

Homily: Palm Sunday: 2016: Cycle C: opening Gospel: Lk 19: 28-40; Is 50: 4-7; Ps. 22;
Phil 2: 6-11; Lk 22:14-23: 56

“The short journey from singing Hosannas to yelling Crucify Him”

1. We now begin to enter into the mystery of Holy Week, into Jesus’s journey of spiritual combat with the powers of satan, sin and death and His glorious triumph over those powers of darkness on Easter Sunday. It is also the time to reflect on the fickle nature of the weak human heart: exulting Jesus on Palm Sunday with Hosannas, as the possible Messiah, to five days later screaming Crucify Him as a frenzied mob in front of Pontius Pilate. What a sad reality! But **Jesus is so good that He didn’t allow the fickle human heart to stop His mission to save the human race.** Thankfully, by His Passion, Death, and Resurrection He has won for us the grace, so that we can love Him and our neighbor with consistency and not with a fickle heart - if we cooperate with the grace Jesus won for us on the Cross and through the power of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism and the other sacraments.
2. How does this new consistency in love and virtue occur in the human heart, rather than being fickle and wavering? **By embracing our own cross daily with love**, which means **bearing our cross in union with Christ.** When we bear our daily sufferings, in this imperfect world, with love, it gives us peace of soul and a more eternal perspective on things as well as helping other souls spiritually speaking. When we don’t bear our cross, we turn on backs on the Lord and lose an opportunity to draw other souls to the Lord as well. So as not to turn away from the Lord in the midst of suffering the mystery of the Cross, we need to pray daily that God gives us a renewed spiritual mind, so that we will not be spiritually blind to the things of God! **What does this daily Cross consist of?** *The little or big sufferings borne in love connected with our state in life and the fulfillment of our daily duties in our vocation; the physical ailments caused by poor health; economic restraints; the fatigue resulting from overwork or anxiety, either at home or at work; the moral sufferings resulting from differences of opinion on important matters, the clash of temperaments and personalities or simple*

misunderstandings; the sufferings that come from others rashly judging our actions or attributing evil or ill will when there is none, the sufferings that come from losing people we love to earthly death, etc. etc (taken in part from meditation 129 “The Daily Cross” in the book *Divine Intimacy* by Fr. Gabriel of Mary Magdalen, TAN books: please buy this book if you don’t already have it- it is a great book!). And we do the same to others, adding to their daily cross, in ways we often don’t realize in our pride and spiritual blindness. May the Lord enlighten us, and help us to carry the crosses of others, instead of adding to them! All of this dynamic is part of the daily cross which you and I are called to bear based on our life circumstances: it should be noted each person’s cross is somewhat **unique** based on God’s Providential plan for our lives and molded specifically for our eternal benefit, but the way we respond to it is the **same** for everyone: **it calls for our daily Fiat or Yes to the Lord.** To meekly bare our spiritual shoulders and open our hearts and carry it with generosity and love. To repeat with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, “*Not my will Father, but Yours be done.*” And with our Lady at the Annunciation, “*Let it be done to me according to Your Word.*”

3. **The Cross is the source of all spiritual fruitfulness in this now redeemed but still sinful world. In the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross the world receives new life.** It is renewed at every Mass, and made spiritually present for our salvation, if we cooperate and allow the Lord to transform us in His grace. Our daily life is to be a continuation of the Cross of Christ, it is to be a continuation of the Mass, in making of ourselves a living sacrifice to the Father, in union with Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit (see Romans: 12:1-2). Let us ask the Lord this week in humility, and in sincere love and generosity to help us enter mystically into Jesus’s Passion, through our daily cross, so we also may share in the life of His glorious Resurrection, beginning now and brought to fulfillment after we depart this earthly life. Blessed Mother Mary, please pray for us that we may have a living knowledge of your Son, Jesus, our Redeemer who leads us from the suffering of the Cross to the glory of the Resurrection. May God bless each of you abundantly during this most holy of weeks in our life of Faith.