

**Homily – Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion
San Fernando Cathedral – March 24, 2024**

Today, I invite you to ask the Holy Spirit for help to contemplate the Passion of Christ through the eyes of Jesus himself.

There are many people who had everything to recognize in Jesus the only Son of God, but they refused to see. From his humanity, our Lord can review in his mind all the miraculous signs that he did in the presence of the people. He can remember the signs he gave that the entire history of Israel – the entire Scripture – refers to Him. He knows the hearts of everyone there. He knows what each person lacks to recognize Him as their Savior and know the love of God.

Even the disciples, after living with Jesus for three years, cannot believe. In the end, they kept thinking that the Lord would be a kingly political leader. They could not get the idea of glory and power and wealth out of their minds. How can they not understand? Could it be that, in the eyes of Jesus, neither do we recognize Him as He wants? Could it be that our own idea of God has prevented us from relating to Jesus as closely as he desires? We want the glory without the sacrifice. Each of us can ask ourselves today: How does Jesus see my little faith?

Jesus keeps telling the disciples his kingdom is different. Despite the Lord’s insistence, they do not believe that He is serious when he tells them that he will have to die, but that on the third day he will rise again. They prefer not to delve deeper and do not believe. They were too comfortable to accept the idea of carrying a cross. As a result, at the time when Jesus needs them most, they abandon Him completely. They are terrified! Let us ask ourselves: How does Jesus see my fears and my lack of trust in Him? How does the Lord see my inability to find

the meaning of my hardships precisely in Him? How does Jesus see my lack of hope?

We see a young man, covered with nothing but a linen cloth, following Jesus as He is arrested. As those taking Jesus also seized him, the young man runs away naked leaving the cloth behind. It is like an ironic metaphor for the apostles, who left everything to follow Jesus, but in the moment of trial they flee from the Lord and discover themselves vulnerable. Later, Jesus says from the cross: “Why have you abandoned me?” How have we abandoned Jesus? Who is He whom we have abandoned? How many times do we just look away and pretend not to see Him in the neediest, the abandoned in our community? How does Jesus see my lack of love for God and for my neighbor?

Let us dive into the solitude of Jesus. Throughout this week, let us place ourselves somewhere in the story. Let us try to look at our life as Jesus sees it. What does Jesus see when he looks at me throughout his Passion? What does the Lord feel as He moves forward, ready to die to save me from my sin? What does the Lord think of my lack of faith, hope, and love?

Pope Francis has said: *“We are men (and women) in tension, we are also contradictory and inconsistent men (and women), sinners, all of us. But we are men (and women) who want to journey under Jesus’ gaze. ... We who are selfish want nonetheless to live life aspiring to great deeds. Let us renew then our oblation to the Eternal Lord of the universe so that by the help of his glorious Mother we may will, desire, and live the mind of Christ who emptied himself.”*

Our Lady of Guadalupe, give us courage to see our lives with the merciful eyes of Jesus.