

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

Palm Sunday begins with celebration as crowds welcome Jesus into Jerusalem with shouts of praise. Yet the liturgy quickly moves into the Passion narrative where Jesus is rejected, abandoned, and led toward the cross. This emotional shift can resonate deeply for many adult children of dysfunctional homes.

Growing up in unstable or unpredictable environments often meant living with constant emotional swings. Moments of peace or closeness could quickly give way to conflict, confusion, or disappointment. Many people learned to remain alert and guarded, never fully trusting that good moments would last.

These experiences can shape the way we approach relationships and challenges later in life. We may become overly responsible for keeping things stable, or we may withdraw to protect ourselves from potential hurt. Even when life becomes healthier, our nervous systems sometimes remain prepared for the next crisis.

Palm Sunday invites us to walk closely with Jesus during the most vulnerable moments of His life. The Passion narrative shows that even the disciples struggled when things became difficult. Peter confidently promises loyalty but later denies knowing Jesus. Many others scatter when fear and uncertainty arise.

For adult children of dysfunctional homes, these moments can highlight the reality of human weakness. People we trust sometimes fail us. Promises are not always kept. Yet the gospel also reveals how Jesus responds when facing betrayal and suffering.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus turns to the Father in prayer (Matthew 26:39):

He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will."

Jesus acknowledges the pain of what lies ahead while still entrusting Himself to the Father's will. This prayer offers a model for our own healing. Instead of suppressing difficult emotions or trying to manage everything ourselves, we can bring our fears honestly before God.

Recovery for adult children often involves learning new ways of responding to stress and vulnerability. We practice recognizing our feelings instead of ignoring them. We learn that our needs matter and that healthy relationships allow room for honesty and boundaries.

The process can feel uncomfortable at first. Letting go of old coping patterns sometimes creates uncertainty. Yet as we continue to show up in recovery spaces, we discover that change is possible. Supportive relationships help us recognize patterns that once kept us stuck and encourage us as we develop healthier ways of living.

Palm Sunday reminds us that suffering does not define the entire story. The events of Holy Week lead toward resurrection. In a similar way, recovery invites us to trust that the wounds of our past do not have the final word.

As we walk with Christ during this upcoming sacred week, we are reminded that God meets us in every part of our story. Through prayer, community, and spiritual growth, we gradually experience greater freedom and peace.

Christ continues to call us forward into new life. When we respond with honesty and humility, we begin discovering that healing often unfolds one faithful step at a time.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have past family experiences shaped the way you respond to conflict or uncertainty today?

- What does honest surrender to God look like when old fears or patterns surface?

- How are supportive relationships helping you grow in trust and healing in your recovery journey?

MASS READINGS

PALMS PROCESSION Matthew 21:1-11

FIRST READING Isaiah 50:4-7

RESP. PS. Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

SECOND READING Philippians 2:6-11

GOSPEL Matthew 26:14—27:66

