

Corpus Christi Catholic Community  
Homily for Palm Sunday, March 28, 2021

Do you have some fond memories of some friends you have had over the course of the years? Like, how about a best friend, a buddy, back in high school? Maybe you rode on the bus with them on your way to school. Maybe you always ate lunch together. Maybe you did homework together. Oh, you were both on the tennis team. Maybe you double-dated together. Maybe you shared some thoughts about a career you would like to get into later in life. Maybe you spoke to them about the person you were dating. Maybe you complained to them about some miserable events in your life ... or about your parents ... or a kid brother or sister ... or the terrible grade on that last test ... or how you had fallen in love! (oops, that is not a complaint!) Yes, you could share just about anything with that best friend. You trusted them. You cared about them and they cared about you. You cheered for them when they scored a point in the tennis match ... and they cheered for you when you scored a point. You sat together at the homecoming game and shouted when your team scored a point. You missed each-other when you were on vacation up north... or they were on vacation out east. Then was the time that you broke your arm and they were there to carry your school bag from the bus into school.

I would like to take those great memories of the past friendship and see how they are like our friendship of today, our friendship with Jesus. It is a friendship that is really torn apart as we share his story here in Holy Week 2021.

The story is quite different from our high school best friend stories! Jesus died for us almost 2000 years ago. Today, Jesus is alive world-wide ... across the whole universe. Jesus is here, right here, super-present, in the Eucharist. He is so alive here in the Liturgy of the Word.

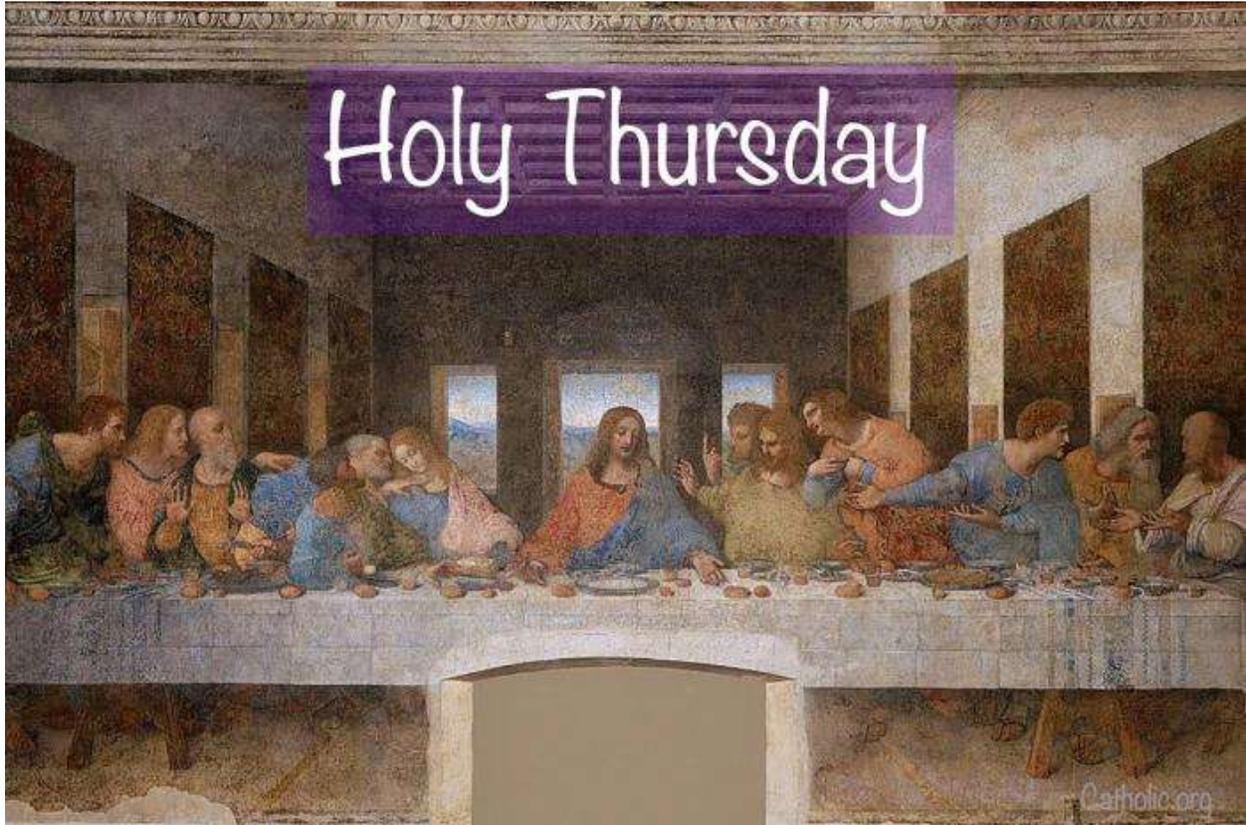
In our minds can we place ourselves right into the stories we heard about Jesus today?

How about the Palm Sunday story?



Let's imagine ourselves in a crowd of people and then Jesus, our best friend, starts coming up the road riding a donkey. "Hey, here comes my friend, my buddy! Look at all the people cheering him! Look at that smile on his face! That's MY buddy! A big "Hurrah" for Jesus! "Good going, Jesus! Hosanna! You are the best! Look at all the friends you have! You are finally getting all the salutes for curing people, for caring for people, for your preaching, for raising people from the dead! You go Jesus!" Our grins go from ear to ear! We have not shouted that loudly in ages! And we know we are so, so special because he has US as one of his personal friends. So proud to be a best friend of Jesus!

Ah, Thursday. A whole lot calmer. Dinner with dear friend, Jesus, and a few others.



A Seder Meal, something we have celebrated every year. These last three years it has been with Jesus, my top friend of all time! Somehow it is different this year. A little more quiet. Less jovial. We recall how 1000 years ago God saved our nation from that slavery in Egypt. Jesus does something different this year. "This is my body." "This is my blood." Jesus, dear friend, what are you telling us? "Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." Oh, Jesus, how can you say that to us? We are your very best friends!

OK, let's go over to Gethsemane and do some evening prayer together. It's nice and quiet over there.



Praying is a nice thing for friends to do together. We friends of Jesus quietly speak on our way to Gethsemane. "Do you have any clue about what Jesus was telling us at supper? I am not getting it." When we get to Gethsemane Jesus divides us into some groups. Let's pray. It's dark out here and all that supper is making me drowsy. A little nap might help. ... "Hello! Could you, my friends, not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation." ... Good grief, who are all these guys with swords and clubs? Oh, no, they are taking Jesus captive. Let's get out of here! But he's our best friend! Do you want to get killed by them. Run! Oh, no! They captured our dearest friend! Just run before they get us too! ... Well, good news! They are not chasing us now. I got to sneak behind them and find out where they are taking him. A best friend has to find out what is going on. ... Oh, oh! That's the high priest and other big wigs who are questioning Jesus! Hang in there friend. Work another miracle ... get yourself out of there. "Hey there! Are you one of the friends of that Jesus guy?"

"I do not know this man of whom you speak!" A cock crowed again. Oh, now I am denying my best friend; I am denying my best friend! Oh, no! I have never wept so much in all my life! I got to get back with the other close friends of Jesus ... back to where we were eating supper.

I made it back! Lock the doors! Keep those guys away from us. Dim the lights. It's those chief priests and scribes that captured Jesus. They hate him! I don't know what they will do with him but it can't be anything good. ... No way can our small group of friends get past all those guards and free Jesus. How about some of you women? Do you think you can get close enough to find out what is going on? OK, then. Try it first thing tomorrow morning.

What's taking those women so long?!! Can't they get back with some news? I can't stand all this not knowing what is happening to my dearest friend! They did not report back at noon and now it's almost supper time. Oh, here comes Mary Magdalene! WHAT! They killed Jesus!!!???!!! The Romans nailed him to a cross!?!?



Oh, Jesus, how could they have done that to you. Oh, my friend, oh, my friend! Jesus, they cannot have done that to you! No way! ... And they allowed Joseph of Arimathea to take him down from the cross and they already put him in a tomb! Oh, no! Oh no! Oh, no! Jesus, how could they have done that to you?!?!



The Sabbath has started. Let us pray! Let us pray! Let us pray!  
Lord Jesus, how could they have done this to you?  
Lord Jesus, how come you didn't just do some miracle and escape?  
Dear friend Jesus, what are we going to do without you?  
Jesus, you had the wisdom and the words.  
You cured the ill, restored vision to the blind, raised three people from the dead!  
How did you let them, why did you let them, do this to you?  
...

Oh, tomorrow morning when the Sabbath is over some of the women will go to that tomb and give Jesus a more proper burial; they'll clean up his bruised body and put some nice garment on him.

Well, the rest of us had better just stay locked up here ... keep it safe!



What?!?! They already came back from the tomb!

What?! Jesus was not there! A young man told them Jesus rose from the dead?!?! What?! Really?!

Jesus, all this is just blowing my mind! Is this all just a wild dream?

Today ... March 27/28, 2021.

Jesus, our best friend, is right here with us and with all people around the world. How are we *feeling* about all this ... Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday ... and today? Can we find time, lots of time, this week to think about what our best friend has done ... what he did 2000 years ago ... and what he did here in our very own lives? What do we have to say to that best friend? Do we hear him saying something to us in our mind or heart or soul?

Deepest blessings on our two-way conversations with the Lord this week!