

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Cycle B

**April 1, 2012 4 and 5:30pm
Saint Margaret Parish, Bel Air**

The Palm

Today, as we begin Holy Week, I want to focus on the palm that we received as we entered church.

The palm captures for me the heart of what today is all about. Here is what I am thinking.

The Palm = Journey

The palm speaks of journey – Jesus' journey, and then our journey.

This is why we have a procession, a “journey” with palm at the beginning of Mass. The palm first points to the journey of Jesus' entire life.

Jesus is always travelling throughout Galilee and Judea, always on the move, always bringing the light and love of the Father to more and more people. He also realizes that his journey will come to its completion in Jerusalem.

And so, the entrance into Jerusalem takes on special significance. The palms that the people use to greet him point to the goal of Jesus' journey.

These palms also call us to see our lives as a journey. We are to be on the move spiritually and personally.

We are never finished products and are always to be growing. And this journey for us will also involve an entrance, in fact many entrances into Jerusalem.

We have to die to self and let go repeatedly of different things within ourselves. We will have to do this so as to live more and more fully in the light and love of God.

The Palm and Patience

With this awareness of our own lifelong journey, we are also to be aware of the journey of others – of each human being.

And in this way, the palm calls us to patience – a patience based on empathy. If we are unfinished and on a journey, then so are others.

This means that we cannot expect others – members of our family, friends, co-workers, fellow parishioners, elected officials, whomever – we cannot expect others to be perfect either. All remain on the journey.

All of us are in need of entering Jerusalem time after time again. All of us are in need of letting go, dying to self in various ways so that we can live more fully in the light and love of God.

The account of Jesus' passion so clearly shows his patience. He was patient with both his followers and opponents – with Peter, James and John, with Pilate and the High Priest, with the soldiers and the crowd.

So the palm today reminds us of Jesus' journey, our journey, and everyone's journey. And it calls us to have the empathetic, thoughtful, and sensitive patience that we see in Jesus himself.