

March 28, 2021

For many years now, throughout Christianity, Palm Sunday has slowly changed into Pasion Sunday, where we read the passion story. I suspect there are many reasons for this, I like the idea of dwelling in the passion story because it frames Easter. It gives background for the Easter story to have a deeper meaning.

This passion story is a journey in itself. It's difficult to hear. It's a story of Religion and Politics, a story of fickle crowds, a story of power and jealousy... A story of sin and death. This story is about human violence... This story is also about all of us, in all the ways we hurt one another.

And there is plenty of blame to go around. It's a story where everyone is guilty, and yet at the same time-- no one is guilty. It is the culmination of coveting, jealousy, bearing false witness, finger pointing, a million little sins that explodes in the killing of an innocent victim.

I like to think of this passion story a little like confession... And if the crucifixion is like confession, then perhaps the resurrection is like forgiveness. Confession and forgiveness, crucifixion and resurrection... It forms a pattern like law and gospel, a pattern that convicts and saves.

This repeated pattern holds the power to change us, to transform us. It's a pattern that creates a mirror for us, a safe place to see our own reflection. And what we see... can be the energy God uses to change our hearts.

When we read this story it's easy for us to identify with the disciples, it's safer to watch what happens from a distance. My invitation for you is to wonder how you might have acted in this story if you were right there.

Put yourselves in the place of the religious people-- how would you feel if someone was challenging your beloved traditions?

Put yourself in the place of Pilate or Herod, trying to be fair and just, and trying to keep the peace when a mob is getting out of hand...

Put yourself in the place of Peter--How would you feel if you betrayed a friend?

Put yourself in the place of the soldiers— just doing your duty, carrying out your orders... Someone has to do the actual dirty work of nailing Jesus to the cross.

Put yourself in the crowd... what would you be saying?

Tough things to think about... And please remember, Easter is coming next Sunday... And thanks be to God, Resurrection comes...