

Palm Sunday, April 2, 2023

On this Palm Sunday we celebrate the beginning of Holy Week. We begin the paschal mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection. The liturgy today consists of two parts. In the first part we celebrated the Triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. In the second part we celebrate the passion of the Lord, with the Passion readings. These two parts portray Jesus in two different positions. In the first part Jesus portrayed as the King of Jews entering into the City of King David. The second part, especially in the readings, portray Jesus standing helplessly in the presence of Pilate, the Roman governor.

At the entry of Jesus on a colt back into Jerusalem, people exclaimed, "Blessed is the king, who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to the Son of David." And just couple of days later, when Jesus was standing helplessly, like a criminal, in the praetorium of Pilate, the same people shouted at Jesus, "crucify him, crucify him".

What caused the people to change their demeanor? What made them to turn against Jesus. Usually, people want to stand by a leader, who can give them Security and protection. When Jesus was entering Jerusalem like a King people found security in him. So they said, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord." But when Jesus was standing helplessly in the presence of Pilot, they found no security in Jesus, but they found security in the authorities of the city of Jerusalem. And so, they turned against Jesus. Even some of the people, who saw Jesus do

mighty works like feeding five thousand with five loaves of bread and two fish, have turned against him.

But in truth, the real protection and redemption is not with the rulers or the Jewish elders. The rulers of this world can only protect us temporarily, for a few years. But it is only Jesus, who can give us protection for eternity. If the people knew this truth, they would have not turned against Jesus. They would have been with Jesus. They would have walked with him on the way of the cross.

Let us encourage ourselves during this Holy week to walk with Jesus on the way of the Cross, to spend time in silence and in prayer to be with our Lord. Perhaps we may choose one little verse from the gospel today and stay with Jesus during this whole time. For example, when Jesus is walking on his way of the cross and people were yelling insults and curses toward him. Share with Jesus blessings and actions of love to counter that hatred that He received.

Another example was when Jesus was on the cross and feeling abandoned. Offer to stay with Him at this time in His excruciating pain. Our Blessed Mother Mary, who stood at the foot of the cross help us remain faithful to Jesus and encourage us to remain with Jesus. If we find that we are carrying a heavy cross, let us invite our Lady, who stood at the foot of the cross with her son to stand by us too.