

Homily – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion San Fernando Cathedral – April 2, 2023

Jesus enters Jerusalem triumphantly. His disciples accompany him, and the people acclaim him. The scriptures are being fulfilled. Which of them are you? From where do you watch as it all happens? With this commemoration we begin Holy Week to live the mysteries of our salvation. Our infinite God assumed our limits and suffered the consequences of our sins, so that we can enjoy Him, who is the source of all beauty, truth, and goodness.

God himself, the origin and the end of everything – the One who encompasses everything and who penetrates all things from their essence – emptied himself. He becomes human and has himself killed by humans to save humanity from its own self-destructive evil. Thus, He lifts us up to the participation in his own divine life. Love defeats hatred definitively. The creator gives everything for his creatures, to whom he owes nothing and who can add nothing to his glory. It is total victory of hope over all despair.

We entered in a procession – which is a model of our synodal journey – because we need to move forward alongside the Lord. His victorious path must pass through the apparent defeat of the Cross, and we must remain with him. What role do you play in his Passion? Will you be able to remain standing in front of the cross next to Mary, his mother? Will you be able not to deny him like Peter, or not betray him like Judas? Without him, we are capable of nothing, but with the Holy Spirit, whom He and the Father promise to send us, we could even die for him and for the gospel. Most of us will not be worthy of

martyrdom, but we are all called to live for Christ, with Him and in Him.

We are the Lord's living body. Throughout this week we have the privilege of being called to suffer in the spirit what he suffered in his mortal body. As Pope Francis has reminded us, *“On Calvary, two ways of thinking collided. (...) ‘Save yourself. Take care of yourself. Think of yourself. Not of others, but only of your own well-being, your own success, your own interests: your possessions, your power, your image. Save yourself.’ This is the constant refrain of the world that crucified the Lord. (...) Against this self-centred mindset is God’s way of thinking. The mantra ‘save yourself’ collides with the Savior who offers himself.”*

Jesus enters as a triumphant King, but his kingdom does not belong to this world. If his kingdom did belong to this world, we would fight to keep Him from being handed over through so many manifestations of sin in our society. Now we must **suffer for Him** for all the times we have offended him in various ways. We must suffer with Him the afflictions of our neighbor, especially those caused by the actions or omissions of others. We must **suffer in Him** the desecrations committed within the Church, against the Holy Eucharist and the other sacraments, against the person of the Pope and in many other ways.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, comfort us with your strength, as we try to comfort you with our compassion for the sword that pierced your heart.