

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
March 28, 2021
Year of the Eucharist and Parish (Sermon #12)

“He said, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and as you enter it you will find a colt tethered on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here.’” (Luke 19:30)

Each year on the celebration of Palm Sunday, the Church encourages her ministers to offer a brief homily or sermon due to the length of the gospel reading. Therefore, I will, as in prior years, offer a brief thought. In conjunction with our study of our Catholic faith, I want to reflect upon what we heard last weekend from the Baltimore Catechism - “We are called to use our intellect and will to know, serve, and love God.”

Palm Sunday may be commemorated with a procession where the priest is led into the church by the people holding and waving palm branches. Some might have even gone so far as to have either the priest or a chosen individual ride to the front of the church upon a donkey symbolizing Christ. As the donkey carried Jesus into Jerusalem that day, I ask you if material objects can still carry us to God or have we allowed material objects to carry us further away from God?

The answer to this question is a paradox. It is both simple and complicated at the same time. Simple - Yes, material objects (persons and things) were created good by God in the beginning and can offer us the opportunity to see the invisible hand of God at work through them. Complicated - It is because these material objects are good and frequently provide us pleasure, that we choose to either abuse and/or idolize them. This will necessarily end in these objects leading us further away from both God and our own personal freedom.

Alcohol is a “good.” Even the Bible thanks God for providing grapes which can become wine to cheer man’s heart. It is our willful abuse of the good of alcohol which causes it to become a detriment in our lives. Steeped in our pride, we have only ourselves to blame when we misuse the goods God has given us. Returning to today’s celebration, let us not imitate the stubbornness of the donkey remaining purposely separated from God through the misuse of material objects. Rather let us allow these material objects to carry us, as the donkey did so well, toward a deeper, fuller, richer knowledge of God which will then allow us to love Him and serve Him all the days of our lives.