

APR 4-5, 2020



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**HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE
WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD,
THE KING OF ISRAEL.
*JOHN 12:13***

To our visitors ... If you are just passing through, we are glad you chose to worship with us. If you are seeking a new church home, please know there is always room in our pews and a place in our hearts for you.

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116 South 2nd Street
Connellsville, PA 15425

724.628.6840 (f) 724.628.0838

MON-THU 8:30am-noon / 1-4pm
FRI 8:30am-1pm

BRADY CENTRE

459 Ranch Road
Dunbar, PA 15431

724.277.4236 (f) 724.277.8954

MON, TUE, THU, FRI 9am-3pm

Confession

is currently by appointment.
Please call the DeVivo Centre
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**We work with the Holy Trinity
Conference of St. Vincent DePaul**
to help our neighbors in need.
Their number is 724.562.3341.

We are grateful for the advertisers
who cover the cost of printing
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Please frequent their businesses
in support of them.

This week's featured advertiser
is Catholic Match.

Our Faith Community consists of the Parish Families
of Immaculate Conception, Connellsville
(1869), Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Dunbar
(1874), Saint John the Evangelist,
Connellsville (1895), and Saint Rita of
Cascia, Connellsville (1915).



We also embrace the former Parish Families of Saint Vincent de Paul,
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of Mount Carmel, Connellsville (1901-1913), Saint Emory, Connellsville
(1903-1970), Holy Trinity, Connellsville (1903-2008), Saint Polycarp,
West Leisenring (1917-1997).

OUR STAFF - WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

FR. PAUL LISIK

Pastor

plisik@dioceseofgreensburg.org

FR. JULIUS CAPONGPONGAN

Parochial Vicar

jcapongponan@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Hospital ministry, homebound visits

FR. DANIEL CARR

Parochial Vicar

dcarr@dioceseofgreensburg.org

SR. DONNA MULLIGAN

Director of Pastoral Ministry

dmulligan@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Communion to the sick/homebound

MARY SAMPEY

Director of Evangelization

msampey@dioceseofgreensburg.org
RCIA, Foundations of Faith, youth
ministry, sacramental prep

MOLLI VASSAR

RCIA Coordinator, Spiritual Counseling

mvassar@dioceseofgreensburg.org

LOU ANN LAUFFER

Business Manager, Connellsville

llauffer@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Connellsville general parish business,
cemetery lots/deeds

SUSAN DUNKARD

Business Manager, Dunbar

sdunkard@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Dunbar general parish business

LISA ANDURSKY

Administrative Assistant

landursky@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Connellsville baptism, marriage,
Mass scheduling

KAREN TWEARDY

Parish Secretary, Connellsville

ktweardy@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Bulletin (deadline MON at noon),
envelopes, membership

TINA MAHALLICK

Parish Secretary, Dunbar

tmahallick@dioceseofgreensburg.org
Dunbar Mass scheduling

DAVID HERTZNELL

Maintenance, Connellsville

dhertznell@dioceseofgreensburg.org

DAVID PANZELLA

Cemetery Care, Connellsville/Dawson
724.323.5365



**THE STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE REPORT FOR
MAR 28-29 WILL BE IN A FUTURE BULLETIN.**

GOOD FRI COLLECTION. At the afternoon Liturgy on Good FRI, a special collection will be taken for the upkeep of the Holy Land, and to help impoverished people who inhabit this part of the world. You are asked to be generous to this particular cause.

EASTER COLLECTION: We also encourage your continued generosity to your parish at Easter. An extra generous Easter collection will allow us to pay our taxes and Diocesan assessments in a timely manner.

**PLEASE ALSO PRAYERFULLY CONSIDER
YOUR DLA PLEDGE.**

Two Masses will be offered on Easter SUN for the intention of those who donated for Easter flowers.

AN EASTERTIME TABLE PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, risen from the dead: You were known to your disciples in the breaking of the bread.

Alleluia! Send your blessing as bread is broken here.

Lord Jesus Christ, risen from the dead: Your friends came to believe in the resurrection as you ate with them.

Alleluia! Send your blessing, be present at this table.

Lord Jesus Christ, risen from the dead: You sent your Holy Spirit to lead us to the eternal feast of heaven.

Alleluia! Send your blessing, send your Spirit again.

Give daily bread to your church through these days of Easter joy. We pray to you, source of all blessing.

**Please remember
these people on
our prayer list:**



Barb Check, Mason Collins, Joe Connell, Jim Garstecki, Doug Pirl, Karla and Kevin Tressler, John Emanuel, Joanne Fox, Robert Ruck, Eugene Onusko, Patrick and Joan Frazier, Esther Ziska, Paul B, Mario Scotto-DiMarco and Joe Maiese.



APR 5, 2020

Philippians 2:6-11 EXTREME LIFE

On Palm Sunday we experience the greatness and the poverty of the human spirit. As Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds acclaimed him as the Son of David. But as he stood trial before Pilate, the same crowds called for his crucifixion.

On Palm Sunday, near the end of Lent, we have come in touch with the greatness and poverty of our own lives. Throughout this season we have reflected on our sin, but we have also experienced God's grace in communion, community, and Scripture.

On Palm Sunday, we also hear about the greatness and poverty

of Jesus. Jesus was in the form of God, but he took on human form. He had all greatness as God, but he did not cling to it. St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians says, "Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave." Jesus humbled himself to become like us and to experience what we experience - even death.

"Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name."

Sometimes in a single day we experience unfettered joy and insoluble grief. A child is born, but someone dies. We receive mercy from a stranger, but we fail to love our neighbor. The extremes of human life are vast. But Christ came to us embracing both extremes and all that is in the middle. All, all of human life he redeems and makes his own.

Lectionary Bulletin Inserts: Reflections on the 1st/2nd Readings, Year A © 2019 Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

MON: Is 42:1-7; Ps 27:1-3, 13-14; Jn 12:1-11

TUE: Is 49:1-6; Ps 71:1-6, 15, 17; Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

WED: Is 50:4-9a; Ps 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34; Mt 26:14-25

THU: Chrism Mass: Is 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9; Ps 89:21-22, 25, 27; Rv 1:5-8; Lk 4:16-21

Lord's Supper: Ex 12:1-8, 11-14; Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Jn 13:1-15

FRI: Is 52:13-53:12; Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25; Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19:42

SAT: a) Gn 1:1-2:2 [1:1, 26-31a]; Ps 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35; or Ps 33:4-7, 12-13, 20-22; b) Gn 22:1-18 [1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18]; Ps 16: 5, 8-11; c) Ex 14:15-15:1; Ex 15:1-6, 17-18; d) Is 54:5-14; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-13; e) Is 55:1-11; Is 12:2-6; f) Bar 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Ps 19:8-11; g) Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28; Ps 42:3, 5; 43:3-4 or Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6 or Ps 51:12-15, 18-19; h) Rom 6:3-11; i) Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Mt 28:1-10

SUN: Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8; Jn 20:1-9 or Mt 28:1-10 or (at an afternoon or evening Mass) Lk 24:13-35

THE MASS INTENTIONS LISTED BELOW WILL BE CELEBRATED AT A PRIVATE MASS ON THAT DAY BY ONE OF OUR PRIESTS. PLEASE KNOW THAT YOUR INTENTION IS BEING FULFILLED.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| SAT, APR 4 | VIGIL/ST. ISADORE, BISHOP & DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH |
| SR | Frank Arcangelini (Sister, Grace Corona) |
| SA | Anna Giobbi (Ron & Joann Park) |
| IC | Florian Goron, Jr. (Maurita, Joe, Pat & Kristi) |
| SUN, APR 5 | PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD |
| SR | Pro Populo |
| SA | Jackie & Eugene Baker (The Porterfield & Dumm Families) |
| IC | Tommy McGuinness (Grandma Iaquina & Uncle Dan) |
| SJ | John F. Painley (Bernadette Russell) |
| MON, APR 6 | MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK |
| SR | Rose Mariotti (Children & Grandchildren) |
| SA | Josephine Bonadio (Family) |
| TUE, APR 7 | TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK |
| SJ | Barb Madore (Mary Shubert) |
| SA | Harry & Dorothy Lizza (Frank & Judy Capo) |
| WED, APR 8 | WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK |
| SR | Kathy Herbert (Audrey DeCara) |
| SR | Fred, Jr. & Letty Perez (The Aquino & Calinao Families) |
| THU, APR 9 | HOLY THURSDAY |
| 10:00am | Chrism Mass/Blessed Sacrament Cathedral |
| 7:00pm | IC For Vocations to the Priesthood |
| | IC Adoration following Mass, until Midnight |
| FRI, APR 10 | FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD |
| 10:00am | SJ Stations of the Cross |
| 1:30pm | IC Good Friday Liturgy |
| 6:00pm | SA Stations of the Cross/Outdoor |
| 8:30pm | SR Tenebrae |
| SAT, APR 11 | HOLY SATURDAY |
| 12:00pm | SJ Blessing of the Baskets |
| 12:30pm | SA Blessing of the Baskets |
| 9:00pm | IC Easter Vigil/For the Parishioners |
| SUN, APR 12 | EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD |
| 8:00am | SR For the Parishioners |
| 9:00am | SA Intention of Those Who Gave for Easter Flowers |
| 9:30am | IC For the Parishioners |
| 11:30am | SJ Intention of Those Who Gave for Easter Flowers |



BRIGHTNESS AND HOPE. Does Palm Sunday fit in with the spirit of Lent? Lent is generally seen as a penitential time, a period of serious consideration as to how we can remove the unproductive parts of our lives and replace them with something more worthy. Then along comes Palm Sunday with a lot of parading and shouting and celebrating. How does that fit in?

There are several answers to this. One answer is that in every season, in every time and in every mood, it is always in place to welcome Jesus into our lives and to celebrate His coming. God's presence enriches every time of life. It is also true that we should always enjoy and celebrate the "now". Today is part of our total life experience. Jesus came to give us abundant life, and part of that abundance is appreciation of what can be around us every day: beauty, friendship and meaningful work.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, He knew that not everyone would welcome Him. In fact there were some who opposed His coming and resented Him. Some religious leaders told Jesus to stop His followers from celebrating but Jesus answered, "I will tell you that if they keep quiet, the stones themselves will start shouting." Despite the opposition, Jesus chose to celebrate.

Is this not a good lesson? Few of us can say that everything is perfect in our life situation. We have problems to face, probably short and long term. There may be obstacles in our way or people who hinder us. Our successes in life may be only partial, but God calls us to celebrate what we have. We should not wait until everything is perfect. If our skies contain a few clouds, be glad for the sun that shines around and through them. Feel the excitement of Jesus' coming.

Enjoy Palm Sunday's brightness and hope.

| MINISTRY SCHEDULE - APR 11 | | MINISTRY SCHEDULE - APR 12 - EASTER SUN | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| EASTER VIGIL - 9:00PM AT IC | | SR-8AM | SA-9AM | IC-9:30AM | SJ-11:30AM |
| ACOLYTES/ SERVERS | Z Zimmerman | M Waggett E Armstrong T Barrett | C Tabaj | R Sebek S House | K Yoders R Knizner |
| EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS | M Pieczynski A Hann M Sampey | C Waggett L Lauffer G Bohinski | A Trimbath T Dull J Laurion | J Colvin P Akers D Gephart | E Smith B Knizner L Martin |
| CROSS BEARERS | R Lewandowski L Thomas A Geary L Geary E Pleva | E Kozel | A Mongel F Vinoverski O Tabaj | M House I House | R Gaudiello N Gaudiello |
| LECTORS | M Dunaway L Grinko C Petrasun J Grover | R Kozel | G Heller | B Colvin | M Hood |

These are Holy Week Services scheduled at our parishes, to celebrate the Holy Triduum.

HOLY THURSDAY

7:00pm IC Mass of the Lord's Supper

GOOD FRIDAY

10:00am SJ Stations of the Cross

1:30pm IC Liturgy of Good Friday

6:00pm SA Outdoor Stations of the Cross

8:30pm SR Tenebrae Service

HOLY SATURDAY

12:00pm SJ Blessing of Baskets

12:30pm SA Blessing of Baskets

1:00pm SA Easter Egg Hunt

9:00pm IC Easter Vigil Mass



PLEASE NOTE:

We are publishing this Holy Week schedule with the anticipation that the coronavirus restrictions will be loosened on our communities. Because of the early bulletin print deadline we printed this schedule, and the Bishop and the Diocese will let us know for sure.

As we complete the Lenten Season this week and celebrate the Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday) and Easter, I thank all of you who made Lent a prayerful, spiritual time. Our Holy Week schedule is something to keep in a handy place in your home. We invite you to share with us the beauty of as many

ceremonies, commemorating the last days of Jesus in this world, as you can. Make the Holy Eucharist the center of your preparation for Easter. Nothing will prepare you better to share the happiness of another celebration of Jesus' resurrection. I hope you will make as much time as possible to be with Christ this week. Fr. Paul

On Holy Thursday at 10am Bishop Malesic will celebrate the Chrism Mass at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral. At this Liturgy, the sacred oils used for the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sick are blessed for the use of every parish in our Diocese. Many priests and laity from several of the parishes in our diocese will be present. This Mass is a visible sign that we are not only individual parishes, but all members of one diocesan family. This is a great opportunity for our parishioners.

After the services of **Holy Thursday**, the eternal flame of the sanctuary lamp is extinguished and remains dark until it

After the **Good Friday Liturgy (1:30pm at Immaculate Conception)**, the tabernacle in each church remains open and empty, signifying the death of Our Lord. They will not

Our Tenebrae Service will be held at St. Rita on FRI, APR 10 at 8:30pm. The word from Latin refers to "darkness", the name of an ancient ceremony originally celebrated during Holy Week. The service is simple but beautiful. It consists of readings from Sacred Scripture and the gradual extinguishing of the lights in the church, leaving only one candle burning at the end of the service. The extinguishing of the lights is meant to point to the Apostles' desertion of

is relit from the flame of the new Easter Fire, which is kindled and blessed at the beginning of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night.

Following the 7pm Mass on Holy Thursday, there will be Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until midnight in Immaculate Conception parish hall. We will close the evening with special prayers at 11:45pm. Plan to spend some time with the Blessed Sacrament at the altar of repose. We spend time with our Lord as we remember His time in the Garden of Gethsemane.

contain the Holy Eucharist again until after Holy Communion is consecrated during the celebration of the Mass during the Easter Vigil.

Christ before the crucifixion. A loud noise signals the end of the service symbolizing the closing of Christ's tomb. Thus, at the conclusion of the service all depart in darkness (Tenebrae), save the one candle which is our hope fulfilled on Easter morning. Please join us for this spiritually moving service in celebration of the Passion of Our Lord and anticipating the hope of Easter.

Both parish offices will be closed on Holy THU, Good FRI, and Easter MON. They will re-open on TUE, APR 14. Fr. Paul, Fr. Julius, Fr. Dan, Sr. Donna,



and the staffs in Connellsville and Dunbar wish you and your family a most Blessed Easter Season.



EASTER EGG LORE. From the beginning of time, the egg has had special symbolism among people. Decorating techniques, patterns and folktales are passed on from generation to generation, while creating beautiful eggs during Holy Week.

One interesting tale involves a man who was sentenced to death. He was made to carry a heavy wooden cross. While carrying it through the city, many people mocked him, except for a merchant selling eggs in the market. When he saw the poor man struggling he took pity on him. He covered his baskets of eggs and left them to help the man carry his cross to the place of his execution. The man thanked him for his help and when the merchant returned to the market he discovered his baskets of eggs were now decorated with colorful multicolored patterns. The merchant's name was Simon and the man he helped was Christ.

A second tale describes the tears of the Blessed Mother. When she heard that her Son Jesus was sentenced to death, she immediately left the marketplace to meet with Pontius Pilate about her son's release. But after pleading with Pilate, he announced "What I have done I have done." Immediately, tears began to fall from Mary's eyes and fell upon her basket of eggs. These tears miraculously turned the eggs into beautiful "pisanki", symbolic of her sorrow, and also to announce the Resurrection of her Son on Easter Sunday.

Catholics in the US age 14 and older are obliged to abstain from meat on Good Friday. The Church forbids use of meat, but does not prohibit eggs, milk products or condiments made with animal fat.



Catholics in the US from the day after their 18th birthday until the day after their 59th birthday, are obliged to fast on Good Friday. Church Law allows for only 1 full meal on Good Friday, but does not prohibit some food in the morning and evening. The combined quantity of the 2 lesser meals should not exceed the quantity eaten at the full meal.

Note: Persons taking medication or with health concerns should follow their doctor's advice.

BLESSING OF EASTER FOOD. One of our revered traditions is the blessing of Easter foods on Holy Saturday. The contents of this basket represent the food that will be shared during the "Blessed Easter Meal" on Easter Sunday. You may wish to check this list before leaving for church on Saturday morning. Remember this meal breaks the Lenten fast and brings the joy of Easter into the home; therefore, it is traditionally eaten on Easter after receiving Holy Communion. Some items included are:

BREAD: sharing it extends Eucharist into the home.

PASCHAL LAMB: made of cake, butter or sugar - Christ is the Lamb of God.

SMOKED MEATS: symbolize the sacrifice of the new covenant. Rings of sausage suggest family unity.

EASTER EGGS: the colored egg shells proclaim the glory of the Resurrection.

HORSERADISH: the bitter herbs of Passover fulfilled as Jesus.

WINE: points to the fullness of joy at the Eucharistic table.

SALT: the faith, hope and love of Jesus' followers give zest and meaning to daily life, preserving all that is good.

SWEETS: denote the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom.

SPRING GREENS (EASTER STRAW): stand for the new life of eternal spring won by Christ's Resurrection.

FLOWERS: Christ blossomed forth as a wondrous flower and the blooms announce the return of Spring.

Additional items are added as family tradition dictates and children may also bring a special Easter candy basket. It is a blessing to continue this holy day custom among our families of today.

IC is hosting a trip on SAT, AUG 29 to see QUEEN ESTHER at the Sight & Sound Theatres in Lancaster.



Cost of \$150 includes bus, show and dinner. There are only 48 tickets, so get yours ASAP. Call Guy or Patty at 880-4919 to make a reservation, or with any questions. A \$25 deposit per ticket, payable to IC, reserves your spot. You may mail your reservation to the DeVivo Centre at 116 South 2nd Street, or put it in the drop box there.

Balance of payment is due by MON, JUN 1.

You may still buy St. John's frozen pirohi, by calling Stephanie/Toni at 628-8878.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of MERCEDES OPPMAN, who died recently. May her soul and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in eternal peace.





A great tradition in our parishes is the annual Easter Egg Hunt at St. Aloysius. This year's hunt is planned for SAT, APR 11 at 1pm

(following Blessing of Baskets at 12:30pm) on the vast confines of the parish grounds. All children of Immaculate Conception, St. John, St. Rita, and of course St. Aloysius are invited to this spring event that is guaranteed to brighten

many faces and let the happy sounds of children resound in anticipation of the Resurrection of our Lord. The Easter Egg Hunt is sponsored by St. Al's Rosary Altar Society. Hope to see you there.

Two years ago, I paid a visit to my daughter Noel's preschool classroom. I had prepared a Lenten lesson and activity for them. The main part of the lesson was centered on retelling the story of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection through "Resurrection Eggs." If you are not familiar with Resurrection Eggs, they are a 12-piece Easter Egg set that is SO much more than the typical plastic eggs with candy inside. They instead tell the full story of Easter, beginning with Palm Sunday. The set is complete with a booklet, stickers, and includes religious figurines inside each egg. The particular set that we have at home can be purchased for less than \$25.



<https://www.amazon.com/Resurrection-Eggs-12-Piece-Religious-Figurines/dp/1602006512>

This is a phenomenal way to connect with your child or grandchild

while reliving the events of those history-changing hours. As you retell the story, and open each egg, you find a surprise inside; each figurine is a symbol of Jesus' journey to the cross. For example: after you read about Palm Sunday, the children are asked to open the blue egg. Inside they find a tiny figurine of a donkey. You can also do this as an "Easter egg hunt" on Easter morning. Every time I have done this activity, the children are incredibly engaged throughout. The usual questions I get are...

"What is going to happen next?"

"What is going to be in the next egg?"

And of course, when we open egg number 12 (the white egg which is EMPTY) they ask

"Why is there nothing inside the white egg? Where is Jesus?"

There have also been some unexpected and poignant responses from the children...responses that, are at times, difficult yet essential in order for them to grow in their faith and love of Jesus...

"Why did Jesus have to die?"

"But Jesus didn't do anything wrong!"
"Jesus must have felt very sad, lonely, and embarrassed."

"WHY didn't anyone stop the people from hurting Jesus?"

In these moments and conversations, I can FEEL the incredible love that our young people have for the person of Jesus; a love that perhaps as adults we have not felt for a very long time.

WHY have we become so numb to the pain that Jesus endured for us? WHY aren't we shocked anymore? If only we had the faith of a child. What an inspirational witness to US.

I challenge you, if you have never done so, to make THIS year the year that you truly allow yourself to enter into Holy Week. Allow yourself to FEEL what Jesus felt, to meditate and reflect on what Christ did for YOU, and to, perhaps, fall in love with Jesus all over again.

Christ's peace
and our Mother Mary's love,
Mary Sampey

This week is the one week in Jesus' life which we can follow daily. It is a week in which we can walk along with Him in His footsteps. Holy Week can become a week of holiness for each of us. Our celebration during Holy Week offers us uncountable blessings. We can renew our lives reconciling ourselves walking in the footsteps of Christ. Above all, we can celebrate the Triduum on the last days of Holy Week by sharing in the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, by standing at the cross with Mary and John during the 3 hours of agony on Friday, and by welcoming the Risen Jesus into our lives on Saturday's Vigil of Resurrection. We can make the Gethsemane Pilgrimage by visiting our neighboring parishes on Holy Thursday to spend time in

prayer with our Lord. We can follow the Stations of Our Lord's last hours on Friday morning and His crucifixion at the Tenebrae Service. We can begin our home celebration of Easter by having our food baskets blessed in His name on Holy Saturday. All this we can do, as we welcome the Lord on Palm Sunday to the song of Hosanna. May we not abandon Him the rest of the week as the crowds did. May we walk with Christ through the Liturgies of Holy Week.





It didn't take long for the people to turn on Jesus on Palm Sunday. Liturgically it only takes about 20 minutes. At the beginning

of Palm Sunday Mass we hear and reenact the people honoring Jesus by holding palm branches and crying out "Hosanna to the Son of David". But by the time the Liturgy of the Word rolls around and we hear the Passion narrative, we reenact those same people who cry out those haunting words: "Crucify him!" Their obvious fickleness is frustrating to see.

But equally frustrating is the reaction of the Pharisees and the other Jewish religious leaders. Their refusal to acknowledge who Jesus is and their unwillingness to be moved are equally grating. We're just as impatient with people who are stubborn and unchanging as we are with those who are fickle and fleeting. If politicians change their minds on certain issues we call it waffling. Then if they refuse to change their minds on other issues we call it stubbornness.

But fickleness and stubbornness are not so far off from virtuous living. Being fickle is similar to being adaptable, versatile, or responsive – all things that are highly valued. Likewise, being stubborn is a lot like being determined or steadfast. The proper disposition for the person of faith is to be "fickle" in a certain sense and "stubborn" in another.

"Living by the Spirit" is a kind of fickleness. We as Christians are called to be attentive to God's working in us – to be responsive

to what God is doing in our lives. And at times this means a rapid change in direction that resembles fickleness. Think of the story of Zacchaeus, when Jesus was intending to pass through the town but decides to stop and stay at his house (Lk 19:1-10). Jesus must have looked rather fickle in much that he did. Likewise, conversion of heart often initially looks like fickleness – the companions of St. Paul must have thought he had gone mad after his conversion to Christianity. Certainly Ananias and the Christians in Damascus questioned it – it was only after God revealed his plans to them that they accepted him (Acts 9:10-19).

Likewise, we laud a certain sort of stubbornness. St. Paul urges the Corinthians to "be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord" (1 Cor 15:57). Jesus himself showed a certain kind of stubbornness, especially when he spoke certain challenging truths that were not always accepted by his followers or by the religious leaders. And who could forget the "stubbornness" of the early Church whose members so often lost their lives by refusing to offer incense to Caesar?

WHEN GOD IS ASKING US TO MOVE AND WE STAY PUT, WE'RE BEING STUBBORN. WHEN HE ASKS US TO STAY PUT AND WE MOVE, WE'RE BEING FICKLE.

How are we to remain on the narrow path between being fickle and being stubborn? I think the classic spiritual book "Abandonment to Divine Providence" answers this question quite beautifully.

The order established by God and His divine will are the life of the soul no matter in what way they work or are

obeyed. Whatever connection the divine will has with the mind, it nourishes the soul, and continually enlarges it by giving it what is best for it at every moment. It is neither one thing nor another which produces these happy effects, but what God has willed for each moment. What was best for the moment that has passed is so no longer because it is no longer the will of God which, becoming apparent through other circumstances, brings to light the duty of the present moment. It is this duty under whatever guise it presents itself which is precisely that which is the most sanctifying for the soul.

Understood in this way, it's rather simple. When God is asking us to move and we stay put, we're being stubborn. When he asks us to stay put and we move, we're being fickle. When we do what God asks us to do in each moment, we are living the way we ought – a virtuous life that is in tune with the Holy Spirit and also steadfast in living our faith. It is when we do this most fully that we are most quickly drawn into the holiness of Jesus.

In these constantly changing times of the pandemic, we must most especially be attuned to the will of God in the present moment. It would be very easy to overreact to some information and revert to a certain mob-like mentality like the crowd on Good Friday. Likewise, it would also be easy to remain stuck in our ways and refuse to change like the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin. But if our responsiveness is rooted in God's will for us in each moment, we will find ourselves in select company at the foot of the cross, and in the presence of Our Lord.