

Passion: Highs and Lows

Intro. Any trip now seems enjoyable, even if it's only to the grocery store. Even though there is less traffic it takes longer. I was in line at a local drug store this week for *fifteen minutes* to buy *one* item. There were only four of us but because of the new situation, there was only one cashier and she was working as fast as you could.

I. No trip across town could begin with so much excitement and end in such tragedy as did the Lord's much anticipated entry into Jerusalem and his death a few days later [*Living Liturgy*, 2020]. It turns out the disciples who *reveled in the alleluias*, soon *revealed their cowardice*; they were all talk and no action. One view of the today's passion reading could lead us to say that nothing much has changed

about human beings since then. Lying, cheating, betraying and abandonment of friends *by friends* are still an experience most of us have. The difference here is the Lord survived his experience by trusting in his Father. A few people stepped forward to comfort or help the Lord. All were strangers and most were women: Veronica, who wiped his face of the blood, sweat and dirt; the women of Jerusalem who prayed for him; and Simon of Cyrene who was in the wrong place at the right time. One other man was there at the end, John, who may have been so young as to not fully understand the danger he was in.

Concl. How do *we* survive the discouragements we face? It is certainly more difficult to do alone. Having at least one person we trust to accompany us, who walks with us through the “dark valley” helps immensely. The Lord had the Father. Remember Veronica and the women of Jerusalem who put their faith in Christ. These are indescribably bad times. Some of us have lived through previous perils like wars, other pandemics and economic recessions. Like those times, people of all different faiths put their trust in God. People of little or no faith are putting trust in each other because of love of neighbor. We are a resourceful, creative people. An example: this week one of our parishioners made masks for our office staff. We are *witnesses to, and makers of, miracles that happen when we don't let difficulties defeat us. The disciples were forgiven,*

recovered their faith and went on to be powerful witnesses for the Lord. So can we. Continue to pray for one another and find ways to witness to Christ's presence and be light in this present darkness.

Fr. Michael Pendergraft

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