

Palm Sunday A/2008

Today we celebrate the entry of Jesus in Jerusalem to accomplish the paschal mystery. All the readings of this day, and in particular the Gospel, bring before our awareness one of the truths of our Christian faith, namely that Jesus has voluntarily accepted suffering and death in order to save us. In this regard, Jesus' passion was in the plan of God.

That is why the words of Isaiah about the servant of the Lord we heard in the first reading apply correctly to Jesus. When the Father asked Jesus to offer his life in ransom for many, he did not rebel against his will. Instead, he gave his back to those who beat him, his cheek to those who plucked his beard, and did not shield his face from buffets and spitting.

Trusting in the Father, he humbled himself like a slave and became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. For that, God will exalt him and put him above every name so that all tongues confess him as Christ the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The violence Jesus underwent and accepted in his passion is not a useless violence; instead his cross is an act of supreme love. In fact, by accepting to die on the cross for our salvation, Jesus gives us a proof of his love for us. When someone loves, he gives to the loved ones everything he has and is. That is what Jesus does in his passion as he offers his life for our sake and for the salvation of the world. In that perspective, the suffering of Jesus is a healing suffering that brings about salvation to the world. In his suffering, we are all healed and reconciled with the Father and with one another.

Since Jesus gives us in his passion an example of total love for mankind, any time we, too, accept suffering for the sake of those who love, we assume and repeat in our own body the passion of Jesus. But at the same time, as the innocent Jesus was condemned unjustly, anytime we make people suffer unjustly, in one way or another, we prolong the passion of Jesus. That is why the passion of Jesus challenges us to love sincerely and totally as we should. The passion of Jesus invites us to break the chain of violence in the world, especially when violence is exercised against the children and the innocents. The passion of Jesus compels us to forgive as did Jesus on the cross, especially where we have been unjustly hurt and humiliated. May God bless you as you suffer for the love you bear for those the Lord has given you! May you find in the passion of Jesus a sign of hope and consolation in your own suffering! God bless you all!

Isaiah 50, 4-7; Philippians 2, 6-11; Matthew 26- 27, 66



Homily Date: March 16, 2008

© 2008 – Father Felicien Ilunga Mbala

Contact: www.mbala.org

Document Name: 20080316homily.pdf