

March 24, 2024

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Is 50:4-7

Phil 2:6-11

Mk 14:1–15:47

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

GROW: “The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them.” This sentence from our first reading is taken from one of the four “Songs of the Suffering Servant” in Isaiah. The New Testament identifies this Servant as Jesus, and we know that Jesus accepted the suffering that was foretold in the verses that follow this one: “I gave my back to those who beat me ... my face I did not hide from insults and spitting.” As aspiring servants of God on this Palm Sunday, the most holy of days when we hear Mark’s account of Jesus’ passion, how does this sentence speak to us? What does it mean to have a well-trained tongue? To me it is a call to speak to the Lord in prayer as well as to speak the Good News of the Gospel whenever and wherever we can.

GO EVANGELIZE | PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

GO: How can we gain the confidence to believe that our tongue is “well-trained”? We know we are all given the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and we must trust in that promise and invoke his presence often. Who knows? A kind word or gesture from us may just “speak” to a weary person who is struggling. Paul writes that in his passion, Jesus “emptied himself” in the hours before his death and “[became] obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” Paul’s next words give us the answer to our question above: “Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend ... and *every tongue confess* [emphasis added] that Jesus Christ is Lord.” The fullness of the kingdom will be realized only when Jesus comes again. But in the meantime, we have the Eucharist that Jesus instituted at the Last Supper to sustain us and give us strength for our task to confess Jesus Christ as Lord and spread the kingdom of God one day at a time.

PRAY: “Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will.” These words from today’s passion narrative demonstrate Jesus’ complete, obedient surrender of his will to his Father’s divine will. As flawed human beings, we will never be able to perfectly emulate our Savior’s actions, but what better way to begin Holy Week than to try? Through prayer, strive to surrender yourself to God this week by trusting him completely, and striving to do his will with humility and Christ-like obedience.