

# Pastor's Message

PALM SUNDAY 2020



## Holy Week More Than Ever!

It's here – Holy Week. Maybe more than ever.

As we journey through this most sacred of weeks while carrying the cross of our current Coronavirus crisis, we may likely understand the mysteries of our Lord's passion, death and resurrection like never before. The daily death tolls, repeated images of profound suffering, and general confusion and anxiety we experience much mirror what took place in Jerusalem some two thousand years ago. Our Lord, like ourselves at the present moment, found himself entrapped and accosted by a culture of death. What can we learn from him this Holy Week?

As we examine the bitter sufferings of our Lord, it is important to first realize that he underwent them because they are part of the human condition. Sin and its consequences lead to the afflictions that he and we endure. Who in this life has not yet experienced betrayal, abandonment, injustice, mockery, torture of some sort, having had to die to something and, even in a moment of desperation, uttered Jesus' very words on the cross: "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" If you live on earth, you've been there and will likely be there again in some fashion. Suffering will end when sin ends and stops spreading its infective power upon us – namely at the Second Coming when time stops, choices can no longer be made, and the Lord restores creation to perfect order.

In the meantime, however, our Lord's passion and death bring us tremendous hope and resilience, for he went through pain to teach us how to confront our own afflictions and challenges and claim victory over them too. Here is his great lesson to us: Although he found himself enveloped by a culture of death from without, he was driven by a *culture of life* from within! Regardless of the

painful thoughts and feelings he endured, he trusted that his Heavenly Father would somehow, someday make life sprout in the midst of it all. Within himself our Lord had a river of life that flowed and cut its way through the most rugged of terrain and emptied itself into a vast ocean! That is what Holy Week is all about and what we will celebrate next Sunday.

Yes, we are presently enveloped in a culture of death, but it is critical for us under current circumstances to realize that the Spirit of life, given to us at baptism, flows within us and cuts its way through our own rugged terrain towards an oncoming ocean of life. Let us therefore nurture the culture of life in us by engaging all the more in things of the Spirit – in all that is good, beautiful, and inspiring. Let us certainly be attentive to directives that local officials and health experts call us to heed, but become less enveloped, consumed and obsessed with the deathly rhetoric which sometimes paralyzes and suffocates us. As such, may our journey with the Lord through his passion, death and resurrection this Holy Week strengthen us and help us trust and discover that the culture of life inside us is far stronger than the culture of death outside us.

May we indeed experience Holy Week more than ever!