

March 29th, 2015

Palm Sunday

Mk 14:1-15:47

The Passion

We just heard, The Passion of our Lord Jesus ... a powerful and sad story. Such begins our walk through Holy Week that leads us through suffering to the ultimate and wonderful resurrection.

The Passion is hard to listen to. We would rather just move on and consider the resurrection and the final peace and joy. Right? Why does the Church spend time on this suffering of our Lord... why not just skip it?

We all suffer, don't we? Why do babies and children sometimes die? Why do we have droughts, floods, tornadoes?

Life has many opportunities for us to suffer and today's Passion narrative shows us how Christ dealt with his suffering.

I encourage each of you to watch the movie, The Passion, in the coming week, before Easter. Saint John Paul II saw Mel Gibson's movie before it came out and simply said, "*It is as it was.*"

We should immerse ourselves in our Lord's Passion and think about what it means for each of us in this life... as we continue to live our lives each day.

It is important for us to spend time with the Passion to learn and to grow and to see how the Passion plays out in our lives ... from time to time. As Christ said, we must take up our cross and follow him. When suffering comes, we should see the cross.

Some say The Passion movie is overdone, that Jesus didn't really suffer that much. There are things Jesus says in that movie that aren't in the Passion accounts in scripture. The moviemakers made additions to the story we have in the Gospels. Consider that Jesus, God, came to earth and we tortured and killed him. How can any movie or words truly show the tragedy of God being tortured and killed by mankind? God came to teach us ... to show us the way and we tortured and killed him! Can anything be more horrendous than that?

Jesus is the way and he submitted to this terrible suffering and death in payment for our sinfulness ... to open the gates of heaven... to show us The Way.

There is a scene in the movie where Mary meets Jesus as he is suffering terrible pain. Mary is also suffering terribly as she watches her Son ... who she loves deeply ... the miracle worker who helped so many ...

Jesus says to Mary, "*See mother, I make all things new.*" Then he embraces the cross, and continues his terrible suffering as he marches on towards His crucifixion.

Yes, Christ made all things new. Through his suffering and death he laid the foundation for the resurrection ... and also gave his presence in the Eucharist that we will have here during this mass.

Our call is to take up our little and sometimes not so little problems and carry them. To make things new through our own lives as we unite our sufferings with Christ and his Church and fill our lives and overflow with the love Christ showed us.