

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion – B

March 28, 2021

St. Patrick

The shadows of the cross.

It's an eerie sight on the back wall of the sanctuary: Jesus hanging on the cross, and the two shadows, one on either side. There are two other figures, hanging exactly like Jesus, one on either side of him. Sure, it's the lighting, but it's haunting.

Oh, it could evoke the image of the two bandits, crucified with him, one on either side. But then we look only from a distance. Then, we're just spectators. At the exact midway point of St. Mark's Gospel, Jesus tells us, **“Those who wish to come after me must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me.”** Jesus fully hopes that these will be *our* shadows.

His shadow falls on us. We're silhouetted, profiled on either side of him, if we truly are his disciples.

We just heard the Passion story from St. Mark's Gospel. We heard what it was like inside for Jesus. It said he was—

- **“troubled”**
- **“distressed”**
- **“My soul is sorrowful to death”**
- **“Take this cup (of suffering) away from me”**
- He was **“silent.”**

Sisters and brothers: Indeed, in becoming one like us in our humanity, Jesus **“emptied”** himself of all his divine prerogatives (Philippians 2:7). In his sufferings, the shadows became absolute darkness. In St. Mark's Gospel, as Jesus took his last breath he had no surety of what it would be on the other side, if anything. Yes, radically **“emptied,”** Jesus had to trust fully. It didn't keep him from crying out in his last agony, **“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”** (1)

Shadows. Haven't we had our times of darkness, of loss, especially in this nightmare of a year? Haven't we really experienced being abandoned—by others, perhaps even by God?

So did Jesus. His shadow falls on us, and we are called to make that same trust, a trust which sometimes seems there is nothing to hold onto.

General Intercessions

April 14, 2019

Palm Sunday

Grace us, the church, faithfully to follow Jesus, the Suffering Servant, and to celebrate this Holy Week experiencing his mercy and healing; we pray to you, O Lord—

Bless our Jewish sisters and brothers as they began their Passover celebration last night; we pray to you, O Lord—

Rid our hearts of anger, hatred and violence, that we might live in peace within our neighborhoods, our homes and schools, and our world; we pray to you, O Lord—

Give support and hope to immigrants, especially children, as they seek safety and a new life of security and hope; we pray to you, O Lord—

Empower us to be healing balm to the sick, the forgotten, and the impoverished; we pray to you, O Lord—

Raise to new life all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, especially as we pray for Father David Knight, Elsa Perez, Eddie Flynn, Leslie Talley, and Robert Brannon (*for the 8:30 a.m. Mass only--*) and James Stengel, on the first anniversary of his death; we pray to you, O Lord—

