

Palm Sunday- Year A

*I have set my face like flint*

Matthew 21:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66

April 12-13, 2014

In the solemn entry into Jerusalem, our Lord and Savior Jesus entered in humility, according to the prophecy of the prophet Zechariah. But suddenly expectations were bound to be disappointed, for the people could not see in the humble entrance a sign of the humility of Him who entered. Expectations were quickly dashed; for what a difference a few days would make.

What were the people expecting? They had surely heard of the miracles, of the raising of Lazarus, perhaps even of the Transfiguration. Yet, they were looking for the restoration of Israel, and they must have thought that the messianic kingdom would crush all enemies on earth. Again, here the prophecy of Zechariah seems to go unheeded. It is recalled in the Gospel account of Saint Matthew read at the very beginning of Mass.

We could speak all day about what the people expected, but perhaps a more relevant question today is, “What do we expect?” Do we think anything of significance will happen this Holy Week? Do we believe that the Kingdom of God will be furthered in any meaningful way this year? If we do not, what is the purpose for our gathering, other than to recall an annual custom, taking a frond of branches home with us? That can never be enough.

As Catholics, we believe that the sacred events of Holy Week demand of us a response—not a physical sword that crushes our enemies, but a spiritual sword that demands a decision, and a definitive one at that. The prophet Isaiah noted: “I have set my face like flint,” signaling his resolve to be a prophet of truth, in season and out, ever faithful to his calling.

Let us commit ourselves to walking the entire road to Calvary, not only the portions that cause us the least discomfort. Let us seek to accompany our Savior in complete and lasting fidelity, confident that by his stripes we truly are healed. Through the Cross, and only the Cross, the gates of the kingdom will be opened. May our *Hosannas* be accompanied by our willingness to journey and to suffer with Him, that we might rise with Him in glory.