

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (New Mass)
Palm Sunday (Traditional Latin Mass)
April 10, 2022
Year of Saint Joseph

“‘The ass which was tied’, says St. Bonaventure, ‘denotes a sinner’. . . But, as Jesus Christ could not sit on the ass before she was loosed, so He cannot dwell in a soul bound with her own iniquities.”
(St. Alphonsus Liguori, Sermon for Palm Sunday)

We gather this day to celebrate our Lord’s entrance into His city of Jerusalem through the blessing and distribution of palms. Furthermore, in many places, Catholics will conduct prayerful processions honoring this event. The blessed palms we raise today will, once dried, be gathered up and set ablaze; becoming the ashes placed upon our heads on Ash Wednesday. It is this transformation of the green palm you held in your hand as Mass began, into the dried yellow palm destroyed by the fire which I propose for our reflection this day.

Before I go any further, please understand this homily will last a few weeks. It may last multiple months. Furthermore, it will be painfully slow and dull. For I want you to see symbolically represented in the blessed palm, a vibrant, pliable soul. Now watch as this transformation into a dried husk slowly, gradually occurs; representing the soul’s painful descent away from God into an unquenchable fire. Unlike that palm which is destined to dry, you are not bound to a pre-determined ending. You are offered the refreshing waters of grace (sanctifying, sacramental, actual) flowing from the pierced side of our Blessed Savior each time you prayerfully enter into His one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church. Please, do not allow yourself to become a dried branch fit only for burning which has become separated from the vine which is Christ. And how does one prevent this drying process from occurring? By living your Catholic faith to the full — Pray, Fast, Give Alms, Fulfill your Sunday (and Holy Day) Obligation, Live in a State of Grace, Forgive, all these and so much more. May God bless you and your families as we begin the most solemn Holy Week.