



Christ in Our Neighborhood

April 2, 2023

Prayer

Loving God, you have given the human race Jesus Christ our Savior as a model of humility. He fulfilled your will by becoming man and giving His life on the cross. Help us to bear witness to You by following his example of suffering and make us worthy to share in His resurrection. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Commentary

2nd Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

In this beautiful reading, we see the descent of the divine Word and the ascent of humanity in Jesus the Christ. In these few words, Paul delivers the mission and purpose of Jesus.

Commentary

1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

This passage from Isaiah is clearly pointing to the theme of this Palm Sunday. In it, we read the steadfast loyalty of a true servant of God. It reveals to the reader what the future Messiah will be for all of Israel. The Messiah (King) will be a suffering servant for the sake of God's people.

Jesus the Christ (the word means King) is the suffering servant whose fidelity to God comes with a price. As Isaiah foretells, the King of Kings does not rebel against the Father:

“I have not rebelled ... I gave my back to those who beat me ... my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting.”

On this Passion Sunday, we give thanks to God who sent us his faithful Son to suffer and die for our infidelity. His death sealed for us a covenant with God that would be everlasting.

Question

Have you ever wondered why God would go through so much to become one with us and suffer for our sins? Why do you think God would do this for our world? Why would he do this for you?

Sunday of the Lord's Passion

The Descent:

(1) Christ, who is in the form of God, (2) does not equate Himself with God, but (3) takes the form of a human, (4) is enslaved (5) and humbled (6) to the point of death on a cross.

The Ascent:

Because of this, God enthrones the Christ (the anointed King) and places His name (Jesus) above every other name. The humiliated one now receives genuflections and acclamations, “Jesus Christ is Lord!”

This Palm Sunday reminds us that the Christ entered Jerusalem triumphantly to embrace the cross. Paul reminds us that the Christ began His journey to His Passover moment long before He entered the gates of Jerusalem. The Church reminds us that, from the first sin of Adam, the pre-existent Word of God was silently, mysteriously, and deliberately descending from the heavens to be Jesus (meaning, God Saves!)

Question

Has this Lenten period helped you to “humble” yourself or descend from your own sense of pride?

Be a part of the parish Triduum experience!

Join us for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter!

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Commentary

Gospel: Matthew 26:14-27:66

The passion accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke (also known as the synoptic gospels because of their similarities) are proclaimed in their respective cycles according to our Church calendar. Matthew's passion account is proclaimed this year (Cycle A). Mark's account will be proclaimed next year (Cycle B) and Luke's in (Cycle C) the year following.

The Gospel of John includes a passion account that differs greatly from the accounts of the synoptic gospels. For this reason, John is read each year on Good Friday.

For the most part, Matthew's account of Jesus' passion follows the Gospel of Mark. It is interesting to note that Matthew is the only evangelist who mentions Judas' suicide. Notice that Judas actually does come to see the error of his ways. He knows that he has wrongly betrayed Jesus. He is truly contrite, confesses, tries to make amends, but is unable to accept that he is worthy of grace and forgiveness. So, in an act of total desperation, he ends his life.

Despair is the opposite of the virtue of Hope. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reads:

In every circumstance, each one of us should hope, with the grace of God, to persevere "to the end." (Catechism, 1821). We have all sinned, but we cannot despair. Hope in Christ, who came to call sinners to himself. This is the very reason why we celebrate this Holiest of Weeks!

Question

How has my Lenten Season given me hope?

This Week's Task

Make an attempt to participate in the Triduum (three great days). Join us on Holy Thursday for the Lord's Supper, the washing of the feet and Eucharistic Adoration. Join us on Good Friday for the Stations and or the Lord's Passion. Finally, join us at the Easter Vigil or on Easter morning.

Group Prayer

The leader invites each member to pass around a crucifix. Holding the cross, they offer a prayer of gratitude for the Lord's passion and death. Then, each will say the following:

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you!

The group will respond each time:

Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

The leader will then guide the group in praying Psalm 22.

Psalm

Response: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

All who see me, scoff at me;
they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads: "He relied on the Lord;
let him deliver him,
let him rescue him, if he loves him.

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Indeed, many dogs surround me,
a pack of evildoers closes in upon me;
they have pierced my hands and my feet;
I can count all my bones.

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

They divide my garments among them,
and for my vesture they cast lots.
But you, O Lord, be not far from me;
O my help, hasten to aid me.

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

I will proclaim your name to my bretheren;
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:
"You who fear the Lord, praise him;
all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;
revere him, all you descendants of Israel!"

R: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Conclude with an OUR FATHER