

A PEP TALK FOR PALM SUNDAY

Brian Gleeson CP

We are beginning today the best week in the whole liturgical year. Centuries ago it was called the 'Great Week'. Nowadays we call it 'Holy Week'. We follow Jesus every step of the way. We have started with his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, where he is welcomed, applauded and acclaimed, by a big crowd of followers. On Thursday we will join him at table and receive the gift of himself in bread and wine. After dining with him we will walk with him along the path that leads from the Upper Room to the Garden of Olives. There we will see him falling to the ground in fear and anxiety about the cruel death that awaits him. Friday will find us standing beside his mother at the foot of the cross, and feeling compassion for him in both his physical agony and his mental torment.

We will be feeling especially some of his sense of being alone and abandoned, betrayed and deserted, not only by friends and followers, but even by God. On Saturday we will be quiet and silent around his tomb, as we remember the injustice, hostility and cruelty of all those evil men who murdered him. Then, late on Saturday, we will move from the darkness of our journey to the place of the brightly burning fire. There we will join the procession of the great Easter Candle, representing the risen Christ, as he lights up the darkness of our church and lives.

There and then the pain and sadness of our journey with Jesus to Calvary will give way to the hope and joy that comes with our awareness. Jesus Christ is not dead and gone. No, he is alive, strong and powerful, alive in himself, and alive in us. And so we will be hearing in our hearts those assuring words that the mystic Juliana of Norwich, in her vision of Christ crucified, heard from his own lips: *'All will be well, all will be well, all manner of things will be well.'*

Do we also believe that?

bgleesoncp@gmail.com