

with Father Dave Pinto

Palm Sunday (Sixth Sunday of Lent)

Palm Sunday Sign: God's Seeking Us

We have talked about signs and God's assurance He gives us when He calls us. Palm Sunday is a perfect sign that Jesus Christ is truly King of heaven and earth. Jesus rides into Jerusalem in glory. His majesty shines through the brilliance of His creation and is shown in the sunlight that bathes His face in His Father's love. Jesus, as the Son of God, sits on the donkey as the Light of Truth. And we can hear the words ringing in our minds and hearts as He passes: Hear, O' Israel—Love your God with your whole heart; from the Inner Room of your soul, sing praise in union with your ego—God is One and Lord of all.

The sign that directly captures not only the call to sonship in the family of the Mystical Body, but also shows that God assures us that our commission is approved and endorsed by Him, is expressed in one word: *Abba*. *Abba*, in its best translation from Hebrew is "Daddy." *Abba* expresses trust, safety, confidence, belonging, and intimacy. "*Abba* implies an embracing and nurturing love that come to us from our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, spouses, friends, and lovers."¹ When we call God *Abba*, we are seeking to enter into the same intimate relationship, that is fearless, testing, and empowering with God—this relationship is called the Spirit. It is the claim that Jesus makes of us as we roam the desert of our Inner Room, seeking communion with the God of our soul. This is the claim of love that God puts on those who would dare call Him Father.

In the Old Testament when the people sinned against God there was a "formula" that God followed: He would summon the prophet before Him; make the accusation of the sin; send forth His messenger with the saying what the Lord says, announcing the judgement. Now, that we can call God "Our Father," the call of our discipleship becomes stronger, we have to be willing to leave everything and follow Christ to His Father—we have to be willing to suffer for the Gospel. We have to be willing to stand up to the false gods of our time. We have to be willing to accept the divine Sonship of, we have to be able to recognize that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We have to not only want but desire to receive into our bodies and souls the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. For if we are to know the Father and call Him *Abba*, we are going to have to know Him and have the faith that Jesus has in Him as our Father. This is the sign by which we will know Him; that we will follow Jesus, just as He follows the Father, for when we see Jesus, we see the Father—and they shall know us by the sign of our love.

We express our love through the exercise of our conscience which we must follow and is completely interior to you. Yet it is formed from what is outside of us. This is why relativism is such an evil because what it offers as the truth for conscience formation is really a negative. The outside influence on our conscious effects how we make judgements for ourselves. It is our imperative that we seek the fullest truth, regardless of personal bias, and to construct our conscious to that truth. The ultimate truth for the baptized Catholic is what is called the "Deposit of Faith;" which is the Gospel and Sacred Tradition witnessed through Revelation. These two aspects of conscience formation are the foundation from which a 'good' or 'bad' belief is formed. This foundation is the springboard from which we love, and from which our love can become sacrificial. Conscience confronts a person and becomes that person's witness of their own faithfulness or unfaithfulness with regard to the law.

¹ Henri, Nouwen. *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith*. (Harper One: New York, New York, 2006) pg. 75.