multitude of disciples rejoiced with loud voices, garments were laid upon the road, and palms were waved in the air. It’s not an exaggeration to call this event a triumph. The more we examine this triumph, the more we are compelled to think about what happened next and what we can learn from this about our salvation.

What came next is well-known: things quickly went downhill. A few days later, Jesus would die upon the cross. However, Christ’s death on the cross was not God’s final verdict on His Son’s sacrifice. God would raise His Son from the dead. Nevertheless, the contrast between the crowd’s enthusiasm when Jesus entered Jerusalem and their cries for His crucifixion a few days later is striking. It’s a complete turnaround in a short space of time.

We might speculate that Christ was not the Messiah the crowd wanted. He wasn’t going to free them from the Romans. That’s not the whole explanation, and it doesn’t get to the heart of the problem. That lies in the nature of a crowd, which is composed of individuals.

What happened was that many individuals who had followed Jesus hadn’t really changed, not truly.

What do we learn from this about our salvation? Salvation requires real change. Salvation is not merely a case of believing certain things to be true. It includes belief but is not restricted to that. Our nature needs to be elevated by grace, our intellect needs to be elevated by faith. Our will needs to be transformed by hope and charity. These are the real changes that affect us and for which we are incomparably better. Changes happen when we are united to Our Lord in Baptism and properly disposed to receive the grace that the other sacraments offer us.

The fickle nature of the Palm Sunday crowd highlights the need all human beings have for real change, which only our salvation can deliver and which only Our Lord’s Passion can make available to us.

Fr. Hernan Cely  
Pastor

