

## **Palm Sunday – Passion Sunday Cycle A**

This Sunday is called Palm Sunday as well as Passion Sunday. In the first Gospel proclamation we read that Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a “colt and an ass.” This act signifies the right of a King. Remember in the Old Testament that King David had Solomon ride into Jerusalem on a mule (1 Kings 1.38). By having both animals there St. Thomas Aquinas writes; “this signifies that they converted both the Jews and Gentiles. The garments are their virtues. They laid their garments on them because they were made examples for others.” Jesus sits on “top of both, because he sits over the hearts of the Jews and of the gentiles.” Jesus claims the right of kings which the people recognize.

The people recognize the symbolism of Jesus riding on a colt/ass and they greet Jesus with praise and honor. They lay palms and some even lay there robes down for Him. As we gather today do we recognize the presence of Jesus, Priest, Prophet, and King? Do we recognize and acknowledge His presence here before us in the Sacred Scriptures and the Eucharist? We as our Jewish brothers and sisters are called to celebrate the King of Kings.

The crowd greets Jesus by shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.” We are called to shout Hosanna, the Hebrew word which means “Save us, we pray.” When asked “who is this?” the crowd replied “Jesus the prophet.” This Palm Sunday ask yourself, who do you say Jesus is? Let us grow in our faith, hope and love as we near the end of our Lenten journey.

This Sunday is also called Passion Sunday as it is this Sunday which focuses our attention on the Sufferings of our Redeemer and is the beginning of Holy Week. It is this Sunday we read about the passion of Jesus Christ. We hear a drastic change; that is, one from cheers to one of anger. The question that is often brought up is, is this the same crowd that cheered for Jesus that demanded his crucifixion? Pope Benedict XVI argues that it was not, hence the crowd at the entry to Jerusalem recognized the signs of the King as opposed to those yelling crucify Him inside the praetorium. This group is denying Jesus’ kingship. We then are brought to the betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus. We witness through Sacred Scripture the humility and obedience of Jesus Christ. We are called to evaluate our humility and obedience to God the Father.

Entering Holy week let’s reflect on our relationship and commitment to follow Jesus’ example of love. We are called to reflect and use Holy Week to consider all that Jesus did for us. We are called to reflect on our own response to Jesus’ sacrifice and how each of us follow His teachings.

This week remember all that Jesus did for each and every one of us. Let us acknowledge our Lord and Savior by surrendering to His teachings, by trusting in Him. Let us pray for a strong conversion and for a deeper loving relationship with God.