

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, Homily by Fr. Robin CRM
(Readings: Isaiah 50:4–7; Philippians 2:6–11; Matthew 26:14–27:66)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today we begin Holy Week with a striking contrast.

We started with joy—waving palms, singing *Hosanna*, welcoming Jesus as King. But very soon, the tone changed. We listened to the Passion—betrayal, suffering, rejection, and the Cross.

This is the mystery of Palm Sunday:
the same crowd that shouts “Hosanna” will soon cry out “Crucify Him.”

In the first reading from the Book of Isaiah, we encounter the Suffering Servant:

“I gave my back to those who struck me... I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.”

This prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus. He does not run away from suffering. He embraces it with courage and trust:

“The Lord God is my help; therefore I am not disgraced.”

Then St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Philippians, gives us that beautiful hymn:

“He emptied Himself... becoming obedient unto death, even death on a cross.”

Pope Benedict XVI once said:

“The Cross reveals the ‘yes’ of God to humanity.”

Jesus’ suffering is not defeat—it is love poured out completely.

And in the Passion narrative from the Gospel of Matthew, we see the painful reality of the human heart.

- Judas betrays for money
- Peter denies out of fear
- The leaders condemn out of jealousy
- The crowd turns out of manipulation
- Pilate remains silent out of convenience

Dear friends, this is not just their story—it is also ours.

How often do we betray truth for personal gain?

How often do we remain silent in the face of injustice?

How often do we follow the crowd instead of standing for what is right?

This Passion is not only about the past—it is happening even today.

We live in a world filled with wars, violence, and deep divisions. Nations rise against nations. Innocent people suffer. Families are displaced. Refugees wander without hope.

And why?

Because of greed, pride, and the thirst for power.

Pope Francis has said:

“War is always a defeat for humanity.”

And again he reminds us:

“The poor are not a problem; they are a resource from which to draw.”

Yet, in our world, the poor are often marginalised, ignored, and exploited. The powerful grow stronger, while the weak are pushed aside.

Is this not the same injustice that Jesus faced?

He too was innocent, yet condemned.

He too was rejected by the powerful.

He too stood with the poor and the forgotten.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Palm Sunday invites us to make a choice.

Are we like the crowd—changing with the wind?

Or are we willing to walk with Jesus—even to the Cross?

To follow Christ is not easy. It requires:

*humility instead of pride

*generosity instead of greed

*courage instead of silence

It means standing with the suffering, defending the oppressed, and being a voice for the voiceless.

But there is hope.

The Cross is not the end.

Pope John Paul II once said:

“Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors to Christ.”

When we open our hearts to Christ, even suffering is transformed into life.

As we begin this Holy Week, let us walk closely with Jesus:

*From the joy of Palm Sunday

*Through the silence of Holy Thursday

*Into the sorrow of Good Friday

*And finally, into the glory of Easter

Let us not abandon Him on the way.

Let us stand with Him.

Let us carry our crosses with faith.

And let us pray:

That our world may turn away from greed and violence,

That justice and peace may prevail,

That the poor and suffering may find dignity and hope.

May this Holy Week change our hearts.

May we not only wave palms today,

but truly follow Christ—

all the way to the Cross,

and into the joy of the Resurrection.

Amen.