



May we walk with Christ and let him walk with us on our journey

The celebration of Palm/Passion Sunday (2 April 2023) is ushered in with parade, song, the noise of the crowd waving palm branches, and the chanting of Hosanna. This amazingly public spectacle of Jesus with his apostles is more than meets the eye.

Jesus requested the apostles to bring him a donkey for his entrance to Jerusalem.

*What kind of king
rides on a donkey
into the city where
his assassins are waiting?*

Michael Gerhler

This is a journey Jesus has to make and he knows what is pending in the days ahead. He is far from feeling glorious and triumphant. He is on a lonely journey, only a journey he can make alone. Even when he reaches the Garden of Gethsemane for prayer his disciples abandon him in sleep.

For Jesus, as for all of us, there are paschal journeys that no one can make or take with us. I have witnessed this during my own journey as I have observed those who are close to finishing their last journey. A close friend, a soul mate, a partner, seem to be on-lookers as the last steps of the paschal encounter are taking place. It is often the same with deep and embarrassing problems that we need to face alone. Forgiveness and healing are part of transformation and wholeness.

Jesus is able to contemplatively and courageously face the days ahead as he has lived on the edge of the society of the time. He has experienced the tussle of difficult encounters, experiences, relationships and circumstances. We too are enabled to cross thresholds as we imbibe the values and spirituality that Jesus demonstrated so that we have the strength to face the hardships of life.

Malcom Guite muses, questions and prays for all of us in his *Palm Sunday* Sonnet:

*Now to the gate of my Jerusalem,
The seething holy city of my heart,
The saviour comes. But will I welcome him?
Oh crowds of easy feelings make a start;
They raise their hands, get caught up in the singing,
And think the battle won. Too soon they'll find
The challenge, the reversal he is bringing
Changes their tune. I know what lies behind
The surface flourish that so quickly fades;
Self-interest, and fearful guardedness,
The hardness of the heart, its barricades,
And at the core, the dreadful
emptiness
Of a perverted temple. Jesus come
Break my resistance and make
me your home.*

Sounding of the Season, 2012

We pray: May we walk with Christ and let him walk with us on both our outer and inner journeys during Holy Week. Hosanna!

Michele Shipperley rsj

*Palm
Sunday*