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JMJ

U.I.O.G.D.

Ave Maria!

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, we love Thee, save souls.

O God come to our assistance. Jesus, Mary, Joseph please make haste to help us!

+ + + Jesus, Mary, Joseph + + +

From the book - Sermons of the Cure of Ars – St. John Mary Vianney

PALM SUNDAY

“Behold, thy King cometh to thee, meek.”—St. Matthew xxi. 5.

My dear Christians, as we have just learned from to-day’s Gospel, the Saviour celebrates to-day His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Many times had the people of the Holy Land, when they were witnesses of His deeds and miracles, tried to bestow upon Him extraordinary honors; several times His enthusiastic admirers went so as to announce their intention of proclaiming Him king, but Jesus had always managed to avoid their intended demonstrations of respect and admiration. This was particularly the case, when in the most miraculous way He procured in the desert food for a multitude of many thousands of hungry people. But to-day we see to our astonishment, that the Saviour Himself makes arrangements for a solemn entry into the Holy City.

And what time did He choose? The time of the Paschal Feast. Every Jew on earth, who had the means, made it a point to celebrate this feast, the memorial festival of their delivery from Egypt, at the place where stood the Ark of the Covenant, that once led them safely forth through the river Jordan into the Holy Land. And as the sons of Israel, in spite of their captivity in Assyria and Babylon, in spite of the persecution from the pagans, and in spite of their being scattered all over the earth, remained participating in the blessing of Abraham, they were to be found in Jerusalem at Paschal time by the hundreds of thousands.

This enormous multitude of people could see for themselves on this day on which Jesus held His triumphal entry, that the words of the prophet Zacharias were being fulfilled: “O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King will come to thee meek.” (Zach. ix. 9.) A true king he entered, not like a conqueror, but meekly, like a prince of peace.

A true and real king made his entry, and why should we not call Him king, who had proved His supremacy over nature and man in such an unmistakable manner? The tempest roared upon the sea, the frail boats were in danger of sinking, and their occupants cried out in terror: “Lord, save us, we perish!” And He arises, calls them “of little faith,” and commands the wind to abate, and the waves to calm down. Where sickness, even in its most terrible aspect, seeks and finds its victims, there He stops its progress. He heals the leper, gives sight to the blind, makes the lame to walk, and causes the paralytic to carry home his own bed.

Since original sin, the evil spirit had been master over nature and man. Nature does not supply any longer the temporal wants of the rational creatures of God, unless it is forced to it. And it has gone so far that man created in the image of God has become a tool in the hand of the arch-enemy. But as soon as Satan, the enemy of mankind, perceives the Saviour, he is overcome by fear, though he may try to still practice and hold on to his

sovereignty, yet he will have to let go of his prey, and retire before the King, who is even master of the evil spirits.

All this was known before Jesus entered Jerusalem; thousands of witnesses had announced the miracles He had performed. Then came the rising of Lazarus. Consider! one of the best known and most highly esteemed Jews, a friend and follower of Christ, had died. The Saviour was not in time to be present at His friend's last moments. He did not arrive in Bethany, where Lazarus lived, until three days after he had been buried. Martha, the sister of Lazarus, tried to restrain our Lord from viewing the remains, because they had been buried so long and emitted a strong odor of decay. The Saviour insisted upon visiting the grave of His friend, and many hundreds of the better class of citizens of Bethany, many of whom had come from Jerusalem, accompanied Him. And what is their experience? Jesus simply called upon Lazarus to rise from his grave, where he had been entombed for four days. Jesus is master over the decay already set in; He can command nature to interrupt its work, and, therefore, He must be master over the whole world of creation. The miracle was not to be denied, and many became converted on the spot. The news of this great deed of Jesus Christ spread like lightning, and involuntarily many thousands in Jerusalem asked themselves: "Who is he, who has command over death and the grave? He is human, but he must be endowed with divine power; he is surely sent from heaven, and if he says of himself that he is the Messiah, it surely must be so."

All those who followed sincerely the promptings of their heart, saw in the approaching Saviour the long-promised Messiah, the Son of David. For them he was the king, whose coming the prophet had told of; for had he not obtained victory over everything man had been subjected to heretofore? Had He not shown Himself master over all creatures, over nature, and the evil spirit? A true King, the King of Zion, entered this day into Jerusalem. But He was not a king like the earthly potentates are; His triumphal entry was quite different from what the entry of one of the princes of this earth would have been. The prophet says "Thy King cometh to thee meek." We know the triumphal processions of the days of old; the victorious warriors, or the leaders of the people appeared in gorgeous, gold-laden chariots, or upon fiery steeds; the spoils of victory were borne before them, and they were followed by the vanquished foe, laden with chains and bent with sorrow; great treasures, fruit of victory, were exposed to the gaze of the multitude, and Kings themselves (the ideals of an enthusiastic and pleasure loving populace) were received with frantic shouting and applause. How did the King of Zion appear? Where are the conquered treasures, the vanquished foe, the chained captives? Where is the gorgeous chariot, the prancing steed? All this is wanting: the King, who celebrated His triumphal entry this day, was seated upon an ass, which His devoted followers had covered, not with gold-embroidered blankets, but with their outer garments. In this triumphal entry, pride, ambition, and avarice are not represented, but humility, meekness, mortification, and self-denial: in one word, unselfishness. The King, who enters Zion, has resigned everything temporal. He was born in poverty, and remained in poverty all His life. He has earned nothing but the love of those whom He has assisted, and of the noble minds who were able to understand Him. He has no friends in the houses of the rich, but all the more in the dwellings of the poor; no adherents among the pleasure-seekers, but thousands among the poor and castaways of this world. And these form His following on this day. Not upon command, not from idle curiosity, but from love and veneration they stream

forth from all sides. As soon as they gain sight of Him, the glorious, the Godlike, an indescribable cry of jubilation resounds in the air; they show their admiration in their own peculiar way; they break off branches of palms and olive-trees, and strew them upon His path; they spread their garments before Him, as a token of their reverence, and they call out joyfully: "Hosanna! Hail to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" And in this way the King of Zion takes possession of His kingdom. What, then, does the Gospel of to-day teach us? The Saviour enters likewise here in glorious majesty, but at the same time poor and meekly, whenever He approaches us with His grace the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The Church recalls it, when she says before the consecration, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Let us give Him the same reception which His friends gave Him in Jerusalem. Let us present to Him all we have, and let us spread under His feet, not only our earthly possessions but also our worldly ideas and longings, so that the Lord may have a triumphal entry into our hearts. Amen.

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