April 19, 2022—Palm Sunday

Jesus wouldn’t allow the people to acclaim Him king until Palm Sunday. A year earlier, a great crowd followed Him to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and He worked an astounding miracle by multiplying a few loaves of bread and fish to feed thousands. At that time, the people wanted to make Him king, but He refused and escaped their fervor by going up into the mountains alone to pray.

The Jews knew that Moses predicted that one day a prophet greater than he would come into the world; they were looking for a new Moses who would give them a new manna and lead them through a new Exodus. This hope for the great prophet and the hope for a Messiah, who was both king and priest, came together in Jesus.

Jesus is the King of kings. His human lineage runs through the line of King David and His priestly lineage is in the order of Melchizedek, but He wouldn’t let them make Him king at the time of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish. Even though the people thought that that was the new manna, it wasn’t. It was still only a sign pointing to the new manna, which would not come until the Last Supper. The new exodus would only come on Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Palm Sunday began the week when all the promises of the Old Testament would come to their fulfillment. It was the time for Jesus to be declared King. We echo the words of the people in the Sanctus at each Mass, when we say or sing “**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest**.” Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem just like King Solomon on the way to his coronation as king. He too came riding on a donkey, humbly accepting the praise and hopes the people were placing on his reign.

As we know, Jesus was not going to be a king like Solomon who had great wealth and power but the Suffering Servant of Isaiah. We heard this prophecy from Isaiah in the First Reading: “**I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard, my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting.**” The Passion of St. Luke that we just read told us of the new Exodus from slavery to freedom. Jesus took the sins of the world—mine and yours—upon Himself through His suffering and death on Good Friday. His loving obedience to His Father’s will brought an end to the slavery of sin and death that afflicted the world—a new and perfect Exodus. He gave us a new and perfect manna in the Holy Eucharist on the night before He died.

This week is the time to walk with Jesus in the events that brought us to eternal life. Although Holy Thursday and Good Friday are not days of obligation, please come and pray with us and be united to Jesus on these special days of our Redemption. Good Friday should be different than any other day; it is not a day for shopping or recreation, but a day to think about the Passion and death of Jesus. Especially holy are those hours between noon and 3:00. You can make that time holy by reading through one of the Gospel texts of the Passion or watch a movie on the Life of Christ or pray the Stations of the Cross with us in Church or right in your own home or pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary.

Along with the people of Jerusalem, we acclaim Christ our King and walk with Him through His Passion, Death and Resurrection this Holy Week.