Homily

Palm Sunday C

April 14, 2019

St. Bernard Church

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THE SCRIPT

In the reading from the Gospel of Luke which was read before the procession with the palms, Jesus tells two of his disciples:

“Go into the village opposite you, and as you enter it you will find a colt tethered on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here.”

The two men went off and found everything just as Jesus had told them.

In the Gospel of Mark, after Jesus arrived in Jerusalem the last time to celebrate the Passover, he again sent two disciples, this time to find and prepare the place for the Passover meal. His specific instructions were:

“Go into the city and a man will meet you, carrying a jar of water. Follow him.”

The Gospel tells us once again that “the disciples then went off, entered the city, and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.”

In our First Reading from the Book of Isaiah, we heard the prophetic passage about the suffering servant, which reads:

“I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting.”

Finally, in our Responsorial Psalm, Psalm 22, we heard more prophetic passages:

“All who see me scoff at me;

They mock my parted lips…

They have pierced my hands and my feet;

I can count all my bones.

They divide my garments among them,

And for my clothing they cast lots.

The point of all these passages in the Bible is that there was a script for the life of Jesus. This script is especially specific with respect to Jesus’ final entrance into Jerusalem and all that would happen there.

Jesus had always known that there was a script for his life, that everything he was to do had been pre-arranged by his Father down to the smallest detail.

He knew the script. A lot of it was in the writings of the prophets and in the psalms, written 500 years or more before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. And Jesus was committed to be faithful and obedient to the script, every detail of it.

Here’s the message for us.

There is a script for each of our lives as well, written by the Father before our creation. If we’re Christians, and Catholic, then our script is supposed to be patterned after the script for the life of Jesus, not identical, but with many similarities.

Part of the script for the life of Jesus that is identical to our personal script is the ritual for the Last Supper. When Jesus says after changing the bread and wine into his body and blood, “Do this in memory of me,” he commands us to follow the script and do as he did.

So, as Catholics, that’s what we do. Some critics of the Catholic Church call what we do “an empty ritual,” but it’s anything but empty.

When we follow the script faithfully, we have access to the divinity of Jesus, the divine life that he shares with his Father and the Holy Spirit. All that is required is for us to have a spirit of obedience and the belief that in following the script our lives are united with the Savior of all humanity and that we have access to all the powers he exercised when he walked this earth.

When we follow the script for the Eucharist, the script for each of our lives takes on a new, supernatural dimension.

So please, especially during this Holy Week, be humble, be obedient and be grateful, for the greatest gift that has ever been given and that could ever be given to humanity, the life of Jesus, poured out for us to share in the most intimate and powerful way.