

## PALM SUNDAY HOMILY 4/5/2020

St Teresa of Jesus the reformer of the Carmelite Order wondered why her sisters would be in tears when reading the passion. She was sad but could not muster the emotional depths that the other sisters could.

So, she prayed for the gift of tears. After sometime she received the gift of tears.

Likewise, St Ignatius of Loyola the founder of the Jesuits, who had been a soldier — a real tough guy. But after he was ordained when saying Mass, he would have to stop because he was overcome with tears.

The saints thought of this as a Charismatic gift — a little gift from the Holy Spirit.

Today's readings are a roller coaster of emotions. The joyous triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. People calling out "Hosanna!" cutting branches and even putting their cloaks on the ground for the colt that carried Jesus to tread. So, the shock from the hooves was suppressed — like first century shock absorbers.

All this to proclaim him King as he entered into Jerusalem.

Then we go to the passion of the Lord. the emotional pendulum swings to the other to profound sadness and regret.

We now enter Holy Week. The events of Holy Week speak to our hearts. Especially this year when we cannot be present in our beloved sanctuary. Yes sanctuary, where we find solace for all our cares and we come to ask God's help with all our troubles. I blessed the Palm branches but there is no one to wave them. No children making little palm crosses or grandfathers teaching them how to make them, as I give the homily.

No chrisom Mass this week. The Bishop has extended the expiration date on the holy oils. Even though Fr Virgil and I have planned a virtual washing of the feet, there will be no feet to wash. The Blessed Sacrament will be made present and adored, but no procession. No altar of repose. Afterwards we will pray Compline — night prayer.

On Friday we recall the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross. We venerate the cross, each in our own way in our homes, we will pray for ourselves, for our neighbors, for church and for the whole world.

At the great vigil of Easter on Saturday we will bless and light the new Paschal candle. No baptisms, no confirmations, all this has been postponed. Yet in some sense we will all be here

All these things will touch our hearts. We will in some way be given the gift of tears even if they do not flow from our eyes.

But there is more. The tears are of no worth if it does not deepen our faith. If we are not compelled to bend the knee before the name of Jesus, our God and Savior.

Just as all knees are bound to do: on the earth, in heaven and under the earth. and every tongue confess to the Glory of God the Father that Jesus Christ is Lord.

AS Pope St Leo the Great wrote: No one however weak, is denied a share in the victory of the cross. No one is beyond the prayer of Christ his prayer brought benefit to the multitude that raged against him. How much more does it bring to those who turn to him in repentance.  
Pope St Leo the Great.