



Lent / Carême / Cuaresma 2021

Palm Sunday

28th March

Blessed is the One who comes!



Bowing down together

We can take our places in the midst of the crowd. The welcoming of Jesus can be experienced together and in surprisingly simple ways. This is the journey of a life: walking alongside everyone, sharing the daily routine and praising God by offering what we have to hand (cloak, branches). And finally, to have the courage to bow down. To follow his self-abasement because the Servant approaches us from the very depths.

Entering into joy

Because TODAY a friend, a brother, but also a liberator, a Messiah-King is revealed to us, and he is entering through the gates of our towns and the fortress of our hearts. How shall we welcome him?

How do we enter into this unspeakable JOY, which does not come from possessing whatever it is (confidence about the future, good health, affection, recognition, talent...) but which is born from entering into a relationship with a person, with Jesus? We can discover in our isolation that someone, in fact, comes to visit us. Doubtless, that is the experience to be had these days.

To enter into the joy of his unfailing presence. He opens up the way for us: the joy of His life, what he has received from His Father...when He entrusts His Spirit into His hands.

To be handed over – to give oneself up

Jesus will be handed over. Betrayed in the very heart of friendship, abandoned by his own people. Delivered into the hands of Pilate. He goes forward, knowing that he is falsely condemned...Surrendered is the key word.

To surrender...the only way to be freed.

How can I reconcile being fully myself and being entirely free of myself? What hinders my ability to surrender? What holds back my sense of hope in the way I look at those close to me and at events?

Remaining in silence

In the Passion according to Saint Mark, Jesus is particularly alone, and his silence is impressive. Some words spoken at the trial, and then "Jesus made no further answer". In a short time, he goes from popularity, from his royal entry to exclusion and desolation. God saves us by accepting that evil is working against him, without reacting. With the strength of love alone.

In this silence, we can understand him giving himself "to the end".

"Jesus never says to us: leave your daily joy for dark miseries. But rather: really believe that the joy in your life wants to slip in everywhere, that it has the power not to die in the places of the dead. People laugh in hospitals, in prisons and on battle-fields. There is a lot of love there. That should encourage us not to imitate the mindset of evil, which wants to see us all turned in on ourselves, boxed in and trapped in our own fears."

*A short treatise on joy. Accepting life
by Martin Steffens (Marabout Spirituality)*

PRAYING WITH PSALM 21

This is the experience, which still happens today, of people who are exiled, of lives scorned and tortured, of so many people condemned to death. This psalm was composed on the return from the Babylonian Exile.

Here is a summary of humanity, of all the journeys of life that are still taking the path of Easter today. This psalm is a spiritual journey in itself, an inspiration, a call, and a movement to be followed, a grace to be asked for and to be welcomed.

We could pray it several times, sometimes with a particular situation in the world, and sometimes with the face of Christ, who lives, abides and takes upon himself all our sufferings.

“All who see me jeer at me, a pack of dogs surround me, they pierce my hands and my feet”.

Seeing the scene, the sufferings shown by certain actions. Hearing the insults, the jeering, and the mockery. Seeing the looks, the indifference of some. Letting myself be moved... Perhaps just keeping silence, a compassionate silence, being there.

My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

From the midst of their distress, Israel never stopped calling out for help, and they never doubted for a single moment that God was listening. This cry is indeed a cry of distress in the face of God’s silence, but it is neither a cry of despair, nor even less a cry of doubt. On the contrary! It is the prayer of someone who is suffering, who has the courage to shout out about his suffering. What are the cries of the earth and the shouts of the world that I let rise up to him?

Do not stand aside, O Lord: O my strength, come quickly to my help!

The just person who is tortured calls for help. He has confidence, is full of certainty: God will come to his help.

You have answered me! And I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters and praise you where they are assembled.

God has heard this cry of despair, this appeal for help. He has intervened, even if his response is not exactly what was expected. Now the cry becomes praise, thanksgiving.

Pray with the sculptures of the Syrian artist, Nizar Ali Badr

« These stones know how to cry out and their voices are louder than bullets.»



And the final verses of the psalm are nothing but a cry of gratitude; unfortunately we will not be singing them during the Mass of this Palm Sunday...

“The poor will receive as much as they want to eat. Those who seek the LORD will praise him. Long life to their hearts! The whole earth, from end to end, will remember and come back to the LORD; all the families of the nations will bow down before him. . . And my soul will live for him, my children will serve him; all will proclaim the Lord to generations still to come, his righteousness to a people yet unborn. All this he has done !”