

Homily for Palm Sunday 2020
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
Father Francis M. de Rosa
Ave.regina.coelorum@gmail.com

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Greetings to each of you, parishioners and friends, who are watching this Holy Mass of Palm Sunday. We are livestreaming today from St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in King George, Virginia. My name is Father Francis de Rosa, and I am the pastor of this parish.

With this great liturgy of Palm Sunday, we are now entered upon Holy Week, in which we will be immersed into the profoundest mysteries of our salvation.

This particular Holy Week of course has its own special character due to the suffering brought upon us by the Coronavirus pandemic and the government's extreme measures to combat it.

However, as Christians we have a unique insight into the nature of suffering and death. That is certainly the motif of Holy Week. It is as if we are accompanying anew Our Blessed Lord as He enters into the Holy City Jerusalem precisely to defeat these realities which are so very much a part of our existence: namely, suffering and death.

The Mass of Palm Sunday begins with the Rite of Blessing Palms and the reading of the Gospel recounting the last entrance of Jesus Our Lord into the Holy City Jerusalem.

In this Mass we have also heard the full and lengthy account of the Passion of the Lord. That meditation is most fitting on Good Friday.

For today, let us consider how Jesus was greeted and welcomed into Jerusalem with praise and acclaim. The people were shouting Hosanna

to the Son of David! Yet by week's end the crowd was clamoring for His death, shouting Crucify Him! Crucify Him!

This, in my purview, is starkly illustrative of the fickleness of human nature. For on one day we profess our Faith in Jesus while on the next we fall into sin. And it is precisely sin which nailed Our Blessed Lord to the Cross.

But we ought also to consider the might of Jesus. He entered into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday cloaked in humility, despite the enthusiasm of the crowds. There was a sobriety about Him, for He certainly knew the nature of the battle which He would be waging by week's end.

That battle was the great contest ever between the power of Life over the power of Death. Jesus was about to take upon Himself the crushing weight of our sins, undo the mystery of iniquity and open to us the floodgates of grace and eternal salvation.

If we sincerely believe these truths in our heart of hearts, if the Holy Catholic Faith is the primary motivator of our lives, if we see Jesus for what He truly is, namely, the great hero and Savior of Mankind, then what have we to fear from the disorder that has been visited upon us by the coronavirus and the machinations of the governments of men?

O Death, where is thy victory? O Death, where is thy sting?

May God bless you and your families and keep you safe!

Amen.

