

Palm Sunday

Intro. We are thirty-seven days since we put ashes on our heads to begin the forty-day journey of Lent; thirty-two if your count leaves out Sundays. My mother's rule counted *them all*; no free Sundays to break the fast from candy or whatever we had given up.

I. Two Sundays past was Laetare Sunday, Latin for "rejoice," the violet vestments changed to rose-colored to signal the half-way point of Lent. Both our weekday and Sunday gospels changed from Luke to John. These are signs ratchetting up the tempo as we get closer to the Lord's death and resurrection at Easter. We have seven (six) more days to make final efforts in our Lenten fasting, almsgiving and prayer we heard about on Ash

Wednesday. Palm Sunday's entry into Jerusalem marks the end of the Lord's journey from his birth in that little old town of Bethlehem.

Concl. Today is *our* entrance to the Holiest Week in our Catholic tradition. Set aside some of the usual things we do this week. Dedicate some time binge-watching and listening to the Lord through the scriptures and the liturgies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. There is power in the prayers and gestures of washing feet and keeping vigil on Holy Thursday night; reverencing the cross on Good Friday; and welcoming new members through Baptism, Confirmation and Communion on Easter. **The presence of God is never more powerful than this holy week.**

Fr. Michael Pendergraft, Palm Sunday, 2022