

Mar. 18, 2018: Journey with Christ to Holy Week

Dear Parishioners

We are quickly approaching the end of Lent. Next Sunday is already Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. The Lenten readings/Gospels have been guiding us through this period of renewal, conversion and enlightenment in our journey to become the best versions of ourselves, with God's grace. This Sunday's Gospel gives us a preview of Easter: Jesus raising his friend Lazarus from the dead. What Our Lord does with his friend Lazarus he will do and wants to do for all those who believe in him.

Jesus declares to Martha just who he is in this passage about Lazarus from St. John: "I am the Resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who loves and believes in me will never die." And Jesus continues question-ing Martha, "Do you believe this?" This question is also for us. Do we believe the mysteries we are about to celebrate and enter into these next few weeks: the Paschal mystery, the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord?

Part of the message of Lent and the preparation for the celebration of Paschal Mystery is the call to conversion, to become that better version of ourselves through the grace of God. The call to conversion must include an awareness of where we need to grow by the acknowledgment of our sins: our faults, failures and weakness. This acknowledgement is part of self-knowledge and essential to growth and progress.

Confession, or the Sacrament of Reconciliation, is that sacrament that helps us along that path of self-knowledge and becoming a better version of ourselves. A good examination of conscience, objectively rooted in the Gospels, the Ten Commandments and the teachings of the Church, helps us to see where we need to grow in our relation with Christ and the moral life. As St. John tells us, "If we say we are without sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

This Wednesday at 7pm we have an excellent opportunity to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We are having our Parish Penance service with a brief Liturgy of the Word and examination of conscience, after which we will have eight priests to hear confessions. Please join us for this moment of grace in the sacrament of God's mercy and forgiveness.

I have noticed since I have been here that some of our smaller altar servers struggle with carrying our processional cross and they worry that they may drop it. As beautiful as it is, it is awkward and heavy for them to handle. We have found a much lighter weight and easier to handle processional cross and will be introducing it for Holy Week. Our present processional cross will be put in our adoration chapel just to the right of the tabernacle and we will continue to use it at the veneration of cross for the Good Friday liturgy. I would like to thank the parishioner who has generously donated funds for this processional cross.

In Christ,

Fr. Vincent