

WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

Readings: Isaiah 50: 4 -7
Psalm 22: 8-9, 17-20, 23-24
Philippians 2: 6 -11
Luke 22:14- 23:56

Palm Sunday
March 28, 2010

Word: **Holiness in Christ, our Spiritual Rock, calls for repentance.**

Theme: **Christ's call for repentance exhorts us to carry our cross daily.**
[Spiritual Endurance]

Promise: ***"The Lord God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced... I shall not be put to shame."*** (Isaiah 50: 7)

Reflection:

Palm Sunday ushers in the holiest week of our Church's liturgical year. This Sunday's readings are the longest of the year and of the greatest stories ever written. None is more powerful than the story of Jesus Christ - especially his passion, death and resurrection.

We marvel at this opportune time to recall and deeply reflect upon the unique drama of the final days of the earthly life of Jesus. We celebrate His triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Acclaimed as King and hailed as a conquering hero by the cheering crowd, he seemed to have arrived at the fulfillment of his earthly mission. For Christ, it's has been a week of violent contrasts, and will end in grief and glory. The palms will soon be formed into crosses and the cheers will turn into jeers calling for his death. Throughout the passion our attention is focused on Jesus who appears as a person completely absorbed in prayer, responding quietly and sensitively to each new moment of sorrow.

Before his triumphant resurrection he has to go through a disgraceful death. In the garden of Gethsemane he is deeply troubled, and he sweats blood as he prays for the Father to remove the chalice of suffering and death from him. Betrayed and taken prisoner he is mocked, blindfolded, beaten and spat upon, while a convicted murderer is set free in his place. He undergoes a final wrench of pain when Peter denies him and the apostles forsake him. His sense of abandonment by God is increased by the desertion of the friends. On Calvary he is crucified between two thieves and dies as a common criminal. Mary alone stands at the foot of the cross faithful to last.

During this most solemn week of the church year we are invited to take the road with Mary and those few friends who follow Christ to Calvary to be silently at his side. He wants the work of the cross to touch our lives, a call to repentance, to break our sinful ways so that we may be changed and know God. The decisive test of our faith is one day to reach the point when we are ready to accompany Jesus to Calvary, walking along the same path into destruction and death. His passion gives us at least a tiny glimpse into the mystery of suffering that surrounds us on all sides. In times of trials and suffering, what often keeps people going and gives them strength and inspiration is the knowledge that they are at one with Jesus who suffered in the same way before them.

St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians goes as far as to recall Jesus as a slave, who took upon Himself the lowliest position of life in order that he can raise all people to the glory and dignity of the children of God. He is not dying on the cross for what he has done, but for what you and I have done, because He loves us unceasingly and excessively. Jesus' love for us and for His Father is full and complete. This empowered Him to be obedient even unto death in order that we may have

redemption, according to the Father's will. It was with profound sense of humble obedience that Jesus embraced the intense suffering on the way to his death upon the cross.

We are confronted with the primary Christian symbol - the Cross – without which we cannot become his disciples. It affords us an opportunity to ponder the implications of the cross that we daily bear, or refusing to face. This day Christ invites us to prepare and relive anew his journey to the Cross. There is not much point in dwelling on the crucifixion of Christ during this solemn week if it is an isolated event and not linked with the drama of suffering that goes on in our own lives for the rest of the year.

The drama of Palm Sunday is not only an event of 2000 years ago; it is our drama today, the split between faith and life. The people of Palm Sunday are none other than ourselves. We too, have our own Jerusalem; it may not be a place, but might be an illness, a change in our life, a problem, challenge and uncertainty ahead of us. Yet in all of this we see the example of Jesus and we must move forward facing whatever lies ahead, knowing Jesus was there before us. That is one message for us in this Palm Sunday we are not entering our Jerusalem alone, Jesus has been there. So let us ask the Lord to give us the grace, the strength to face whatever is ahead of us. Jesus shows that whatever form our cross might take in our life, it can lead to salvation and new life.

God encourages others through us - not in mysterious ways, but by our kind words and actions we do to them. This is the glory of God shining through us and in our lives and we grow brighter as we are turned into the image of the one we are to reflect.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, in the glory of the passion of your beloved Son, Jesus offered up prayers aloud and in silent tears. By your grace and love through our words and actions, may the Your glory shine through us. Give us the courage to face hardship through the inspiration of Jesus Christ, who suffered and gave His life for us. Amen.

Suggested Personal Reflection Guide:

1. Jesus crucified – what comes to your mind when you look at the Cross? What was on Jesus' mind? Where is our sharing in his passion?
2. How would you imitate Jesus' life of obedience, in the face of the sufferings it entails at times?
3. Do you see yourselves entering your own Jerusalem, many crosses ahead, trials and difficulties on your way to transformation and glory at Easter?

Next Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:

March 29, 2010 (Mon):	Is 42:1-7; Ps 27:1-3, 13-14; Jn 12:1-11
March 30, 2010 (Tue):	Is 49:1-6; Ps 71:1-6, 15, 17; Jn 13:21-33, 36-38
March 31, 2010 (Wed):	Is 50:4-9; Ps 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34; Mt 26:14-25
April 01, 2010 (Thur):	Is 61:1-3, 6, 8-9; Ps 89:21-22, 25, 27; Rv 1:5-8; Lk 4:16-21
April 02, 2010 (Fri):	Is 52:13-53:12; Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25; Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19, 42
April 03, 2010 (Sat):	Gn 1:1-2:2; Ps 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12-14, 24, 35; Gn 22:1-18; Rom 6:3-11 Lk 24:1-12

“Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!”