

## Palm Sunday 2023

In Holy Week, we are invited to take part in the sad and mysterious events that culminated in the shameful and life-giving death of our Lord. It's a rollercoaster journey. We have sung our joyful "Hosannas!" welcoming the Lord to Jerusalem, but we've also made our own voice of the crowd crying hounding Jesus to death crying "Crucify him." We have heard about Jesus' kingly entry into Jerusalem, and how just days later the crowd would turn on him and he would face its cruelty as a reviled outcast, with even his disciples fleeing.

This story has changed the lives of millions. We retell it today. Only we don't just retell it, we enter into the drama, and best of all, we let the drama enter into us.

This is a story that exposes the fault-lines within the human heart. It is not just a story from 2000 years ago, it is the story of our own lives and of our world.

My loyalties and my loves, by betrayals and my neglect. It uncovers our capacity for great love, but also for great hatred; our capacity for courageous self-sacrifice, but also our ability to "wash our hands" at the right moment; our capacity for loyalty, but also for betrayal.

This story becomes painful in its familiarity as I realize that I am Judas in my betrayals, I am Peter in my weaknesses, I am Pilate as I wash my hands, I am Caiaphas in my exploitation and manipulation of others. I am all these in my double standards and my inconsistencies. At times I have embraced the Lord in my actions, at other times despised him. Such is the complexity of life and of love.

But this doesn't draw me down or make me wallow in guilt. For then I come to realize that all this matters not one jot, one little bit. Because a cry goes out from the Cross *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do!"*

I come to realize that my sins count for nothing, because the love revealed by a dying man two thousand years ago is a creative love that calls me back to life, and calls me to keep on living and keep on loving as one of his own. His disciples.

He has embraced our suffering and absorbed our sins, not because he likes or wishes to glorify them, but simply because he loves us, and rather than abandon us, he will take into himself the very worst we have to offer. His death was a huge cry to the world, and each one of us: I love you and always will.

*My song is love unknown, my Saviour's love for me.*

Let's stay with the Lord like Mary and the steadfast women who did not abandon or betray or wash their hands of him so that we may meet him, the Lord of Life on Easter Sunday morning.

A curtain has been raised on the drama of Holy Week.  
Let's enter into it, heart and soul.