



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller



Homily – Passion of the Lord Sunday

March 29, 2015

You and I have been invited to join the people who witnessed Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. What did they see, and what did it mean to them?

The inhabitants of Jerusalem see a Galilean, someone from the frontier region with a mixed population of Jews, half-Jews, and Gentiles. It was considered a backward region, and its inhabitants were looked down upon. Who does this Galilean think he is, riding in on a colt with a few followers in front of and behind him?!

The religious leaders of Jerusalem see a Galilean troublemaker, someone about whom they have received negative reports. By what authority does he teach about God? Will this blasphemer make trouble with the Roman occupiers? How and when can they get rid of him?

The pilgrims arriving in Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover join in singing the traditional Hallel psalm to celebrate their coming to the Temple. They may see a fellow Galilean who has attracted crowds by his teaching,

healing, and exorcising demons. But he has said many things that people find it hard to accept. His popularity has diminished. Why has he come to Jerusalem where there can only be trouble? Who really is this carpenter from Nazareth?

His disciples, entering Jerusalem with him, are excited about being in Jerusalem. They think that they are accompanying the Son of David, the royal Messiah who will establish his earthly kingdom where each of them will have a special position. They have not understood his predictions about his passion and death – and certainly not about his resurrection. They sing their “Hosannas” with the other pilgrims without a clue about what will happen this week.

Jesus himself enters Jerusalem in silence, looks around the Temple, and retires to Bethany with the Twelve.

What happens when we look at this scene through **God’s** eyes?
With **faith!** We learn that God is full of surprises!

We see a man of suffering, a man of silence and quiet authority. We see the Son of God who took on human form in its lowest estate – as a workman from Nazareth, a small town in Galilee, the frontier region. He has walked the roads of Galilee and beyond to proclaim the good news of

the coming of God's kingdom of justice, compassion, love, peace, and unity. He has practiced what he preaches, reaching out to those who are on the margins of the society – the sick, the disturbed, the possessed, the public sinners, the tax collectors, the outcasts, the forgotten, the confused, the poor, the elderly, the children. . .

He is obedient to his heavenly Father's will and enters Jerusalem knowing what lies before him – a Last Supper with his friends, an agonizing time in Gethsemane, an arrest in the middle of the night, incessant questioning, false accusations, scourging, mocking, spitting and taunting, being nailed to the cross as a common criminal, a horrible death.

Because of this, God's Servant, Jesus, will be raised from the dead and exalted to his rightful place at the Father's side from where he will send the Holy Spirit upon his followers. That is why we look upon this Galilean carpenter riding into Jerusalem in a colt and see the Savior of the world, the Lord of our lives. We learn the depth of God's enduring love for us. And so, we proclaim: Jesus Christ is Lord!! Jesus Christ is Lord!! Jesus Christ is Lord!!