

Palm Sunday (A)

9th April 2017

‘Will you also go away?’

Is 50: *for my part I made no resistance, neither did I turn away*

Ps 21: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

Phil 2: *He was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross*

Mt 27:11–54: (shorter) Passion according to Matthew.

Would we have been there at the foot of the Cross? This is a question for us as we begin Holy Week. We might well have been in the crowd praising and waving palms as Jesus joyously entered Jerusalem. But would we still have been there at His side by the Friday, on Calvary? Most of His disciples dared not stay (only Our Lady, St Mary Magdalene, St John). It’s quite likely that like St Peter and the others, we wouldn’t have shown our face at the foot of the Cross on Good Friday.

But are we going to be *this* Holy Week? Hopefully we *are* going to be at His side throughout the week, because this is where He would want us. Perhaps in the past year we deserted Him, betrayed Him or denied Him? Perhaps there have been times of serious sin, or serious neglect; or perhaps just a knowledge deep-down that in our selfishness we have not given to the Lord and to our neighbour the love and the effort they deserve. But these shouldn’t be things which keep us away from the Lord ... they should be the very reason we are compelled to come closer to Him. A place at the foot of the

Cross is the place for us, whatever our condition, whatever our year has been like, whatever our sins, because the Cross is the place in which the mysteries of grace are dispensed, and the words of forgiveness, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” Tomorrow (Monday, morning & evening, there’s the chance for forgiveness in Confession at Penitential Services.)

We do not want to be deserters, we want to be Our Lord’s most faithful followers, so we must make this week ahead a truly *holy* week: on Thursday evening come to celebrate with Him the supreme sacrament of the Mass; on Friday take those painful steps of suffering with Him to the Cross and to death; on Saturday wait quietly as He lies in the tomb; on Sunday come and rejoice with the whole Church that God the Father has raised Him from death for us. These days ahead are the heart of our year as Catholics — let’s pack the church this week with our presence at the Holy Week ceremonies, and show the Lord that our love for Him comes above all else. A particular day of great solemnity is Good Friday. We keep this not only with our attendance at the 3pm Liturgy of the Passion, but also with fasting and abstinence from eating meat. Let’s show by our way of living this week close to Our Lord that we truly mean it to be a very holy week in our hearts.