

Palm Sunday 2020 SSP Online Mass

Passion according to St. Matthew, Year A

What a strange way to keep and share this solemn beginning of Holy Week:

- We cannot be at our cherished liturgies in church
- We cannot see the great sights and hear the great music (unless we use recordings)
- Worst: we cannot assemble and be together to keep our great holy day
- You're confined to your home and I am to mine. And two good souls are in Saint Stephen's behind locked doors to perform remnants of the liturgy online for us, as fear of the contagious COVID-19 virus grips everyone.

THANK GOD FOR GIVING MANKIND THE WITS TO DEVELOP TECHNOLOGY

So I have two things to say ---

1. JESUS LIVES. HE IS RISEN. We wouldn't be remembering and making present his Passion otherwise.
2. JESUS LIVES. HE IS RISEN, and if he weren't we wouldn't be making these efforts to overcome necessary physical distancing. After we have boiled this liturgy down to its essentials, we are left with this everlasting truth: Jesus comes to each of us, individually and personally, as well as corporately, or he doesn't come at all. I assume you each are watching and listening because Jesus is an essential part of your life. When Jesus is an essential part of your life, you have a relationship with him which transcends space and time. In prayer, you and the Lord are contemporaneous. The Sacraments such as Baptism and the Eucharist are outward and visible signs of this inward and spiritual relationship that we have.

One last thing. This isn't just Palm Sunday, commemorating Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Most essentially it is The Sunday of Jesus's Passion. Jesus allowed sinners to do their worst to him. We are, all of us, each of us is, in that crowd of sinners. But Jesus knows all this: the Man of Sorrows who went to the cross is Almighty God, the Son of God in our flesh. He underwent this, he allowed it, in order to overcome it.

Sin did the worst thing it could ever do in killing Jesus Christ. Christ's Cross is God's Cross. All the suffering in the world, all the aching and groaning in creation, is gathered up there; Calvary is the part, the epicenter, that God has allowed us to see. And in so doing, God has revealed his heart. That is how our Lord overcame sin on Calvary, because sin is spent there, death is spent, in him. It has done its worst. Seeing Christ's death, we watch and wait. We watch and wait for Jesus to reveal himself on the other side of death. Amen.