

Integral Faith

"Homily helps and liturgy resources highlighting care for our common home."



Homily Resources and Petitions for the Palm Sunday, the Passion of the Lord, Cycle B (March 28, 2021)

Homily Helps

† Scripture passages to note:

Isaiah 50: Morning after morning he opens my ear that I might hear; and I have not rebelled, not turned back.

Philippians 2: He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Mark 14: "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many." . . . "Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times." He broke down and wept.

† Comments for the Day:

Today we enter the most solemn week of the liturgical year. We accompany Jesus on a pilgrimage: from the shouts of praise of Palm Sunday, to the agony of Good Friday, to the silence and stillness of Easter morning. In speech, song, silence, symbolic action, processions, incense, color and other ways, we try to make Jesus's journey our own. We hear about Jesus as he offers his disciples his most intimate self, his body and blood. Then, like the suffering servant in Isaiah, he offers his body and blood – not as a passive victim, but as one who has made a choice to establish a new covenant between God and humanity. The God of this covenant is not an angry deity who demands sacrifice in order that we might be acceptable. This God, in Jesus, is the God who shows us that He is no stranger to our pain, our tears, our fear. This God touches us just as we are. This God loves us just as Jesus loved his disciples who failed him.

The celebration of Holy Week offers us another chance to orient our lives to Jesus, whose whole life was oriented to the reign of God. His ear and his heart were always open to God's word. In his resurrection, Jesus became the Lord of Creation. Holy Week can become the occasion for us to find someplace in our lives for self-giving love.

In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis offers us encouragement and suggestions to express self-giving love by working for environmental improvement and justice for all humankind. Because God "lives in the heart of this world," Jesus poured himself out for humankind and gives himself to us in "a fragment of matter" out of love for humanity. Pope Francis tells us that efforts toward ecological health for the planet are God's work of self-giving love.

We have seen many examples of this kind of love during the pandemic. From exhausted health care workers who risked exposure the virus, to those who worked to provide the hungry with food, and many others. May they inspire us to give of ourselves in any way we can to serve the common good.

† **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:**

God, who calls us to generous commitment and to give him our all, offers us the light and the strength needed to continue on our way. In the heart of this world, the Lord of Life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. *Praise be to him!* (245)

The Lord, in the culmination of the mystery of the Incarnation, chose to reach our intimate depths through a fragment of matter. He comes not from above but from within, he comes that we might find him in this world of ours. . . . Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Indeed the Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love. (236)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That, knowing that God is not stranger to our pain and struggle, we have the courage to go beyond ourselves in the service of God, others, and the earth, we pray to the Lord . . .

Option 2: That, knowing that Jesus loves and forgives us even as we fail in fidelity, we renew our commitment to God's work of renewing the earth, we pray to the Lord . . .

Further Resources

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