

Palm Sunday Homily
March 27-28, 2021

“*Christus factus est.*”

Readings: Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1-15:47

“All of you will have your faith shaken.” With these ominous words, Jesus said to the Twelve that they would suffer on account of the Faith, and that they would question, wonder and doubt. How disturbing these words must have sounded to this group of Twelve chosen disciples, the Lord’s closest confidants. Yet how prescient they would turn out to be.

Two thousand years later, we live in a world in which events can easily shake our faith, make us stop in bewilderment, fear and even doubt.

Whether a senseless attack on innocent people in a grocery store, uncertainty about community safety closer to home or a growing fatigue with the divisions both in society and the Church—many feel uneasy.

What we recall during Holy Week is so much more than a re-enactment of historical events. Rather, we enter fully into the reality of the Paschal mystery of the suffering, death and resurrection of our Savior. It is a dark road, littered with the effects of our own sin and weakness. We must realize that by our own actions, we are part of the crowd that shouting, “Crucify Him.” In this necessary examination of our own consciences, we mustn’t sit back idly and remain silent in the face of injustice.

And yet the greatest injustice of all is commemorated this week. As the altar is being prepared shortly, you will hear our schola sing the words *Christus factus est*. “Christ was made obedient for us, even unto death.” It was our Lord’s obedience to the will of the Father that made possible our salvation. Whatever troubles we may have in our world or in our lives, the invitation this week is to place them aside and focus on Jesus.

Yes, our faith is tried and tested. We do not always know the way; at times feel alone in our convictions. Yet, it is to the name of Jesus that all must bow in humble supplication.

For now, Holy Week takes center stage in our lives. We do not allow the challenges of the world to overwhelm us, but rather we allow the power of the Cross to transform us. Holy Week is the most solemn time of the Church year, when we willingly enter into the darkness of sin, including our own, that we might be a witness to the lifting of this darkness by means of the Blood of the Cross.

Let us walk with the Lord, let us not abandon Him now, not in this hour of need. Let us hold fast to the Truth, confident that the Truth will indeed set us free from our shackles, that in the end we might bear witness to the Light.