

Homily Outline for the Palm Sunday Mass - Cycle C
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
April 10, 2022

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- I. Every year we read the Passion narrative on Palm Sunday and Good Friday.
 - A. The Good Friday reading of the Passion of the Lord is always from St. John.
 - B. Palm Sunday's reading of the Passion of the Lord follows a 3-year cycle of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

- II. This year's readings are from St Luke, which has some unique details.
 - A. The reading for the blessing of Palms ends with Jesus just outside Jerusalem.
 1. If we continue reading to the next verse, St. Luke tells us that as Jesus looked at Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, he wept.
 2. Just as some scholars suggest that Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus not out of grief (since He knew He would raise Lazarus from the dead), but at the lack of faith of the disciples, especially Martha and Mary, Jesus weeps at the lack of faith in Jerusalem, knowing that they will kill Him.
 3. In the next passage, Jesus cleanses the Temple: Jesus comes to conquer sin.
 - B. The Lord's Passion from the Gospel of St. Luke starts with the narrative of the Last Supper: Jesus says one of His apostles will betray Him; another will deny Him.
 1. St. Luke tells us that an argument about who was the greatest broke out among them while they were eating. Only Luke records this story.
 2. This is not the first time this argument broke out: recall the mother of James and John asking for special places for them in Christ's Kingdom!
 3. Jesus does not give up on them despite their failure to comprehend.
 - C. When Jesus is arrested, only Luke records the healing of the high priest's servant whose ear had been severed. This is a powerful example of Jesus' love of enemies, including those who came to kill him.
 - D. After Peter denies Jesus the third time, the cock crows, and only Luke records that Jesus looked at Peter at that very moment.
 1. I do not think it was a look of anger, scorn, or rebuke.
 2. I imagine it was a look of disappointment mixed with compassion and love.
 3. Peter recognizes his sin, and weeps bitterly.
 4. After the resurrection, Jesus will ask Peter three times, "Do you love me?" We do not know the inflection of His voice, but He may have said to Peter, "I have never stopped loving *you*, but do *you* love *me*?"
 - E. Upon the cross, the "good thief," St. Dismas, asks, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Only Luke records this. Jesus assures him that paradise is given to those who repent even after a sinful life.

III. Next Sunday is Easter.

- A. In between today and next Sunday, we have the Paschal Triduum, whereby we commemorate the events that lead to the Resurrection.
- B. In his bulletin columns during Lent, Fr. Alford has been giving us various spiritual challenges.
 - 1. This week, he challenges us to attend all the liturgical services of the Triduum: the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, the Good Friday Liturgy, and the Easter Vigil.
 - 2. Yes, the Easter Vigil is long—about 2½ hours, but that is shorter than a football game! Also shorter than the 3 hours that Christ spent on the cross, dying for our sins.
- C. By celebrating the entire Paschal Triduum, we will have a greater appreciation for the celebration of our Lord's resurrection on Easter Sunday!

IV. May God give us this grace. Amen.