

Palm Sunday (C)

14th April 2019

'Make this 'Holy Week' holy!'

Lk 19:28–40 *'If these keep silence, the very stones will cry out'*

Is 50: *I offered my back to those who struck me ...* Ps 21: *Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani? ...* Phil 2: *though He was in the form of God ...*

Lk 22:14–23:56 The Passion according to Luke

The other evening I was up at St Patrick's, Soho, at a sung service of Stations of the Cross. The boys' choir of the Oratory School (50 of them!) sung a piece of beautiful polyphony between every other station; we also had the chance to hear about the Catholic charity, 'Aid to the Church in Need,' in helping support the beleaguered Christians of Syria and other countries who have suffered so much. What struck me was that Fr Alexander, PP there, who led the Stations meditations, chose not to offer any words of his own at the 12th Station, 'Jesus Dies on the Cross.' I know how he feels. I always feel the same at this point on Palm Sunday (& Good Friday too). Is there anything I can add to the eloquent words of the Passion Gospel? It has expressed it all: the Word of God made flesh has said all that needs to be said. He has died on the Cross; He has died for love of me; He has died to take away my sins.

This Passion Gospel stands at the head of Holy Week, to stir us up to a fervent few days ahead — days that as faithful Catholics we really *must* give over to the Lord. We have our parish Penitential Service coming up on Tuesday for the chance to receive forgiveness of your sins, a very important element of our Lenten practice. Then the Sacred Triduum which is the centrepiece of the Christian year: days that we should keep, in their entirety, as people devoutly in love with Jesus our Saviour: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday night taking us into Easter. Let's make sure that we set aside these days and times without excuse, without compromise: these are days for the Lord, and the Masses and the 3pm Good-Friday service are times when we should be here to love & serve the Lord Jesus. Think of all that He has done for you, all that He has sacrificed for mankind's good, and that will impel you to return love to Him by your presence here. Holy Week can only be a 'holy week' by your devout attendance here in His holy Church. So: make the Lord that heartfelt promise today that you will be here for Him this week as He offers His life for you!