

**Homily**  
**Palm Sunday - A**  
Rev. Peter G. Jankowski  
April 04-05, 2020

Mt 21: 1-11  
Is 50: 4-7  
Ps 22: 8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24  
Phil 2: 6-11  
Mt 26: 11-54

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Before all this craziness going on with the virus, I had spoken to Fr. Michael Magiera, FSSP from St. Joseph's Church in Rockdale. Fr. Magiera is a priest from the Fraternal Society of St. Peter who celebrates Mass exclusively in the extraordinary form, the Latin mass for the people of his community. Father Magiera and I worked together with the Poor Clares (who have been kind enough once again to provide me with all these items for my St. Anne chapel so that I can offer these Masses for your sake. Fr. Magiera, in conjunction with his musician (Mr. Daniel Lucetta) was kind enough to sing the passion for this Palm Sunday liturgy so that we can offer you some type of spiritual feeling during this holiest of weeks in the Church year. I very much thank



them and thank all of you for being patient with me with these online Masses.



That said, I do have to ask who, WHO in this community had the audacity to take a rose and affix it on the rail of our church here at St. Anne, taking a rose during Holy Week and

attaching it to our church????!!!!??? The **audacity**, the hubris of such an act!!! **CALL THE OFFICIALS - CALL THE POPE!!!**

What someone did for us is a wonderful symbol. We have used the idea of ribbons (yellow, red, pink and the like) as well as roses or other flowers to commemorate those who have died, who are suffering or for those who are in need. That Rose that I noticed while entering the church today is a great symbol of faith that reminds us that the rose symbolizes the kiss of God. The Latin word "rosarium" means "garden of prayers." Every time we pray an "Our Father," "Hail Mary" or

“Glory Be,,” it is as if we are planting a seed in the garden of prayers for the salvation of souls, starting with our own. For Jesus to come down and do what he did is like planting a garden throughout the whole world.



In light of this, I was thinking about the Garden of Gethsemane that I visited two years ago on a Holy land trip. I was told on this trip that after Jesus died, the Roman government ordered that all the olive trees in the garden be leveled by the army in order to suppress any sign of the Jewish or Christian faith in a converted pagan world. Some ten centuries later, those trees grew out to become even more lush than before and subsequently more beautiful than they were in the past.

This image of the resurrected olive tree is the image I have for Palm Sunday. I see Palm Sunday as an image that our Lord, through his death and resurrection, provides something even greater than we could ever comprehend.

We realize that every time we have to deal with conflict (as we certainly do at this time), we recall how *every* generation most likely has dealt with one problem or another; every generation has had to endure one way or another through something in the course of their lifespan. What we learn on Palm Sunday, on Good Friday and certainly during Easter is that we can get through this tension together, on the other side of it will be this lush, beautiful garden, maybe not the way that we remember it, but certainly much more beautiful than we can ever imagine. In our hearts, if we can show how much we love and how much we care and sacrifice for the sake of love, then we realize what Christ did for us. If we sacrifice like Christ, come what may, we understand the way in which we make it to the other side of this life.

If we learn about modeling this sacrifice, then the metaphorical garden that we are going to enter as a result is infinitely more beautiful than what we have experienced and we realize that all of this was made possible through the sacrifice of this God-man. As one man (Adam) sinned because of his lack of faith, the “New Adam” shows us how to

find our “second life” and that is why we are here today. We are here celebrating an online Mass so that we learn not to give up. Through this sacrifice, we hope to realize that even though the world abandoned this God-man, this Emmanuel, this Savior of the world on the cross, the Savior did not abandon us. If we turn to our Lord and continue to pray, planting those seeds every step of the way, we will find hope in the world of conflict and we will find God.

Perhaps, maybe, we can help our florists out or help those who sell palm branches. Maybe take a palm, take a rose or a ribbon, attach it outside your house, take a ribbon, attach it on your tree – do whatever you think appropriate. Since today’s color is red for Palm Sunday, find a red rose or find a red ribbon, wrap a ribbon around a palm, and then every time you look at that rose, that ribbon or that palm, say an “Our Father,” say a “Hail Mary” and/or say a “Glory Be.” Let us view this time in our homes not as a time to lose hope but rather as an opportunity to build a relationship with God, plant a spiritual garden

and, in this process, continue to save souls, including our own! When we live like Christ, then God shows us to the path of heaven as well.

Let us always keep faith, keep love and keep hope. Know that we in the church communities are praying for you in this holiest week of the year as well because it this is not just our job or our responsibility but it is our honor and our privilege to live like Christ through this sacrifice. Let's continue to plant the seeds of faith in this garden of prayers by offering this sacrifice with the people that we meet.

This is our prayer.