

'CONTINUING ON THE EASTER JOURNEY' – HOMILY 25 MARCH 2018 HOLY WEEK

The homily today is modified from last year and our younger members lead us at 9am Mass, as we celebrate Palm and Passion Sunday during the 'YEAR OF YOUTH'. Thank you for your insights and participation.

SACRED OILS

The Sacred Oils have already been blessed in the Cathedral last Thursday evening, and go out to all the parishes and places of pastoral ministry, in our Archdiocese for the next twelve months. Including all the thousands of baptisms and confirmations to come in our parishes including the people sick and injured who will be anointed with the Oil of the Infirm over the next twelve months.

PLANNING

Clergy of the Brisbane Archdiocese gathered for a Convocation on Wednesday and Thursday. The issues included:

- The spirit of Pope Francis over the past 5 years
- Following through on the Recommendations of the Royal Commission
- Professional Supervision for clergy
- [Plenary Council 2020](#) preparation, timetable, resources

Brisbane Archdiocese may have an Assembly beforehand, though a time has not been set.

REFLECTING ON THE PALM & PASSION

This Sunday we reflect on both the Palm and the Passion.

We take the time to ask what each dot point means for us in our lives now.

WHAT DOES GOD SAY TO YOU, TO ME IN EACH OF THESE EVENTS AND ENCOUNTERS IN THE PASSION AND DEATH OF JESUS?

You are invited to pray about each point.

PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION

Our palms are blessed, and we take them home for the year ahead.

The short Gospel reading on the Palm Procession by Jesus into Jerusalem. Mark 11:1-10

- Fulfil prophecy of the [KING](#), humble, riding on a colt.
- Procession with many people in front and behind Jesus
- Hosanna
- Crowd proclaim Jesus: "*Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord.*"

Singing, we too process as we enter the Church.

GOSPEL OF THE PASSION OF JESUS

The long Gospel reading on the passion and death of Jesus Mark 14:1-15, 47 including:

- Anointing of the head of Jesus
- Preparation for the Passover

- The Gift of the Eucharist at the Lord's Supper
- Way to the Mount of Olives with Jesus predicting Peter will deny him.
- Prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane
- The arrest of Jesus and the role of Judas
- Jesus before the high priest, the chief priests, the scribes and elders assembled
- Denial by Peter three times
- Jesus before Pilate
- Choice to release the guilty (Barabbas) or the innocent (Jesus)
- Scourging of Jesus, ridiculing Jesus and crown of thorns
- Simon of Cyrene co-opted to help carry the cross
- Placing of sign *'The King of the Jews'*
- Passion (Suffering)
- Crucifixion
- Jeering at Jesus
- Death of Jesus
- Signs: Temple veil split.
- Centurion makes a partial recognition of Jesus "In truth this was a son of God"
- The naming of some of the Galilean women who were followers of Jesus,
- Joseph of Arimathea
- The Burial of Jesus.
- The presence of Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Jesus, note where the tomb is.

CONTRAST

Having prayed to God about each point, we notice the contrast.

The contrast between the popularity of the Palm Procession and the suffering, courage, mission and hope of Good Friday.

**HOW CAN SOMEONE SO POPULAR BE DESERTED SO QUICKLY?
IN TIMES OF TROUBLE DO WE DESERT GOD?
AND IF SO, IS IT LACK OF COURAGE OR SOMETHING MORE?**

**WHAT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE MISSION OF JESUS?
WHAT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING OF HOW WE SHARE IN THAT MISSION
BY OUR FAITH, OUR LIFESTYLE CHOICES, OUR PRAYER, OUR COMMITMENTS?**

Thinking of the world around us,
and of the sacred ceremonies to come this week, we continue.

PLACING THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS BEFORE THE CROSS

On Palm Sunday, there is a tradition of **Palm Sunday Processions**.

In Brisbane there is the practice of Christians processing for a more just world.

Today the Procession is in the city of **Brisbane**

and in many places for **refugees and asylum seekers, and genuine peace**.

On Good Friday there is the **Way of the Cross**.

In Rome, an annual solidarity walk is organised by the Pope John XXIII Community in support of the **victims of human trafficking, especially women and girls**.

The wording of reflections for the **Stations of the Cross**

can reflect the plight of local people.

The recent devastation from fire in parts of Victoria and NSW, and floods in parts of Queensland, and current cyclones and tropical lows.

The plight of people in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Myanmar, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistan, Afghanistan, northern Nigeria and other nations.

The poverty, injustices, inequalities, starvation, malnourishment, dirty water.

Child and adult sexual abuse in Church, secular and religious institutions.

Domestic violence.

Dishonesty in banking practices.

Corruption, denial of basic human rights.

Denial of religious freedom.

We can add to the list.

All are placed before the cross.

Jesus bringing hope to the devastated parts of our world and to the devastated parts of our own lives.

The Passion and Death of Jesus

are read aloud on Palm Sunday and Good Friday.

In our busy lives we take the time to hear and feel and pray God's Word.

We take time to feel the pain

and to be touched deeply by the love and mercy of God.

We join together, we pray together, we celebrate together.

Our 2016-2018 refugee families from Iraq and Syria celebrate their second Easter here.

In Brisbane and in Logan cities the more recent arrivals celebrate their first Easter here.

We thank God for them.

The parishes of our Archdiocese are all unique

and celebrate our ethnic diversity, as Jesus Christ died and rose for all.

On **HOLY THURSDAY** at 7.30pm we celebrate:

the intimate gift of Jesus in the Eucharist,

the Washing of the Feet as an act of service and humility,

And a brief procession to the Altar of Repose for time in adoration before God in love.

On **GOOD FRIDAY** we commemorate passion and death of Jesus at 3pm.

We venerate the Cross, coming forward as family or small groups.

A much shorter procession is held on **HOLY SATURDAY** evening

as Catholics gather around the **Easter Fire**.

We highlight our call to care for **God's creation**.

We remember the oneness of our **Indigenous Sisters and Brothers** with the land.

We remember our **farmers and producers** who bring forward the fruits of the land.

The Easter Candle is lit

and we process into a darkened church with the Candle bringing forth light.

Three times the cantor proclaims, "*The Light of Christ*".

And each time we proclaim together "*Thanks be to God*".

In the Easter journey, we renew our baptismal promises as a family,

and we pray for the Adults in our Catholic churches throughout the world who will be

- Received into the Catholic Church
- Baptised
- Confirmed
- Receive Jesus in Holy Communion during the **HOLY SATURDAY EUCHARIST**.

We thank God for them.

We renew our Baptismal Promises

at the three Masses – Saturday Easter Vigil 7pm and Easter Sunday 7.30am and 9am.

And we in solidarity pray for our world.

And we journey together in faith this Holy Week.

Amen

Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/032518.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook25032018>]

Year of Youth 2018: <http://youth.catholic.org.au/year-of-youth>

Plenary Council 2020: <http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au>