

## **Wellspring, Fransalian Center for Spirituality Whitehouse, Texas**

April 2, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are almost at the close of the season of Lent. I hope this season has been a time of blessing and grace for you, even in the midst of the death and dying situations that we have all been facing. On Palm Sunday, we begin Holy Week with the prayerful remembrance of the Messianic entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. It is my hope and prayer that meditating on the courageous entry of Jesus into hostile territory will bless us all with courage and hope during these difficult and troublesome times.

I continue to walk with you in spirit and prayer. I have prepared the following for you for Palm Sunday worship at home, alone or with family. I hope that it helps you celebrate Palm Sunday. On Thursday, I will send you similar prayer and reflections for the Easter Sunday and the following weekdays.

God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus

### **Palm Sunday April 2, 2020**

#### **Penitential Act**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Let us acknowledge our sins and pray for forgiveness and peace.

A moment of silence for remembering your sinfulness

#### **Pray the formula of general confession:**

I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned,  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,  
through my fault, through my fault,

through my most grievous fault.  
therefore, I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Lord have Mercy. Christ have Mercy. Lord have Mercy.

## **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**

The sixth Sunday of Lent is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. On Palm Sunday, we remember Jesus entering Jerusalem to face rejection and eventual death. He moved, with courage, into hostile territory. He entered a city that killed its prophets and did not know how to receive the things that were for its own good, a city that did not know how to receive blessings, gifts and grace.

The people of Jerusalem greeted Jesus as they would greet a pilgrim, "Blessed is he who enters in the name of the Lord." (Psalm 118:26) 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."

**Pray for courage and wisdom to face difficult situations.**

**Pray for those who have to live in hostile situation.**

**Pray with all who are facing life and death situations because of COVID-19.**

## **Scripture Readings**

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

### **First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7**

Isaiah said, “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 a “well-disciplined” life.**

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

**Make a phone call or send an email or a text message of encouragement and support to someone who is anxious and afraid of COVID -19.**

### **Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 22**

This psalm is a lament, unusual in structure and intensity of feelings. The 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, Matthew 27:46) and several other verses are quoted in the accounts of the passion of Jesus in Matthew 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.  
You who fear the Lord praise him;  
All you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;  
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel.

### **Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11**

Paul says that Jesus 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 costs.**

**Pray for the courage to accept the cross that comes your way and pray for those who are carrying heavy burdens today.**

### **Gospel: Matthew 26:14 – 27:66**

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, a sign of shame and punishment, becoming the symbol of sacrifice, unconditional love, total giving, redemption and salvation. We remember and relive the passion, the cross and the death of Jesus.

**The passion of Jesus was doing the will of His Father. Passion is often thought of as suffering. The passion of Jesus was not his suffering. He accepted suffering and the cross because He was passionate about doing the will of His Father.**

**Reflect on how passionate you are about doing the will of the Father.**

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

**Remember those who have heavy burdens to carry.**

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

### **Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

Remember our president and all leaders of our country and the world and pray that God will enlighten them with His wisdom to make wise decisions during these difficult days.

Remember your most urgent need and that of your family and those in your care.

Remember those who are affected by COVID-19 and those who care for them.

Remember those who are searching for a cure for COVID-19.

Remember all who suffer and all who have no one to care for them.

Pray the "Our Father."

## **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. Spend a few moments in silent prayer.**

### **Prayer after Communion:**

Nourished with these sacred gifts,  
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,  
that, just as through the death of your Son  
you have brought us to hope for what we believe,  
so by his Resurrection  
you may lead us to where you call.  
Through Christ our Lord.

May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**"When I despair, I remember that all through history the ways of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants, and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end they always fall. Think of it... always."  
(Mahatma Gandhi)**