



Palm Sunday



Date: Sunday, March 29, 2026 | **Season:** Lent | **Year:** A

Gospel Reading during the Procession: Matthew 21:1–11

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4–7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 22:8–9, 17–20, 23–24 | **Response:** Psalm 22:2a

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6–11

Gospel Acclamation: Philippians 2:8–9

Gospel Reading: Matthew 26:14–27

Preached at: the Chapel of Emerald Hill Children's Home **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe.

Today the whole city shakes as Jesus enters Jerusalem with cries of hosanna, joy, and welcome. Then, before long, the earth shakes again as he dies on the cross. In Saint Matthew's Gospel, the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus are a world-shaking event.

And yet, in the middle of these great and terrible things, there is also something very quiet and very personal. As we listen to the Passion, perhaps each of us finds one person in the story who feels a little like ourselves.

Am I like the disciples who understood nothing, who fell asleep while the Lord was suffering? Perhaps in my own life I have fallen asleep.

Am I like the disciple who reached for the sword, thinking everything could be settled by force? We live in a world still full of war, fear, and violence. We think of Ukraine, Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan, Mozambique, and now the wider Gulf region too, where fear and conflict are spreading, and where so many people suffer, mourn, and long for peace. Jesus shows us another way, not the way of the sword, but the way of love, mercy, and peace.

Am I like Judas, who draws near to Jesus and yet betrays him?

Am I like Pilate, who sees what is right, but washes his hands and turns away?

But like Peter, if we have failed, we can still repent and return.

Am I like the crowd, carried along by noise and confusion?

Am I like the soldiers, who take pleasure in another person's pain.

Or am I like Simon of Cyrene, weary from work, yet willing to help carry the cross?

Am I like the women who stayed near Jesus, faithful and silent?

Am I like Joseph of Arimathea, who lovingly cared for the body of the Lord?

Which of these persons am I like?

Holy Week invites us not just to hear the story, but to enter it. To stay with Jesus. To walk with him. To let his Passion speak to our own hearts.

Like the women who stayed near Jesus, let us stay close to him this Holy Week, and let us come to this altar asking him to shake our hearts anew.

And so today let us ask very simply:

- Do I believe?
- Do I have hope?
- Have I allowed Jesus, in all he has done for me, to shake my world?

Let us pray for the grace to stay close to Jesus this Holy Week. Let us pray for deeper faith, for greater love, and for peace in our hearts, in our homes, and in our wounded world.

Amen.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2026-03mar-29-ya-lt-ps/>

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