

Passion (Palm) Sunday 20 Mar 2016

Isaiah 50: 4-9

Psalm 31: 9-18

Philippians 2: 5-11

[Luke 22:14-23.56](#)

Passion Sunday or Palm Sunday marks the end of Lent and the Beginning of Holy week, it marks our entry into Easter..

As we come out of the wilderness of Lent, we enter the intensity of Holy week, and we seek to walk into the whole process of Easter.

However, when we look at the rituals for Palm Sunday, we might confuse or even distort this point of transition...

Churches around the world will hold palm processions, a sort of ritual re-enactment of the gospel narrative of the entry into Jerusalem..

And most of us subconsciously will therefore identify with the crowd, as in the gospel story, we act out waving Palm branches as Jesus passed by on his way toward Easter; it is worthwhile pausing and wondering if that is actually what the church has done since that first Easter.

Have we stood by watching Jesus pass by?

It is a simple example of how we continue to miss that which Christ revealed, and as we enter Holy week, what we really need to attend to is our Christ-likeness, we do not engage the process of Easter from the view point of the crowd, but only when we contemplate ourselves in the footsteps of Christ.

Palm Sunday is our turning toward Easter with Christ; Isaiah spells it out in the first reading;

“I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame”.

And Paul spells it out in the second reading:

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus”.

Most weeks in the church we listen to the gospel, today as a community we read the gospel ourselves; and that is the orientation we might carry into holy week; seeing

ourselves as the gospel narrative; and seeing the gospel narrative not as the story of Jesus but rather as our own story.

Our 40 days of Lent has been an opportunity to hear, an opportunity to listen to the voice of prayer, that dialogue we all have between our humanity and divinity.

The liturgy of Easter now asks us to attend in prayer as we engage the different aspects of the Easter process.....

Maundy Thursday

1. We engage our community (and ourselves) in new way as we wash each other's feet. **What is the prayer of our humility**
2. We strip the altar and find ourselves 'alone' without the sacred table from which we are fed. **What is the prayer of our hunger**
3. We "keep watch" for the night before the crucifixion, we encounter the waiting and/or the struggle of gethsemane.
What is the prayer of our waiting in the face of death

Good Friday

1. We listen to the 'Word' spoken from the cross and to the giving of all into the Divine truth **What is our prayer of self emptying**
2. We mark the hour of dying, "it is done"
What is the prayer that will keep us alive and also allow us to die

Easter Sunday

1. We celebrate resurrection and we reaffirm our baptismal vows.
What is our prayer of resurrection
What is our prayer of "A New Creation"

Today we turn toward Easter, and that is the gospel account of Christ's becoming, it is also an encounter with our own becoming, and that is well summed up in this quote from Richard Rohr:

The Face You Had Before You Were Born

Most spirituality, in one way or another, has taught that we have all indeed begun to forget, if not fully forgotten, who we are. Universal amnesia seems to be the problem. Religion's job is purely and simply one thing: to tell us, and keep reminding us, of who we objectively are. Thus, Catholics keep eating the Body of

Christ until they know that they *are* what they eat—a human body that is still the eternal Christ.

Is it possible that we do know our True Self at some level? Could we all know from the beginning? Does some part of us know from the beginning? Does some part of us know—with a kind of certitude—who we really are? Is the truth hidden within us? Could human life's central task be a matter of consciously discovering and becoming who we already are and what we somehow unconsciously know? I believe so. Life is not a matter of creating a special name for ourselves, but of uncovering the name we have always had. [*Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation*]