

Palm Sunday C/2010

Human history teaches that great people have often been misunderstood in their life time and by their contemporaries. This has been true for political figures and the saints throughout the centuries; but it was also true for Jesus Christ. The celebration of Jesus' passion gives an idea of the drama that happened in his life; it teaches also how we can deal with our own suffering, especially when we are unjustly condemned.

All the readings of Jesus' passion tell us one thing, namely that Jesus suffered and died for our sake. He voluntarily accepted to give up his life on the cross so that from his suffering we might live. Even when people were praising him and glorifying him with chants - "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord"- , he knew that all that was short-lived and fragile. As ironical as it might be, the same crowd of those who were praising Him on his entrance in Jerusalem was among those who were shouting on Good Friday: "Crucify him".

While people were praising him, Jesus did not lose his head in their gloriole and chants. With courage and abnegation, he assumed his destiny and identified himself with the suffering servant of God whose wounds bring peace to the world. He gave his back to those who bit him; he offered his cheeks to those who plucked his beard and did not shield his face from buffets and spitting.

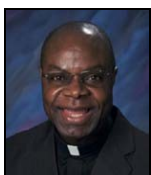
By accepting all this humiliation, God will reward him. God will give him a name that is above every name so that every creature on earth and on heaven may proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father. That glory comes out of cross and the suffering deliberately accepted.

In his passion, Jesus teaches us that the way that leads to glory is the unconditional love that gives everything until the giving up of one's own life for the beloved ones. In his passion, Jesus stands before us as a model of true and uninterested love.

The suffering that comes out of the passion of Jesus is a healing suffering. The love that he shows in passion is a love that forgives, restores and re-creates. Jesus' passion is a passion of love for the salvation of humankind. Love alone is able to endure sacrifices and sufferings for the beloved ones.

Jesus' passion challenges us so that we become sensitive to the suffering of the innocent who are unjustly condemned. Christ's passion challenges each one of us, because any time we make people suffer for one reason or another we prolong Jesus' passion. The suffering Christ teaches us to forgive as he did on the cross, especially when we have been unjustly hurt. Jesus compels us to open our heart to the gift of forgiveness by giving and receiving forgiveness from one another. May you find consolation and comfort in the passion of Jesus when love of your beloved ones brings you sacrifice and sufferings! May God bless you all!

Isaiah 50, 4-7; Philippians 2, 6-11; Luke 22, 14-23, 1- 56



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