

My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! This weekend marks 18 years since Pope John Paul II went to the "House of the Father." As we enter this Holy Week and accompany Jesus into the Jerusalem, in obedience to His Father, let us make this week different. I encourage you to participate in the Liturgies of the Sacred Triduum, Spend time in Silent Prayer, Ready yourself for the Passover of Jesus Christ! It is His Passover that enables us to move from Death to Life and makes possible, the salvation of each and every soul, yours and mine included!

Be sure of my prayer for you this week and please keep me in your prayer.

Peace, Fr. Rogers

1. *"He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8).*

The celebration of Holy Week begins with the "*Hosanna!*" of Palm Sunday and culminates in the "*Crucify him!*" of Good Friday. But this is not a contradiction; rather it is the heart of the mystery the liturgy wants to proclaim: Jesus willingly gave himself up to his passion; he did not find himself crushed by superior forces (cf. Jn 10:18). It was he himself who, in discerning the Father's will, understood that his hour had come and he accepted it with the free obedience of the Son and with infinite love for mankind.

Jesus brought our sins to the Cross and our sins brought Jesus to the Cross: he was crushed for our iniquities (cf. Is 53:5). The prophet said in reply to David, who was seeking the one responsible for the deed Nathan had recounted to him: "*You are the man!*" (2 Sm 12:7). The Word of God gives us the same answer as we wonder what caused Jesus' death: "*You are the man!*". Indeed, Jesus' trial and passion are repeated in the world today and renewed by every person who abandons himself to sin and can only prolong the cry: "*Not this man, but Barabbas! Crucify him!*".

2. Looking at Jesus in his passion, we see humanity's sufferings as well as our personal histories reflected as in a mirror. Although there was no sin in Christ, he took upon himself what man could not endure: injustice, evil, sin, hatred, suffering and finally death. In Christ, the humiliated and suffering Son of Man, God loves everyone, forgives everyone and confers the ultimate meaning on human life.

We are here this morning to receive this message from the Father who loves us. We can ask ourselves: what does he want of us? He wants us to look at Jesus and be willing to follow him in his passion in order to share in his Resurrection. At this moment we recall Jesus' words to his disciples: "The cup that I drink, you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized" (Mk 10:39). "If any man would come after me, let him ... take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mt 16:24-25).

The "*hosanna*" and the "*crucify him*" thus become the way to measure how one conceives of life, faith and Christian witness: we must not be discouraged by defeat nor exalted by victory because, as with Christ, the only victory is fidelity to the mission received from the Father. "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name" (Phil 2:9).

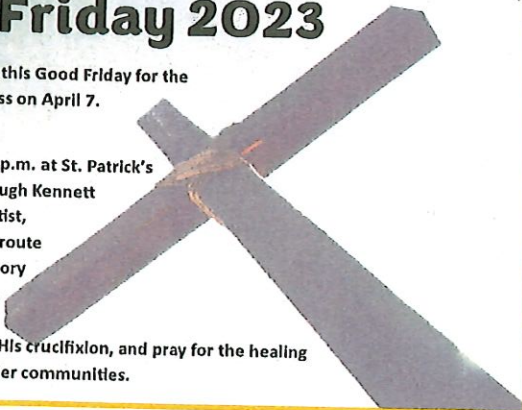
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St. Pope JP II Palm Sunday Reflection 1999

Good Friday 2023

Join area churches this Good Friday for the Stations of the Cross on April 7.

Service begins at 7 p.m. at St. Patrick's and processes through Kennett Square to First Baptist, stopping along the route to remember the story as told in Scripture, reflect on the walk that Jesus made to His crucifixion, and pray for the healing of our local and wider communities.



LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE
ST. PATRICK CHURCH
TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023
7:00 PM

"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you of two minds."
~ James 4:8

