



Bringing Home the Word

Palm Sunday
April 10, 2022

The Gift of Redemption

By Fr. Mark Haydu

We come to the holiest week of the year. This week, Christians around the world dedicate their minds and hearts to meditate on the great gift of the redemption won for them by Christ. It is a cosmic event that happened 2,000 years ago but it bears fruit today in the heart of every Christian in every continent, country, city, and home.

As chaotic and nonsensical as evil appears in our world, it also seems to

have a commonality that betrays a will, or an intelligence hidden beneath the surface. The suffering and destruction of so many people from senseless violence, famine, and hatred seems at once both spontaneous, yet strangely orchestrated by some force.

The same was true for Christ's crucifixion. On the surface it appears the result of a feverish crowd, a confused politician, a jealous and blinded religious leadership, and an overwhelmed group of cowardly followers. Yet we perceive the return of the tempter, Lucifer, the author of the *non serviam*. The power of evil that struck the head continues to strike the body. Be aware of the call for all followers of Christ to be ready to face the same struggle against evil that he did, and with the same measure of love. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

Let us make Jesus' prayer our own: let us ask the Father to remove the veil from our eyes, so that in looking at the crucifix over these days, we may understand that God is love. At Easter, God [reveals] himself in the humility of a love that seeks our love. Thus, we give him glory.

General Audience, April 17, 2019



Sunday Readings

Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord GOD is my help,
therefore I am not disgraced;
...I have set my face like flint,
knowing that I shall not be
put to shame.

Philippians 2:6-11

Christ Jesus, ...though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.

Luke 19:28-40

They proclaimed: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How do I react when others hurt and insult me?
- Do I stand idly by when I see others being mistreated?

Becoming the Paschal Mystery

By Johan Van Parys

Have you ever wondered where Lent comes from? The word Lent comes from the Middle English word *lente*, meaning “spring.” Just as new life abounds in spring, during Lent we prepare to celebrate new life at Easter. The origin of Lent can be traced back to a period of intense fasting and praying in preparation for adult baptism. In some Christian communities this period lasted anywhere from a few days or a few weeks to the symbolic forty days. Our current forty-day Lenten fast refers back to the forty days of Jesus’ fast and the forty years the Israelites spent in the desert.

It was determined that the Easter Vigil is the best time to celebrate baptism, and forty days of preparation before Easter became a custom. Currently the period of preparation for Easter known as Lent is recognized by the entire community; it used to be recognized only by catechumens planning to be baptized during the Easter Vigil.

Lent also became the time for great penance by those who belonged to the Order of Penitents as the precursor to the sacrament of reconciliation, which was created to allow people to repent for grave sins. The bishop admitted sinners to the Order of Penitents during a special rite that included the use of ashes. A remnant of this rite is found in our Ash Wednesday service.

Members of the Order of Penitents



were excluded from the sacraments and expected to dedicate their lives to prayer and penance. Once a year, on Holy Thursday, the bishop welcomed those who were ready to be readmitted to the Church and the sacraments. Penitents would intensify their prayer and penance during the days leading up to Easter.

Today, these two movements toward the sacraments of initiation and reconciliation characterize the season of Lent. Lent is indeed the time of final preparation for those who will join the Catholic Church during the Easter Vigil. Those who are already members are called to reconcile with God and the Church so they can celebrate Easter in a worthy manner.

In addition, Lent offers three

disciplines as part of the preparation for initiation and reconciliation: fasting, praying, and giving of alms (charity or care for others). Prayer helps us reconnect with God. Without this relationship, our Church membership is an exercise in following rules and regulations. Penance helps us reconnect with ourselves as an exercise in removing everything that clouds our vision. Giving alms enables us to reconnect with others through sharing.

May the celebration of this great season of Lent be a time of sincere penance, prayer, and sharing so that, in a renewed spirit, we may become the paschal mystery we celebrate. +

Penance helps us reconnect with ourselves as an exercise in removing everything that clouds our vision.

PRAYER

Lord, you are the model of nonviolence and unconditional love.

May your example inspire me to be a more loving and forgiving person in life

—*Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

April 11–16

Monday, Holy Week:
Is 42:1–7 / Jn 12:1–11

Tuesday, Holy Week:
Is 49:1–6 / Jn 13:21–33, 36–38

Wednesday, Holy Week:
Is 50:4–9a / Mt 26:14–25

Thursday, Holy Week (Christ Mass):
Is 61:1–3a, 6a 8b–9 / Lk 4:16–21

Friday, Friday of the Lord's Passion (Good Friday): Is 52:13–53:12 / Jn 18:1–19:42

Saturday, Holy Saturday:
Gn 1:1–2:2; Gn 1:1, 26–31 / Lk 24:1–12

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