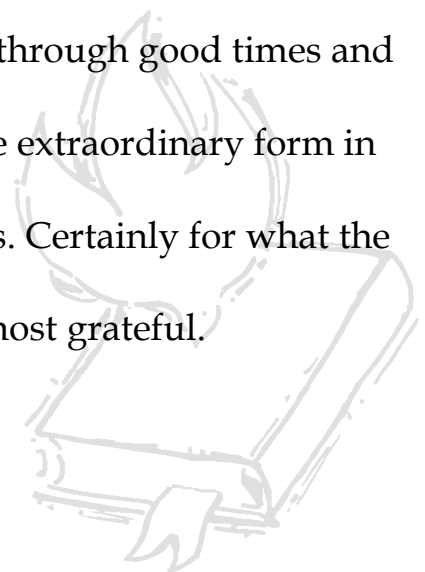


Homily
Palm Sunday - B
Rev. Peter G. Jankowski
March 27-28, 2021

Mk 11: 1-10
Is 50: 4-7
Ps 22: 8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Phil 2: 6-11
Mk 14: 1 - 15:47

I would like to thank Mr. Daniel Lucetta and Fr. Michael Magiera, FSSP from St. Joseph's Church in Rockdale, Illinois for helping me chant the Passion of the Lord, according to Mark. Because of our pandemic and our unique situation in today's age, we have tried to offer you these services in a heightened way so that you may know that we still care for you, and we will make the sacrifice for you.

There are so many folks that have sacrificed for me and the causes that I have pursued that I feel very blessed in my life to have them as a part of my life. The Poor Clare Sisters of the Annunciation Monastery who have housed me, who have supported me through good times and bad - they have helped me learn the Mass in the extraordinary form in Latin with the help of father Magiera and others. Certainly for what the sisters have sacrificed for my well-being, I am most grateful.



I am most grateful for the Knights of Columbus in Momence. Over the last few weeks, we have had to re-renovate the rectory after the damage caused following the original renovation. In addition, we had to do some work on our garages and security systems on the property as well. The cost for that renovation was just under \$2,000 and the Knights of Columbus were kind enough to write a check in that amount to cover those repairs.

I would like to thank those like Connie Sterling who have braided palms for us. I would like to thank those who have decorated our churches for the liturgical seasons, those who have provided music and those who have done so many “behind the scenes” activities on behalf of our parishes. There have been a great number of people that have offered their time and talent and some that have offered great treasure for the sake of our border town parishes.

I have to keep reminding myself that in small ways throughout my entire life, this gift of sacrifice, this great gift of mercy has been afforded on me, whether it be my parents who made great strides and allowing

me to go to high school and college and graduate school seminary so I could serve as a priest for all of you. I certainly give thanks to folks like you who have modeled this sacrifice and mercy that our Lord modeled here for us.

I would not be here today if it were not for priests like Fr. Pat Boyle, a Jesuit missionary who served in the Vietnam War and suffered greatly while caring for our soldiers. I am inspired by priests like Monsignor Jim McLoughlin, who was a mentor during my college days. After I served at his parish, Fr. McLoughlin suffered great pains as a captive on a terrorist flight in Lebanon; how Monsignor McLoughlin enduring that suffering very much taught me the gift of humility that I need to carry throughout my own life.

I give thanks to Fr. Thomas Kane, a pastor at St. Paul the Apostle Church in Sandwich, IL, who encouraged me to be a priest despite the trials he had to endure in his own ministry. Fr. Kane also served in the military and suffered horrible ordeals as a prisoner of war in Korea, which carried through into his parish life. Nevertheless, Fr. Kane saw

the priesthood as a noble vocation and encouraged me to pursue this call, despite the trials that come with the ministry (tell me a ministry that does not have trials...).

I also was thinking about a priest I once knew in Gibson City, IL named Bill Smith. Gibson City is a small little parish in the southwest corner of the diocese where I once covered for this priest who had not taken a vacation in twenty years at the time I covered for him.

According to what I was told, Fr. Smith chose *not* to vacation, *not* to spend parish monies on himself and not to buy a new car for so many years because most of his finances were directed back to the communities he served. For Fr. Bill, his ministry was all about keeping his parishes afloat and the people were exceedingly kind to him because of it.

As a response to Fr. Bill's sacrifice, his parishioners ended up buying him a new car so that he could travel safely in his journeys from one parish to another. One family went so far as to pay for Fr. Bill's trip to his home country of Ireland with them to show Fr. Bill how much they

loved him. Fr. Bill Smith reminds me a great deal of Fr. Jim Fanelli and the sacrifices he made for the people of St. Anne. As I have been told, for the twenty some years that Fr. Jim served as pastor of St. Anne's Church, he willingly took half a salary, making great sacrifices for the people of this community.

When I see these small examples of sacrifice *over and over again*, when I witness how so many of you follow and struggle with whatever vocation God has called you to live and how you have made great strides and supporting me in the ministry we offer together in eastern Kankakee Country, their example, *your* example reminds me of the infinitely greater sacrifice that Christ offered some two thousand years ago.

When I reflect on how Christ's sacrifice inspires so many of you, I try to dedicate myself to do the best I can to serve you, to make the sacrifices in my own ministry, according to the gifts that God has given me. As you well know, I teach three courses at the University of St. Francis, the monies from which come back to these parishes I serve. For

me, the sacrifices the Lord has asked me to make is all about you. Even though I may not know each of you well, I am still called to love you with whatever resources I have. My ministry is to be like Christ, to sacrifice like Christ, for your well-being.

In return, I have witnessed personally how much you have done so much for our parishes. Because of this, I feel really blessed because I have learned from your example. I am supposed to preach how each of us are a member of the body of Christ, that we are many members of the same body with different talents and different gifts and that Christ is the head of this body. As we enter the holiest week of the year, I need to keep learning from you; I need to see your sacrifice. I need to see your love because it reminds me of what I need to do for all of you over this next week.

During this Holy Week, I have been asked to make sacrifices by offering you a great number of services on behalf of Christ's example. On Holy Thursday, Christ works through me by offering a commemoration, a memorial, a continuation of the same Mass offered

two thousand years ago on the night before he died. At St. Anne's, this special Holy Thursday Mass will take place at 5:00 p.m.; at St. Patrick's, the *bilingual* service begins at 7:00 p.m. As is my custom, I will remain in the confessional following Mass to hear whatever confessions folks wish to make during Holy Week.

On Good Friday, I will celebrate an outdoor Stations of the Cross in Spanish at 12:00 noon and in English at 3:00 p.m. (weather permitting). Cookie Schroeder will lead stations at St. Anne's at 3:00 p.m. I will celebrate a Good Friday Service at St. Anne's at 5:00 p.m. and at St. Pat's at 7:00 p.m.

On Holy Saturday morning, I will bless Easter Baskets outside St. Anne's at 11:00 a.m. and at St. Patrick's at 12:00 noon. At 8:00 p.m., we will celebrate our annual Easter Vigil Service, where eleven members of our community will be receiving the sacraments for the first time.

On Easter Sunday, we celebrate Masses at the usual times: 9:00 a.m. at St. Anne's (outside, weather permitting) and at St. Pat's, we will celebrate Masses at 10:30 a.m. in English and 12:00 noon in Spanish.

Please know how appreciative I am of your sacrifice of your support in the border town area. Please keep doing what you are doing so that it can inspire others (as well as me) to follow your example of service and sacrifice. May we all continue to serve in God's name, based on our talents and our gifts. Let us continue to share these gifts with each other and all people that we need. This is our prayer.