

Passion - Palm Sunday

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Today, we commemorate the triumphant entry of our Lord into Jerusalem. With palms and branches in our hands, we remember that sacred moment when voices rose, hearts rejoiced, and the road was covered with hope.

These palms we hold in our hands are not just leaves; they carry a story. We take them home, we place them in quiet corners, and they remain with us throughout the year: silent witnesses to our joys, our struggles, and our prayers. Then, we bring them back almost a year later; to be burned, to become ashes, and to be placed upon our foreheads as a sign of repentance and salvation. What a mystery! What once was raised in praise becomes a sign of humility. What was once proclaimed in victory becomes a mark of surrender. We apply and receive the Holy Ashes with a beautiful and reflective prayer: “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Just recall what happened to the blessed palms of last year. Some remained with us, close to our daily lives; some were forgotten; and some were lost, never to be seen again. Yet many are returned: to be transformed; to receive a new purpose; and to become part of another sacred moment in the history of salvation.

Dear brothers and sisters, the blessed palms that we hold today reflect our own lives. We are called to be like these palms: a life raised in praise; a life offered in sacrifice; and a life transformed into a sign of salvation.

William Shakespeare wrote in his famous play *As You Like It*: “Sweet are the uses of adversity.” That means that difficult, painful, and challenging experiences can have positive, “sweet” outcomes. In a deeply spiritual way, Thérèse of Lisieux also teaches us that “Everything is grace.”



Yes, everything is grace. Even our sufferings, our hidden struggles, our silent sacrifices; in the hands of God, these are never wasted.

But when we fail in our mission: when we do not spread the Gospel of peace, joy, and love, we become like the forgotten palms; left aside, unnoticed, and disconnected from our purpose.

Today, the Word of God reminds us powerfully: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “At the name of Jesus every knee should bend... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” (Philippians 2:10–11).

Again, we hear the call of Christ: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23). This is the journey of the palm, and the journey of every Christian. From praise, to sacrifice; from celebration, to surrender; from Hosanna, to the Cross.

The blessed palms are burned, crushed, and sifted: yet they rise again as Holy Ash, marking us with the sign of salvation. So, too, do our sufferings, our pains, our struggles: when united with Christ, they become the path of our sanctification: “For if we have died with Him, we will also live with Him.” (2 Timothy 2:11).

Dear brothers and sisters, as we lift our blessed palms today to sing “Hosanna”, let us not remain only in the moment of praise; let us become what we hold. Let our lives be lifted in praise to God. Let our hearts be ready to be transformed. Let our struggles be united with Christ. Let our whole life proclaim: “Hosanna to the Son of David!” Then when the time comes, may we not be like the forgotten palms, but like those that are returned, transformed, offered, and made holy; a living sign of God’s saving love.