

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion
Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem
April 17, 2011

Today you and I enter the most significant eight days in the Church's calendar. And how we see the liturgy today will pretty well determine how we act the rest of the week – perhaps the rest of our lives.

Passion Sunday, like all of Lent, gets its liturgical meaning from Easter. Easter is what we call the paschal mystery. And what is the paschal mystery? An inseparable two-some, a duality: the dying-and-rising of Jesus. The whole of Lent is a progressively more intense initiation into the twin reality of Jesus dead and risen.

Today, Passion/Palm Sunday, this whole week, we enter with growing intensity into the *whole* paschal mystery. Not palms *or* passion: both. Not triumph *or* tragedy; triumph *in* tragedy. Not a dying *or* a rising Christ; a dying-rising Christ. The paschal mystery is *one* mystery: life in and through death.

My brothers and sisters in Christ Our Hope: If you want to celebrate both liturgy and life these eight days, I have three suggestions: 1) Don't divorce passion and palms, Good Friday and Easter. They are inseparable. *In* Christ's death there is life. 2) Act today, and all week, like risen Christians. You have already risen with Christ. Thus rejoice... today! 3) Let all your dying be a new living. Not without pain. But let the pain be permeated with Easter promise. There is no dying that does not bear within it the seeds of fresh life.

Acclaiming Jesus, like the people of Jerusalem, let us go forth in peace!

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