

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

P. O. Box 440, Whitehouse, Texas 75791

www.wellspringcommunity.net

frgus@suddenlink.net

April 13, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We began our Lenten Journey hearing the call to repentance, change of heart and faithfulness to the Gospel. On the first Sunday, we met Jesus in the desert being tempted but choosing to remain faithful to his Father's plan. On the second Sunday, we met Jesus on the mountain being transfigured and being proclaimed the beloved son of God. On the third Sunday, our Scripture readings reminded us of the need for ongoing, lifelong conversion, renewal, and transformation of our life in Christ. The fourth Sunday reminded us of the generosity of our God in forgiving us, healing us, and making us free from the burden of guilt and shame, and called us to be generous in forgiving ourselves and others who have offended us. The fifth Sunday called us to leave our past behind, embrace the grace of the moment and make new beginnings.

Today, the sixth Sunday of Lent, we celebrate Palms Sunday of the passion of the Lord. We remember Jesus entering Jerusalem to face rejection and eventual death. He moved, with courage, into hostile territory. They greeted him as they would greet a pilgrim: "Blessed is he who enters in the name of the Lord" (Psalm 118:26). And they shouted "Hosanna!" "Hosanna" means "Save now." It was a cry for help, which a people in distress addressed to their king or their god. "Save us, we beseech thee, O Lord" (Psalm 118:25). Hosanna in the highest means, let even the angels in the highest of heavens cry unto God, "save now". It is essentially an oppressed people's cry to their savior and king for deliverance. These hosannas of Palm Sunday will become the cries of "crucify him, crucify him!"

Prior to the second Vatican council, the fifth Sunday of Lent was called "Passion Sunday," and Palm Sunday was observed on the following Sunday. Currently the Roman Rite denotes Palm Sunday as "Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion," which combines the two Sunday observances. The fifth Sunday of Lent was called Passion Sunday because, on this day, the Church began to make the Sufferings of Jesus the main focus of reflection and prayer.

Passion Sunday also marked the beginning of a special sub-season called Passiontide, which extended from the fifth Sunday to Holy Saturday. During this time, the Church's liturgy became more somber, and a sorrowful mood was reflected in the various practices that occurred in the liturgy. The most obvious example of a more somber mood was the veiling of statues and images, which remains an optional practice in the current liturgy. Crosses remain covered until the end of the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, but other images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

Palm Sunday of the passion of the Lord is often thought of as the remembering and reliving of the suffering of Jesus resulting from his rejection, condemnation, carrying the cross and dying on the cross. The word passion seems to have the same meaning as suffering. Passion however has a deeper meaning and suffering is only one of the consequences of passion.

Passion is an eager interest, a feeling of intense enthusiasm towards or compelling desire or longing for someone or something. Passion is determination, conviction, commitment and love. Passion is a strong desire, a hunger, a thirst and an urgent longing that can move you and get you to do amazing things. Passion can move you through difficult, troublesome and trying times because you don't care about the cost of fulfilling your desire, satisfying your hunger and thirst, and achieving what you are passionate about.

The passion of Jesus was not the rejection or the insults or the condemnation or the cross or the suffering or his death – they were the consequence of his passion. His passion was doing the will of his Father. Jesus said to his disciples, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work” (John 4:30) and “I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me” (John 6:38). Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “This is how you are to pray... Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10). And Jesus prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done” (Luke 22:42).

The passion of Jesus was the will of his father, and he gave his life for it. His passion moved him to accept the cross and carry it to his death. It is this passion and its consequences that we remember on Palm Sunday this week. As we remember the Lord's passion, let us not stop with recalling the events that led to his death. Let us get in touch with our own passion. What are we passionate about? Is there something deep inside of us that moves us, urges us, and keeps us going? What gives meaning and direction to our lives? Do we have a hunger or thirst, or urgent longing that holds us together and keeps us alive and moving?

We are often challenged to make difficult choices, face difficult situations and work with difficult people. We can face them only if we really hunger and thirst, if we really desire...if we are really passionate! If we are really passionate and passionately strive for God and God's ways, we will do those things that are difficult and troublesome... even carry the cross if that is what it takes to fulfill God's plan and purpose.

I encourage you to take a few moments each day of this week to be still and get in touch with your own inner longings! Try to become aware of your own inner desires, the desires of your hearts.... Bless yourself with good, noble, wholesome and redeeming desires! Try to align your plan and purpose with God's plan and purpose for you. And pray, “May your will be done!”

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Scroll down to read the reflections on the Scripture readings of today's mass....

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

April 13, 2025

**Lent is not an effort to save ourselves.
We have been saved by the one and perfect sacrifice of Jesus.
Rather, it is part of our journey, the continuum, the falling in love, staying in love,
and growing in love with God.**

Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
who as an example of humility for the human race to follow
caused our Savior to take flesh and submit to the Cross,
graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering
and so merit a share in his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

**Acknowledge your imperfections, setbacks and shortfalls
and continue to strive to fulfill your purpose.
(St. Francis de Sales)**

Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I may know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them.

Reflect on developing a “well-trained tongue” and “well-disciplined” life.

Reflect on speaking words of affirmation, compassion, encouragement, kindness and support.

Psalm 22

This is a lament, unusual in structure and intensity of feelings. Present distress is contrasted with God's past mercy (1-8); remembers surrounding enemies (9-21); praises God (22-30) and closes with a universal praise of God (31).

This is an important psalm in the New Testament. The opening verse is found on the lips of Jesus on the cross (Mark 15:34; Mathew 27:46) and several other verses are quoted in the accounts of the passion of Jesus in Mathew 27:35, 43 and John 19:24.

Verse 1 introduces the psalm as "The deer of the dawn", which is a note to the leader or the choir master. It is a suggestion to sing the psalm according to the tune of "The deer of the dawn", a tune unknown to us. Just imagine a lonely deer, cut off from the rest of its herd, standing alone at dawn, gazing into the distance in the hope of discovering its friend at last.....Use your imagination as you pray!

**I will proclaim your name to my brethren;
In the midst of the assembly, I will praise you.**

Philippians 2:6-11

He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even on a cross.

Be humble in your ways. Surrender to God's plans, even at great cost.

Luke 22:14 – 23:56

We remember Jesus being betrayed, tried, judged, condemned and crucified. We remember him dying on a cross. We remember Jesus giving himself totally in life and in death. We remember the cross, sign of shame and punishment, becoming the symbol of sacrifice, healing, unconditional love, total giving, redemption and salvation. We remember and relive the passion, the cross and the death of Jesus.

Reflect on how you share in the passion and cross of Jesus.

Remember those who have heavy burden to carry.

Remember the innocent, especially children and the helpless who have to suffer without support.

Be Still for a few moments!

Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.

Spiritual Communion

Lord Jesus, I believe in your real presence in the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar. I place myself in your presence and adore you, worship you and glorify you. I am unable to receive you in Holy Communion at Mass today. I hunger and thirst for your way, your truth and your life. Come into my heart Lord and satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst. Bless me that I may give witness to your presence in my life. Amen

Be Still for a few moments!

Saint of the Day, April 13 – St. Martin I and 8 other saints are remembered this day.

Martinus was born on June 21, 598 near Todi, Umbria. We do not have information about his birth and early life. He was of noble birth, of commanding intelligence, and of great charity to the poor. He acted as papal legate at Constantinople in the early years of the pontificate of Pope Theodore I (642–49), and was a deacon at the time of his election as Pope in 649.

When Martin I became pope in 649, Constantinople was the capital of the Byzantine empire and the patriarch of Constantinople was the most influential Church leader in the Eastern Christian world. The struggles that existed within the Church at that time were magnified by the close cooperation of emperor and patriarch.

A teaching, strongly supported in the East, held that Christ had no human will. Twice, emperors had officially favored this position: Heraclius by publishing a formula of faith, and Constans II by silencing the issue of one or two wills in Christ.

Shortly after assuming the office of the papacy—which he did without first being confirmed by the emperor—Martin held a council at the Lateran in which the imperial documents were censured, and in which the patriarch of Constantinople and two of his predecessors were condemned. In response, Constans II first tried to turn bishops and people against the pope.

Failing in this and in an attempt to kill the pope, the emperor sent troops to Rome to seize Martin and to bring him back to Constantinople. Already in poor health, Martin offered no resistance, returned with Calliopas, the exarch of Constantinople, and was then submitted to various imprisonments, tortures, and hardships. Although condemned to death and with some of the imposed torture already carried out, Martin was saved from execution by the pleas of a

repentant Paul, patriarch of Constantinople, who was himself gravely ill. Tortures and cruel treatment having taken their toll, Martin died September 16, 655. He is the last of the early popes to be venerated as a martyr.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**With Christ the unbearable becomes bearable,
the impossible becomes possible.**

