Reflection for Palm Sunday
April 10, 2022

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7
Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Written by: Patsy Geary, GNSH

Palm Sunday marks the transition from the season of Lent into the celebration of Holy Week. We recall our Lord’s triumphal entry into the royal city as we spiritually join with the joy-filled crowd. Waving palm branches (symbols of goodness and victory), we make our way to Jerusalem for the annual beginning of the week of Passover. The traveling throng is all abuzz with stories of the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee, this Jesus who had recently driven out demons, cured two blind people, and actually raised a man from the dead. Amid the people’s growing chants of “Hosanna to the Son of David,” many talk among themselves - “Is he the ‘one,’ the long awaited Messiah-King?” Yet, here he is riding on a common beast of burden, a donkey’s colt, to contrast himself from the naked, brutal power exhibited by the Roman authorities present in Judea.

We mentally place ourselves at the scene on that first Palm Sunday as we wave our branches and sing for joy. However, much more is demanded of us. In today’s powerful reading from Philippians (2: 6-11), Paul encourages his disciples and each of us to consider the attitudes and actions of Jesus and contrast them with our own views and behaviors. “He emptied himself, taking the form of a slave...he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death” (2: 6-8). He challenges us to model ourselves after Jesus by being persons of humility and loving service. We may never do these things completely, but we can improve and bring our lives and attitudes more into alignment with Christ’s.

As we begin this year’s observance of Holy Week, let us ask the Lord to help us realize the Palm Sunday procession is just the beginning of our journey to Jerusalem (and all that ensues there). During this week, remember to pray for one another and for a world desperate for peace!

Reflect: How does the love and unending mercy of Jesus affect the way you live?