

**Palm Sunday Homily, Year A**  
**4/5/2020**  
**St. Columbkille-Dubuque**  
**Is. 50:4-7 / Phil. 2:6-11 / Mt. 26:14-27:66 Or 27:11-54**  
**Fr. Paul Attah-Nsiah**

**“He humbled himself”**  
**“One of you will betray me”**  
**“All of you will have your faith shaken”**  
**“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”**

Jesus asks us this year – no, let us consider that our doctors and nurses are asking us this year -- during this strange and eerie season to reflect for a few moments on these few critical Palm Sunday, Holy Week words.

**“He and she humble themselves.”** Like Jesus, true disciples give their life, love and serve others as their own. They are at bedsides, staying with the most critically ill. They are coming from around the country to serve in the most crowded make-shift critical care arenas. Today’s disciples put others first, risking their own lives for others, not even returning home. These leaders are heralded as heroes, as was Jesus, ones who follow Him all the way to the cross of Calvary. This Holy Week marks us as a Christian nation and calls us to be real spiritual leaders making the necessary personal sacrifice as at no other time in our history.

And we are told: **“One of you will betray me.”** Today, that one, or two or three, become those who disregard our safety; those who put everyone at risk; those who feel invincible, untouchable and gather in unsafe circles. The truth is not in them. God’s love is not leading them, and they endanger everyone because of their own selfish interests.

As we learn from centuries ago, we know today: **“All of you will have your faith shaken.”** Who of us is not somewhat worried? Do we carry this virus and not know it? When will children return to school? How will parents pay their bills and buy food? How will those in assisted living survive without the companionship of any other human person? What will be the bottom line for the economy? How do we grieve with those whose family members do die without keeping company with them? How do we live well without our common prayer, gathering and celebrating faith? How does our faith carry us through these fearful and sometimes paralyzing possibilities?

Our medical care givers and most of us are praying as Jesus: **“My God, My God. Why have you abandoned me?”** And yet, we will walk faithfully as Jesus did, choosing to follow, humbly, to be ones who live for others, ones who sequester and stay home while holding on faithfully. This desert season tests our faith, but we will say like Peter, “Lord to whom can we go; you have the words of eternal life.” **God IS with us, as God was with Jesus.**

Everything about our current climate redirects our attention from an historical Paschal Mystery to embracing the Paschal Mystery right here within our lives. This Palm Sunday journey is the one we make into our own heart and into the heart of the Domestic Church we create within our family at home.

So quickly, everything does change! Jesus' story is our story. We too, must become obedient, humbling ourselves to the safety needs of our community and world. We share in this sacrificial time, becoming one in this suffering and isolation, so that all of us might rise to new life. I encourage all of us to share in our Holy Week prayers online if we can. Our prayerful remembering will be at home, alone or with just one or two. If we have the internet, our parishes have many good reflections and Holy Mass is offered at times that can be found on our websites: [stcolumbkille.net](http://stcolumbkille.net) or [theworker.org](http://theworker.org). or just Google: "Catholic Mass" or Holy Week services. We may have only a Bible to read or Lenten literature to comfort us, or just our memory of the Resurrection joy of Easter. For sure, let us ***be grateful that God is with us in these days!***

With our care-givers throughout our nation, we make our own entry into Jerusalem with trust in God's mercy to hold, heal and carry us throughout our days. When we suffer, we find unexpected blessings and the presence of God in all who serve. Remember that, like the colt, 'The Master has need of each one of us'. May God hold us in the palm of His hand this week and always. Happy Palm Sunday.